



## **Week 2: The Servant King**

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## KING OF KINGS

### Week 2: The Servant King

**Bible:** Matthew 26 & 27, Hebrews 2:17–18

**Bottom Line:** Jesus suffered and died so that God's plan could be accomplished.

## OPENING GAME

*\*Each week of the Easter series will have an opening game that is strictly for fun and relationship building. Many visitors will be present, so the Eggstravaganza games are to get them engaged with the group.\**

### 1. Pass the Egg

**Supplies:** plastic egg for every student, slips of paper with each color of eggs (blue, green, yellow, etc.), slips of paper with activities, 2 baskets or bowls

Before the activity, write down every color of the eggs you are using on a slip of paper. Fold the slips of paper and place in a basket or bowl. You will also need to create 5 to 10 slips of paper with silly activities. Fold and place these slips of paper in the other bowl. Some activities you might include are: sing "I'm a Little Teapot", do 10 jumping jacks, 15 seconds of freestyle dance, have a staring contest with the person next to you, etc. Think of things that your students will find funny, but don't cross the line to embarrass or humiliate them.

**How to Play:** students sit in one large circle. If your group is large, you can create several circles. Give each student a plastic egg, and instruct them to pass the eggs to their right when the music starts. When the music stops, draw a slip of paper from each bowl. Call out the color written on the slip of paper and have all students who are holding an egg of that color to stand. Next, read the slip of paper and have those standing do the silly activity. Continue playing until you are ready to move to the next activity.

## TEACH

Welcome back to our series *King of Kings*. Last week, we looked at how Jesus was the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. It was amazing to see how God gave us signs of Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection 700 to 1,000 years before Jesus was even born! Those signs are to help us have faith that Jesus Christ is the Messiah.

Today, we're going to look at the most dramatic and powerful seven days in history. Those seven days were Jesus' last days. For those around Jesus and for the people of Jerusalem, those seven days were extremely confusing.

On the Sunday that Jesus entered Jerusalem, the people lined the streets and shouted, "Hosanna." *Hosanna* means "save us now." The people were convinced that Jesus had come to save them from the Roman Empire. They believed Jesus would raise up a mighty army and overthrow the Roman government.

The people did not understand that Jesus had come as a different type of King. He had come as a Servant-King. He was unlike anything the people had ever seen, and definitely was not what they expected.

Instead of coming to overthrow the Roman rulers and rise to earthly power, Jesus humbled himself and became a servant. He endured suffering and shame, so that we could fully experience the grace of God. You all have heard the stories about how Jesus was arrested, put on trial, and crucified. Have you ever thought of why Jesus went through all that He went through? Why did He have to suffer? Why did He have to die? Jesus understood that it was all a part of God's plan. While in the Garden of Gethsemane, right before Judas betrayed Him with a kiss, Jesus prayed the same prayer two times in a row. His prayer was, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will." (Matthew 26:39)

Jesus knew what He was about to go through, but He chose to be obedient to God. **Jesus suffered and died so that God's plan could be accomplished.**

We often think that we know everything about these famous events, but today we're going to take a fresh look at the last days of Jesus. I want you to see, hear and feel everything Jesus went through to save you from your sin.

Today will be a little different because you will be the teacher. As small groups, you will read a passage of Scripture and work together to answer some questions. I want you to really think through each of the questions because your group will have some time to share what you learned with the rest of the groups.

*Assign a Scripture passage to each group. The stories to be reviewed are: Jesus in Gethsemane (Matthew 26:36–46), Jesus' Arrest (Matthew 26:47–56), Jesus*

*Before the Sanhedrin (Matthew 26:57–68), Jesus & Pilate & the Soldiers (Matthew 27:11–31), and Jesus' Crucifixion & Death (Matthew 27:32–54).*

*Instruct Small Group leaders to use the attached questions to lead the group in discussion. (A copy of these questions appears at the end of the lesson.) They are to read the Scripture passage aloud and then work with students to answer the questions. The first set of questions asks students to share about what they learned, particularly what they learned that they hadn't noticed or known before. The second set of questions focuses on the personal suffering that Jesus willingly submitted to so that He might fulfill God's perfect will. The questions ask the students to try to put themselves in Jesus' place, so that they can see what Jesus saw, hear what He heard, feel what He felt. The last question will help the children use their imaginations to think of what they envisioned the scene would look like in a movie.*

*Allow 20–25 minutes for small groups to work through the Scripture passage and questions. If you have less than 5 small groups, assign multiple passages to groups. Just be sure to give them more time to discuss and think through both passages. Be sure to give them a 5 minute warning, and then call them back to large group to share what they learned from their Scripture passage with the other groups. Limit the share time to 3–5 minutes per group. You may want to guide them by asking them to answer specific questions from their sheet. After all groups have shared, move to the CLOSING section of the lesson.*

## **CLOSING**

These Scriptures passages have helped us to see how much suffering and pain Jesus endured. Think about the sacrifice Jesus made, think about His decision to give up His will to do the will of God the Father. Jesus was submissive to God. Submission means you are willing to give up or sacrifice everything for a cause that is greater than you. Jesus, when He gave Himself to die for our sins, showed us what it meant to be a Servant King. When He was on the cross, you were on His mind. He came to earth to die so that you could have eternal life. This was God's plan to bring you back to a relationship with Him, and Jesus willingly endured pain and agony to make it happen.

**Remember, Jesus suffered and died so that God's plan could be accomplished.**

## **SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

**Discuss the following questions in small groups:**

1. What new things did you learn about the last days of Jesus?
2. What type of king were the people expecting? How was Jesus different?
3. Why was Jesus called a Servant King? How did He serve people?
4. Why did Jesus have to suffer?
5. If Jesus could have called down angels to stop everything He was going through, why do you think He didn't?
6. How does knowing Jesus faced pain and suffering help you to deal with your own pain and suffering?
6. In what ways does God call you to submit to His will?
7. What is one thing you will do differently after studying this lesson?

## Small Group Guide: Questions for Discussion

### Jesus in Gethsemane: Matthew 26: 36–46

#### What did you notice?

1. As you read the passage, did you learn anything new?
2. What was different from the way you thought “it” happened?

Now move to the specific questions below. Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of possible observation questions!

1. What did Jesus’ closest friends do during Jesus’ agony in the garden? How would you feel if your closest friends fell asleep when you needed them the most?
2. What did the garden look like? Where was the garden located? (On the lower slopes of the Mt. of Olives just across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem, which means He could see the torches of the crowd that was coming to arrest Him)
3. What time of day was it? [late in the night, after the Lord’s supper; probably after midnight]
4. The word “gethsemane” means “olive press.” It was a huge stone that pressed the oil out of the olives. Why, then, is Gethsemane an appropriate place for Jesus to have suffered? [because the weight of the sins world was on His shoulders; Luke, the gospel-writer who was a doctor, tells us in Luke 22:44 that “being in anguish, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat was like drops of blood falling to the ground”; this physical condition is very real; doctors call it hematomidrosis, the mingling of blood and sweat under extreme strain or suffering] Jesus knows great suffering lies ahead for Him.
5. What does Jesus mean by “the hour is near”? How do you think Jesus spoke that line? Was He angry? resigned? sad?
6. **Key Question:** What example does Jesus set for us?

#### What was it like for Jesus to face submission to God’s will?

1. **Key Question:** Was submission to God’s will **easy** for Jesus? You might want to read them these verses from Hebrews to remind them that Jesus perfectly understands our sufferings and temptations because He experienced them Himself: “For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God...Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17–18)
2. **Sight:** What sights might he have seen?
3. **Sound:** What sounds might he have heard?
4. **Touch:** Was His body hurting? Why? From what? What could Jesus feel around Him? Rocks? Air? Wind? Cold? Heat? What do you think it might have been like?
5. **Taste:** Would Jesus have tasted anything unusual? (maybe His tears, His blood)
6. **Smell:** What would Jesus have smelled? (blood? the earth or trees in the garden? incense?)
7. **Feelings: Key Question:** What emotions was Jesus experiencing? How might Jesus have felt at this time?

#### What if you were a movie director?

1. Imagine you are a movie director. How would you film this scene?
2. What would you want to emphasize? What do you think is most important to get across to your audience? In other words, what would you want to make sure that the audience saw or heard?

## Small Group Guide: Questions for Discussion

### Jesus' Arrest: Matthew 26: 47 - 56

#### What did you notice?

1. As I read the passage, did you learn anything new?
2. What was different from the way you thought "it" happened?

Now move to the specific questions below. Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of possible observation questions!

1. Where was Jesus when He was betrayed? [in the Garden of Gethsemane] Where was the garden located? (on the lower slopes of the Mt. of Olives just across the Kidron Valley from Jerusalem; **that means He could see the torches of the crowd which were coming to arrest Him**)
2. Notice the text says, "Judas, one of the Twelve." What does that mean? [Judas was one of Jesus' 12 disciples] Why is that information important? [because someone who had been with Jesus day in and day out, someone who knew Him better than most people, betrayed Him] Have you ever been betrayed by someone you thought was a close friend? (Don't let them name names!) How did it feel? How do you think Jesus must have felt?
3. How did Judas betray Jesus? [with a kiss] Why a kiss? [in Jesus' day, a kiss was a common greeting of a close friend, so that makes the kiss even more despicable as a means of betrayal]
4. What was the reaction of one of Jesus' followers? [he cut off the ear of the servant of the high priest] What was Jesus' reaction? [He said, "No more of this!" and healed him] Why did Jesus react in this way?
5. Jesus seems to be very calm. Why do you think He is so calm and willing to submit to the arrest? [answers will vary, but probably a lot had to do with His hours of prayer in the garden]
6. **Key Question:** What example does Jesus set for us?

#### What was it like for Jesus to face submission to God's will?

1. **Key Question:** Was submission to God's will **easy** for Jesus? You might want to read them these verses from Hebrews to remind them that Jesus perfectly understands our sufferings and temptations because He experienced them Himself: "For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God...Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted." (Hebrews 2:17-18)
2. **Sight:** What sounds might he have heard?
3. **Sound:** What sights might he have seen?
4. **Touch:** Was His body hurting? Why? From what? What could Jesus feel around Him? Rocks? Air? Wind? Cold? Heat? What do you think it might have been like?
5. **Taste:** Would Jesus have tasted anything unusual? (maybe His tears, His blood)
6. **Smell:** What would Jesus have smelled? (blood? the earth or trees in the garden? incense?)
7. **Feelings: Key Question:** What emotions was Jesus experiencing? How might Jesus have felt at this time?

#### What if you were a movie director?

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## Small Group Guide: Questions for Discussion

### Jesus Before the Sanhedrin: Matthew 26:57-68

#### What did you notice?

1. As I read the passage, did you learn anything new?
2. What was different from the way you thought “it” happened?

Now move to the specific questions below. Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of possible observation questions!

1. Where was Jesus taken following His arrest? [to Caiaphas and the Sanhedrin] Who was Caiaphas? [the high priest; in other words, the most important religious leader for the Jews]
2. Who followed Jesus? [Peter] But how does he follow Jesus? Proudly? Defending Jesus’ honor? [no, “at a distance”] What do you think about Peter’s behavior? What does his behavior tell you about Peter at that time?
3. What were the chief priests and Sanhedrin looking for at that time? [**false** evidence] What does this information tell you about the character of the priests?
4. Upon Jesus’ confession that He is the Christ, what does the high priest do? [he tears his clothes and accuses Jesus of blasphemy] Does any one know what “blasphemy” means? [cursing God or defiling His name] What might Jesus be thinking at this point?
5. What do these religious leaders do to Jesus? [they spit in His face and hit Him with their fists]
6. Ultimately, they say He is **worthy** for what? [death] How does that comment make you feel? Why?
7. **Key Question:** What example does Jesus set for us?

#### What was it like for Jesus to face submission to God’s will?

1. **Key Question:** Was submission to God’s will **easy** for Jesus? You might want to read them these verses from Hebrews to remind them that Jesus perfectly understands our sufferings and temptations because He experienced them Himself: “For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God...Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted.” (Hebrews 2:17-18)
2. **Sight:** What sounds might he have heard?
3. **Sound:** What sights might he have seen?
4. **Touch:** Was His body hurting? Why? From what? What could Jesus feel around Him? Chains? Crowds? What do you think it might have been like?
5. **Taste:** Would Jesus have tasted anything unusual? (maybe His tears, sweat, blood)
6. **Smell:** What would Jesus have smelled? (the market? incense from the Temple?)
7. **Feelings: Key Question:** What emotions was Jesus experiencing? How might Jesus have felt at this time?

#### What if you were a movie director?

1. Imagine you are a movie director. How would you film this scene?
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## Small Group Guide: Questions for Discussion

### Peter's Denial and Judas Hangs Himself: Matthew 26: 69-75 and 27:1--10

#### What did you notice?

1. As I read the passage, did you learn anything new?
2. What was different from the way you thought "it" happened?

Now move to the specific questions below. Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of possible observation questions!

1. Where was Peter located at the beginning of this passage? (He was in the courtyard outside where Jesus was on trial.)
2. Who was the first person to identify Peter as a follower of Jesus? (A servant girl)
3. How many times did Peter deny knowing Jesus? (3 times)
4. What immediately happened after the third denial of Jesus? (a rooster crowed)
5. What did Peter do? (He wept bitterly.)
6. **Key Question:** Why did Peter deny Jesus? (He was afraid that he too would be arrested and put on trial.)
7. What did Judas do when he realized Jesus had been condemned to be crucified? (He felt remorse and took the 30 pieces of silver he was paid to betray Jesus back to the chief priest.)
8. What did Judas do after returning the silver? (He hung himself.)
9. What did the chief priest and elders do with the money? (They bought a field to bury foreigners.)
10. **Key Question:** What would have been a better action for Judas rather than hanging himself? (He could have prayed to God and asked for forgiveness and then lived to honor Jesus.)
11. **Key Question:** What was it like for Jesus to have two of his disciples turn their backs on him? (He must have been very sad and hurt, but he also realized at this point they didn't really understand that He had not come to overthrow Roman rule of Israel or to establish an earthly kingdom.)
12. Contrast Peter's action after denying Jesus and that of Judas after his betrayal of Jesus. **(Peter felt deep remorse, but he went on living and he was able to later become one of the men who preached the good news of Jesus. Judas was sorry, but he took his own life and was unable to make any positive contributions.)**

#### What if you were a movie director?

1. Imagine you are a movie director. How would you film this scene?
2. What would you want to emphasize? What do you think is most important to get across to your audience?

## Small Group Guide: Questions for Discussion

### Jesus & Pilate & the Soldiers: Matthew 27: 11-31

#### What did you notice?

1. As I read the passage, did you learn anything new?
2. What was different from the way you thought "it" happened?

Now move to the specific questions below. Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of possible observation questions!

1. Where is Jesus then taken? [to Pilate, the Roman governor in the city of Jerusalem]
2. As Pilate continues to question Jesus, what is Jesus' response? [He refuses to answer; He remains silent] Why do you think Jesus made no reply to the charges?
3. What time of year was it? What event was taking place? [the Feast; in other words, Pass-over] You might want to ask them what Passover is. What was the governor's custom? [to release a prisoner] Which prisoner do the people ultimately ask for? [Barabbas] Who was Barabbas? [a notorious (the Greek word suggests "famous" or well-known") prisoner]
4. What warning does Pilate's wife give him? [don't have anything to do with that innocent man] What might this tell us about the wife of Pilate? [many possible answers; she of all the people, including Jesus' own disciples, seems to understand or sense Jesus' innocence; she certainly showed more courage than any of Jesus' friends that day]
5. What is Pilate's reaction to Jesus? [he seems to have a grudging respect for Him]
6. What does Pilate do to take away his responsibility for what happens to Jesus? [he washes his hands] Does this take away Pilate's guilt? There's an old expression that says, "I wash my hands of this matter." It comes from this scene in the Bible. What's the only way we can be free of guilt for our sins?
7. The crowd shouts, "Let His blood be on us and on our children!" What are they actually saying? [that the responsibility for Jesus' death should be theirs and their children's; it's as though they are calling down a curse on their own heads; in their angry mood, they are certainly ignorant about what they are doing]
8. **Key Question:** What example does Jesus set for us?

#### What was it like for Jesus to face submission to God's will?

1. **Key Question:** Was submission to God's will **easy** for Jesus? You might want to read them these verses from Hebrews to remind them that Jesus perfectly understands our sufferings and temptations because He experienced them Himself: "For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God...Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted." (Hebrews 2:17-18)
2. **Sight:** What sounds might he have heard?
3. **Sound:** What sights might he have seen?
4. **Touch:** Was His body hurting? Why? From what?  
What could Jesus feel around Him? Chains? Rods and whips? What do you think it might have been like?
5. **Taste:** Would Jesus have tasted anything unusual? (maybe His tears, His blood)
6. **Smell:** What would Jesus have smelled? (blood? the soldiers? the animals in the market?)
7. **Feelings: Key Question:** What emotions was Jesus experiencing? How might Jesus have felt at this time?

#### What if you were a movie director?

1. Imagine you are a movie director. How would you film this scene?
2. What would you want to emphasize? What do you think is most important to get across to your audience?

## Small Group Guide: Questions for Discussion

### Jesus' Crucifixion & Death: Matthew 27: 32-54

#### What did you notice?

1. As I read the passage, did you learn anything new?
2. What was different from the way you thought "it" happened?

Now move to the specific questions below. Please understand this is not an exhaustive list of possible observation questions!

1. Why do you suppose that the Roman soldiers forced Simon of Cyrene to carry Jesus' cross? [perhaps because at this point Jesus was too weak to carry His own, which was the custom]
2. The text says "after they crucified Him." What is involved in crucifixion?
3. Did the soldiers believe the words on the sign that put above Jesus' head? [no] Why did they put the sign there? [to mock Him and His claims] In what other ways did the people mock Him? [they ask Him to come down from the cross *if* He was the Son of God, etc.]
4. Remind them that this day is Friday: Good Friday. What time of day was Jesus crucified? [around noon] The sixth hour is 12:00 p.m., and the ninth hour is 3:00 p.m.
5. What changes in the physical elements took place? [the sky darkened; later the earth shook, the rocks split, tombs broke open] What do you suppose all this meant or symbolized? [many possible answers; the unnatural things occurring perhaps symbolized the most unnatural act ever committed by humans: the killing of their own Lord and Savior]
6. What does Jesus cry out? How deeply did Jesus feel abandoned by God?
7. How does the death of Jesus affect the centurion and those who were guarding Jesus? [they were terrified; it caused them to proclaim "Surely He was the Son of God; we don't know if they accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior or whether this was just an acknowledgment that Jesus was very special]
8. **Key Question:** What example does Jesus set for us?

#### What was it like for Jesus to face submission to God's will?

1. **Key Question:** Was submission to God's will **easy** for Jesus? You might want to read them these verses from Hebrews to remind them that Jesus perfectly understands our sufferings and temptations because He experienced them Himself: "For this reason He had to be made like His brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God...Because He Himself suffered when He was tempted, He is able to help those who are being tempted." (Hebrews 2:17-18)
2. **Sight:** What sounds might he have heard?
3. **Sound:** What sights might he have seen?
4. **Touch:** Was His body hurting? Why? From what?  
What could Jesus feel around Him? Wooden cross? Nails? What do you think it might have been like?
5. **Taste:** Would Jesus have tasted anything unusual? (maybe His tears, His blood, vinegar)
6. **Smell:** What would Jesus have smelled? (blood? the wood of the cross? metal striking metal?)
7. **Feelings: Key Question:** What emotions was Jesus experiencing? How might Jesus have felt at this time?

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2. What would you want to emphasize? What do you think is most important to get across to your audience? In other words, what would you want to make sure that the audience saw or heard?