

"That You May Believe"

Gospel of John

Week 3

Main Idea – God's chosen King will reign. Jesus reigns as God's chosen King.

The goal of this week's lesson is to help the children look forward from Old Testament Israel's perspective to understand that God promised to send His chosen King to reign perfectly on His behalf. Israel had a few good kings, and many bad kings. But God's King would be His own Son and rule perfectly from the throne. This week's lesson culminates in the Person of the Lord Jesus, God's chosen King, who presently reigns over all creation. From John's perspective, and ours, Jesus is presently reigning as King over His kingdom in the hearts of His people, and He will return again someday to establish that kingdom on earth.

Sunday school teachers should emphasize the first half of the main idea in an interactive way for **20 minutes**, and explain the second half clearly without much interaction as a conclusion for **5 minutes**. *Children's church* teachers should explain the first half without much interaction for **5 minutes** as an introduction and emphasize the second half in an interactive way for **20 minutes**.

 Pedagogical Tool — See the below footnote for help with time management.¹

Sunday School — Psalm 2

Preparation

Materials:

- Print out pictures of famous world rulers and kings
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize main point.
- Jesus on throne coloring page

Set-up:

- Tape/magnet the world rulers and kings to the board during the lesson.

Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

¹ To improve your time management, you can: 1) Have your Helper set a timer, 2) Write the schedule with the time on the board and appoint a student to remind you, 3) Set a timer on one of the adult's phone, etc.

Romans 1:16 (ESV) – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing “Not Ashamed” (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Start the Bible Verse section at the beginning without waiting for students who may arrive late. This will preserve the allotted times for other sections. During the singing time, either the Teacher or the Helper should be setting up for the opening activity, depending upon who is leading the Bible Verse time.

Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – God chosen King will reign.

Pray

Introduction (5 minutes)

Opening Activity — “The world's greatest king!” I am going to talk to you about four kings that people would claim had the greatest kingdom in the history of the world. After you hear about each King, you must vote on who you believe had the greatest kingdom in the *history of the world* (important phrase, because the history of the world is not complete yet).

Caesar Augustus — He was the first Roman Emperor. He initiated a time of peace (Pax Romana) where the Roman world was largely free from conflict for more than two centuries.

Alexander the Great — He was king of Macedon, a Greek kingdom. His empire stretched from Greece to northwestern India. He was undefeated in battle and considered one of the greatest military commanders.

Genghis Khan — He was the founder of the Mongol Empire, which became the largest contiguous (big word for land that is all connected, like 48 US states) empire in history after his death. He is considered to be one of the greatest conquerors of all time.

Cyrus the Great — He was the founder of the Persian Empire. He conquered most of Western Asia and much of Central Asia during his reign.

At this point, you can have the students take a vote. After a winner is selected, tell them that God also has a vote — He votes for none of them! None of these kings will have the greatest kingdom when history of the world is complete because God has a different plan.

Today, we are going to learn exactly what God’s plan.

Body (15 minutes)

Main Point — God’s chosen King will reign (Have the students repeat this multiple times).

Why must God send a chosen King? If God plans to send a chosen King, there must be an important reason. Let’s take a look at our first point.

The RAGE (Spread feet wide, curl arms, and growl!) — God’s chosen King will reign **because** the world rages against God (Read Psalm 2:1-3).

The kings and nations of the earth are hostile toward God. They don’t want to follow His rules, even though He is in charge! Now, those who love God understand that His rules are righteous and for the good of men and women made in His image. But for those who don’t love God, they hate His authority.

What are some of the ways that the Psalmist describes how kings and nations rage against God? The nations are angry at God, they come up with plans that go against God, they desire to be free from His authority, and they reject His anointed One (Messiah) — God’s chosen King!

Illustration — Handcuffs. The Psalmist uses a word phrase to illustrate how the nations and kingdoms view God’s reign over them — “Let us break their chains and free ourselves from slavery to God” (Psalm 2:3, NLT)... It’s like having handcuffs on. **By show of hands, how many of you have ever worn handcuffs? What is it like?** It’s hard! They restrict you, they limit what you can do. That’s how these nations and kingdoms think of God’s authority.

These nations and kings are confident that they can stand up to God and stop His plans for the world from happening! Will they succeed? **What do you think is going to happen?**

The RESPONSE (pull sword out and thrust it forward) — God’s chosen King will reign in the future (Read Psalm 2:4-9). Whoa! That is an intense passage.

How does God feel about the plans of the nations and kings? He laughs at their plans, He scoffs at them, He feels angry with them.

What does God plan to do about the plans of the nations and kings? He will send a chosen King to reign in Jerusalem, His holy mountain. This King is not just God’s chosen King, but also God’s Son. God will also give the nations and the whole earth as an inheritance to this King. This King will also destroy any opposition from nations and kings that don’t respect his rule.

So there is no hope for all of the nations and kings of the world to defeat this coming King. **But are they completely without hope?** No, God gives them a command that is both a serious duty and an incredible opportunity.

The REFUGE — God’s chosen King welcomes those who honor Him for who He truly is (Read Psalm 2:10-12). What an amazing King! Let’s break this down.

What does God command of the nations and kings? They should be wise, and submit to God’s chosen King!

What is the promise for those who submit to God’s chosen king? They get to know joy, true joy, because God’s King is gracious. If they honor Him the right way, they will get to be His servants and serve Him forever!

What is the end result of those who don’t submit to God’s chosen King? He will be angry and instantly destroy them when He returns.

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Today, we learned: God's chosen King will reign. (Have the students repeat it)

It is important to remember that at the time Psalm 2 was written, this was looking forward to a time when God's chosen King will reign over the earth. God's people waited for this king for centuries! In the midst of bad kings, and horrible nations, it was difficult to hope that God's king would ever come.

But there is good news! 2000 years ago, Jesus came as God's chosen King. That is the good news of the gospel — 1 Corinthians 15:3-4.

Because He honored God perfectly, died for sin, and rose again, God exalted Him above every King. Jesus now sits at the Father's right hand, reigning over the world as King. That means two things:

- 1) If the greatest desire of your heart is to be in control of your own life, to live your own way (as the nations and kings did before you), you will not honor the King. If you don't honor the King, He will be mad, and you will be destroyed.
- 2) But if you honor the King, if you come to Him for salvation as the only One who can offer it, you will be welcomed into His kingdom and you will have eternal joy!

Today, honor Jesus — look to Him for salvation, turn from your sin, and submit to His authority — for He reigns as God's chosen King.

Pray

Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)

Children's Church — John 1:35-51

Preparation

Materials:

- Print optical illusions
- Two levels of word searches to emphasize main point.
- Jesus on throne coloring page

Set-up:

- No additional set-up required

Bible Verse (5-10 minutes)

Romans 1:16 (ESV) – “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

Memorization — Have the students repeat the Bible verse with hand motions 2-3 times.

Song — Have the students sing “Not Ashamed” (Seeds Family Worship, ESV) at least once.

NOTE — Starting with the Bible verse in Children’s Church will help the children get some movement in before the lesson starts.

Lesson (20-25 minutes)

Main Idea – Jesus reigns as God’s chosen King.

Pray

Introduction (5 minutes)

This morning in Sunday school, we learned something very important: God’s chosen King will reign. The world has seen many bad kings, but one day, God would send a perfect King to rule for Him over all the earth.

We learned some very specific things from Psalm 2 about this chosen King:

First, this chosen King was referred to as “God’s anointed.” The Old Testament word for God’s anointed servant is “Messiah!” So when Israel was looking for the Messiah to come, they were talking about God’s anointed One, the true King of Israel!

Second, this chosen King would also have a unique relationship with God. This King would be God’s very own Son!

Israel really wanted to see this King! So Israel looked for years for God’s chosen King — The Messiah, the Son of God.

But before we join our search, we have an opening activity.

Body (15 minutes)

Opening activity — “What do you see?” One at a time, hold up one of the three optical illusions (Duck/Rabbit, Young woman/Old woman, Musician/woman). Ask the children what they see?

At the end of the exercise, ask the children, “Why do people looking at the same picture see different things?” The reason is that we all have different perspectives that give us the ability to see different things.

Today, we are going to learn about two Israelites who finally saw what the Jews had been seeking for hundreds of years!

While I read the passage, you have an important responsibility — Every time you hear a word about “seeing/looking”, you must stand up. If you are already standing, you must sit down. You have to listen very carefully so that you’ll know when to stand/sit.

Read John 1:35-51 (In the NLT, the words ‘seeing/looking’ appear 11 times, so the students will stand 6 times and sit 5 times).

Let’s see what the two men saw.

First, Andrew saw the Messiah — We know that Andrew and the Jews were looking for the Messiah, because he tells Peter, “We have *found* the Messiah!” How did Andrew know that Jesus was the Messiah?

Andrew *saw* the man that John the Baptist pointed out. Jesus told Andrew to come and *see* where He was staying. And after spending the day with Jesus, Andrew *saw* that He was the Messiah.

In his excitement, Andrew runs to tell Peter!

If you were a Jew, how exciting would it be to believe that you found the Messiah? It would be really exciting. Andrew was very excited.

But not everyone wanted to believe that Jesus was the Messiah. That brings us to the second point.

Second, Nathanael saw the Son of God and the King of Israel.

Philip goes to tell Nathanael — you know the prophet that Moses told us to look for? We have found Him, and His name is Jesus from Nazareth.

Nathanael knew his Old Testament. He knew that a prophet like Moses would come, but there wasn't anything written about the Messiah being from Nazareth. That made it hard for Nathanael to believe!

How did Philip tell Nathanael to respond to his message? — Come and see for yourself! Don't believe my words only, but come hear His words for yourself. Come see this man!

When Nathanael comes to Jesus, Jesus already knows who he is. That is surprising to Nathanael. He asks Jesus, “How do you know me? We've never met!”

Jesus says, “Before Philip told you to come and *see* me, I *saw* you under the fig tree.” This was amazing! Nathanael was probably alone under the fig tree, with no one around. Nathanael must have thought, “The only person who could have possibly seen me under the fig tree is God!” As he thinks about it, he sees that Jesus must be God, with the ability to see everything!

But Nathanael also knew that Jesus couldn't be God the Father. Why couldn't Jesus be the Father? Because the Old Testament says that God is not a man, He doesn't have a body, He is spirit.

This causes Nathanael to understand that Jesus is not God the Father, but the Son of God — God in the flesh, the true King of Israel! After hearing Jesus words, Nathanael believed.

Jesus does not correct Nathanael — what Nathanael said is true. Jesus is the Son of God, the King of Israel. Jesus also has good news for Nathanael — You have so much more to see! Your journey has just begun! You will see me reign as God's chosen King!

Conclusion (5 minutes)

Here is the main point — Jesus reigns as God's chosen King. He is the Messiah, the Son of God, the King of Israel.

Here is an important question — **Do you see Jesus reigning as King?** No, the world looks bad. We have sinful leaders ruling sinful nations. Jesus is not physically reigning as God's chosen King on the earth — that day will come.

But Jesus does reign on the earth today — **How can we see Jesus reigning as King on earth today?** We see it in the lives of the people that He has changed. Jesus reigns in the hearts of those who believe in Him, and the evidence is seen in how they live. When someone asks for forgiveness, when they share with others, when they endure persecution, it reveals to the world that Jesus is reigning in their heart.

Today, Jesus reigns as God's chosen King. This is the good news of the gospel — 1 Corinthians 15:3-4 (This is a great place to have the children stand up, review the Bible Verse for the month, and hear the final exhortation on their feet before moving to the activity table).

Believe the good news of the gospel and show the world that Jesus is the King who reigns in your heart and who is coming again to reign on the earth.

Pray

Lesson Activities (20-25 minutes)