



Date: _____
Series: Jesus Now...
Spring Year 1, Lesson 50

Ascension— Jesus Reigns in Heaven

Take Home Point: *Jesus ascended and now rules and intercedes for us. *Repeat this phrase throughout the lesson.

Bible Event: Acts 1:3-11; Colossians 3:1-4; Hebrews 7:24-25; Revelation 22:3

Key Verses: Hebrews 7:25b, "...he is always able to save those who come to God through him. He can do this because he always lives and intercedes for them."

We will help kids know:

- Jesus ascended into heaven after 40 days of appearing on earth after his resurrection. He rules now in heavenly authority.
- Jesus also now intercedes for us before the Father.
- We have special authority as we call upon his name in prayer as if Jesus were praying for us.




We will help kids feel:

- Confident because Jesus not only rules over their lives, he intercedes for them to his father.
- Challenged to live out their faith in obedience to Christ's rule in their life.

We will help kids do:

- Imagine what orders they would give if they were king of the world.
- Use their imaginations to see themselves sitting beside Christ who rules in heaven.
- Make a crown that will serve as a prayer list. They will pray for an extended time in small group.

THIS LESSON'S ROADMAP

| DESTINATION | PAGE # | DISCOVERIES ON YOUR JOURNEY | SUPPLIES NEEDED |
|---|--|---|--|
| Small Group Warm-Up  | 3 | Kids talk about Jesus as the ruler of the world right now. He's not just ruling over the earth, but over heaven and people's hearts. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a paper crown – (p. 12) <i>Option:</i> Burger King crown |
| Large Group  | 4 7 8 9 10 | Overview Reading the Bible: Act 1:3-11. Kids read portions of the Bible passage. Christ Candle Object Lesson – Jesus is the light of the world. A Picture of Heaven – Illustrations from scripture are given to show Jesus ruling and reigning now. Wrap up Story -- Story of Tad Lincoln, son of Abraham Lincoln | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> two volunteer readers a Christ Candle incense to burn crown placed on top of stool stool placed on a table before large group begins quiet contemplative music for the background |
| Small Group Application  | 4 | Kids discuss Jesus ruling now in heaven and interceding for us. They make paper crowns and write prayer requests on them as a visual reminder of this. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> construction paper for paper crown making crown pattern (p. 12) scissors tape, staplers or glue sticks pencils and/or pens for writing prayer requests |

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Small Group Warm-Up: 15 minutes



Purpose: *Get pointed in the right direction!* Build relationships and help guests feel at ease. Do the learning readiness activity that will point your group in the right direction for the lesson.

As kids gather: Listen to memory verses from last week and give coupons for memory verses, remembering to bring your Bible, and bringing a guest.

Needed: sample of the crown to be made in small group application. Option: Burger King crown

Pass the crown and have kids take turns wearing it as they share their ideas to the following scenario.

Let's pretend that the entire world is subject to one earthly king. This king or ruler can give any order and people have to do it. However, there are certain orders a king cannot force someone to do. For example, you cannot force anyone to love someone else. And just because you're an earthly king, it doesn't mean you can give an order and make miracles happen. But there are a lot of things you can do if you are king. Pretend you are this king. What are some ideas? What silly orders would you give if you were ruler of the world?

What kind of orders would you give to try and help people?

Pass crown around again as kids share ideas.

Can you think of any orders you might give that would help people know and love God?

Take answers. After discussion, continue.

If you could, in real life, would you like or not like to be ruler of the world? Why or why not?

Today, we will talk about how Jesus is the ruler of the world right now. He's not just ruling over the earth, but over heaven and people's hearts. What's interesting is that we can picture ourselves right there with him, connected to him. He not only rules over us, but he rules through us. Every prayer request we send to God, Jesus himself intercedes for on our behalf. We'll discover more about how
**Jesus ascended and now rules and intercedes for us.*

Large Group Overview: : 20-30 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids observe what the Bible says. Present the Bible event in creative fashion. Help kids begin to interpret what it means.*

Reading the Bible: Act 1:3-11. Kids read portions of the Bible passage.

Christ Candle Object Lesson – Jesus is the light of the world.

A Picture of Heaven – Illustrations from scripture are given to show Jesus ruling and reigning now.

Wrap up Story-- Story of Tad Lincoln, son of Abraham Lincoln

Small Group Application: 20-25 minutes



Purpose: *Help kids map out the meaning of the Bible event in their lives. Use the questions to stimulate discussion, but don't feel tied to them. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide you. Include personal examples from your own faith journey. The example of Christ at work in your life will leave lasting impressions of how Christ can work in the children's lives.*

Use your Bibles! Children need to learn how to look up references and follow along when scripture is read aloud. Allow for quality time of prayer at the close of the lesson. Our process of learning to use the Bible involves three types of questions. Observation Questions ask, "What happened?" Or, "What does it say?" Interpretation Questions ask, "What does this mean?" Finally, Application Questions ask, "What does this mean to me?" This question helps the student discover how to best apply it to his or her life.

For this lesson, these questions are grouped around the Bible verses being examined so that the questions follow a logical progression of thought.

Observation and Interpretation Questions What happened?/ What does this mean?

Read Acts 1:8-11.

Jesus promised his followers that they would receive power when the Holy Spirit came to them. What would that power help them do?
(Testify about Jesus throughout the world.)

Describe how Jesus left the earth. *(He ascended. He rose up into heaven and a cloud hid him.)*

Why do you think Jesus didn't just stay here on earth and set up an earthly kingdom so that people would follow him? *(Discuss and point out that Jesus gave us the power to testify about him, so that we can continue his work here on earth. He went to heaven to prepare a place for us to live forever in his heavenly kingdom.)*

Do you think it would be easier to convince someone of the importance of knowing Jesus if he was ruling from an earthly throne or a heavenly throne? Interesting discussion question. Let them talk.

Read Matthew 6:10, part of the Lord's Prayer.

What does it mean to pray, "Let your kingdom come. Let your will be done on earth as it is done in heaven"? *(When people obey and follow him here, they are living for him and are a part of his kingdom here on earth.)*

Read Colossians 3:1-2.

Where does Christ hold the highest position? *(He holds it above, in heaven.)*

Where should we keep our minds? *(Our minds should be kept on things above, not on worldly things.)*

How are our lives hidden in Christ? *(When we believe through faith we become united with Jesus.)*

Application Questions: What does this mean to me?

If you are having a hard time at school, say for example, you had an argument with a friend, how might it help you to stop and think about Jesus ruling in heaven? *(We can talk to Jesus about our problems and try to solve it the way Jesus would want us to since Jesus is in heaven to rule over us.)*

Read Hebrews 7:24.

"But Jesus lives forever, so he serves as a priest forever." Remember that a priest intercedes or goes before God for us. **How does Jesus intercede for us?** *(Jesus hears our prayers and presents our prayers and needs to the Father who wants to grant his requests.)*

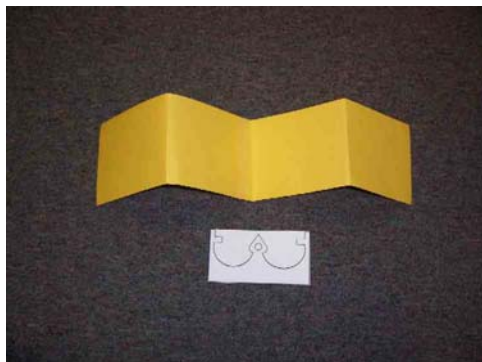
How is this like the story of Tad Lincoln, Abraham Lincoln's son?

Application Activity:

Supplies:

- construction paper for paper crown making
- crown pattern
- scissors
- tape, staplers or glue sticks
- pencils and/or pens

Give each child a sheet of construction paper. Have them cut it down the middle so they have two sections about 4½ x11-inches. Tape these end-to-end so that you have one long strip. Fold this accordion style in six-inch sections so that you end up with a fold that is approximately 5½ x4½ -inches. Like a paper doll, trace the crown pattern and cut design so that it contains a cross.



While kids are making crowns, have them think of special prayer requests. After making crowns, discuss the following.

In Warm-Up, we thought of some things we would do if we were rulers of the world. Can we now ask God to do some of those things through Jesus? After all, **Jesus ascended and now rules and intercedes for us.*

As the children talk about their requests, help them be more specific. For example:

What are some things we could specifically pray for today that would really help people you know? How is this like praying God's kingdom would come?

Have kids write some of these prayer requests on their crowns.

Hebrews 7:25b, "...he is always able to save those who come to God through him. He can do this because he always lives and intercedes for them."

The cross pattern made on this crown can be a reminder of this.

Since **Jesus ascended and now rules and intercedes for us*, we can have confidence and ask God to do mighty things only God can do.



Closing Prayer:

Have kids pray the specific requests they wrote on their crowns.

Large Group Presentation: 20-30 minutes

Ascension- Jesus Reigns in Heaven

Supplies:

- *a Christ Candle*
- *incense to burn*
- *crown placed on top of stool*
- *stool placed on a table before large group begins*
- *quiet contemplative music as background music*
- *two volunteer readers*

INTRODUCTION

Oftentimes, when we think about Jesus, we might think of what he did throughout his earthly ministry. For example, he performed miracles, taught people and spent time with his disciples. Finally, he died on the cross and completed his number one mission here on earth.

Today we will talk about Jesus' ministry *after* the cross. Last week, we discussed the resurrection. This week we will discuss what happened when he ascended into heaven. We'll see what the Bible says about where he is now and what advantage that is for us. First let's read the Bible.

READING THE BIBLE: Acts 1:3-11

For the reading of this Bible passage, ask for a volunteer to come forward to read the part of Jesus—and another volunteer to read the voice of some angels. Instruct “Jesus” and the “angels” to read the portions that are CAPITALIZED in the text below. (*They can read from their own Bibles, if you point to the volunteer when it is his/her turn to speak.*)

After his death Jesus showed the apostles a lot of convincing evidence that he was alive. For 40 days he appeared to them and talked with them about the kingdom of God.

Once, while he was meeting with them, he ordered them not to leave Jerusalem but to wait there for what the Father had promised. Jesus said to them,

Point to student playing Jesus:

“I’VE TOLD YOU WHAT THE FATHER PROMISES: JOHN BAPTIZED WITH WATER, BUT IN A FEW DAYS YOU WILL BE BAPTIZED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.”

So when the apostles came together, they asked him, ‘Lord, is this the time when you’re going to restore the kingdom to Israel?’ Jesus told them,

Point again to the student playing Jesus:

“YOU DON’T NEED TO KNOW ABOUT TIMES OR PERIODS THAT THE FATHER HAS DETERMINED BY HIS OWN AUTHORITY. BUT YOU WILL RECEIVE POWER WHEN THE HOLY SPIRIT COMES TO YOU. THEN YOU WILL BE MY WITNESSES TO TESTIFY ABOUT ME IN JERUSALEM, THROUGHOUT JUDEA AND SAMARIA, AND TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH.”

After he had said this, he was taken to heaven. A cloud hid him so that they could no longer see him. They were staring into the sky as he departed. Suddenly, two men in white clothes stood near them. They asked,

Point to the student to read the angel part:

“WHY ARE YOU MEN FROM GALILEE STANDING HERE LOOKING AT THE SKY? JESUS WHO WAS TAKEN FROM YOU TO HEAVEN, WILL COME BACK IN THE SAME WAY THAT YOU SAW HIM GO TO HEAVEN.”

CHRIST CANDLE AS AN OBJECT LESSON

Begin playing light instrumental music in the background to create a contemplative mood. Maintain it throughout the following presentation. If possible, dim or turn off (some) of your room lights, as the candle is lit.

Where did Jesus go when he rose up into the clouds that day? So, where is Jesus now?

Light the Christ candle and place it on the table next to the stool that has a crown sitting on it.

Jesus came as the light of the world. He lived among people as a human being, even though he was the Son of God. We demonstrate this as the Christ candle is lit.

But Jesus left his kingly glory in heaven.

Point to crown on the stool.

Otherwise, his heavenly glory would be so bright and awesome that none of us could stand in his presence.

After Jesus died and rose again, his mission on earth was accomplished. He showed himself to his followers for forty days, and then he ascended into heaven.

Set the candle in the middle of the crown on the stool.

He has now assumed his position of heavenly glory.

When Jesus ascended into heaven, the Bible says he disappeared in a cloud so that they could no longer see him. Do you think that cloud was like the ones airplanes go through? Perhaps, but it might have been a special cloud made by God. Remember in the Old Testament the glory of God was often seen as a cloud.

Remember, it was a cloud that led the children of Israel through the wilderness in the daytime. A cloud of smoke filled the temple full of God's glory when Solomon dedicated the temple. This cloud was so wonderful, that the priests could not even stay inside the temple. They had to run out. This cloud is a picture of God's glory. So you can see that Jesus ascended not just into outer space but also to his heavenly kingdom, which is a very real place. He is seated in a position of power in glory, reigning and ruling over all creation.

A PICTURE OF HEAVEN: JESUS RULING

What is Jesus doing now? The Bible gives us a picture of Jesus sitting at the right hand of God the Father. This is the position of authority and honor. It means that right now, Jesus is ruling. He is in his heavenly glory. It says this in Revelation 22:3. *"The throne of God and the Lamb will be in the city,"* that is, in the middle of heaven. From that position, Jesus now rules over all creation. If you know Jesus as your Savior, he is ruling over you and even ruling through you.

PICTURE OF HEAVEN: YOU ARE HIDDEN IN JESUS

Did you know that if you trust Jesus as your Savior, you can picture yourself with Jesus, as well. It says this in Colossians 3:1-2, *"Since you were brought back to life with Christ..."* What does that mean—that we were brought back to life with Christ? We haven't died yet, have we? Can anyone explain what that means?

Take some answers. (*This does not refer to physical death and physical life, it is talking about spiritual life. When we are in faith with Christ, we are brought to life spiritually.*)

Continue reading the verse.

“Since you were brought back to life with Christ, focus on the things that are above—where Christ holds the highest position.”

Kids, close your eyes and picture Jesus ruling over all creation. The Bible then says,

“Keep your mind on things above, not on worldly things. You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.”

Picture yourself right there with Jesus while he is reigning. You are connected to him through faith. He is reigning over you and through you. That’s the picture he wants you to have.

PICTURE OF HEAVEN: JESUS INTERCEDING FOR US

Light the incense and say:

There is one other thing Jesus is doing for us while he is heaven. He is interceding. That means he is representing us to the heavenly Father. This happens when we pray in the name of Jesus. He hears our prayers and requests them of his Heavenly Father, *“For my sake, answer this prayer.”* This is what it says in Hebrews 7:24-25.

When you hear the word “priest” think of this definition: A bridge builder or a go-between person. Verse 24 says, *“But Jesus lives forever, so he serves as a priest forever.”* That is why he is always able to save those who come to God through him. Jesus can do this because he always lives to intercede for us. And God, the Father, loves to give his beloved Son whatever he asks.

I light this incense to remind us that priests in the Old Testament would light incense showing the people their prayers went up to God like a sweet aroma. Jesus is like our priest in heaven and his prayers go to his father in our behalf. Anything we ask in Jesus’ name, Jesus, himself, intercedes for us.

WRAP UP STORY

Tad Lincoln was the son of the famous American president, Abraham Lincoln. Often he was free to enter the room where his father

conducted business as president of the United States. On one such occasion, a group of soldiers appeared before the president. One of their fellow soldiers had fallen asleep during his watch at night. He was supposed to stay awake and watch for the enemy. It was a serious crime and was punishable by death if a guard was found sleeping. This soldier had been sentenced to face a firing squad. These soldiers now appealed to President Lincoln to spare the soldier's life.

However, the President knew that if he excused such an action, it might hurt the attitude of all soldiers who had to abide by this important rule. So the president said that the punishment must be carried out. As the group sadly turned away to leave, little Tad Lincoln stepped forward. He scooted up to his father's lap and said, "Please, father, for my sake, don't let them shoot that poor soldier!" The President felt he must say "yes" to his small son's request. He changed the decision and spared the soldier's life.

Closing Prayer:

Dear Jesus, thank you that you ascended and now rule to intercede for us. In our small group time, help us to see ourselves right next to you—the one who is ruling and reigning in heaven—because our life is hidden in yours. When we pray in your name, help us to see how you voice our prayers before the Father. You intercede for us and we are thankful for you doing this. In Jesus' name, Amen.

