

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 Noah and his family escape destruction?

How old was Noah when the Flood came?

How long did it rain upon the earth?

What were some of the characteristics of Noah that caused him to find favor with God? Why might these characteristics be important to people today?

Noah was given very specific instructions. How important is it to follow directions in order to escape judgment or to reach desired goals?

What are the directions for escaping sin and judgment?

Think how it must have been for Noah to build the ark. How would you feel if you did not understand boat building yet were directed to build a craft with which you were not familiar?

What is coming upon the earth soon, that God compared to the time of the Flood?

Noah escaped by obeying God. What must we do to prepare for Heaven?

What comparisons might be made between conditions on the earth today and those in Noah's time?

Do you think God will again destroy man from the face of the earth? Why or why not?

In the ANSWER story, Kim disobeyed her parents. What did she do to cover up for her disobedience? Will a "cover-up" keep one from being punished? Why or why not?

THINGS TO DO

Using the alphabet as a guide, ask each student to name an item that went into the ark; for example, A — aardvark, B — baboon, C — cat. If a student cannot think of something, just go on to the next person.

Show your students pictures of the ark and a cross. Explain them in this way: ARK — The ark was prepared

to save Noah and any who would believe and follow him into it. Eight people, in all, were saved from that destruction. CROSS — God sent Jesus to die for us. If we will believe and follow Him we will be saved from the end-time destruction. How many people, in all, will be saved?

Bring a road map and a Bible to class. Have your class look at the map and help you choose a starting point and a destination. Decide the best road to travel. Now that you know the best way, it would make no sense to start traveling on back roads or streets that go in the opposite direction. The same is true when we know we want our destination to be Heaven. The Bible is our road map and it tells us that the only way to get there is to repent of our sins. How foolish to think we can get to Heaven in any other way.

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.

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

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

