

<b>TEXT</b>	Matthew 2:1-12
<b>OBJECTIVE</b>	The students will be able to recount how the special star sent from God led the Wise Men to the Christ Child.
<b>MEMORY VERSE</b>	Lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them. — Matthew 2:9

# The Wise Men Come

## MEMORY VERSE IN ACTION

**LO, THE STAR** — Hold both hands up at sides of face. With finger tips touching thumbs, open and close hands quickly, to represent blinking stars.

**WHICH THEY SAW IN THE EAST** — Point to eyes, then move hand away and point toward the east.

**WENT** — With index fingers moving forward, rotate around each other (palms toward self).

**BEFORE THEM** — Point in front and away from self.

## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

Three Wise Men following the star is the visual display of our memory verse this week. (See pattern at the end of this lesson.) Cut apart the four pieces as indicated by the heavy black lines. Arrange them in order, a piece at a time, as your students recite each section of the verse.

## BIBLE LESSON OUTLINE

Introduction: Spread out a large, dark blue cloth on your table. Sprinkle it with small, gummed stars or other types of small stars that can be purchased at a craft store. Tell your class this represents the sky on the night Jesus was born. Then hold up a large star cut from yellow construction paper and decorated with glitter. That night a special star appeared!

Progression of events:

1. Explain who the Wise Men were.
2. They saw the star, realized its importance and purposed to follow it.
3. They came to Jerusalem, sought there for the Child King, and met with King Herod.
4. Their persistence was finally rewarded when the star led them to the Christ Child.
5. They worshiped the Child, and then returned by another way.

Climax: The persistence of the Wise Men was rewarded when they saw the young Child, Jesus.

Conclusion: God led and directed the Wise Men and He will also lead and guide us.

Response: The students will be able to explain how and why the Wise Men made their journey and what happened when they reached their goal.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Wise Men from the East, are believed to have been from an area where astrology was practiced and where the Israelite's Messianic expectations were known.

The Wise Men brought three types of gifts to Jesus — gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Gold was a gift of royalty. As far back as the patriarchs, gold and silver have been standards of money. Of all the standards of wealth, gold is perhaps the supreme gift fit for any king.

While gold adorned the crowns and palaces of kings, frankincense was mingled with the offerings of priests. It was the gift of worship. The Song of Solomon mentions it as a perfume of love, from a king for his bride. Frankincense is acquired from the resin of the *Boswellia* tree. In the summer the bark is peeled back and the tree is cut with a knife. From this wound the gum exudes as a white substance which turns amber color.

Myrrh was a gift of suffering. It was myrrh which was mixed with vinegar and offered to the suffering Savior on the cross to ease His pain. It was also myrrh that Nicodemus brought to anoint the body of Jesus after He had died. Myrrh is extracted from a small tree that is almost like a thorny bush. Usually, like frankincense, it comes from a cut made in the tree. Also, like frankincense, myrrh gives out a fragrant aroma when crushed.

## SPECIAL NOTE FOR THIS LESSON

Refer to Lessons 4d and 28d for additional ideas.

## IN-CLASS ACTIVITIES

Cut simple shapes of Christmas-related things (see Patterns) from old Christmas cards. Let the children string yarn through the shapes and make a colorful mobile.

Gift-wrap a box, wrapping the lid separately so it can be easily removed. Decorate your box with foil, glitter, "jewels" from discarded brooches, sequins, or anything else that you feel might make it look as if something of value is inside. Attach a tag which says, "To Jesus, from Teacher \_\_\_\_\_'s class." As you talk about the gifts the Wise Men brought to Jesus, move into a discussion of what kinds of gifts we can give to Jesus. Give each child a piece of paper on which he may write or draw what he would like to give to Jesus. At the end of your class time, collect all the papers and put them into the box. Explain that although they can't give these gifts directly to Jesus, He sees what they put into the box and He accepts their gifts.

If you want to elaborate on the gifts brought by the Wise Men, here are a few ideas. The gold, of course, can be represented by "gold" stars, a gold watch, etc. The frankincense and myrrh were fragrances. You may not be able to find those scents, so explain to the children that they were wonderfully fragrant gifts. Then use one or more of these examples (which can also be given as gifts): a small sachet pouch or box filled with aromatic potpourri, a small bar of soap wrapped in pretty fabric and tied with a thin ribbon, a little "calling card" with the child's name on the right side and a Scratch-N-Sniff sticker on the left side, a Christmas wish written on a pretty paper with scented marking pens.

Make star headbands for each of the children (see Patterns). Cut construction paper or tagboard into 24" by 2" strips. Arrange the stars on the strips as shown with the larger star in the center. Give a headband to each child and talk about how the Wise Men followed the special star.

Prepare a Wise-Men puzzle for each child (see Patterns). Copy the picture onto blue construction paper and cover it with clear contact paper. Cut the finished picture into approximately six pieces. Put each puzzle into a Ziploc bag. Let the children put these together in class and then take them home to share with their families.

## QUESTIONS

Who were the Wise Men who followed the star, and where did they come from? Why were these men called *wise*?

How would the Wise Men know about the King of the Jews and that it was a young child they were seeking and not a grown man?

Why did the Wise Men go to Jerusalem when Christ was born in Bethlehem?

Why did the Wise Men talk to King Herod? What did King Herod want the Wise Men to do?

What gifts did the Wise Men bring?

After the Wise Men had seen Jesus what did they do? Why?

King Herod also sought Jesus. Why couldn't he find Him?

Do you think it is wise to seek Jesus? What type of people seek Jesus today?

Christmas is a special holiday. What does the word *Christmas* mean? Do all the people who celebrate Christmas love and believe in Jesus?

What gifts can we give to Jesus?

## PRESCHOOL SUGGESTIONS

Give each child a copy of the camel without legs (see Patterns). Let the children attach snap-on clothespins for legs. Have them pretend that these camels are the ones that carried the Wise Men as they followed the star.

Make a small coloring book for each child (see Patterns). Copy the pattern onto sheets of typing or copy-machine paper. Fold on the dotted lines so the title page is on the front. Provide crayons and let the children color the pictures as you tell the story.

Give each child a copy of the gift-star picture (see Patterns). Copy and cut the stars from yellow construction paper. Provide crayons so the children may color the picture. Impress upon the children that the special star shone just for Jesus on those nights so many years ago. It was God who made that star lead the Wise Men to Jesus.

## REVIEW IDEAS

Talk about the gifts the Wise Men brought to show their love for Jesus. Then have the children do any of the following to show their love for Jesus: sing a song, say the memory verse, say the Lord's Prayer, show a heart that represents what we can give to Jesus, give a glass of water in Jesus' name, etc.

The wise men journeyed a long distance in search of the young Child. Ask your class to imagine some of the adventures the Wise Men must have had and what they thought they would see when they found Jesus. Have a group story about what might have happened on the long journey. Use a star-shaped beanbag (see Patterns) and a bell or timer to signal each person's turn. You start the story. When the timer rings, pass the star beanbag to the next person and let him continue the story as you reset the timer. Each person takes his turn from where the last person left off. When the star beanbag comes again to you, finish the story with a reemphasis of God's love.

Use children from your class to pantomime the actions of the Wise Men as they followed the star. Hang a large star from the ceiling. Have a few people walk by and wonder aloud about the star, or say it is pretty, but not really show much interest in it. Then the Wise Men see it and they know immediately what the star is for because they have been waiting and waiting for this event. Have them

prepare for the journey by wrapping the gifts they will take to the new King. Then they travel across the desert, enter the City of Jerusalem, talk to King Herod, again follow the star, and end their journey by finding the Christ Child.

## SUPPORT MATERIAL

The Happiest Search — Arch Book, Concordia

Clem the Clumsy Camel — Arch Book, Concordia

Bethlehem's Brightest Star — Arch Book, Concordia

Strange New Star — A Magic Picture Book, David C. Cook Publishing Company

The Mysterious Star — J. Marxhausen, Concordia

Andro, Star of Bethlehem — A Happy Day Book, Standard Publishing

Secret of the Star — Arch Book, Concordia

## COORDINATING SONGS

"We Three Kings"

"Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star, Leading Wise Men From Afar"

## MEMORY VERSE SONG



## MEMORY VERSE VISUALIZED

