

TEXT Matthew 2:1-12

SUPPLEMENTAL SCRIPTURES Isaiah 55:6; Matthew 6:33

OBJECTIVE The students will be able to explain why the example the Wise Men set in their diligent search for the King of the Jews is one we should follow in seeking for things of spiritual value.

KEY VERSE FOR ANSWER Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
— Matthew 2:2

KEY VERSE FOR SEARCH I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.
— Revelation 22:16

**ANSWER
TITLE:** **Follow His Star**

**SEARCH
TITLE:** **What “Star” Are You Following?**

REFERENCE INFORMATION

The Book of Matthew focuses on Jesus as the kingly Messiah, foretold by the Old Testament prophets. Matthew, the author, was a companion of Jesus.

We are not given an exact location of the home of the Wise Men, only that they came from the East. As stated in the first lesson of this unit, it is supposed that these men were Medes and had a priestly function in the Persian Empire.

The descendants of Shem settled along the Euphrates River and in that general area. Their historical background was handed down from generation to generation and some of them retained a knowledge of God’s plan for mankind. Job, for one, worshiped the true God, and

was declared to be a perfect man. Balaam, who made some beautiful prophetic predictions concerning Israel, spoke of a “Star out of Jacob” (Numbers 24:17). That Star was Jesus. How fitting that God would use a special star in the heavens to reveal to these Wise Men that, indeed, the King had been born.

Gold was the most precious of all metals. Frankincense was an incense used in the worship of God. Mixed with spices, it was used in tabernacle worship. Anyone duplicating the fragrance of the perfume for personal use “shall even be cut off from his people” (Exodus 30:34-38). In Revelation 8:3, incense is said to be a symbol of prayer. Myrrh is a fragrant, bitter tasting resin, used as perfume, incense, and in medicine.

YOUR OPENER

What “Star” Are You Following?

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RESPONSES

1. Review with your students some of the Old Testament Scriptures which spoke of a coming Messiah. Point out that the Wise Men evidently had knowledge of these prophecies. Were they the only ones of the day who anticipated a coming king? See “. . . the people were in expectation . . .” in Luke 3:15.

2. Let the students offer their thoughts. No doubt they will conclude that Herod likely was troubled because he felt that his position could be in jeopardy. Perhaps the people of Jerusalem, too, were concerned at the thought of a new king of whom they knew nothing about. Then ask your students to draw a parallel between Herod’s response upon hearing the Wise Men’s news and the response of many today upon hearing the truth of the Gospel.

3. The chief priests and scribes knew the prophecy of Micah which told that Christ’s birthplace would be Bethlehem. Why didn’t they follow the star? It would seem that the star was visible only to those who were looking for it. The Wise Men of the East were apparently watching for the star, and recognized it when it appeared. Jesus enlightens every man that comes into the world, but if a person neglects to walk in the light, he receives no benefit from it.

4. They knew they were going in the right direction again. How does God let us know that we are going the right way as we seek to follow Christ today? Let students share the different sources of encouragement they have received as they have sought to follow Jesus.

The sighting of the star in the east was the beginning of the diligent search by the Wise Men. Their mission served to answer the question, “Who is Jesus?” We have the opportunity to follow their example as we seek for things of spiritual value so that we might know Christ better.

1. How do you think the Wise Men knew that they were searching for the One who was “King of the Jews”? See Matthew 2:2.

2. Why do you think Herod, and all Jerusalem with him, was so troubled upon hearing of the newborn King?

3. How did the chief priest and the scribes know where Christ should be born? See Micah 5:2.

4. Why were the Wise Men so happy to see the star again after they departed from the king?

5. What did the Wise Men do before they presented their gifts to the newborn King?

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION NOTES

6. What gifts can we offer the Lord today? See Romans 12:1 and Hebrews 13:15,16.

7. The Wise Men followed the star which led them to Christ. God still gives man a light to follow. What do you think directs us to Christ today?

8. Are many seeking to follow the Savior today? Why or why not?

9. The Wise Men followed the star even though the journey was difficult. They persevered until they reached their goal. Using the Wise Men as an example, what should our attitude be as we strive for the heavenly goal?

5. They worshiped Him. That was their offering of praise and recognition of His royal position. After that, they "presented unto him gifts." With which do you think God was most pleased? The next question discusses how we can follow their example.

6. Discuss how we can offer ourselves to the Lord. When we are careful of what we read or watch, what we listen to, where we go, and what we say in praise and testimony, we are presenting ourselves to God.

7. Discussion should center around the fact that the star was a sign to the Wise Men. Our signs could be a testimony, the fulfillment of Scripture as seen in our generation (wars, earthquakes, famines, the Jewish nation, etc.), the availability of the Bible, and the presence of the Holy Spirit.

8. Stress that some are truly seeking to follow the ways of Christ today. However, many are not following Him. No doubt, the Wise Men did not understand why others didn't follow the star they saw. In our day, too, it is difficult to understand why so many choose another way.

9. As the students discuss this question they should conclude that they must follow Christ, walk in the light, persevere until the goal is reached. Ask your class what they must do to fulfill these requirements.

YOUR WRAP-UP

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

Why did the Wise Men want to find Jesus, the “King of the Jews”?

Why do people seek Jesus today?

The Wise Men relied on the star as a sign to find Jesus. What are the “stars” that can guide people to Christ?

What “star” guided you to Christ?

How can we find Jesus today?

Why were the Wise Men considered wise?

Do you think that journey was easy? If not, why do you think they didn’t change their minds and turn back?

Why is it helpful to follow Jesus in our day?

What gift can you give Jesus, and how can you use it to serve Him?

In the story in the ANSWER, what news caused surprise when the Wise Men shared it?

THINGS TO DO

The Wise Men brought gifts for Jesus. What can we give Him? Bring several gift-wrapped packages to class (containing items like coins, a watch, tracts, etc.). As each student chooses and opens one, have him or her describe what the gift represents (e.g., coins: our resources; watch: our time; a kneeling figure: prayer; tracts or church invitations: service).

Have your students help you list some of the obstacles or challenges the Wise Men might have faced: dust, heat, a long journey, finding food and lodging, trouble with Herod, receiving no response from the people of Jerusalem, etc. Then, create a list combining these with the obstacles we might face in reaching our own goal: Heaven.

Decorate your bulletin board by cutting out stars and placing them around the board. At the top, display the words: “WHICH ‘STAR’ DO YOU FOLLOW?” Place a star featuring a picture of Jesus in the center. On the other stars, place images representing things like money,

sports, etc. Explain that only Christ gives eternal happiness, while all other things offer only temporary happiness. You can also use this idea without a bulletin board; simply mount the images on cardstock and use them as visual aids.

If you buy Christmas gifts for your students, hide them around the classroom and have the students search for them during the lesson. Clues could be placed under chairs, behind a picture on the bulletin board, etc. Once the students have found their gifts, draw a comparison between their search and the Wise Men’s search for the greatest gift of all: Jesus.

Assignment: Imagine you are one of the Wise Men following the star on the journey to find Jesus. Write a journal entry explaining how you felt. What do you think about the star? How did you feel when you saw Jesus? What motivates you to continue the journey? Be prepared to share your notes with the rest of the class.

Answers for ANSWER

Great Joy!

The Bible tells us that when the wise men saw the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Do you know what else they did? To find out you must decide if the statements below are true or false. Color the T's after each sentence if the statement is true or color the F's if the statement is false. Fill in the blank lines at the bottom of the page with the letters you discover.

1. They saw His star in the east. FFFF  2. They found Him in Bethlehem. FFFF 3. They saw the young Child. FFFF 4. The Child was in a manger. TTTT 5. The Child was with His mother. FFFF 6. They fell down and worshipped Him. FFFF	7. They gave Him gifts. FFFF 8. They were warned in a dream. TTTT 9. They returned to the king. TTTT 10. They departed to their own country. TTTT
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W O R S H I P P E D

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

