

Wise Men and a Star_Family Bible Time

Wise men from the East knew because of a star that something significant had taken place. They made a long journey bringing precious, valuable gifts to this special baby. Wanting to do harm to Jesus, King Herod tried to use the wise men to lead him to the baby but the wise men left no trail. Instead, Joseph and Mary took Jesus to safety in Egypt.



Scripture References: [Matthew 2:1-18](#)

Suggested Emphasis: Give honour and respect to Jesus.

Group Share Time

List honours that are awarded today and talk about their meanings. If you prepare beforehand you might bring pictures of various awards to use as talking points. Examples might be military awards and honours, Nobel prizes, presidential awards from the queen, recognitions from mayors like keys of a city, school and classroom awards like perfect attendance or for good behaviour and more. Use this as a lead-in to today's theme of honouring Jesus.

Story from the Bible

An adult or young reader can read the words below as the slides are shown.

1. Cover: Wise Men and a Star (Matthew 2:1-18)
2. Far to the east of Bethlehem there were men who were referred to as "magi". The magi were considered to be very wise. Even though they were wise in many ways the magi did not worship God. The magi did, however, study science and the stars. They had seen the stars many times but there was something very different about one star they began to see in the sky. There was something so special about this star that the magi knew they must go and see what it was about.
3. After studying the star the magi began to follow it. This star was so special that they realised that it was leading them to a king. The king of the Jews. This was exciting! They wanted to worship this new king.
4. The star was over the town of Bethlehem but the magi decided to stop in the city of Jerusalem on the way. Herod was the King of the Jews and he lived in a palace in Jerusalem. The magi thought that since he was a king that surely Herod would know about the new king. "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?" the wise men asked Herod, "We saw his star when

- it rose and have come to worship him.” They wanted to give him gifts and praise him like a king deserved.
5. King Herod seemed puzzled. He called together the chief priests and teachers of the law and asked for their advice. Herod was the king. Had the priests and teachers of the law ever hear about another king. These advisers knew what the prophets had written about in the Old Testament. They knew that God was sending a Messiah to save his people. The prophets had said that the Messiah, the real King of the Jews, would be born in Bethlehem.
The “real King of the Jews?”. This meant that when the Messiah came, he would be more important than King Herod. King Herod did not want anyone to be more important than him! He was king and he liked himself a lot. He knew he had to find out where this new king was. He had to get rid of him.
 6. So Herod came back to the Magi and tried to trick them. He told them to go and find the newborn king so he could go and worship him and give him honour too.
But this was a trick. King Herod didn’t really want to worship the new king – he wanted to kill him! He just wanted to follow the magi so he would know where the new king was.
 7. The star began to shine again so the wise men followed it once again. Soon they found the house in Bethlehem where Joseph, Mary and their little boy, Jesus were staying.
 8. Mary and Joseph told the wise men all about how Jesus had been born in a stable. They told them about the angels singing to the shepherds when they announced his birth.
The wise men knew immediately that this little boy was truly the new king of the Jews. They bowed down in front of him and gave him very expensive gifts from their country in the east. The gifts were gold, incense and myrrh. These were the kinds of expensive gifts that people would give to a king. The Magi gave Jesus this special honour.
 9. The magi had a dream and knew that King Herod was going to try to kill Jesus. The magi did not want to tell King Herod where to find Jesus. They went back home a different way so that King Herod would not be able to follow them.
 10. The magi weren’t the only ones to have a dream. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Joseph, get up, take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you. If you don’t go then Herod will search and find your son. Then he will kill him.”
 11. So Joseph got up at that very moment. In the middle of the night he took his family on the long trip to Egypt. They were safe.
 12. It was a good thing that Joseph did act quickly. When the other Magi and I did not return to King Herod he got very angry. King Herod ordered his soldiers to kill every single little Jewish boy under the age of two. He did not know that Jesus was already gone so he thought that he could kill him this way. What a sad day.
 13. But God kept Jesus safe! Jesus was God’s special gift to the world. The wise men knew that Jesus was special so they wanted to give him special honour.
Are you like the wise men? You can give Jesus special honour by obeying him and telling him how much you love him. Have you given Jesus honour today?

Verse(s) to Think About

*“...the Father has given the Son power to do all the judging. God did this so that all people will respect the Son the same way they respect the Father. He who does not respect the Son does not respect the Father. The Father is the One who sent the Son.”
John 5:22b-23*

“Our Lord and God! You are worthy to receive glory and honor and power. You made all things. Everything existed and was made because you wanted it.” Revelation 4:11

Choose Activities and Learn Together

Select activities that suit your family or group. Consider ages and abilities and how to involve everyone present in at least one of the activities.

- **AT HOME:** If Family Bible Time is in the evening go outside and look at the stars. Otherwise make a plan for a star gazing adventure as a family. Talk about what items you will need to take and what kind of stars you will look for.
- **EXPLORE:** Learn about various star constellations. What kind of light do you think the wise men followed?
- **IN THE WORD:** Write Scripture references about honour on individual index cards and fold them or put them in envelopes. Everyone should take turns drawing a card or envelope and reading the verses out loud. After each is read the group can discuss how “honour” is referred to. Some verses about honour might include [Romans 12:10](#); [Romans 13:7](#); [Philippians 2:3](#); [1 Peter 2:17](#); [1 Timothy 5:17](#); [Ephesians 6:1-3](#) or [1 Corinthians 6:20](#) among others.
- **IN THE WORD:** Choose one of the verses above and write it on a large piece of paper. Read and say the verse together. Tear off one word or portion and read and say it together again. Continue tearing off parts of the paper and repeating the verse together. Soon everyone will know the verse without having a paper in front of them. Another way to do this is to use “post-its”. Write one word on each post-it and place them on a surface such as a wall. Read and say the verse together as above and then remove words one by one. [Click here for full instructions.](#)
- **GAME/ACTIVITY:** If at home search for any trophies, medals, ribbons, certificates or any kind award anyone in your family might have received.
- **CREATIVE:** Provide paper, crayons or markers so that everyone can create a recognition award to honour everyone who is present for a quality that each might have. Avoid comparisons and competition and words like “best”. Concentrate instead on giving honour. Examples might be “Great Singing Voice” or “Genuine Smile” or “A Wonderful Encourager”.
- **LIFE APPLICATION:** List ways that you will honour God this week. Consider life situations in which members of the group might find themselves. This might include school, play, sports and leisure, hobbies, being with friends, work or being with neighbours.
- **LITTLE ONES:** Team up younger and older to practice drawing stars. Star stickers on black paper are also fun.
- **LITTLE ONES:** If at home make a trail of stars for the children to follow. Have the children follow the star trail to “Herod’s palace in Jerusalem”. This might be a road sign or picture of a palace. Tell the first part of the story in this place. Then have the students follow another trail to Jesus’ house and tell the next part of the story. Finally, have the children “sneak” back to the main room a different way like the Magi did when they went back home.
- **FOOD FOR THOUGHT:** Serve biscuits/cookies shaped like stars. For more hands-on participation provide plain biscuits/cookies and decorating supplies so participants can decorate.

Song Suggestions:

Singing does not have to be a performance. Don’t take yourself too seriously. In the privacy of your own home or within a small group allow yourself to just be genuine and enjoy the experience together.

Singing songs yourself is more reliable than viewing them online. If you are viewing published videos online on forums such as YouTube be sure and preview them first to make sure there are not unhelpful advertisements. To avoid long pauses due to internet speed issues play the song through once before you begin and then hold it paused and ready to go at the beginning of the song.

- [If You Love Jesus](#)
- [JESUS Cheer](#)
- [Oh, How I Love Jesus](#)

- [You're the One \(video by Acapella-Youtube\)](#)
- [You Are Worthy of My Praise \(video with sing-a-long words by Zoe group-Youtube\)](#)
- [We Three Kings \(video by Eclipse 6-Youtube\)](#)
- [More songs to choose from](#)

Additional Mission Bible Class Resources

- [Instructions for Family Bible Time and Intergenerational Groups here.](#)
- [More teacher information and additional ideas for today's lesson here.](#)
- [How to Plan a Bible Class for Children](#)
- [How to Teach Children at Various Ages](#)
- [Ideas for Teachers](#)
- [Songs for Bible Class](#)
- [Praying With Children](#)
- [Movement and Dance](#)



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