

date: \_\_12/31/17

**Bible Passage:** Micah 5:2; Jeremiah 31:15; Hosea 11:1; Matthew 2  
(Wise Men)

## Jesus Is King

### REMEMBER VERSE

**For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
Isaiah 9:6**

### Inspire

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

Looking back at my life, I can see the same pattern the Israelites fell into during the time of the judges. For a time I will do what is right in my own eyes (Proverbs 21:2), and then God will help redirect my path. Then I put Him back on the throne of my life and acknowledge Jesus as King. Then this pattern replays over and over.

I remember sitting in my car one day, crying out to God, anguishing over bad choices I had made. A quiet, gentle voice spoke to me and asked who was ruling in my heart. Who was sitting on the throne of my life? Such a simple question, and yet it can be so hard to live out the right answer.

This isn't just my story, it's the story of mankind. In the garden, Adam and Eve rejected God as their king and decided to be their own rulers. During the time of Samuel, Israel wanted to be like everyone else and rejected God as their king. At the triumphal entry, when Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and presented Himself for the first time as a king, the world rejected Him as well.

The entire history of mankind can be viewed as millions of stories of individuals either making the decision to honor God as King or to keep themselves on the throne. Jesus is King, and life works the way God designed it to work when we acknowledge that truth and live like it.

*Tori Funkhouser*  
ROCKHARBOR Church

### Equip

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

Who were the magi, really? The version we get in children's stories often has a picture of three old, frail men with long beards riding camels, visiting baby Jesus in the manger. The history behind who the magi actually were paints a much different portrait. The visit of the magi was a significant cultural and political event that announced to the world that a King had indeed arrived.

Many misconceptions have arisen over the last 2,000 years surrounding the magi. The history of the magi goes back hundreds of years before Christ to the time of Daniel. Daniel was given prophetic insight into the coming of Messiah that no one before or after him ever possessed. In Daniel 9:24–27, God gave Daniel a prophecy that laid out the precise time when Jesus would present Himself as Messiah at the triumphal entry. Daniel was given the title “Rab-Mag,” or, chief of the magi. He founded a sect of priests who were entrusted with the job of keeping watch for the coming of the king. When the star appeared in the east, it was no surprise to them. It was the signal they had been waiting for.

The political unrest in the region at the time of Christ's birth fed into Herod's reaction when the magi arrived. The magi were descendants from the Persians, now comprising the dominating ruling group of the Parthian empire. This empire to the east was the source of constant border tension with Rome. Their role, as the upper house of the Council of the Magistans, was to be the king-makers of the region.

When this large entourage arrived in Jerusalem, with all the attendant oriental pomp and circumstance, undoubtedly accompanied by a significant military force to ensure their safety, it sent Herod into a panic. They asked: “Where is the one ‘born’ king of the Jews?” This was a calculated insult to Herod, who was not Jewish, who had bought and bribed his way into the office of king. These magi had arrived to announce to the entire region that Messiah the King, the one Daniel had prophesied about, had finally arrived. Jesus *is* King, and the magi made sure the world knew this too.

## Support

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

In the Bible, God gave many prophecies referring to the Christ and His plan for redemption. God fulfilled all of these in Jesus.

Before you teach this lesson, you may want to just sit and ponder how miraculously God has weaved the tapestry of His big story. Then pray God will give you wisdom and discernment about how to lead your kids through this lesson, which is not only about the intricate and mysterious prophecies God gave His people but also about His desire to forgive people's sin and heal their guilt.

Even very young children can wrestle with sin. Children can also be affected by others' sins, such as living in an abusive relationship or with angry family members. Pray God would draw their hearts toward Him and heal them from any sinful circumstances inflicted upon them.

**SMALL GROUP**  
SECTION

**EXPLORE//** 10 min.

Small Group Leaders

*Children engage in fun, creative activities designed to pique their curiosity about the day's portion of The Big God Story.*

Sometimes it's hard to understand prophecies. We know they'll be fully explained one day, if not here on earth, then in heaven. But, in the meantime, they can seem very mysterious, especially when we don't have all of the information. Today your children will interact with the idea of understanding something that at first seems confusing.

## Funny Phrases

### SUPPLIES

- Funny Phrases cards (see Resources)
- Card stock (2–3 sheets)
- Scissors

### SET UP

Print two or three copies of the Funny Phrases cards onto card stock and cut them apart. Be sure to print the responses on the back sides of the phrases.

### RELATE

**We're really blessed to have the Bible. We can see the whole story of God from beginning to end, all in one book! But people who lived in Bible times didn't have the Word of God in one book like we do. During Bible times, some of the things that happened probably seemed really confusing to the people.**

**For example, think about some of the Bible's prophecies. We understand them today because we know they've been fulfilled. But I'll bet they seemed really mysterious to the people who received them long before Jesus came!**

**Sometimes things aren't quite what they seem. You might think you hear one thing, but actually you heard something totally different! Today we're going to play a game that requires us to use our best listening skills to figure out what's really being said.**

Invite the children to pair up and grab a few Funny Phrases cards. Then encourage them to take turns sounding out the words on each card and trying to guess the phrases. After they make guesses, they can check out the correct responses on the back.

## LARGE GROUP

SECTION

## DISCOVER// 30 min.

Host/Worship Leader/Storyteller

*Children participate in discovering God's Word through Bible Verse memorization, interactive storytelling techniques, and worship as response.*

## Traditions and Remember Verse

### SUPPLIES

- Mementos for your church Traditions (rocks, marbles, gum balls, etc.)
- [Remember Verse image](#) (see Resources)

### RELATE

Give the children mementos (such as rocks, marbles, or blocks) for accomplishments such as memorizing the Remember Verse or bringing their Bibles. Have them put the objects into a clear container or add them to a structure, and celebrate when it's complete.

This week's Remember Verse focuses on a character trait of God that's highlighted in today's portion of The Big God Story.

**For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Isaiah 9:6**

## Connect

Encourage the members of your community to get to know one another through engaging questions, energizing games, and creative activities.

### Question

**If you wanted to look for a king, where would you look?**

## The Big God Story

**Bible Passage: Micah 5:2; Jeremiah 31:15; Hosea 11:1, Matthew 2**

**Storytelling Technique: Kids Acting Out Narrative**

**Jesus Is King**

### SUPPLIES

- [Timeline image](#) (see Resources)
- [Images: Micah 5:2, Hosea 11:1](#) (see Resources)
- Bibles
- Card stock (yellow, gold, or metallic)
- Scissors
- Glue
- Craft stick (jumbo)
- Optional: Bible-times costumes (magi, Mary, Joseph); props for gold, frankincense, and myrrh

### PREPARE AHEAD

Draw a star on the sheet of card stock and cut it out. Glue it to the end of the craft stick.

**SET UP**

Choose several children to help act out today's lesson. You will need three to five children to act as magi, one child to act as Mary, and one child to act as Joseph. Before the storytelling time, go through today's portion of The Big God Story and explain what their roles and cues will be.

**RELATE**

Lead children in a Prayer of Release to pause, be still, and ask the Holy Spirit to quiet their hearts and minds. **What words come to mind when you think of a king?** Interact with responses. **Great thoughts! You probably think of royalty as someone who is powerful, strong, and dignified. How do you think you'd act around a king?** Pause for responses. **Last week we heard about prophecies that foretold the coming of our King, Jesus! Prophecies are messages from God.**

**Do you think people in Bible times completely understood what the prophecies meant? Probably not. Prophecies are mysterious. To the people who lived during the time of Isaiah or the other prophets, these messages might have sounded confusing. They didn't explain exactly how, when, or where something would happen. They were more like hints or clues. Today I'm going to share two more prophecies with you.**

**God gave our first prophecy to a man named Micah.** Invite children to turn to Micah 5:2 in their Bibles. *Tech: Cue Micah 5:2 image.* **This message said, "But you, Bethlehem ... though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old" (Micah 5:2). God gave the second message to a man named Hosea.** Invite kids to turn to this reference and follow along. *Tech: Cue Hosea 11:1 image.* **This message said, "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son" (Hosea 11:1).**

**Bethlehem—we heard about that town last week. It's where Jesus Christ was born. How amazing that hundreds of years before Jesus came to earth, God told His people that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem. This town was very small, and people probably didn't expect a king to be born there. But that's where God brought Joseph and Mary so they could be counted along with everyone in the empire. God made sure they were in Bethlehem, fulfilling the prophecy from long ago.**

Invite magi children onstage and have one read Matthew 2:1–2. Invite kids to follow along. **After Jesus' birth, some magi, or wise men, asked King Herod to tell them where to find Jesus. But Herod became jealous and upset. He didn't want another king born in his country because he didn't want to lose his power! So Herod gathered his chief priests and teachers and asked them where he could find Jesus. What do you think they told Herod?** Allow responses. **They quoted him the Scripture from Micah!** *Tech: Cue Micah 5:2 image.*

**Herod told the magi what the priests and leaders had said. Then Herod said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him" (Matthew 2:8). But Herod was lying. He didn't want to worship Jesus; he wanted to hurt Him!**

Hold up the card stock star and walk through the room as you talk while the magi children follow. Meanwhile, have the children playing Mary and Joseph stand onstage. **The magi left Jerusalem and followed the star until it "stopped over the place where the child was" (v. 9). Walk toward the stage and hold the star over Mary and Joseph. What an amazing miracle! When the magi saw Jesus, "they bowed down and worshiped him" (v. 11).** Have the magi come to greet Mary and Joseph.

**Then the magi gave Jesus gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.** Have the magi pull out each gift one at a time while Mary and Joseph react. **Gold was a gift for a king. Frankincense was a sticky substance that smelled very good. It was used by Old Testament priests in the temple, so it was a gift for a priest. Myrrh was a substance used for burial, so it was a gift for someone about to die. How do these gifts relate to Jesus?** Allow responses. **Great thoughts. Jesus is our King, and He's also our priest because He offered a sacrifice, Himself, to die for our sins, which is why myrrh would be needed. Wow! The gifts were hints about Jesus' life!**

**After the magi worshipped Jesus, God warned them not to return to Herod.** Have magi children walk offstage and back to their seats. **When the magi did not return, Herod grew even more angry and determined to find Jesus. God warned Joseph in a dream to escape with Mary and Jesus to Egypt. God said, "Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him" (Matthew 2:13).** Have Mary and Joseph look afraid and hurry offstage. **This situation might have been really scary for Mary and Joseph, but it also fulfilled prophecy! Tech: Cue Hosea 11:1 image. God said He would call His Son out of Egypt, and later He did!**

**What does this mean for us? Well, God made the way to be in relationship with Him. When we sin, we separate ourselves from relationship with God. But when we trust and obey Jesus, He forgives our sins and sets us on the right path.** Tell a story about a time God forgave you from your sins.

**The magi worshipped Jesus as King. They bowed down in front of Him and gave Him gifts, including gold, the perfect gift for a king. Let's worship God and celebrate Jesus as the King of our lives.**

## SMALL GROUP SECTION

# RESPOND// 15 min.

Small Group Leaders

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

## Reflect: Jesus Is King

Encourage the kids to open their Bibles and read the suggested passages.

### Questions for Younger Kids

- **Why do we call Jesus our King?** John 12:15
- **Why do we worship Jesus?** Philippians 2:9–11
- **What do you think it was like for Mary and Joseph when the magi came to visit?**
- **Why was Herod angry about the birth of Jesus?** Matthew 2:3, 16–18
- **What makes you want to worship God?**

### Questions for Older Kids

- **Why do we call Jesus our King?** John 12:15; 1 Timothy 6:15
- **Why do we worship Jesus?** Philippians 2:9–11
- **What do you think it was like for Mary and Joseph when the magi came to visit?**

- **The magi brought gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. What did those gifts mean?** Matthew 2:11
- **Why was Herod angry about the birth of Jesus?** Matthew 2:3, 16–18
- **What makes you want to worship God?**

## **BLESS//** 5 min.

Small Group Leaders

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

### **SUPPLIES**

- Remember Verse cards (see Resources)
- Bible

### **RELATE**

As you bless your kids, tell them they have the opportunity to also be a blessing to others. Encourage them to freely share the joy and love they have received from God.

Encourage the kids to hold their hands in front of them, palms up. Then open a Bible and read Psalm 5:1–3:

**Listen to my words, LORD, consider my lament. Hear my cry for help, my King and my God, for to you I pray. In the morning, LORD, you hear my voice; in the morning I lay my requests before you and wait expectantly.**

**Children, may you know that Jesus is King—over the world and over your life. May you praise Him and trust Him to guide you.**

Now bless each child individually with the following words: (Child's name), **may you recognize Jesus as King of your life this week.**