

March 24, 2024

Bible Passage: Matthew 21:1–17
(Triumphal Entry)



Jesus Is King of Kings

Remember Verse

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ,
whom you have sent.
John 17:3

LESSON OVERVIEW

CONNECT// 10 minutes



King's Chair

SUPPLIES

- Connect Questions*
- Scissors
- Small bowl
- Chair

GATHER// 30 minutes



Remember Verse

Game: Verse Maze

SUPPLIES

- Index cards (21)
- Marker
- Hole punch
- Yarn (approx. 100')

Storytelling

SUPPLIES

- Optional: Investigate Questions*
- Palm Branch template*
- Bibles
- Card stock (1 sheet per child, green)
- Scissors

Discussion Questions

RESPOND// 15 minutes



Song of Praise

SUPPLIES

- Whiteboard
- Dry erase marker
- Poster board
- Marker

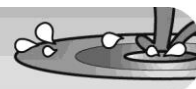
(Optional) Palm Sunday Race

SUPPLIES

- Baskets (2)

- Rags or old clothing (10 pieces per team)
- Masking tape

BLESS// 5 minutes



SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards*
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 4*
- Bible

Further Resources

To help you plan and lead:

**Customizable copy of Lesson 3
2018–19 Scope and Sequence
TruStory How It Works
Small Group Enhancement**

At Home Weekly: Lesson 3

The weekly for the next lesson—to be sent home for preteaching by parents—is found in BLESS.

LEADER PREP

Each week you'll find a list of resources along with encouraging articles that help you prepare your heart to present the lesson.

Inspire *Shares personal stories from fellow ministry leaders about how God has worked in their lives*

A sense of freedom fills the 9:00 p.m. service Sunday nights at my church. Energetic college kids attend “The Nine,” and it's not unusual for people to raise their hands, shout, or even dance as they worship.

Because those of us at The Nine are so willing to uniquely worship God, our worship leaders sometimes suggest new or different postures of response. One Sunday, after the sermon, the worship leader stopped halfway through the first song. “I think it would be great,” he said, “if we got to our knees to worship Jesus, our King.” The space between the rows of seats at my church is pretty tight! But slowly, one by one, everyone maneuvered to his knees. Even the worship band followed suit.

I'll be honest: It felt uncomfortable. But, to me, it was a physical expression of what our hearts and lives should look like. We're called to glorify Christ regardless of our situations. We're called to be the sort of people who submit to God even when it's inconvenient. We're to lift up Jesus, always, because He is our King.

Erika Abdelatif

ROCKHARBOR Church

Equip *Offers perspective and context to the lesson's Bible passage*

From the beginning to the end, the Old Testament records the history of God's people, the Israelites, awaiting the arrival of their promised Savior. They envisioned a king who would come with a sword and make Israel the leader of all the nations. Their hope for this sort of Messiah is evident in the way they welcomed Jesus on what we refer to as “Palm Sunday” or the “Triumphal Entry.” As Jesus approached Jerusalem, crowds scurried to cut palm branches and wave them over Him as He entered the city.

The palm branch was a symbol of Jewish patriotism. It represented victory for the Jewish people. Palms were used in decorating Jewish coins, buildings, and even synagogues. They were prominently displayed during many of the major feasts and festivals. Throughout the Old Testament and various Jewish texts, palm branches were used to symbolize Jewish pride, and Israelites would only cover the ground with them for honorable and worthy individuals. For the people to lace Jesus' path with palm fronds while waving branches over Him as He passed implied that they perceived Him to be a king coming to rescue them. In fact, the people cried out, “Hosanna,” which means “Save us” or “Rescue us.” The people shouted it in celebration, as if to say, “Hooray—He is here to save us!”

In His first coming, Jesus didn't intend to be an earthly warrior king. He came to restore the broken relationship between mankind and God. Instead of bringing a sword, He brought a message of peace and humility for true salvation. Those who followed Jesus had to be willing to embrace a new concept of kingship, one of love and inclusion rather than domination and exclusion. And one day He'll return to earth as our conquering King.

Support *Provides reflection and assessment through encouragement, prayer, and time in God's Word*

How do you honor a king? In the movies, everyone bows in the presence of a king. Sometimes a servant or messenger will kneel or walk backward so as not to turn his back to the king. This gives the king the honor and respect he deserves. Subjects bow down in submission, recognizing the power and majesty of the king.

The Bible proclaims that Jesus is the King of Kings! We probably don't bow down before Jesus—simply for the sake of giving Him honor—often enough. Sometimes we forget His position of authority and rule over us because He is such a loving and generous King. This week, each morning, spend a few minutes bowing down before God. Instead of

running into His throne room with requests, spend a few moments worshipping and praising Him for who He is—the King of the universe and your life.

CONNECT//10 minutes



Children develop relationships with their leaders and one another through simple activities and conversation starters.

King's Chair

Kids will take turns sitting in a “king’s chair” and answer questions from classmates.

SUPPLIES

- Connect Questions (see Resources)
- Scissors
- Small bowl
- Chair

PREPARE AHEAD

Print the Connect Questions, cut them apart, and place them in the bowl. Place the chair at the front of the classroom.

RELATE

CONNECT QUESTION: Welcome and greet children. Open your time by asking this question: **What famous person would you like to see or meet?**

Seeing a famous person would be very exciting. Now, we are going to take turns sitting in the king’s chair and answering questions from our classmates. Choose a child to sit in the chair. Then, have another child draw a question from the bowl and ask it of the seated child. Then, the child who asked the question can take a turn sitting in the chair, and another child can draw and ask a question. Continue until each child has answered a question.

GATHER//30 minutes



Children experience and learn more about God through prayer, storytelling from The Big God Story, an investigation into God’s Word, and creative ways to memorize Scripture.

Remember Verse

Each week children will spend time memorizing a portion of Scripture together. The Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that’s highlighted in today’s portion of The Big God Story.

Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. John 17:3

Game: Verse Maze

SUPPLIES

- Index cards (21)
- Marker
- Hole punch
- Yarn (approx. 100')

PREPARE AHEAD

Write each word and the reference of the Remember Verse onto individual index cards. Then, punch a hole in the top of each card and string the words of the verse in order onto the long piece of yarn. Create a maze around the classroom using the yarn.

RELATE

Invite children to learn the Remember Verse as they walk through the yarn maze set up in the classroom. Students will find each word of the verse by following the yarn that’s woven around the room. When they are finished, invite the kids

to recite the verse together.

Storytelling

Bible Passage: Matthew 21:1–17

Storytelling Technique: Writing Key Words, Drawing Images, Actions

Jesus Is King of Kings

SUPPLIES

- Optional: Investigate Questions (see Resources)
- Palm Branch template (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Card stock (1 sheet per child, green)
- Scissors

PREPARE AHEAD

Print one Palm Branch template per child onto green card stock. Cut out each branch.

RELATE

Give each child a palm branch and ask her to keep it in front of her until you ask her to wave it. **Have any of you ever been to a parade? What was it like?** Invite responses from the children. **Parades are so fun! We get to watch people go by, and we often cheer and clap.** Invite the kids to cheer and clap. **Today in The Big God Story we're going to learn about a very special time when Jesus entered Jerusalem and people cheered for Him as their king. What's amazing is that Jesus is still our King of Kings today, and we get to praise Him for it! Let's take a minute to ask God to teach us today.** Lead the children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds.

Invite the kids to turn to Matthew 21 in their Bibles. **Jesus was teaching and healing people all over Israel. Several years after He began to teach, Jesus knew that it was almost time for Him to die on the cross for our sins. This would happen in Jerusalem, Israel's capital city. So, Jesus and His disciples went toward Jerusalem, where they were going to celebrate Passover. Does anyone remember what Passover is?** Pause for kids to respond. **Passover is an important holiday in the Bible. All of God's people—the Jews—would go to Jerusalem to remember and celebrate God, who had rescued and redeemed them from slavery in Egypt! Jesus and His disciples were going to Jerusalem to celebrate.** Invite the kids to cheer.

So many people went to Jerusalem for Passover—there were way more people in the city than usual, so the city was crowded. Have kids pretend to push through a crowd. And lots of them really wanted to see Jesus. They had heard about all the miracles He did, and many people thought He was the Messiah. Who is the Messiah? Ask the kids to respond. **That's right—the Jewish people had been waiting a long time for the Messiah, the Person God had promised to send to rescue them. They waited and waited, and when Jesus came along, many of them believed He was the Messiah. And they were right!** Invite the kids to cheer. **But, they thought the Messiah would come to be a mighty king who would fight battles for Israel. They didn't realize that God had sent His Son, Jesus, to be a king who would save us from our sins. Jesus is the King of Kings.**

Before they entered the city, Jesus asked His disciples to do something. Read Matthew 21:1–3 aloud. **During Jesus' time, people walked everywhere, for miles and miles!** Invite the kids to stand up for a moment and walk in place. Encourage them to wipe their foreheads like they are worn out. Then ask them to sit back down. **Jesus told His disciples to go get a donkey so He could ride into town. Whenever a king came into a city, he would ride on a horse so everyone knew he was king. But Jesus chose a donkey instead. A donkey wasn't as majestic as a horse, and kings didn't ride them. But Jesus knew the Bible had a prophecy about a king riding into Jerusalem on a donkey. Jesus was fulfilling this prophecy and showing everyone that He is King of Kings!**

Many people came to greet Jesus and cheer Him on as He entered the city. Read Matthew 21:8 aloud. Invite the kids to create a path down the center of the room, with half the kids on one side and half on the other. **Everyone took palm branches to wave at Jesus as He entered the city. In Bible times, palm branches meant victory and peace. People began to wave them at Jesus as He passed because they thought He was the king who was going to save them from the Romans and make them a free country again.** Invite the kids to wave their palm branches. **Jesus is King of Kings, so the people were half right. But at that time, Jesus didn't come to be a warrior king who would save Israel from the Romans. He came to be the one true King who would die for us and save us from our sins! He came to bring us eternal life.**

As Jesus entered the city, the people waved their palm branches and called out to Him. As you read the next

verse, have the kids wave their palm branches as you walk slowly down the path in the middle of the room. Read Matthew 21:9 aloud. **The people called out, “Hosanna” to Jesus. *Hosanna* is a word that means “Please save us!”** The people thought Jesus was going to save them from Rome. But He was going to do something so much bigger! He was going to save people from their sins so they could have a relationship with God and live with Him forever. When Jesus came to earth, He showed us who God is and how much He loves us. Jesus is the ultimate King—the King of Kings—who saves us!

The people cheered and cheered for Jesus and blessed Him. Encourage the kids to cheer and call out praise to God. **When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, many other people wondered who He was and what He had come to do.** Read Matthew 21:10–11 aloud. **Everyone knew Jesus was a prophet, but not everyone realized that He is King of Kings and He is God. They didn’t know that in just a few days He would die on the cross to save us from our sins.**

Jesus died, but then He rose again. He showed the world that He is King of Kings! He is still King today, and He reigns in our lives and our hearts when we ask Him to. It is good to know that we worship the one, true King! Invite children to wave their palm branches again. Share a time when you knew that Jesus was King in your life.

Discussion Questions

- **Where was Jesus going to celebrate Passover?** Matthew 21:1
- **What did Jesus ride into Jerusalem?** Matthew 21:2
- **What did people say as Jesus came into the city?** Matthew 21:9
- **How does it make you feel to know that Jesus is King of Kings?**

RESPOND//15 minutes



Children reflect on what the Holy Spirit is teaching them and respond to God through creative activities and games.

Song of Praise

Children will work together to create a song of praise to God.

SUPPLIES

- Whiteboard
- Dry erase marker
- Poster board
- Marker

RELATE

Jesus is our King of Kings and Lord of Lords. There is no one like Him. What are some ways we can worship Jesus as our King? Invite answers. **Those are great thoughts. What are some words of praise you would like to say to Jesus for being your King?** As kids share, write their words on the whiteboard. Then, use the words and phrases the children came up with to create a song of praise. Write the song on the poster board. When you’re done, have the class stand and sing it together.

(Optional) Palm Sunday Race

In this game, kids will race to recreate the scene of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem.

SUPPLIES

- Baskets (2)
- Rags or old clothing (10 pieces per team)
- Masking tape

PREPARE AHEAD

Divide the clothing and rags evenly between the baskets. Use masking tape to create two winding paths, each path at least 10 to 15 feet. Place a basket at the beginning of each path.

RELATE

When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the crowds waved palm branches at Him and laid their robes before Him, recognizing that He was the King. Today we are going to race to recreate the scene of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. Divide your class into two equal-sized teams and have each team line up at the beginning of a path. Then, invite children to race to lay down their clothing to cover their team's pathway. Once a team's path is covered, each team member must race down the pathway on his hands and knees from one piece of clothing or rag to the other. The first team to finish wins.

Developmentally Speaking

Children in this age group enjoy concrete learning experiences. Creating a game out of a key aspect of today's Storytelling will not only allow children to have fun but will also give them a tangible reminder of what they've learned.

BLESS// 5 minutes



Children receive a blessing from their leaders and sometimes one another. A blessing can be a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words to encourage and guide.

SUPPLIES

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- At Home Weekly: Lesson 4 (see Resources)
- Bible

RELATE

Invite the children to stand together as you read the blessing verse from Psalm 47:1–2:

Clap your hands, all you nations; shout to God with cries of joy. For the LORD Most High is awesome, the great King over all the earth.

Lead children in a call and response with motions as you go through the blessing verse with them.

Clap hands. **Clap your hands, all you nations.**

Cup hands around mouth. **Shout to God with cries of joy.**

Raise hands toward sky. **For the LORD Most High is awesome.**

Spread arms wide. **The great King over all the earth.**

When the kids finish the call and response, have them stand together and close their eyes as you bless them.

May you know that Jesus is the King of Kings. May you be full of joy and praise because He alone is the King over all the earth.

Send home Remember Verse cards and the At Home Weekly with your kids.