



**Mustard Seed Children's Lesson Summary for December 20, 2009**  
**Released on Wednesday, December 13, 2009**

**“Worshiping the King”**

**Lesson Text:** Matthew 2:7-10, 16-23

**Background Scripture:** Matthew 2:1-23

**Memory Verse:** When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (Matthew 2:10).

**Matthew 2:7-10, 16-23**

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

.....

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying,

18 In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.

21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:

23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

**THE OBJECT IN VIEW:**

Help the children, like the wise men, recognize that the baby born in Bethlehem was the special One whom God had promised.

**TRUTHS TO STRESS:**

1. God revealed in different ways to different people that He was sending someone special to be King and Saviour.
2. Baby Jesus was the promised special One.

### **PLANNING LESSON AIDS:**

For Telling the Lesson, have pictures of a small group of Middle Eastern men, a mixed crowd, a starry sky, four or more men on camels, Herod, the star over Bethlehem, and the wise men kneeling.

For Telling How to Live, bring a picture of the cross.

For Helping to Remember, provide each student with crayons, safety scissors (blunt tip), paste, a half sheet of blue art paper cut lengthwise, and a 2-inch circle drawn on white paper.

For the lesson activity, make a copy of the Word Search for each student.

### **TEACHER'S NOTES:**

Time: 5 or 4 B.C.

Places: Jerusalem; Bethlehem; Egypt; Nazareth

God not only orchestrated the time and place of Jesus' birth; He also planned who would be the first to know of His coming and when.

The Prophet Isaiah knew seven hundred years before Jesus' birth. He told King Ahaz that a special child was coming, and his words were picked up by Matthew as referring to Jesus: "A virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son" (Matthew 1:23).

Later, God used an angel to tell the Jewish woman Mary that she had been chosen to be the special child's mother. He used an angel to make the announcement to Joseph, Mary's Jewish husband-to-be, and later still He used angels to tell the Jewish shepherds out on the hillside that what God had promised had now come to pass.

The One promised would be the Jewish Saviour and the Jewish King, but God had not forgotten or ceased to love the rest of the world. He knew the Gentile multitudes sat in darkness, and He cared. It was time to introduce the Gentiles to the promised One too.

The Lord did not use angels to tell the Gentiles. At first He did not use words at all. He got their attention with a new star, something that was certain to arouse interest in the Gentile world of that day.

The "wise men," or Magi, lived to the distant east of Jerusalem, likely in Babylon. They were a combination of astronomers and astrologers. They studied the stars both scientifically and as a means of divination. Some predicted the future on the basis of what they saw in the heavens. These fell into the fortune-teller category. Others were students of the sacred writings. God, who so beautifully orchestrates all things, knew exactly what would happen if such men saw a star they had never seen before.

What is it? Why is it here? What does it mean? The wise men would have looked to see whether the sacred writings had anything to say on the subject. One such available sacred writing was the Hebrew Scriptures. Four hundred years earlier, many Jews, including Daniel, had been transported as captives to Babylon. They took their Bible with them.

In that Bible this passage appears: "There shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel... Out of Jacob shall come he that shall have dominion" (Numbers 24:17, 19). Did the wise men find those words? We are not told. But we do know they went to find *Him* - *and* they worshiped.

### **BEGINNING THE LESSON:**

*Jesus* was special. He was God's Son, and God made sure people found out that this baby was so special that He did not need an earthly father. Who did God send to tell King Ahaz? (If necessary, remind the class it was Isaiah.) God made a way for Mary to know about the special baby. What was that way? How did He let Joseph know? He wanted some shepherds to know too. What was God's way of telling the shepherds that someone special had been born?

There was still one more group of people God wanted to tell. And He let those people know about the baby in a very different way.

## **TELLING THE LESSON:**

Far, far away from the town of Bethlehem lived a group of men who liked to learn things. (Show men.) They studied books. They even knew about books that people in faraway places had written. They were truly wise about many things, and we call them "the wise men."

Now, it happened that many of God's people, the Jews, used to live in the wise men's country. (Show crowd.) Some still lived there. And the Jewish people had brought some of the Bible with them when they came. The whole Bible was not written yet, but they had the first part, and somehow the wise men learned what God's Book said. A special Person was coming who would be a great king.

Now the wise men were interested in the stars too. (Show starry sky.) They knew they could look up and see this star here and that star there every night. But one night they saw a star that had never been there before. They decided it must mean that something special had happened. Then somebody found what the Jewish people's Book said. A great king was coming. Maybe that was what the new star meant. The great king must have been born.

After a while the star went away, but the wise men kept talking about it. They decided some of them should travel to the land of the Jewish people and take presents to their new king. God was making these faraway men want to find Jesus, and that is the kind of thing God does even today.

So the wise men packed their presents and the things they would need for the trip, got on their camels, and started off. (Show wise men on camels.) Pictures like this usually show three wise men, but the Bible does not say how many there were. Maybe there were more than three. If more men traveled together, they would be safer on such a long trip.

After a long time of traveling, they came to the land of the Jewish people. They thought the new king would be at the palace; so into the big city of Jerusalem they rode. They started to ask people, "Where is He? Where is the One who was born the King of the Jews? We saw His star back in our country, and we have come to bow down to Him."

No one in Jerusalem seemed to know anything about a new king. (Of course, we know the wise men had gone to the wrong city. Where should they have gone?)

Then Herod, the king in Jerusalem, heard about someone else being the king, and he was *not* happy. (Show Herod.) Herod did not want a new king. He wanted to be king himself. He thought and thought.

Maybe this baby was the king God's Book said would come. Herod called in some men who would know what the Book said. He asked, "Where does God's Book say the Christ will be born?"

"In Bethlehem," they said.

So Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem, saying, "Go find the Child; then come back and tell me where He is. I want to take Him presents too." What Herod really wanted was to kill Jesus. Then he could keep on being king all by himself.

The wise men did not know that, though. They got back on their camels and started down the road to Bethlehem. (Show wise men on camels.) Then they looked up, and there it was again! The king's star had come back. The Bible says that they rejoiced greatly, which means they were very, very happy. Now they were sure they would soon find the king.

The wise men kept watching the star as they rode along. Now, we cannot see stars move, but they saw *this* star move ahead of them like a light, showing the way to go. God sometimes uses strange ways to bring people to Jesus.

The star went in front of them all the way to Bethlehem. Then it stood still over the house where Joseph and Mary and Jesus were now living. (Show star over Bethlehem.)

The wise men got off their camels and went to the door. Inside they saw Mary and the Child Jesus. He was not a brand-new baby anymore, and He did not look like a king yet; but the wise men knew He was the special One whom God had promised to send. They

all bowed down in front of Him and gave Him their presents - gold and good-smelling perfumes. (Show kneeling wise men.)

The wise men never did go back to tell King Herod they had found Jesus. In a dream, God told them not to. Instead, they went home to their faraway country a different way, and God kept the special Baby safe.

### **TELLING HOW TO LIVE:**

This lesson tells us that it is God who makes people want to know Jesus. It says God has different ways of telling different people about Him. It says the news that shows people how to come to Jesus is happy news. It also shows us that the Baby born in Bethlehem was sent by God. He is someone special. He is God's Son, Jesus.

Let us rejoice because that Baby came to grow up and to take away our sins by dying for us. (Show cross.)

### **HELPING TO REMEMBER:**

Tell the children to draw a sandy, hilly desert across the bottom of their papers and a wise man and camel on the left side. Show them how to make a star by cutting jagged points into their round white papers. They should paste the star in the upper right corner and then add as many other stars to the scene as they like.

Give each student a copy of the Word Search – they will review keywords from the lesson text as they complete the activity.

### **EXPLAINING THE MEMORY VERSE:**

**When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy" (Matthew 2:10).**

The star the wise men saw now was the same star they had seen back in their own country. They were happy because now they were sure they were going the right way. They knew that soon they would find the special King they were looking for.

### **CONCLUSION:**

God revealed in different ways and to different people that Jesus had been born and that He was the one promised to be King and Saviour. Mary and Joseph each had their own special part to play in the birth of Jesus. We also know that shepherds, working to care for their sheep, were also told about this wonderful birth, and they responded by finding Him and worshiping Him.

But the story does not end there. A group of wise men who lived far away from Bethlehem saw a new star in the sky and followed it. These men believed that it would lead them to a special child. After a long journey, they found the special baby that they had left their homes to search for – and they worshiped Jesus!

### **PRAYER:**

Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our Saviour. Help us to be filled with joy like the wise men as we remember the birth of Jesus. Help us to worship and to adore Him, in Jesus' name. Amen.

### **ANTICIPATING THE NEXT LESSON:**

Next week's lesson is "**Jesus' Baptism**" and tells about Jesus being baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. Study Matthew 3:1-17.

## WORD SEARCH

### “Worshiping the King” (Matthew 2:7-10, 16-23)

Find the following keywords from the lesson:

EGYPT

ANGEL

GALILEE

NAZARETH

WORSHIP

BETHLEHEM

HEROD

JOSEPH

PROPHET

STAR

WISE MEN

REJOICE

DREAM

WEEPING

CHILDREN

KING

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## SOLUTION TO WORD SEARCH

### “Worshiping the King” (Matthew 2:7-10, 16-23)

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The Pulpit Commentary, Spence-Jones, H. D. M. (Hrsg.), Bellingham, WA : Logos Research Systems, Inc.

The KJV Parallel Bible Commentary, by Nelson Books