MAIN POINT: Jesus, King of the Jews, is worthy of our worship.

BIBLE VERSE: Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him. Matthew 2:2

BIBLE STORY: The Wise Men Visit Jesus, Matthew 2:1-12

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE TEACHING:

The title, King of the Jews, was used as a military or political type title by the Jewish people. It referred to a leader over the Jewish people, not a divine king who would be worshipped.

Today we understand that the King of the Jews was not a political leader but a leader who would show the way to true salvation. We must decide if indeed He is king of our lives, and if so, give him the worship that He deserves.

Kids will learn that Jesus is a king who is worthy of their praise and their worship.

THIS LESSON CONTAINS:

Preparation:
- O Christmas Tree Trivia
- Francois and Frank
- What’s Under the Tree
- Unwrapping the Verse

The Work:
- Christmas Bible Story
- Funky Christmas Tree
- Christmas Tree Art

Display:
- The Christmas Tree Studio
- Ornament Craft
- Game
- Bible Memory
- Express Yourself
- Snack
- The Gallery Cards
- Family Guide
O CHRISTMAS TREE TRIVIA

Each slide will present a question with multiple choice answers. Kids guess which answer is correct. This can be done by show of hands, shouting an answer, clapping or any other fun sound or movement.

Trivia Question #1
Country that gives a Christmas tree to Westminster, England as a thank you for Britain’s help during World War II.

A. France
B. United States
C. Norway

Answer: Norway

Trivia Question #2
This country’s Christmas tree is not a pine tree, but rather an oil palm tree that is decorated with bells.

A. Japan
B. India
C. Liberia

Answer: Liberia

Trivia Question #3
Country that in addition to the family Christmas tree traditions it is not unusual to put up a “tree” for the birds also. Large sheaths of grain are attached to a tall pole for their Christmas feast.

A. Mexico
B. Sweden
C. Canada

Answer: Sweden
Trivia Question #4
Country where decorating a Christmas tree is said to have started.

A. Germany  
B. Italy  
C. England

Answer: Germany

Trivia Question #5
Country where Christmas trees are decorated with dazzling baubles, ribbons and nesting dolls.

A. South Africa  
B. Peru  
C. Russia

Answer: Russia

FRANCOIS AND FRANK

Supplies: Christmas tree (decorated from previous weeks), crown, “dress” clothes for Francois and Frank

Preparation: Place the crown at the foot of the tree.

Francois is circling the tree putting the final touches on it. Frank enters looking uncomfortable. He pulls at his clothes not used to wearing dress clothing. Francois sees him and goes over to him.


Frank: If you say so. I do not usually dress this way. (Pulls at clothes again.) But I felt it was important for your occasion.

Francois: (Shakes Frank’s hand.) Frank, you are not only a wonderful assistant but a true friend.

Frank: I am not your assistant.

Francois: Oh, but you are.

Frank: (Shakes his head.) I am a Christmas tree farmer.
Francois: (Ignores him and turns to the audience.) Ladies and gentlemen. I am so pleased to have you here for the opening night of our new gallery exhibit: Christmas Tree Lane. As you wander about the gallery tonight I hope that you will be dazzled with the beautiful Christmas trees you will encounter. We have a special guest with us tonight, Frank of Frank’s Christmas Tree Farm. He has used his talents in growing all the trees you see tonight. And he is my trusted assistant. (Frank starts to say something and then stops.) He will be placing the tree topper on top of our tree to mark the opening of the gallery.

Francois hands Frank the crown and he places it at the top of the tree. Francois claps.

Francois: Thank you Frank for this moving moment. Perhaps you are wondering why we chose to put a crown on top of the tree instead of an angel or a star. The crown acknowledges that we understand that Christmas is about a king that was born one night long ago and that this king is above all things. You may now enter the gallery.

Francois turns to Frank for a private conversation.

Frank: Well said Francois. Well said. And thank you for not making me stand and wear that crown.

Francois: Oh! I did have a hard time choosing the crown and if you would have only been here... it would have been much easier. Maybe we should change the crown. Perhaps I should have you stand here and try on crowns until we find the right one.

Frank: Merry Christmas Francois. I shall see you next year when I deliver your new shipment of trees. (Frank departs.)

Francois: That crazy assistant of mine. He just does not stay long anywhere.

WHAT’S UNDER THE TREE [PP]

Supplies: For the display-crown, King of the Jews sign
Preparation: Print King of the Jews sign. Fold it into a tent sign. Practice toggling Powerpoint slides back and forth to reveal gifts.
Under the Christmas tree there are gifts. One of the gifts contains the symbol that we will use to help us remember the name of Jesus we are learning today. As each gift is opened, see if you can decide if this might be a symbol for the name of Jesus.

(Have all the kids work together, divide into teams or choose two people to compete.)

Which one do you think is the symbol that represents Jesus’ name King of the Jews? (Give the kids some opportunities to guess.)

It is the crown with the star behind it. King wore crowns, of course. The star behind it represents that a star was over the place where Jesus was born. The Jewish people had awaited this king for sometime. However, it was people from another place who saw the star and recognized that this baby was the King of the Jews.

Jesus, King of the Jews, is worthy of our worship.

Options:
Display: Place the crown and the King of the Jews sign in the display.

No Power Point: If you do not have access to power point, put the crown in a gift wrapped box and have the kids guess what might be in the box giving clues.

UNWRAPPING THE VERSE

Read Matthew 2:2 together:

Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.

Let’s say the verse again with some motions to help us remember it.

Where is he (Look around and shrug shoulders.)
Who has been born (Rock baby in arms.)
King of the Jews? (Place imaginary crown on head.)
For we saw (Put hands up like binoculars over eyes.)
His star when it rose (Point off to the side with arm extended and bring up to point at a star.)
And have come to worship him. (Place hands together and bow.)
THE WORK

CHRISTMAS BIBLE STORY

The Wise Men Visit Jesus
Matthew 2:1-12

Supplies: Nativity set (with wise men), three gifts, crown

What is a tradition? (Give kids an opportunity to answer.) The definition of tradition is “A long-established custom or belief that has been passed on in this way.” Custom might be something that you always do such as having birthday cake on your birthday. A belief passed down might be something your family thinks such as going to the doctor when you are hurt is a good thing.

What are some traditions your family has? (Allow a few kids to share their traditions.)

Sometimes traditions that people believe about Bible stories are not true. There are some traditions that people believe in the story we are going to tell today that are not true or we do not have enough information in the Bible to know whether they are true or not.

Let’s see if we can guess what these traditions might be before we read our story.

The first one has to do with this nativity scene. It is traditional to put some people in here that do not belong. Who do you think does not belong here? (Give kids an opportunity to guess.) The wise men do not belong. Actually, by the time they traveled to Bethlehem to see Jesus, He was about two years old and the family was probably living in a house. (If you want to bring it up, there are two other traditions that are not accurate in the nativity scene. Often, it looks like a barn, however, while the family was in a place where animals were kept it was more likely a cave, a room in the back of the house or underneath a house. Also, the angel visited the shepherds in the fields not where Mary and Joseph were with baby Jesus.)

The second tradition has to do with these three gifts. Does anyone know a tradition having to do with the number three? The Bible never tells us that there were three wise men. One of the Christmas carols we might sing is “We Three Kings.” However, the only thing we know is that there were three gifts.
Finally the last tradition has to do with the crown. This tradition is not one we believe today but one that the Jewish people believed. They knew that a Savior was promised. They believed he would be a great ruler who would free them from the rule of Rome. However, Jesus was a different kind of king. He came to free people from their sins.

Let’s read the story from the Bible. It is in Matthew 2:1-12.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

Remember that the Jewish people thought the king would be a powerful political leader.

“When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.”

King Herod wanted to know the prophecy that had been written about Jesus. That means what the prophets had written a long time before that.

“They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: “‘And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.’”

This must have made King Herod nervous. Here the wise men were telling him that the king of the Jews had been born and the prophets had said he would come from Bethlehem.

“Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.”

Do you think King Herod really wanted to worship this child who was called king of the Jews?

“After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.”
The wise men worshiped Jesus but not as the Savior but as a king. They brought gifts fitting a king. They treated him like a king. However, He was a different king than they thought.

“And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.”

God used a dream to warn them not to go back to King Herod.

Jesus was called the King of the Jews. He was their promised King. Eventually people would learn that He is not just King of the Jews but King over all of us. Jesus, as the King, is worthy of all our worship.

PRAYER

Play or sing a worship song. Encourage the kids to focus on Jesus and worshiping Him. At the end of the song, lead the kids in a prayer praising God for Jesus and for the King, the Savior, the Horn of Salvation and Immanuel.

FUNKY CHRISTMAS TREE: DIAMOND TREE

Supplies: Powerpoint or printed picture of the world’s most expensive Christmas tree

I have a picture of a funky Christmas tree. Are you ready to see it?

Who would like to have a tree that looks like this? This tree is the world’s most expensive tree. Can you tell from what the tree is made? Diamonds. In fact it has almost 22,000 diamonds on it plus crystal beads and lights. It is worth a little over a million dollars.

This tree was made in a country called Singapore. Why do you think someone would make a Christmas tree out of diamonds? Why would they spend so much on a tree? The person who made it is a jeweler so he spends his life working with fine jewels like diamonds.
The tree reminds me that people will often put their money and time into treasures that really do not matter. They can end up worshiping the things that money can buy. Does that mean that they literally bow down before money or their possessions? No, but it does mean that they have put those things above Jesus. Anything that we treat as more important than Jesus is a thing that we worship.

What types of things do you think kid’s worship? (Give the kids an opportunity to answer.) Why do those things become so important to kids? We need to be careful that we do not put too much importance on our things or our activities. We need to always make sure that we are spending time worshiping Jesus. What are ways that we worship Him? (Give kids a chance to list some ways. Include prayer, singing, solitude, journaling, reading Scripture, Bible study, going to church, giving offering, appreciating nature, talking to others about Jesus)

Let’s say our Bible verse today to remember what the wise men said about who Jesus is. “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” Matthew 2:2

Let’s remember that Jesus, the King of the Jews, is worthy of our worship.

CHRISTMAS TREE ART: GIFT OF WORSHIP TREE

Supplies: poster board, glue, 6-8 boxes of decreasing size, different colored wrapping paper, crown, marker
Preparation: Wrap the boxes. On the largest box, write “WORSHIP” on the side.

Jesus is King of the Jews. He is not the king that the Jewish people expected. He did not come to earth to rule their land and set them free from the Roman rule. Instead, He came to earth to set them free from sin.

As king, Jesus is worthy of our worship. He is not just an earthly king but God coming down to us.

Place the largest box on the ground or a table.

What are some ways we worship? (Have the kids answer and write their answers on the sides of the boxes. Place the boxes in decreasing order one on each other until the smallest is at the top. Place the crown on top.)

This Christmas tree shows the different ways we worship the King. Each of these ways draws people closer to Him and glorifies Him. Some people tend to sing more than others. Some enjoy writing prayers to God. Others enjoy going for walks and seeing what He has created. Just as God made each of us different and special, we all have ways that we worship that might be a bit different than someone else’s way. For instance, the kind of
**DISPLAY**

**CHRISTMAS TREE STUDIO**

Divide the kids into small groups and let them work together to create a tree. Different options for trees are listed below. Consider allowing each group to make a different kind of tree. When completed, display the trees in the room or hallway. Each week more trees will be added to your “Christmas Tree Lane.”

Most trees will need a canvas board, foam core board or poster board.

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**-CHALKBOARD TREE**

**Supplies:** Chalkboard paint, paintbrush, white chalk

**Preparation:** Paint the entire board with chalkboard paint. Use the white chalk to draw a Christmas tree.

Fill in the tree with words of worship for the King. Draw a crown on top of the tree.

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**-STAR TREE**

**Supplies:** Yellow paper, green paper, scissors, glue

Cut a tree from the green paper. Glue onto the board. Cut individual stars for each child. Write words of praise on the stars. Glue to the tree.

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**-GIFT TREE**

**Supplies:** Small boxes, wrapping paper, tape, scissors, markers

Wrap the small boxes. Glue on the board in the shape of a tree. Write the Bible verse on the boxes with one word or phrase on each box.
-PAPER STRIPS TREE

Supplies: Green paper, scissors, glue, markers, gold shiny paper, gold sticker stars

Cut strips of green paper. Write words on the strips to describe Jesus. Glue the strips on the board overlapping one another in the shape of a tree. Make the tree large enough that the strips of paper look like branches reaching off the board. Cut a crown out of the gold paper and place it at the top of the tree. Place gold stars among the branches of the tree.

-JEWEL AND GOLD TREE

Supplies: Stick on jewels, gold ribbon/piping, old costume jewelry, Tacky glue

Lightly sketch the outline of a Christmas tree. Fill in the tree with jewels and pieces of old costume jewelry. Run ribbon around the tree. Glue all in place. Add a piece of gold ribbon to the bottom of the board with the words “WORSHIP THE KING” written on it.

ORNAMENT CRAFT: CROWN

Supplies: Empty paper towel rolls, gold spray paint, stick on jewels, gold string, scissors, hole punch

Preparation: Cut the paper towel roll into 2 inch circles. Punch a hole in the circle. Spray paint gold.

Decorate the crowns using the jewels. Make some jewels overlap the top of the crown to make a jagged effect on the top. Cut a piece of gold string. Thread it through the hole and tie together forming a loop to hang the ornament.

GAME: TREE DECORATING

Supplies: Red and green paper streamers, gold paper, colored paper, masking tape, scissors

Divide the kids into teams. Each team chooses one person to be the tree. Give the teams a time limit during which they should decorate the tree using the items given them. Make a crown to put on the top of the tree. Take pictures of the completed trees.
Review what it means that Jesus is the King of the Jews. What does it mean to worship Him? (Discuss how we can make it all about us instead of all about Him.)

**BIBLE MEMORY ACTIVITY: VERSE TREE**

Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him. Matthew 2:2

**Supplies:** Paper, markers

**Preparation:** Lightly draw a triangle on the paper with a pencil.

Write the words to the verse in order inside the triangle, making a Christmas tree with the words. Use different colors and decoration. Place a star on top of the tree.

**EXPRESS YOURSELF**

**Supplies:** Copy of questions for each small group

1. What does it mean that Jesus is the King of the Jews?
2. What kind of king was expected by the Jewish people? Is Jesus that kind of king? Why or why not?
3. How do we make Jesus king of our life?
4. Can you think of an example of a time when you had to make a choice whether Jesus would be king of your life or not?
5. What does it mean to worship the King?
6. What can tempt kids to worship things or activities instead of Jesus?
SNACK: KING’S CROWN

Supplies: Graham crackers, triangular crackers, fruit snacks, plate

Place the graham cracker on the plate. Make the zig zag pattern on top of the crown using triangular crackers. Decorate the crown with the fruit snacks (jewels.)

Review what the name King of the Jews means.

GALLERY CARDS

Supplies: Printed card for each child, markers or crayons (optional)

Name: King of the Jews
Symbol: Crown with a star
Verse: Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him. Matthew 2:2

Give each child the card. If using the coloring cards, use markers or crayons to decorate them. Go over the verse together and review the symbol.
SUPPLY LIST

FRANCOIS AND FRANK: ☐Christmas tree ☐Crown ☐Dress Clothes

WHAT’S UNDER THE TREE: ☐For the display-Crown ☐King of Jews sign

CHRISTMAS BIBLE STORY: ☐Nativity set (with wise men) ☐3 Gifts ☐Crown

FUNKY CHRISTMAS TREE: ☐Powerpoint or printed picture of diamond Christmas tree

CHRISTMAS TREE ART: ☐6-8 boxes of decreasing size ☐Wrapping paper ☐Crown ☐Marker

CHALKBOARD TREE: ☐Chalkboard paint ☐Paintbrush ☐White chalk

STAR TREE: ☐Yellow paper ☐Green paper ☐Scissors ☐Glue

GIFT TREE: ☐Small boxes ☐Wrapping paper ☐Tape ☐Scissors ☐Markers

PAPER STRIPS TREE: ☐Green paper ☐Scissors ☐Glue ☐Markers ☐Gold shiny paper ☐Gold sticker

JEWEL AND GOLD TREE: ☐Stick on jewels ☐Gold ribbon/piping ☐Old costume jewelry ☐Tacky glue

ORNAMENT CRAFT: ☐Empty paper towel rolls ☐Gold spray paint ☐Stick on jewels ☐Gold string
☐Scissors ☐Hole punch

GAME: ☐Red and green paper streamers ☐Gold paper ☐Colored paper ☐Masking tape ☐Scissors

BIBLE MEMORY ACTIVITY: ☐Paper ☐Markers

EXPRESS YOURSELF: ☐Copy of questions for each small group

SNACK: ☐Graham crackers ☐Triangular crackers ☐Fruit snacks ☐Plate

GALLERY CARDS: ☐Printed card for each child ☐Markers or crayons
Family Imaginative Thinking:
Have the child(ren) of the family design a worship time for the family. Consider prayers, songs, art, talking to one another, nature, Bible reading or service projects as possible ways to worship. Take time one evening this week to participate in the worship time.

Family Christmas Cooking: Crown Cookies
Ingredients: Roll of sugar cookie dough, frosting, jewel shaped candies

Roll out dough. Cut out crown shapes with a knife or cookie cutter. Bake according to directions. Frost and decorate with candies.

Family Discussion:
Read Matthew 2:1-12 together.

1. What kind of king do you think the wise men were looking for? What kind of king do you think Herod was looking for?

2. What kind of king is Jesus? How is He different from what people were looking for?

3. What are some ways you can worship Jesus? When do you feel especially close to Him?

4. What could you do as a family to make worship more important in your home?

MAIN POINT: Jesus, King of the Jews, is worthy of our worship.

BIBLE VERSE: Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him. Matthew 2:2

BIBLE STORY: The Wise Men Visit Jesus, Matthew 2:1-12
EXPRESS YOURSELF

1. What does it mean that Jesus is the King of the Jews?

2. What kind of king was expected by the Jewish people? Is Jesus that kind of king? Why or why not?

3. How do we make Jesus king of our life?

4. Can you think of an example of a time when you had to make a choice whether Jesus would be king of your life or not?

5. What does it mean to worship the King?

6. What can tempt kids to worship things or activities instead of Jesus?
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