

Glenview New Church Sunday Morning Program
Preschool Lessons, Phase 2 – Lesson 14
The Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12)

Theme: Christmas - The Lord's Birth

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord's coming was the most important thing that ever happened.
- B. The Lord came into the world to teach people how to be good and to show us who He is and what He is like.
- C. Many people were evil, and few remembered how to be good. If the Lord had not come into the world, mankind would have destroyed itself.
- D. The wise men knew the prophecies of the Lord's birth, and they were waiting for Him to come.
- E. The gift of gold means love to the Lord.
- F. The gift of frankincense means really believing in the Lord.
- G. The gift of myrrh means obeying the Lord.
- H. We too can give the gifts of love, faith, and obedience to the Lord.
- I. When we go to the Word for the truths to guide us, we are following the star, and we will find the Lord in His Word.

II. Story Circle

- A. Introduce the Story
 - 1. Whose birthday do we celebrate on Christmas Day? (The Lord's)
 - 2. Do you know why the Lord was born on earth? (Because people were being very bad, and He had to teach them how to be good)
 - 3. The baby Lord who was born on earth was the same God who had always lived and who made everything on the earth.
 - 4. Do you know the place where the Lord was born? (in the town of Bethlehem)
 - 5. Do you remember His name? (The Lord was called Jesus when He lived in the world.)
 - 6. What was His mother's name? (Mary)
 - 7. Who was Mary's husband? (Joseph. But remember that Joseph was not the Lord's father.)
 - 8. Who came first to see the baby Lord? (the shepherds)

Preschool Sunday School Lessons: Phase 2 – Lesson 14

9. Today we will talk about the wise men. They lived far, far away from Bethlehem. It took them a long time to find the Lord because they lived so far away. (People didn't have planes and cars back then. They walked or rode camels or donkeys.)

B. Tell/Read the Story

1. Tell the story of the wise men, Matthew 2:1-12. (Verses 9-11 are clear enough to be read aloud from the Word.)

C. Ideas to Discuss

1. Who was king when Jesus was born? (King Herod. He was a wicked man. He wanted to kill the baby Lord because he thought the Lord wanted to be king instead of Herod.)
2. Where did the wise men come from? (They came from the East, far away from Bethlehem.)
3. They saw a special star in the East, didn't they? And they followed it to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem they asked Herod where they could find the baby. Did Herod tell them? (Yes. He told them to look in Bethlehem.)
4. Herod asked the wise men to come back and tell him where Jesus was, so he could go worship Him also. Did Herod really want to worship Him? (No. He was lying. He wanted to kill the baby Lord.)
5. Then that special star led the wise men to where the Lord was. What did the wise men do when they saw Him? (They fell down and worshipped Him.) You get down and worship the Lord when you kneel down to pray, don't you?
6. What were the three gifts the wise men gave to the Lord? (gold, frankincense, and myrrh)
 - a. Gold is a very precious metal. Gold means love. Do you love the Lord? (Yes) And it's very important to love the Lord, isn't it?
 - b. Frankincense comes from a special kind of tree, and it smells good, so sometimes people burn it to make the air smell good. Frankincense means faith. Do you believe in the Lord, that He is good and kind and takes care of you? (Yes)
 - c. Myrrh comes from a special kind of bush, and it smells good, and people burn it, too. Myrrh means obedience. Do you try to obey the Lord and your mommy and daddy? Do you do what they tell you?
7. We can give the Lord these three special gifts, too. We can love Him, we can believe in Him, and we can do what the Lord and our mommy and daddy tell us to do!
8. Did the wise men go back to Herod? (No, they had a special dream warning them not to go to Herod, so they went home another way.)

Preschool Sunday School Lessons: Phase 2 – Lesson 14

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "We Three Kings," HYMNAL #207. (You may want to teach children the chorus only.)

B. Activities

1. Burn some frankincense and myrrh during the discussion following the project if time permits. Show the children something made of gold.
2. Pretend to be the wise men:
 - a. Before class, hide a nativity scene in the classroom or in another room. Make a large gold star.
 - b. Teacher carries the star and leads the children around looking for the wise men.
 - c. The teacher may want to say something like:

We are the wise men. The Lord is born on the earth, and we want to worship Him and bring gifts to Him.

A star appears, and we follow it looking for the baby Lord. We travel on our camels for a long time. (Ride your camels, swaying back and forth a little.)

The star leads us to Jerusalem. We ask King Herod where we can find the baby Lord, and he sends us to Bethlehem. Then the star leads us right to the Lord. [NOW find the nativity scene.] There's the baby Lord! Do you see Him there with Mary and Joseph?

What gifts did the wise men give to the Lord? Gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Can we give a present to the Lord? Yes. We can obey the Lord; we can believe that He will take care of us; and we can love Him.

C. Project - A Special Star

1. Materials needed
 - a. White star precut for each child (see attached pattern)
 - b. 12" x 18" piece of black or dark blue construction paper
 - c. Silver glitter
 - d. Glue stick
 - e. Text slip: "And behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them till it came and stood over where the young Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great Joy."
2. Motivation

Have you seen a star at night? What does it look like? What color is it? The wise men saw a special star, didn't they? Let's make a beautiful star to help us remember this story.

Preschool Sunday School Lessons: Phase 2 – Lesson 14

3. Procedure

- a. Children glue the star to the dark paper.
- b. Glue text slip at the bottom of the paper.
- c. Children rub glue stick on the star and around it wherever they want glitter to stick.
- d. Teacher applies glitter for the children.

4. Optional

Tell children that when we read the Word to find out how to be good, we are like the wise men following the star.

D. Alternative Project Idea

1. A quicker star project would be to precut stars from poster board and let the children put glitter on them. These could be used at home as an ornament on the tree or over the nativity scene.

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Pictures of the wise men traveling or adoring the Child.
- B. Felt nativity scene and another nativity scene for the children to play with.
- C. Frankincense and myrrh for the children to smell, and something made of gold.

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's BIBLE STUDY NOTES, Vol. 4, "The Visit of the Wise Men," pp. 257-272.

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