



The Wise Men Worship Jesus

Matthew 2:1-18



LESSON GOAL

Students will worship Jesus as the promised King.

LESSON OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to

- Explain the important event that happened in Jerusalem.
- Describe Herod's response to the wise men.
- Give the details of the prophecy.
- Evaluate what the wise men did when they found the child.

KEY VERSE

"And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him" (Matthew 2:11).

APPLICATION

- Believe that Jesus is the Son of God and the Savior.
- Trust God to do what He has promised.
- Worship Jesus by being humble and giving to others.

Symbol Key



Craft



Memory Verse



Object Lesson



Game



Visual Aid



Activity



Q & A



Work Sheet



2 Grade Level

PREPARE WITH THE TRUTH

“Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul... You shall teach them to your children” (Deuteronomy 11:18–19).

Please take time to prepare your mind and heart to accurately handle the truths of God’s Word (2 Tim. 2:15). Read through the Bible background and study the truths contained in this lesson. Crucial background information is included here to aid you in understanding the Scripture.

Bible Background

In 2 Samuel 7:8–16, God promised David that one of his descendants would reign on the throne of Israel forever. This promise would start with his son, Solomon. However, David’s descendants lost the throne to the Babylonians and never fully regained it. After Babylon, other countries ruled over the region of Israel. The promise given to David had never been fulfilled. The people of Israel waited for a king from the tribe of Judah and the house of David to deliver them. The name they gave to this promised king was “Messiah” or “Anointed One.” In Greek, the word was “Christ.” The people had been waiting for a Messiah for over 400 years. Matthew the apostle wrote a book about the life of Christ the King that we know as the Gospel of Matthew. Because many Jews did not believe that Jesus was the Christ, Matthew had to prove to them that Jesus was the promised King.

There was another group who also were waiting for the Messiah. These were the Jews who lived in Babylon. Most Israelites did not go back to Israel at the end of the captivity. They stayed in Babylon and other cities. Many of these Jews had a strong influence on the people around them. Many of the scholars and elders in Babylon learned about the true God. Not all of them followed Him, but some looked to the Bible as a source of true wisdom. These men often are called “magi.” They thought that they could get messages from the stars and the Bible. They became wealthy and influential men. It is unlikely that any of these men exercised true faith. But God had mercy on them and led a few of them to visit and worship the Messiah when he was born.

Matthew 1:18–23

The time had indeed come. Rome was ruling the known world, and Israel was occupied by a Roman king. The Messiah came from an unlikely place in unlikely circumstances. Joseph, a descendant of David, was living in Nazareth. He was legally engaged to a woman named Mary. Mary became pregnant, and Joseph knew that the baby was not his. So he decided to quietly divorce her. However, before he went through with it, an angel came to him and said in Matthew 1:20, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit.” He called Joseph “son of David,” which referred to him as being in the royal line. Jesus then, though not the biological son of Joseph, was his legal son and therefore was worthy to be a king.

Jesus was not going to be an ordinary king. In Matthew 1:21, the angel said of Mary, “And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.” This was not going to be just a political king, but a Savior as well. This was not going to be any ordinary king.

Matthew 2:1–12

After Jesus was born, a group of men from the east came to visit Jesus. These men were called wise men. They probably came from Persia, an area the Romans did not

Additional Reference Materials

The MacArthur Study Bible by John MacArthur

For further study concerning the possible origin and history the wise men, refer to pages 99–114 of *The Miracle of Christmas* by John MacArthur.

control. They were wealthy traders and probably had great political influence in Persia. They believed that they could get messages from God through the stars. Most likely, they were also descendants from the Jews in Daniel's day. They were considered the wise men of the East. Using the stars to get messages from God was never endorsed by God, but God was gracious and gave the wise men one message. They saw a star from the east and somehow knew that the King of Israel had been born. Possibly, they knew of the prophecy of Numbers 24:17, which said that the Messiah star would appear. They set out to give gifts and respect to this new king. This process took them some time, and while they were on their way, the star disappeared and they went to Jerusalem, where King Herod was ruler. They expected to find Jesus in a palace, but they did not find Him there. They asked where the promised King of the Jews would be.

Herod was a minor king who had been appointed by Caesar. He did have significant power, however, and did not want to lose it to a local Jewish leader. Herod asked the priests where the Messiah was to have been born and secretly planned to kill Him. He asked the wise men at what time the star had appeared and then sent them to Bethlehem, the City of David.

The wise men began the short trip to Bethlehem. As soon as they set out again, the star appeared over Bethlehem and rested over the house where Jesus now lived. Jesus was a toddler by now and was not living in a great mansion or palace but in a house. When the wise men went into the house where Jesus was, they fell down and worshiped Him. They gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Matthew 2:13–23

The wise men had been warned in a dream to not tell Herod anything about the child, Jesus, and they returned to their own country by another route. Herod was furious and ordered all babies two years old and under to be killed. God warned Joseph in a dream to take Mary and Jesus to Egypt, where they could escape Herod's wrath. After Herod's death, they returned to Israel and eventually moved back to Joseph's hometown of Nazareth.

Jesus was the promised Messiah. He was from the line of David and came to earth to bring about a new kingdom. He was no ordinary king. He came from a humble family and was forced into exile when He was a toddler. His kingdom was not merely political, but was also spiritual. He fulfilled a promise to Abraham and David. His death and resurrection would pay the penalty for our sins and establish Him as the King of the universe. He will come back to rule the earth and finish the promise that He started.

Worship the King of heaven and earth. Just as the wise men bowed down to worship, we need to give humble praise and worship to God. Through our words, actions, and attitudes.

Trust the promises of God. The promise to Abraham took nearly 2,000 years to fulfill. We know that God will work things out in His timing. Jesus came to save us from our sin. We can be assured that He will come back to fulfill His promises and rule over all the earth.

POINT TO THE TRUTH

*"Give ear, O my people, to my law; incline your ears to the words of my mouth"
(Psalm 78:1).*

This section includes questions to review last week's lesson and ideas to prepare students for this week's lesson. Choose from the following ideas to point to the truths of this lesson.



Review Questions

Use these questions to review and reinforce key truths.

Who were Zacharias and Elizabeth?

Zacharias was a priest who served in the temple. Elizabeth was his wife. They were both old and could not have babies.

An angel visited Zacharias in the temple. What did the angel say?

He said that Elizabeth was going to have a baby. That baby would tell people about the Messiah.

How did Zacharias respond, and why?

He did not believe the angel. He thought that he and his wife were too old to have a baby.

What did the angel do to Zacharias?

He made Zacharias unable to speak.

What did Zacharias and Elizabeth name the baby when he finally was born?

John.

What was John supposed to do?

One day he would tell the people to get ready for the Messiah.



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Promise Board

Use the promise board made earlier as a way to review the previous four lessons. Select different parts and review them with the students. In today's lesson, we will talk about the One who fulfilled these promises and the right response to Him.



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Star of Wonder

Copy the star outline at the back of this lesson onto yellow cardstock. Have each student decorate a star with crayons or markers and star stickers, and then cut it out. Allow each student to punch several holes all over his star. Then hang it on a window or hold it up to a lamp to see the star light up from behind. The sun is a star. The other stars give light to us at night. This star reminds of two things. First, Jesus is the light of the world. Second, in today's lesson, the wise men followed a star to Bethlehem to look for Jesus.



Gift Rolls

Roll a cardboard tube (or toilet-paper roll) with wrapping paper. Next, gather one end of the paper and tie it together with a ribbon. Fill the tube with candy, and



then gather the other end of the wrapping paper and tie it with a ribbon. Add a tag. In today's Bible lesson, some rich wise men traveled a long distance to bring gifts to the promised King of Israel. They brought their gifts to Jesus.

Christmas Chain of Christ's Names, Week Five

Add to the chain from previous weeks the title *King of the Jews*.



Smelling Center

In small plastic containers, place scented items or cotton balls soaked with scented liquids. Set five or six items on the table and have the students walk around and smell each item. Let students take turns smelling and identifying the smells. Let them vote on which smells they like best. If they like the smell, they can vote by placing a piece of paper in a cup above that item. Some suggestions include: perfume or cologne, vanilla, peppermint, spices, chocolate, a sliced orange, bubble bath, soap, and leather. In today's Bible lesson, some wise men travel from far away to bring the King of the Jews gifts of sweet-smelling oils and incense. Jesus was the King of the Jews.

PROCLAIM THE TRUTH

"Telling to the generation to come the praises of the LORD, and His strength and His wonderful works that He has done" (Psalm 78:4).

This section includes the Bible lesson, lesson questions, and praise and worship ideas. Song suggestions are included to use during worship time. Use the lesson questions to check the students' understanding. This section also includes various presentation ideas to use during the teaching time. Read the Bible passage several times before you read these pages. All teaching should be done directly from the Bible.

Bible Lesson

Reading of the Text

Read Matthew 2:1–12.

Introduction

In the book of Matthew, there is a story about some unknown people who came to Jerusalem one day, a long time ago. They were searching for something very important, something that they were excited about. But for some reason, very few other people were as excited as they were; some were even upset about what the wise men were looking for.



Leadoff Questions (LOQs)

LOQ: What important people arrived in Jerusalem?

Answer: People called wise men arrived in Jerusalem.

LOQ: When did the wise men arrive in Jerusalem?

Answer: The wise men arrived in Jerusalem after Jesus was born in Bethlehem, in the days of Herod (the Great) the king.

LOQ: What did the wise men ask when they were in Jerusalem?

Answer: “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matt. 2:2). The wise men had followed a star in the east and had come to worship the King.

LOQ: How did King Herod feel when he heard what the wise men asked?

Answer: King Herod was troubled.

LOQ: Why do you think king Herod was troubled?

Answer: King Herod was the self-appointed “king of the Jews”; he ruled over the people at the time the wise men came. But the wise men were not asking about him. They were asking about someone else. They wanted to find the real “King of the Jews.” Since King Herod did not want another king to take his place, he was very bothered by what the wise men were saying.

LOQ: What question did King Herod ask the chief priests and scribes?

Answer: King Herod asked them where the Christ (Messiah) was to be born.

LOQ: Where did the chief priests and scribes say the Christ would be born?

Answer: They said that the Christ would be born “in Bethlehem of Judea” (Matt. 2:5).

LOQ: How did they know?

Answer: They knew because it had been written by a prophet. The place where the Christ would be born was prophesied in the Old Testament.

LOQ: What did the prophet write?

Answer: Matthew 2:6 is a quotation from the Old Testament (Micah 5:2): “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler, who will shepherd My people Israel.” Even though Bethlehem was a small town, and still is, it would be famous because a Ruler would come from it and would lead, or shepherd, the people of God. That special person is Jesus Christ.

LOQ: How did the wise men know where in Bethlehem to find Jesus?

Answer: The star reappeared and “stood” over the house where the child lived. When the wise men saw the star again, they were filled with joy.

LOQ: List four things that happened when the wise men found the house.

Answer: (1) The wise men came into the house; (2) they saw the child with Mary, His mother; (3) they fell down and worshiped Him; and (4) they presented Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

LOQ: How did Herod respond when the wise men did not come back to Jerusalem?

Answer: He ordered that all of the children age two and under be killed.

LOQ: What did God tell Joseph in a dream?

Answer: God told Joseph to flee to Egypt to protect Jesus.

Summary

A long time ago, an important event happened in Jerusalem. Some wise men arrived in the city, looking for the King of the Jews, who was the Christ. They asked the people in the city where to find Him. When King Herod heard what they were

saying, he was troubled. The king found out what the Scriptures said about the Christ: He would be born in Bethlehem; He would be a ruler; and He would shepherd His people. The Christ would be very special. When the wise men finally found the Child, (unlike Herod) they rejoiced, gave Him gifts, and worshiped Him.

Application

The wise men were earnestly seeking the real King of the Jews, who was also the Christ, the Messiah. Herod was troubled. The chief priests and scribes (the religious leaders) did not seem to care, but the wise men did care. They honored Jesus when He was a child by giving gifts to Him and worshiping Him. Christians should respond as the wise men, not as Herod and the others. Christians should honor Jesus Christ and give Him praise and worship because He is not only the King of the Jews, but also the King of all who love Him and follow Him.

Presentation Ideas



A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards

Use appropriate A Beka Book Flash-A-Cards with the lesson.



Betty Lukens Flannelgraph

Use appropriate flannelgraph pieces to present with the lesson.



Gifts from the Wise Men

Put the following items inside a box: gold-foil-covered chocolates, a jar of sweet spice (frankincense), a bottle of perfume (myrrh), and slips of paper labeled "obedience," "praise," "adoration," "prayer," and "learning God's Word." Wrap the box as you would a present. Ask the students what they think is inside the present. Tell them that you have wrapped a gift for Jesus. Then open the present and describe the gifts that the magi brought to Jesus, using the chocolates, perfume bottle, and spice jar to illustrate. Explain that in today's lesson, students will learn more about the wise men from the east and how they worshiped Jesus. At the end of the lesson, pull out the labeled slips one at a time and talk with the students about the things they can do to make Jesus happy.

Praise and Worship

Away in a Manger

Go, Tell It on the Mountain

O Come, All Ye Faithful

The First Noel

The Little Drummer Boy

Trust and Obey

We Bow Down

We Three Kings

What Can I Give Him?

PRACTICE THE TRUTH

“That they may set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments” (Psalm 78:7).

Choose ideas from this section to review and apply the truths of the Bible lesson.



Promises Fulfilled Ornaments, Week Five

Cut out colored construction paper in the shape of a Christmas ornament. Give each student a pair of preprinted verses. The Savior’s birth fulfills the promises given the last four weeks. This is the culmination of promises given thousands of years before. Read 2 Peter 3:8–9, and discuss it as the students make their ornaments. The following are suggested verses:

Savior born in Bethlehem—Luke 2:11

Gentile wise men worship the Savior—Matthew 2:11

Instruct the students to glue a verse on each side of their ornaments. Then supply the class with glitter glue, stickers, and markers or crayons, and have them decorate the ornaments. Finally, punch holes in the tops of the ornaments, and tie ribbons through the holes for hanging.



Christmas Ornament

Cut out an image or scene from a recycled Christmas card. Glue the cutout to a jar lid or a circle cut from construction paper. This will serve as the ornament. Cut and glue a shiny tassel to the outside edges of the ornament. Glue a piece of cording to the top for a hanger.



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Wise Men Luminaria

Materials: one lunch-size paper bag for each student; enough sand to place an inch of sand in each bag; stickers, ribbon, colored cloths, and sequins; small card-stock star templates; one votive candle for each student; pushpins

Directions: Make a luminaria before class. Light it before class. Turn the lights off before craft time, and show the students what they are going to make. Give each student one paper bag. Allow the students to trace a star shape on the bag and poke holes with a pushpin along the lines of the star shape they traced. Provide stickers, cloth pieces, or ribbon to decorate the luminaria. Tell them to not cover the star shape. When they are finished, pour sand at the bottom of each bag, and give each student a candle to put it in. They may wish to give these as gifts to someone in their families. The wise men in today’s story followed a special star until they found Christ.



“The Wise Men Worship Jesus”

Use this work sheet to review the lesson with the class. It is located at the back of this lesson.



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Journal Page: “Jesus Deserves Our Worship”

Give the students a copy of the journal page at the back of this lesson. They can work on the page individually, in small groups, or at home.

Coloring Sheets

Give each student a copy of the coloring sheets at the back of the lesson. The students can color the pages in class or at home.



MEMORY VERSE

“And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him” (Matthew 2:11).

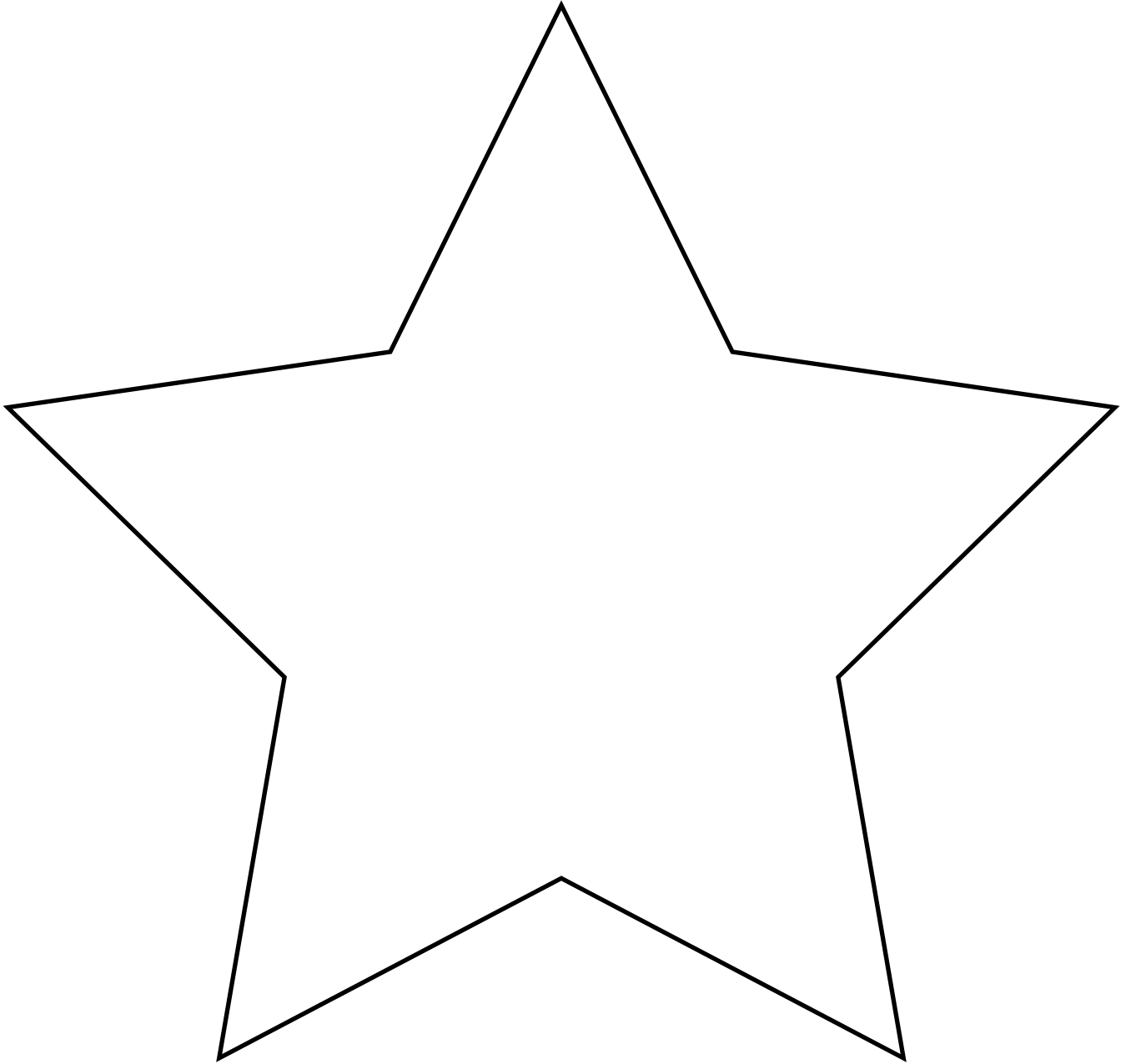


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Pin the Star on the Village

Tape a large piece of blue poster board (with the picture of a star glued on it) to the wall at a child’s eye-level. Give each student a large star sticker to glue or tape to the poster board. Have students recite the verse before they put the stars on the poster board.

Star of Wonder



The Wise Men
**Worship
Jesus**



Matthew 2:1-12

Name _____

1. According to Matthew 2:1, when did the wise men arrive in Jerusalem?

After _____

in the days of _____.

2. For whom were the wise men looking? _____

3. What did the wise men see that made them come to Jerusalem? _____

4. How did King Herod respond to the wise men's search? (Circle the correct answer.)

He was very happy.

He was troubled.

5. What did the wise men do when they saw Jesus? _____

6. What three gifts did the wise men give to Jesus?

7. After seeing Jesus, did the wise men return to Herod? _____

Jesus Deserves Our Worship

A short time after Jesus was born, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem to worship Him. They asked many people in Jerusalem where they would find the King of the Jews. The chief priests told them that He would be born in Bethlehem. They knew this because they had studied God's prophecies in the Old Testament. Look up the verses below, and match each prophecy with its fulfillment.

Prophecy	Fulfillment
Luke 1:17	Matthew 2:1
Genesis 49:10	Luke 7:24, 27
Micah 5:2	Galatians 3:8
Genesis 3:15	Luke 2:7
Isaiah 7:14	Luke 2:11
Matthew 1:21	Matthew 1:23
Luke 1:32	Luke 1:76–77
Genesis 12:3	Revelation 20:2
Malachi 3:1	Matthew 28:18

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Matthew 1:21	Matthew 1:23
Luke 1:32	Luke 1:76–77
Genesis 12:3	Revelation 20:2
Malachi 3:1	Matthew 28:18

I can believe God's Word is true because _____

I can learn more about God and how He fulfills His Word by

Christ deserves my worship because _____

This Christmas, I will worship Christ by _____

Christ came to earth to _____

I can believe God's Word is true because _____

I can learn more about God and how He fulfills His Word by

Christ deserves my worship because _____

This Christmas, I will worship Christ by _____

Christ came to earth to _____



“And when they [the wise men] had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh” (Matthew 2:11).



“When Herod, saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was very angry; and had put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem who were two years old and under” (Matthew 2:16).

