

LESSON 5 THE MAGI

LESSON AT A GLANCE

WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the King We Worship

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2

GOD'S BIG STORY: Guided by a star, wise men from eastern lands come to Jerusalem seeking Jesus, the King we worship. A lying King Herod attempts to trick them, but fails.

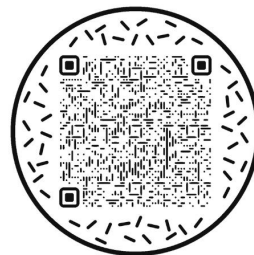
WORD OF WONDER: A child will be born. He will be the Prince of Peace. —from Isaiah 9:6

CURIOSITY

BELIEF

FAITH

- Play Stations:
 - Connect the Stars
 - Gift Wrapping
 - The Magi Coloring Sheet
- Curiosity Activity: Follow the Star
- Word of Wonder: From Isaiah 9:6
- God's Big Story / Snack
- Circle Time: Star Questions
- LARGE GROUP
- Responding in Worship: Bring Your Gift to Jesus
- Game: Star Chasers



[Waiting for the King Preschool Spotify playlist](#)



INVITATION

We invite you to pause, listen, and shift your gaze toward the Father ...

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WONDER TRUTH: Jesus Is the King We Worship

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2

WORD OF WONDER: From Isaiah 9:6

We all worship something, whether we realize it or not. People must order their lives around something. Maybe it's the God revealed in Scripture, or maybe it's one of the many counterfeit gods vying for our attention. The god of comfort. The god of success. The god of wealth. Who do you worship? What do you give your allegiance to?

Read Matthew 2:1–12. In the story of the magi, the wise men are faced with a choice: to obey Herod or listen to God. God had led them to Jesus, who had come not only as the king of the Jews, but also as the everlasting King who would bring salvation to the ends of the earth. After these travelers from a foreign land found Jesus, they bowed down and worshiped Him. Then they listened to God and returned home without yielding to Herod's request. They made their choice.

Every day, we too have choices to make. The rightful King of all creation has been revealed to us, and every other kingdom will someday give way to His Kingdom. Jesus is the King we worship, but counterfeits desperately jostle for our attention. So, what do you give your attention to? Does it point you to Jesus or obscure your vision? Every day is an opportunity to follow Jesus with your whole heart. Come, let us worship the King.

—**Michael Rade**

Care & Support Ministry Assistant; Itinerant Preacher
Contributor to Wonder Ink

DID YOU KNOW?

FOUNDATION BUILDING BLOCKS

WHO?

The magi, or wise men, were astrologers who interpreted the appearance of stars and other astronomical objects. These men played an important part in the court life of various Mesopotamian kingdoms, served as advisers to kings, and were believed by some in the early church to be royalty themselves.

WHAT?

After Jesus' birth, magi from the east came to worship Jesus and bring Him gifts. They followed a star that had risen in the sky. King Herod tried to trick the magi into telling him the location of Jesus. God warned them not to return to Herod.

WHERE?

The magi traveled from Mesopotamia, from what is most likely present-day Iraq. Depending on their route, they may have traversed up to 900 miles. It would have taken several months. They arrived in Jerusalem and then traveled to Bethlehem, which was about five miles south of Jerusalem.

WHEN?

Jesus was born before King Herod died in 4 BC. The magi arrived at least several months after Jesus was born. Herod was still alive at this point. Shortly after the magi's visit, Jesus' family had to relocate to Egypt until Herod's death.

CONNECTING TO GOD'S BIG STORY

The visit of the magi foreshadows the inclusion of Gentiles in God's kingdom and makes sense of Daniel's vision in which people of all nations worship the everlasting King. The kingdom of God is made up of persons from every tribe, language, people, and nation.



Curiosity

Belief

Faith

Identity

LESSON 5 EARLY CHILDHOOD

Spark curiosity, encourage exploration, and get kids thinking about the wonder of God.

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WORD OF WONDER: From Isaiah 9:6

Play Stations

SUPPLIES: coloring utensils, various small toys or objects, wrapping paper, scissors (prep only), tape, gift bows

RESOURCES: Connecting Dots Sheet (1 per kid), The Magi Coloring Sheet (1 per kid) *These are front and back*

Greet kids warmly as they arrive and briefly explain the play stations. Invite them to play at any of the play stations.

"Welcome to church! While we're getting ready to start, you can play at any of these stations to help get ready for our lesson today. Do you have any ideas of what we'll be learning about today?"

Play Station: Connect the Stars

Set-up: Print a Connecting Dots Sheet for each kid. Set out coloring utensils.

Play: Encourage the kids to begin at 1 on the Connecting Dots Sheets and follow the numbers with coloring utensils. It will create a star. They can color the star when they finish.



Play Station: Gift Wrapping

Set-up: Set out several small toys or objects you already have. Cut some wrapping paper to wrap the items. Tear or cut off pieces of tape and stick them along the edge of the table. Set out gift bows.

Play: Let the kids take turns wrapping, unwrapping, and re-wrapping toys or objects.

Play Station: The Magi Coloring Sheet

Set-up: Print one copy per kid of The Magi Coloring Sheet. Set out the Coloring Sheets and coloring utensils.

Play: Let the kids color. The kids can also turn the sheet over and draw a picture of a favorite gift they have received.

Curiosity Activity: Follow the Star

SUPPLIES: yellow construction paper, pen or pencil, scissors (prep only), tape, ruler

Ahead of time, draw a star on a sheet of yellow construction paper and cut it out. Tape it to one end of a ruler.

Have kids get into a line. **Can everyone see this star? Good! I'm going to hold it up so you can all see it as we walk around the room. All of you will follow the star. We will take turns holding the star and walking with it as we go on a journey.**

Walk around the room holding the star up high so all the kids can see it, with kids following in a single file line. Pick a new leader by giving the star to a kid who will come to the front of the line and hold it up high. Continue switching the star to a new leader every so often.

To keep things interesting while the kids are walking, call out different actions and obstacles.

- **It's starting to rain! Hurry! Move fast! I see a cave up ahead.** Move quickly.
- **We're in the cave. It's a tight squeeze! Stay low to the ground!** Pretend to be in a tight space.
- **Whew! We're out of the cave. But because it was dark, you lost your sandal. Hop on one foot!**
Hop on one foot.
- **Oh my! See up ahead—a river! Let's swim through the river.** Pretend to swim.
- **Now there's hot sand and we lost our other sandal in the river—skip!** Skip for a bit.
- **Oh good—I see some rocks. Let's jump across the rocks to get across this hot sand.** Jump a few times.
- **I see some sleeping lions. Let's tiptoe so we don't wake them up.** Tiptoe for a few steps.
- **I think we made it! Let's cheer and celebrate!** Cheer and celebrate.

Great job following the star! Today in our part of God's big story, we're going to hear about some people who also followed a star that led them to a new King—Jesus. When they found Him, they worshiped Him. We can worship Him too! Today's Wonder Truth is: JESUS IS THE KING WE WORSHIP.

Be sure to keep your star attached to the ruler nearby. You'll use it again later in a game.

Make It Inclusive!

Some kids may not be able to do all the movements. Encourage them to move as they're able. If they are unable to walk on their own, they can do the motions from a sitting position and move their arms.

Word of Wonder

SUPPLIES: Bible, empty wrapping paper tubes (1 per every 2 kids), scissors (prep only), construction paper (1 sheet per kid, optional), tape (optional)

Leader Tip: You could also roll up sheets of paper and tape them as an alternative to wrapping paper tubes.

WORD OF WONDER

A child will be born. He will be the Prince of Peace.

—from Isaiah 9:6

Before kids arrive, cut empty wrapping paper tubes in half so there is one half of a tube for every kid. You can also roll up a sheet of construction paper and tape it closed for each kid.

Give each kid a half tube. Say the verse with kids a couple of times, then instruct them to hold the tubes up to their mouths and say the verse through the tube. Encourage kids to say the verse in different ways, with the tube up to their mouth like a microphone or megaphone, pausing between each new command. **Now say it in a soft voice, like a whisper!** Invite the kids to say the verse. **Good, now say it in a high-pitched voice.** Invite the kids to say the verse. **Now let's sing the Word of Wonder.** Invite the kids to sing the verse. **Beautiful! Say it as fast as you can, but all together so we sound like one voice.** Invite the kids to say the verse. **That one was hard! Good job! Now say it in a low, deep voice.** Invite the kids to say the verse. **Good! Now say it in slow motion.** Invite the kids to say the verse. **Great job! Now try saying it with your eyes closed.** Invite the kids to say the verse. **Impressive! One more. Now try saying it with lots of energy!** Invite the kids to say the verse. **Great! I think you know it by heart now.**

- **A CHILD WILL BE BORN.**—Pretend to rock a baby.
- **HE WILL BE**—Point up.
- **THE PRINCE OF PEACE.**—Pretend to place a crown on your head.
- **FROM ISAIAH 9:6**—Hold your hands together in front, palms together, as if opening a book.

Gather kids to discuss these questions:

- **Why do we worship Jesus?**
- **What are some ways we can worship Jesus as our King today?**

God's Big Story / Snack

SUPPLIES: Bible

Hold up a Bible and show the kids. Tell them today's story comes from the book of Matthew in the Bible, which is the first book of the New Testament. Open a Bible and show them where the story is found.

Bible Time Rhyme

Say the Bible time rhyme (with motions) each week before the Bible story to remind kids that what they're about to hear is part of God's big story.

I open my Bible and what do I see? (Hold your hands together, then open your palms, as if opening a book.)

God's big story, waiting for me! (Point to yourself.)

"Let's hear part of God's big story, which comes from the book of Matthew in the Bible."

Read pages 226–231 in the Laugh and Grow Bible.

Circle Time: Star Questions

SUPPLIES: scissors (prep only), box or gift bag (7)

RESOURCES: [Star Questions Sheet \(1/SG\)](#)

Before kids arrive, print and cut apart the Star Questions Sheet. Place each question in a small gift box or gift bag. Have kids sit in a circle on the floor. Lead kids in the following song to the tune of "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star."

Twinkle, twinkle, special star.

We are watching from afar.

Leading us to find the King.

We will come and worship Him.

Twinkle, twinkle, special star.

We are watching from afar.

We're going to sing the song and pass the bag at the same time. The person with the bag when we say the last word ("afar") will choose a question out of the bag to answer. If you don't know the answer, you can choose someone else to answer. Sing the song with the kids. The kid holding the bag when you say the last word ("afar") will choose a question and bring it to you to read. That person can answer or choose another kid to answer. Continue until all questions have been chosen.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- **Who is the King that God promised?** (Jesus)
- **How did the magi know where to find Jesus?** (A star led them.)
- **What is another name for the magi?** (the wise men)
- **How did the magi feel when they saw the star?** (joyful and excited)
- **What did the magi give Jesus?** (gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh)
- **Why did the magi worship Jesus?**
- **How can you worship Jesus as King?**

The magi, or wise men, knew how special Jesus was and they worshiped Him. We can worship Him as our King! Let's talk to God now in prayer and thank Him for sending Jesus."

Invite kids to share prayer requests and praises and to pray for each other. Some kids may not be comfortable praying out loud. That's OK! Encourage them to pray silently and to worship and thank God for coming to earth as our King.

Head to Large Group!

Return and finish the rest of this guide before parents arrive.

Responding in Worship: Bring Your Gift to Jesus

SUPPLIES: chair, fabric or blanket, decorated boxes from the Craft (1 per kid), paper (1 sheet per kid), coloring utensils, sparkly fabric (optional)

RESOURCES: songs from the [Waiting for the King Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#)

Set up a chair in an open area and cover it with fabric or a blanket. You could also cover it with sparkly fabric (if you have it). This will be a throne.

Give the kids their gift boxes from the Craft and a sheet of paper. Set out coloring utensils. **"The Bible says that when the magi saw Jesus, "They bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures. They gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh" (Matthew 2:11).**

During this time, you'll be able to give Jesus a gift. Do you remember how we just decorated some gift boxes? We're going to draw a picture of something you would like to give to Jesus as a gift if you could. It can be a picture of one of your toys. Or maybe you would worship Jesus by singing him a song, so you draw a music note.

Then we'll put your picture into your gift box, and you can set it by the chair. Point to the chair in the room. **We're imagining this is Jesus' throne, like a king has a throne! You're bringing Him your gift."**

While kids are creating their pictures, play worship songs from the [Waiting for Jesus Early Childhood Spotify playlist](#) softly. Allow time for the kids to place their gifts by the throne.

Game: Star Chasers

SUPPLIES: star shape attached to ruler from the Curiosity Activity

Have kids stand in a line shoulder to shoulder on one side of the room. Stand at the other end of the room with the ruler with the star on it. **"The magi watched the star carefully on their journey. When I hold the star up, you will run toward me. When I put the star down, you stop right where you are. If you keep moving when I put the star down, you'll need to go back to the starting place. Watch closely so you know when to go and stop. The first person to get to me wins!**

Hold the star up and down periodically, watching to make sure kids are stopping when the star is down. To make the game more interesting, you can add in a new mode of movement such as walking (not running) when the star is held out to the side.

Great job! You followed the star so well and watched it so closely!"