

Wise Men Visited Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 2:1-21

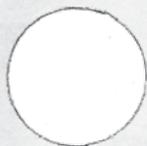
MAIN POINT: The wise men worshiped Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

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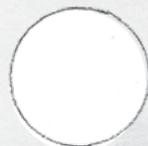
**LARGE GROUP
WORSHIP**
(15–20 MINUTES)
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**SMALL GROUP
ACTIVITIES**
(25–30 MINUTES)
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**LARGE GROUP
CLOSING**
(10+ MINUTES)
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Leader BIBLE STUDY

The wise men were magi. Their study of the stars led them to Judea to find and worship Jesus, the newborn King. Before they found Jesus, though, the wise men met King Herod. God had promised the Jewish people a new king—one who would save them from their enemies.

King Herod was not that king. Imagine how he felt when he heard about a new king in town.

The wise men asked him, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” (Matt. 2:2) The wise men unintentionally challenged Herod’s reign. Not only was Herod not a full Jew, he was not a descendant of King David. Herod was deeply disturbed by the news that this child had the birthright of being king.

As Herod’s fury grew, he gathered his chief priests and scribes to determine where Jesus had been born. Then he lied to the wise men: “When you find Him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship Him” (Matt. 2:8). What deceitfulness! The truth was, Herod did not want to worship Jesus at all; he wanted to kill Him!

The wise men continued on their journey and found Jesus. Jesus may have been about two years old when the magi found Him and worshiped Him. The Bible does not say how many magi worshiped Jesus, although three are often depicted because of their three gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. God warned the wise men in a dream to avoid Herod, so they returned home by another route.

The wise men came to worship Jesus as King. Jesus is the King who will rule forever, as God promised to King David in 2 Samuel 7. Help the children you teach realize that Jesus is the true King who is worthy of all our worship.



Additional resources for each session are available at gospelproject.com. For free training and session-by-session help, visit <http://www.ministrygrid.com/web/tbegospelproject>.

The BIBLE STORY

Wise Men Visited Jesus

Matthew 2:1-21

Long ago, God promised to send a king to save His people from their enemies. The people waited a long time for their king, and the time had finally come! God's Son, Jesus, was born in Bethlehem.

At this time, Herod was the king over the land of Judea. Was Herod the king God promised? No! Herod was a bad king.

Some wise men saw a star in the sky. It was a sign that Jesus had been born, so the wise men went to find Jesus. They came to King Herod.

“Where is the king of the Jews?” they asked. “We saw a star in the east. We want to worship the new king.”

King Herod was very angry. A new king? Herod was king! He asked the priests and scribes, “Where is this king supposed to be born?”

“In Bethlehem, just as the prophet said,” his priests and scribes replied.

Herod spoke to the wise men in secret. “Go find this child. When you find Him, come tell me where He is so I can worship Him as king, too.” But Herod was lying. Herod didn’t want to worship the new king; he wanted to kill Him!

The wise men followed the star to Jesus. They went into the house where Jesus was with His mother, Mary. **The wise men** fell to their knees and **worshiped Jesus. Then they gave Jesus gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.**

When it was time for the wise men to go home, **God warned them in a dream not to tell Herod where Jesus was. So they took a different way home.**

After the wise men were gone, **an angel appeared to Mary's husband, Joseph, in a dream. The angel said, "Take Jesus and Mary to Egypt and stay there. King Herod is looking for Jesus and wants to kill him!"**

So in the middle of the night, Joseph got up and took Mary and Jesus to Egypt where they would be safe.

A while later, after Herod had died, an angel spoke to Joseph again in a dream. "Take Jesus and Mary to the land of Israel, because King Herod is dead now." Joseph did what the angel said. He got up and took Mary and Jesus to Israel.

Christ Connection: The wise men came to worship Jesus as King. God promised to send a King who would be King forever. Jesus is the King who will always be King. Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship.

Large Group WORSHIP

SESSION TITLE: Wise Men Visited Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 2:1-21

MAIN POINT: The wise men worshiped Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

Welcome and worship with song

- “Joy to the World” song
- “Celebrate (Ring the Bells)” song

Welcome preschoolers to worship by playing “Joy to the World.” Greet preschoolers with a smile. When all the preschoolers have arrived, sing an upbeat song such as “Celebrate (Ring the Bells)” to engage them and help them feel welcomed.

Watch or tell the Bible story

- Bible
- “Wise Men Visited Jesus” video (optional)
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster

Invite preschoolers to tell you about any Christmas presents they received or really wanted. Talk about how we celebrate Jesus’ birth at Christmas time.

SAY • Do you normally get special gifts when it is someone else’s birthday? If it’s your little brother or sister’s birthday, do you get presents? Have you ever wondered why we give each other gifts at Christmas? Today we’re going to learn that wise men brought Jesus gifts. **The wise men worshiped Jesus.** Let’s find out what happened.

Open your Bible to Matthew 2. Tell the Bible story in your own words, using the script provided, or show the video. Read the bolded version of the script for younger preschoolers.

Practice the key passage and a Bible skill

Place a Bible marker or ribbon at Galatians 4:4-5. Open your Bible to the key passage. Invite a few volunteers to say the key passage from memory, then say it together as a class one more time.

SAY • Our key passage says that God sent Jesus to rescue people from sin. That's such great news!

Sing the key passage song "Adoption As Sons" together.

- Key Passage Poster
- Bible marker or ribbon
- "Adoption As Sons" song

Learn the big picture question and answer

SAY • Who can say our big picture question and answer?

[*Invite a preschooler to do so.*] Great job! **Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.** Jesus never once sinned, but He died on the cross and rose again to rescue us from sin. Jesus deserves all our worship!

- Big Picture Question Poster

Respond through song and pray

SAY • **The wise men worshiped Jesus as King.** God promised to send a King who would be King forever. Jesus is the King who will always be King. Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship.

Sing "Joy to the World" and "Born in Bethlehem" as preschoolers move with the music. Prepare for prayer by singing "Let Us Adore Him." You may also collect an offering. Pray for the children.

SAY • Dear God, thank You for sending Jesus to be our King forever. Thank You that He rescued us from sin by dying on the cross and coming back to life. Thank You, Jesus, for being our King. Amen.

- "Joy to the World" song
- "Born in Bethlehem" song
- "Let Us Adore Him" song
- offering basket

Transition to small groups

- countdown video (optional)

Small Group ACTIVITIES

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BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.



• star cutout

Follow the star

Before class, cut out a large star from construction paper. Invite preschoolers to line up along a far wall. Explain that children will play “Red Light, Green Light” but instead of saying red/green light, children will move forward when you hold up the star. They will freeze when you lower the star. Play again as time allows.

SAY • God put a star in the sky to show that Jesus had been born. The wise men followed the star until it led to Jesus. **The wise men worshiped Jesus.** Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship.

Pass the crown

Gather preschoolers in a circle. Provide a toy crown. If a toy crown is unavailable, make one out of construction paper. Invite preschoolers to pass the crown while playing the unit theme song or key passage song. When the music stops, the preschooler holding the crown should say, “Jesus is King!”

SAY • God promised to send a King who would be King forever. Jesus is the King who will always be King. Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship. **The wise men worshiped Jesus** as King.

- toy crown
- construction paper crown (optional)
- “Joy to the World” song
- “Adoption As Sons” song (optional)

Build with “gifts”

Before class, wrap a few blocks in Christmas gift wrap (no fantasy themes). Invite preschoolers to use the festive blocks to build. You may also provide gift boxes for children to use.

SAY • The wise men brought Jesus gifts. **The wise men worshiped Jesus.** Jesus is the King who will always be King. Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship.

- blocks
- wrapping paper (non-fantasy themes)
- Christmas-themed gift boxes (optional)

What’s in the bag?

Make sure the jars of perfume and scented oil are sealed and place all of the items in the bag. Invite preschoolers one a time to close their eyes and reach inside the bag. Invite preschoolers to guess the items that are in the bag. After all of the children have guessed, remove the items and talk about what they represent.

SAY • The wise men brought Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **The wise men worshiped Jesus** because Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship.

- large bag or tote
- block wrapped with gold paper
- jar of perfume
- jar of scented oil

Draw a dream

Provide paper, crayons, and markers for each preschooler. Invite children to think about a dream they had or would like to have, and then draw what they can remember.

SAY • God spoke to Joseph and the wise men in a dream. **The wise men worshiped Jesus** because He is our King forever.

- paper
- crayons and markers

Transition to large group closing

- countdown video (optional)

Large Group CLOSING

SESSION TITLE: Wise Men Visited Jesus

BIBLE PASSAGE: Matthew 2:1-21

MAIN POINT: The wise men worshiped Jesus.

KEY PASSAGE: Galatians 4:4-5

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

- Bible
- Bible Story Picture Poster
- Main Point Poster
- Key Passage Poster
- “Joy to the World” song
- Big Picture Question Poster

Review

Point to the Bible story picture as you briefly review the Bible story. Ask the following review questions:

1. What did the wise men follow to find Jesus? (*a star*)
2. Where did the star lead them? (*Bethlehem*)
3. What did the wise men do when they found Jesus?
(**The wise men worshiped Jesus.**)
4. What gifts did the wise men give Jesus? (*gold, frankincense, and myrrh*)
5. ***Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.***

SAY • The wise men came to worship Jesus as King. God promised to send a King who would be King forever. Jesus is the King who will always be King. Jesus is the true King, and He deserves all our worship.

Sing the key passage song or unit theme song.

Pray

Invite preschoolers to tell you any prayer requests they have. Pray for the children by name.

SAY • Jesus, thank You for being King over everything. You are perfect and King forever. Thank You for loving Your people so much that You would pay for our sin. We worship You! Amen!

Missions story

If your preschool ministry is participating in a missions activity, discuss the activity, the reasons for it, and your group's progress. If you are not participating in a missions activity, talk about how God wants us to tell others the good news that Jesus was born to rescue us. You may also show the "Ministry Needs" missions video.

SAY • The men and women in this video know that Jesus came to rescue them and that He is the King of their lives. They traveled to a country called Moldova to share this good news with children there. They love the children there by meeting their physical needs and showing them Jesus' love. They also tell them the good news about Jesus so that the children can believe in Him and celebrate His life too.

Pray for missionaries serving in Moldova. Pray for children to be ready to tell others about Jesus here at home this Christmas season.

• "Ministry Needs" missions video

Travel a long way

Invite preschoolers to line up single file. Hold up a star cutout as you lead preschoolers on a walk out of the classroom and through the children's area of your church. Remind children to be quiet in the hallways so they do not disturb other classrooms. Guide the children back to the classroom.

SAY • The wise men followed a star that led them to Jesus. **The wise men worshiped Jesus** because Jesus is the true King who is worthy of our worship.

• star cutout

Tip: Leave a note for parents so they will know where to find you.

Journal Page

Christmas

Key Passage: Galatians 4:4-5

Big Picture Question: Why was Jesus born? Jesus was born to rescue us.

Session 1: Angels Spoke to Mary and Joseph
Luke 1:26-56; Matthew 1:18-24
God chose a family for Jesus.

Session 2: Jesus Was Born
Luke 2:1-20
Jesus was born as God promised.

Session 3: Wise Men Visited Jesus
Matthew 2:1-21
The wise men worshiped Jesus.





**God sent his Son
... to redeem
those under
the law.**

Galatians 4:4-5





God sent forth his
Son ... To redeem
them that were
under the law.

Galatians 4:4-5





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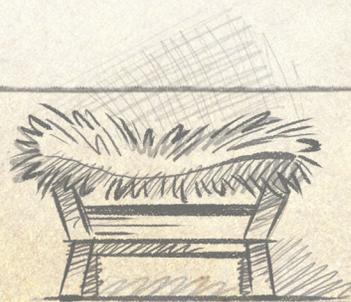


The wise men worshiped Jesus.





Why was Jesus born?



Why was Jesus born?

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