

THE CHURCH IN NEW YORK CITY
CHILDREN'S MEETING LESSON (Pre-K & K)

Lesson #51

DATE:

SUBJECT: The Magi or Wise Men Seek and Find the Baby Jesus, God's Son

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2: 1-8, 9-18; Micah 5:2

AIM: To show the children that if we seek after the Lord as the wise men did, they too will find Him.

MEMORY VERSE: Psalms 95:6 "O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord, our Maker."

Content:

The wise men see the star (Matthew 2:2)

occasionally people are puzzled that the lesson emphasizes the young CHILD. Yet a careful reading of Matthew 2:11 indicates that Jesus is called a Child, and He is living in a house with His mother and Joseph. Scholars have surmised that the wise men came sometime after Jesus' birth perhaps several months later, or even close to two years later (see Matt. 2:16)

About the same time as Baby Jesus was born, some men in a faraway land were looking at the night sky. They often looked at the sky so they could study the stars. "Look!" One of the men pointed excitedly to the western sky. His friends came immediately to see what he had discovered. We can imagine what they might have said.

"I've never seen another star like that – it is so bright!" "You're right! We've watched the sky for many nights and we know where all the stars usually are. But I've never seen that star before. It must be a new star." "Do you think it is a sign that something has happened?"

These men were called magi, or wise men; they believed that a new star always meant something special had happened. That's why they were so curious about this star. The men watched as the sky grew darker and the star shone brighter. The star seemed far away, standing over some faraway land in the west.

We wonder if these men had heard sometime before that God was going to send a great King to the earth. Perhaps they had heard about this great King when God's people lived, long ago, in their land. They may have heard that this great King was to be born in the land of Israel, where God's people lived. *Maybe*, the wise men thought, *this is His star.*

Oh, how the wise men wanted to see this great, new King! So they decided to take the long journey to find Him. "If we're going to visit this wonderful King, we should take the best gifts we have," they said to one another. They decided to take gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Those last two

gifts were expensive, rare perfumes, so they were good gifts to give the King. We don't know exactly how many wise men went to see little Jesus. Many people believe there were three men because they took three gifts, but maybe there were more.

Quickly their servants helped the men get ready. Their camels were loaded with supplies for a long trip. The men knew they had to travel many miles across hills, villages, and deserts, for many months. Night after night the men rode their camels, traveling toward the place where the star had appeared.

The wise men inquire about the new King (Matthew 2:1-8)

Maybe the wise men wondered how they would find the new King once they reached the land of the Jews. Surely, they thought, everyone will know about the new King. We will probably find Him in the palace in the city of Jerusalem. He will be surrounded by many important people, with many servants taking care of Him. He will be lying in a silk-lined bed and have velvety robes. People will be very happy that He is born, and they will still be celebrating His birth.

But when they came to the city of Jerusalem and asked people about the new King, no one seemed to know that a new King had been born! The wise men kept asking, "Where is the new King of the Jews? We have seen His star in the East, and have come to worship Him."

It wasn't long till King Herod heard about the wise men and their strange question. Could it possibly be true, Herod wondered, that a new King has been born – a King who would take my place? King Herod was greatly troubled and because King Herod was troubled, all the people in Jerusalem were afraid.

King Herod asked his wise men, who knew many things, "Where was God's King going to be born?" Herod's wise men said, "God's Word tells us that the savior will be born in Bethlehem" (Micah 5:2). Then King Herod talked to the wise men who had come from the faraway country in the East. He sent everyone else out of the room. When did you first see this bright star?" King Herod asked. "I want to know the exact time you saw it." The men told him. Then King Herod said, "Go about five miles south to the little town of Bethlehem; that is where the great King is to be born. Hunt carefully for Him. Then, when you have found Him, come back and tell me where He is. I too want to go and worship Him."

The wise men travel to Bethlehem (Matthew 2: 9-10)

That same night the wise men left Jerusalem. As they started their journey, they saw the bright star once again, the star which they had seen in the East. This time, the star seemed to go ahead of them, leading them to the town of Bethlehem, and then to the house where the little Child Jesus lived.

The wise men worship Jesus (Matthew 2:11-12)

The wise men came into the little house, and they bowed down and worshiped the Child Jesus, thanking God for leading them to Him. *Show Bible Picture 3.* The wise men brought out their gifts of gold and perfume, and gave them to the little Child. They were showing their love and respect for the new, young King. How glad the men must have been that they had taken this very long journey, and found the new King.

Then, when they left the house and got back on their camels, they remembered that King Herod had told them to come back to Jerusalem and tell him where the young Child was. They planned to do that as they started back to their own land.

But that night, when they were sleeping, God spoke to the men in a dream, and said, “Do not go back and tell King Herod where the Child is living. He doesn’t want to worship the Child – He plans to kill Him!” (implied in Matthew 2:13). The wise men believed the dream, and they were glad that God had warned them. They wanted to obey God, and protect the new King, so they went home another way.

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