The Branch Who is High Priest and King Family Lesson

Learn who Jesus is as both our High Priest and King rolled into one.

Bible Verse: Zechariah 6:12-13 "Here is the man called the Branch. He will branch out from where he is and build the Temple of the Lord. **13** Yes, he will build the Temple of the Lord. Then he will receive royal honor and will rule as king from his throne. He will also serve as priest from his throne, and there will be perfect harmony between his two roles" (NLT).

Supplies: Flour tortilla or gluten free wrap for each person, mayonnaise, Dijon or regular mustard, <u>two</u> kinds of meat (deli ham, turkey, chicken, roast beef, etc.), shredded cheese, lettuce, more toppings like chopped tomato, sliced avocado, bacon bits, etc. Set out all supplies and chop veggies before you begin.

Activity: Make a wrap representing Jesus' dual roles as High Priest and King rolled into one. Read the explanations aloud, adding your own words as needed to help small children understand the concepts.

1. **Set out a tortilla for each person.** Jesus is the bread of life, the foundation upon which we build our lives just like this flatbread is the foundation for our wrap.
2. **Combine mayonnaise with a small amount of Dijon or regular mustard** (in a three-to-one ratio or 1 T. mayo mixed with 1 tsp. mustard). Our small amount of mustard represents faith in who Jesus is as our High Priest. Jesus said even a little faith as small as a mustard seed opens the door to miracles. In the Old Testament, the High Priest offered sacrifices on behalf of the people so they could remain spiritually clean before God. Our white mayonnaise reminds us of God's promise in Isaiah 1:18, *"Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool."* When we add our small "mustard seed" of faith to God's promise to wash away our sins, it flavors our lives with hope.
3. **Lay down a piece of deli meat.** We lay down our first piece of meat to remind us that Jesus came first as our High Priest to lay down his life as a sacrifice for our sin. In the Old Testament, priests offered animals as sacrifices to God. The blood of the animals made atonement for sin which means that what the people had done wrong would be forgiven as if it had never happened. Isn't that good news! The even better news is that by becoming the sacrifice and being raised from the dead, Jesus fulfilled that sacrificial system so we can be made right with God without having to sacrifice animals.
4. **Sprinkle some shredded cheese on the meat.** We've sprinkled cheese on our wrap to remind us that the High Priest would sprinkle the blood of the sacrifice on the ark of the covenant, called God's mercy seat. As our High Priest, Jesus brought his own blood to God in heaven to pay for our sins so we can receive mercy when we mess up. He did this because he loves us and wants us to receive mercy. Hebrews 4:15 says, *"This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin."* Jesus understands our weaknesses, has compassion on us when we mess up, and pleads for us to receive mercy as our High Priest.
5. **Put some lettuce on top of the cheese.** Hebrews 4:16 is another "lettuce" scripture that tells us how we should respond to God's offer to draw near through Jesus. *"<u>Let us</u> then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (NIV).* Because Jesus is our High Priest, standing with us before God, we don't have to be afraid to come to God in prayer. We can expect grace, mercy, and help because Jesus is our High Priest.
6. **Place another kind of meat on top of the lettuce.** This meat represents Christ's other role as King. Hebrews 10:12-13 says that *"our High Priest offered himself to God as a single sacrifice for sins, good*

for all time. Then he sat down in the place of honor at God's right hand. ***13*** *There he waits until his enemies are humbled and made a footstool under his feet."* Jesus is seated at God's right hand as King over all who worship Jesus as God's Son. What is he doing while he waits to return as King over the whole earth? Zechariah 6:12 prophesied, *"Here is the man called the Branch. He will branch out from where he is and build the Temple of the Lord."* While Jesus waits to return as King, he is building God's Temple on the earth as our High Priest. Where is God's temple?

7. **Sprinkle any additional toppings like bacon bits, chopped tomato, sliced avocado, etc.** 1 Peter 2:5 says, "*You are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his holy priests."* We are now God's temple because his Spirit lives in us, and we are his holy priests who represent him to the world. The toppings represent the "living stones" of the church and the variety of gifts the Spirit gives us to help us share the good news of Jesus with people. When we share Jesus with someone and they receive him, it's like adding another living stone to God's spiritual temple.
8. **Roll up the wrap.** Zechariah 6:13 says of Jesus, the Branch, *"Yes, he will build the Temple of the Lord. Then he will receive royal honor and will rule as king from his throne. He will also serve as priest from his throne, and there will be perfect harmony between his two roles" (NLT).* In the Old Testament, Israel had a separate High Priest and King, but just like we rolled up our wrap, Jesus is our High Priest and King rolled into one perfect leader. When God's temple covers the whole earth because people everywhere receive Jesus, he will return to reign over the whole world as High Priest and King. Revelation 6:4 says that when Jesus returns, the sky will be rolled up like a scroll, just like we rolled up our wrap like a scroll. There will be no more separation as heaven comes down to earth, just like there's no more separation between us and God because Jesus, our High Priest, made a way for us to connect with God's presence anytime in prayer.
9. **Assemble your wraps to look like branches coming out of one center wrap.** Jesus is called "the Branch" in the Old Testament because he comes from the family line of King David like a new branch growing out of a tree stump. He branches out through us to spread the good news of his coming Kingdom. In John 15:5 Jesus says, *"I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing."* Jesus tells us to remain connected to him like branches of a vine, coming to God in prayer with confidence that he receives us and will help us represent Jesus to the world.
10. **Pray for God to bless the food you're about to eat, then play the song, "The Blessing." (You'll find it in the worship section at the bottom of the Puzzle Piece 8 page at TillingMinistries.com.**) This song is based on the High Priest's blessing in the Bible. As our High Priest, Jesus releases this blessing over us and invites us to sing it over each other.