



# 9

## Seeking the King

### Key Theme

- God is faithful to His promises.

### Key Passages

- Matthew 2:1–13, 2:16

### Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Describe how the wise men reacted to Jesus.
- Describe how King Herod reacted to Jesus.



## Lesson Overview



### Come On In

Students will review the memory verse by putting the Memory Verse Cards in order. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a friend or to the class.



### Activity 1: Seeking the King Class Notes

Students will fill out the Seeking the King Class Notes as you study the lesson.



### Studying God's Word

Wise men from the East rejoiced when they learned that the King of the Jews had been born. They brought gifts and worshipped Him. The king of Judea, King Herod, reacted far differently. He became jealous and angry, and attempted to destroy Jesus!



### Activity 2: Review Relay

Teams will race to pick up question cards and then answer the questions.

# Lesson Preparation

## WHAT YOU WILL DO

## WHAT YOU WILL NEED



### COME ON IN

- ☐ Print and cut out one set of 10 Memory Verse Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Print on cardstock.
- ☐ Put cards in an envelope or plastic bag. Keep cards for Lessons 7–12.

- ☐ Memory Verse Poster
- ☐ Memory Verse Cards in envelope or plastic bag for each student



### SEEKING THE KING CLASS NOTES

- ☐ Print one Seeking the King Class Notes from the Resource DVD-ROM for each student. Keep the answer key for your use.

- ☐ Seeking the King Class Notes for each student
- ☐ Seeking the King Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils



### STUDYING GOD'S WORD

- ☐ Study the Prepare to Share section.
- ☐ Print one Wise Men Map for your use during the lesson.
- ☐ Go Before the Throne.

- ☐ Wise Men Map
- ☐ Student Take Home Sheets



### REVIEW RELAY

- ☐ Print and cut out one set of 16 Review Relay Cards from the Resource DVD-ROM.
- ☐ Print the Review Relay Answer Key for your use.

- ☐ 16 Review Relay Cards
- ☐ Review Relay Answer Key
- ☐ 2 clothes pins



### MEMORY VERSE REVIEW GAME (OPTIONAL)

- ☐ This is an optional activity to use in some or all of the lessons to review the memory verse if time allows.
- ☐ Use one set of 10 Memory Verse Cards from the Come On In Activity above.
- ☐ Tape one card to the backs of 10 students.

- ☐ Memory Verse Poster
- ☐ One set of Memory Verse Cards
- ☐ Tape



## Memory Verse

**Philippians 2:8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.



# Prepare to Share

## SCRIPTURAL BACKGROUND

Prepare to teach by preparing your heart. Read the key passages listed above along with this background.

We learned last week that Jesus came as a humble servant (Philippians 2:8). He came to earth in a very simple way. He was born to a young Jewish woman and laid in a manger (Luke 2:7). God did not send His angels to announce the birth to kings, rulers, or religious leaders. God sent His angels to announce the arrival of the Savior of the world to simple shepherds in the field who were watching over their sheep in the countryside (Luke 2:8–14).

This child laid in a manger was the one promised to be heir to the throne of David, whose kingdom would not end (2 Samuel 7:16). Isaiah prophesied of a King who would bear the government upon His shoulder. He would be the Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). The angel Gabriel announced to the virgin Mary that she would have a Son through the Holy Spirit and that her Son would be great. He would sit on the throne of David, and His kingdom would not end (Luke 1:32–33). This baby Jesus would fulfill many prophecies. And He would one day be a mighty, everlasting King.

How would this King be received? Matthew tells us of two very different reactions. First, we hear of magi (“wise men”) from the East who came to Jerusalem (Matthew 2:1). These wise men were probably from Babylon and ancient Persia. Hundreds of years earlier, magi in this area may have had opportunities to learn of the Jewish Scriptures and the promised Messiah—the King of the Jews—from the prophet Daniel who had been taken as a captive from Judah to Babylon and served in high positions there for many years (Daniel 1:19–20, 6:3).

These great wise men from Babylon came to Jerusalem. They asked, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him” (Matthew 2:2). When King Herod heard about these magi, he met with them to learn of their journey and destination. At the advice of his counselors, King Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem to find the child. When the wise men saw Mary His mother, they fell down and worshipped Him. They then presented Him with treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh (Matthew 2:9–11).

The wise men from Babylon, Gentiles from a distant land, came with expensive gifts and humbly fell before the child in praise and worship.

But what of King Herod—the ruler who was ruling over Judea? What was he thinking about this King who had attracted such attention from men of pagan nations? King Herod was troubled at the news of the one called King of the Jews (Matthew 2:2–3). He sent the wise men to Bethlehem to find the child and instructed them to come back to him and tell him where the child was so that he could worship Him (Matthew 2:8). King Herod’s motives were deceitful, but the almighty sovereign God was watching over the Christ child and His family. Soon after the wise men left for home, Joseph was warned in a dream to take the child and His mother and flee to Egypt because they were in danger. King Herod intended to destroy the child (Matthew 2:13).

Jesus escaped King Herod’s jealous wrath. But many other children were killed as Herod sent forth an order to put to death all the male children two years old and under who were born in Bethlehem and in all its districts (Matthew 2:16).

What a contrast we see between the Gentile wise men and the king of Judea (Herod) regarding the birth of Jesus Christ. The wise men travelled a great distance to worship the King. They humbly bowed before Him and presented valuable gifts. King Herod, on the other hand, was threatened by this one who was destined to be King. His extreme response of murder was one of hatred and fear of losing his throne.

The truth of the matter is, there are only two reactions to Jesus Christ. The Bible clearly states that the one who is not with Christ is against Him (Luke 11:23). There is no middle ground. He is the way, the truth, and the life (John 14:6). Those who repent, trust, and receive Him will freely and willingly bow to Him in praise and worship. They will have eternal life. And those who don’t believe in Him, but are threatened by Him because they don’t want another King in their life, will be condemned because they will not believe in God’s one and only Son (John 3:18).

## HISTORICAL/APOLOGETICS BACKGROUND

Jesus is King! Many people throughout history have rejected His lordship and demanded that they are the kings of their own lives. Like King Herod, they conspire to deny Jesus His rightful place on the throne. Every person throughout all of history has been born a rebel against King Jesus. In Colossians 1:13, Paul makes it clear that no one is born into Christ’s kingdom—all

are born under the power of darkness. It is only by acknowledging, through repentance and faith, that Jesus is Lord that anyone can be brought into the kingdom of Jesus.

Herod was so intent on remaining the king of Judea, and the king of his own life, that he was willing to murder many young children and infants. This heinous act was committed in fulfillment of a prophecy given through Jeremiah (Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:17–18). This murderous legacy continued through Herod's line. His son, Herod Antipas, was the ruler who beheaded John the Baptist and tried Christ before His death. Later, Herod Agrippa I was persecuting the fledgling church in Acts 12. And Paul appeared before his son, Herod Agrippa II, to defend himself in Acts 26.

Herod the Great could not deny Jesus the throne God had prepared for Him. In the same way, any effort of people to deny the lordship of Jesus will also fail. One day, every knee will bow before King Jesus—some exalting Him as the merciful Savior, others as the just Judge who will cast them into eternal punishment (Philippians 2:9–11; Revelation 20:11–15). As ambassadors of King Jesus, we have the joyful duty of serving Him and calling people to bow their hearts to Him before it is too late.

As people celebrate the birth of Christ, there are many traditions they participate in. You might choose to have a nativity scene in your home during the Christmas season. What pieces does it include? Mary? Check. Joseph? Check. Jesus in the manger, a few animals (hopefully no pigs), maybe a stable backdrop . . . and three wise men? Check. But do all of those pieces belong in this scene together?

The birth of our King didn't necessarily happen in a stable behind a hotel, but could have been in the lower room of a house where animals were often kept. Based on our text today, we see another discrepancy between Scripture and the typical nativity scene. If you read the account of the birth in Matthew 2, you will find no mention of how many wise men travelled to Jerusalem seeking the King of the Jews. Some have assumed that there were three since there were three gifts. Others have even suggested the names of these men, but the Bible does not confirm these ideas. They are extrabiblical traditions.

Also, the text seems very clear that the wise men were not present at the birth. They did go to Bethlehem and offer gifts and worship to the child. The Greek

word used in Matthew 2:11 is *paidion*, the word commonly used of a child, not an infant. Additionally, Herod had determined the time of the star's appearing from the wise men and ordered his soldiers to kill every child up to age two (Matthew 2:7, 2:16). This indicates that it was as many as two years later that the wise men found the Christ and offered their worship and gifts to Him. If you would like to spark some conversation, place the wise men across the room (to the east) and when people ask why, open up the Scriptures with them and share the true account of their visit to worship the young King.

Another common question relates to the sign the wise men saw. What was the star? Many have tried to explain it as a convergence of different stars or planets at a specific time, but these explanations fall short of the biblical descriptions. The alignment of planets in the constellations could never point the wise men to a particular city, let alone a particular house. According to the biblical account, the star was a supernatural object that led the wise men to Jerusalem, disappeared, and then reappeared to lead the wise men to the very house where Jesus was living (Matthew 2:9–10).

At Christmas and throughout the year, we need to be diligent to ensure that the cultural traditions and the media do not corrupt the truth of God's Word. We must take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ—our King. As we do so, we can help those who are His subjects to understand more about their King and share those truths with those who are not yet part of His kingdom.



## BEFORE THE THRONE

King of kings, I worship you. Once again, I am brought to my knees as I consider your glory. You alone are worthy of the kind of royal worship that the wise men offered you. I have no gold, frankincense, or myrrh, but my life is yours. My desire is to surrender my life completely to your lordship. As I teach this lesson and discuss the response of men to King Jesus, please bring understanding to the minds of my students. Move in their hearts to hear the truth and to one day submit to the authority of Scripture and to Jesus Christ, the King of kings.

➤ Because of the age and ability of 1st and 2nd graders to read and comprehend, we encourage you to read the Scriptures to the students. However, if you have strong readers, by all means have them participate by reading God's Word.



## COME ON IN

As students arrive . . .

- They will review the memory verse by putting the Memory Verse Cards in order. If time allows, they will recite the verse to a friend or to the class.

*This time at the beginning of class should be used to review the memory verse. We have provided an activity sheet on the Resource DVD-ROM for you to use. You may have other ideas and ways to encourage your students to memorize the verse.*



After all the students arrive, pray with them before beginning the lesson.



## REVIEW

Using the Lesson Theme Posters provided with each lesson, quickly review the previous lesson(s) with your students. Take 5 to 10 minutes to reinforce the important truths the students have heard so far in your class.

Ask the children questions about the previous lessons as you display the Lesson Theme Posters. Reflect briefly on the passages you read, bringing the objectives and themes back into focus. This will refresh the truths in your students' minds and maintain continuity as you teach through the lessons.



## Seeking the King Class Notes

### MATERIALS

- ☐ Seeking the King Class Notes for each student
- ☐ Seeking the King Class Notes Answer Key
- ☐ Pencils

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Print the class notes for each student. Pass them out at the beginning of class. Have students fill in the blanks as you study the lesson.*

We will be completing these class notes as we study the Bible passages. Do not

work ahead. We'll complete them together during class. You will finish the words in each statement by filling in the blanks. There is a Word Bank on the notes to help you with the spelling of the words.

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

As we complete the class notes today, we will compare two different reactions to Jesus's birth. Some people loved Jesus, and some hated Him.



## Studying God's Word

### READ THE WORD

*Refer to the Lesson 8 Lesson Theme Poster. So Christ was born! He came as a humble servant. He came to earth in a very simple way. He was born to a young Jewish woman and was laid in a manger. God sent His angels that night to announce the birth of His one and only Son. But the angels did not go to kings, rulers, or religious leaders. Instead, God sent His angel-messengers*



► Use the New Testament History Poster included with your teacher kit as you teach the lesson. Emphasize that Jesus ministered only 3 years, and He lived only about 35 years. Yet His life changed the world forever and brought eternal life to all who believe.

### Matthew 2:1–12

to announce the birth of the Savior of the world to simple shepherds in the fields who were watching over their sheep.

? We said this was a bit surprising. Who remembers why people would be surprised by the simple and humble way God brought Jesus into the world? **Who is Jesus?** *Jesus is God, Creator, King, sovereign ruler, and sustainer of the universe!*

Yes! Jesus is God! But He came to earth in a simple way. He came as a servant. He came to be the perfect sacrifice for sinners, so we could have life and hope in Him!

We will read today about two different reactions to Jesus. The king of Judea reacted differently from the Magi—the wise men—who came from a faraway land. They were all powerful men. But we will see how they reacted to the birth of this simple baby, born to be the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

I'm going to turn in my Bible to Matthew 2. This is what happened after Jesus was born. Listen while I read verses 1–12. *Read Matthew 2:1–12 with enthusiasm.*

## EXAMINE THE WORD

### Observe the Text

? Who was the king of Judea at this time? *Re-read Matthew 2:1 if necessary. Herod.*

? And who had made their way to Jerusalem? *Matthew 2:1. Wise men from the East.*

Some people call these wise men Magi. That is another name for them. They were not kings, but they served the kings of their land in different ways.

*Refer to the Wise Men from the East Map.* These wise men were probably from Babylon and ancient Persia. As you can see on the map, they would have traveled a long way to get to Jerusalem!

These wise men were more than 1,000 miles away from Jerusalem! Yet they had heard and read the prophecies about a coming King—prophecies written in the Jewish Scriptures—the Old Testament! It seems impossible that they could have known about Him! But nothing is impossible for God. And God made sure they would know.

You see, long before Jesus was born, about 600 years before, a man named Daniel was taken captive from Israel and taken to Babylon.

Daniel was a prophet of God and knew God's Word. Some people think that Daniel told the people in Babylon what he knew about God and the coming King. The people in Babylon heard the prophecies Daniel talked about and believed what they heard.

? Will someone read #1 on your class notes? How will you answer that? Finish the word. Use the Word Bank to help with spelling. *Assign a reader. Wise.* Let's read it together.

? The wise men came a long way! And now these Magi from the East arrived in Jerusalem. What did they ask when they got to Jerusalem. *Re-read Matthew 2:1–2. Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?*

? What had they seen in the sky? *Matthew 2:2. A star.*

? And why had they traveled so far to see this King? *Matthew 2:2. To worship Him.*  
Herod did not know anything about this King of the Jews. And yet these wise men had come over a thousand miles to worship Him!

? Now, look at #2 on your class notes. Who can read it for us? What is the answer? Finish the word. *Assign a reader. Star.*

? And who will read #3 and answer that? What is the answer? Again, finish the word. Use the Word Bank to help with spelling. *Assign a reader. Worship.*

Herod may not have known about this King of the Jews. But he wanted to find out! The Bible tells us that Herod gathered his own wise men—chief priests and scribes—and asked them where this King of the Jews was to be born. He had never heard of Him!

? Where did they say the King was born? *Re-read Matthew 2:5. In Bethlehem of Judea.*

The chief priests and scribes Herod gathered around him knew the answer to Herod's question. They knew because they had read the Old Testament Scriptures and the words written by God's prophets long ago.

*Refer to your Bible as you explain this.* You see, before Jesus was born and before the New Testament was written, the Jews already had the Old Testament. They had read what God's prophets had written about the promised Messiah. They knew what the prophet Micah wrote, that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem. So, when King Herod asked about this King of the Jews, they knew how to answer him! They knew the baby would be born in Bethlehem of Judea.

? Herod told the wise men to go to Bethlehem and find this baby. What else did King Herod tell them? Listen again. *Re-read Matthew 2:8. What did King Herod say? When you have found the baby, let me know. I will come and worship Him also.*

*Refer to the Wise Men from the East Map.* The wise men from the foreign land were very close to the end of their journey. They were in Jerusalem. Jesus was in Bethlehem, just a few miles away. The Bible says the star that had led them this far appeared again and moved along until it stood over the very house where Jesus was.

➤ Re-read the verses or the portion of the verse(s) that answer the questions you are asking of the text.

➤ Read the completed answers on the class notes together as you go through the lesson.

They made it! They were so glad to finally find the new King! Listen to these verses again, so you can answer my questions. *Re-read Matthew 2:10–11 enthusiastically!*

- ? What was the first thing they did as they entered the house? *Matthew 2:11a. They fell down and worshipped Him.*
- ? And what did they do after bowing before this young child who was the King of the Jews? *Re-read Matthew 2:11b. They presented gifts—treasures—to Him.*
- ? What does the Bible say those gifts were? *Matthew 2:11. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*  
That's right! They brought special treasures for the King.
- ? Let's move on to #4 on your class notes. Will someone read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Treasures. Finish the word. Let's read that sentence together.*

### Discover the Truth

These wise men, from a faraway country, bowed down and worshipped this little child! They loved Him. They brought gifts worthy of a king. The Bible says they rejoiced with exceeding joy, which means they were full of great joy because they were finally able to meet this one who would be a King forever—they met King Jesus! They loved King Jesus.



### READ THE WORD

Then there was King Herod. He was in Jerusalem. He had lied to the wise men and told them to come back and tell him where to find Jesus so he could worship Him, too. But Herod did not want to worship Jesus. He hated Jesus. He wanted to harm Him!

God protected Jesus by telling the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. They obeyed God and went home another way! King Herod didn't like that one bit! He was really angry now. The wise men had ignored him. But God had protected Jesus.

Matthew 2:16

Let's read what the Bible says happened next. *Read Matthew 2:16 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

### EXAMINE THE WORD

#### Observe the Text

- ? How did King Herod feel when he learned the wise men had deceived him and went home a different way? *Matthew 2:16. He was angry!*
- ? He was VERY angry! What does the Bible tell us he did? *Matthew 2:16. He ordered that all the male children—the boys—who were 2 years old and younger be killed in Bethlehem and in all its districts.*



I would say that he was VERY angry. King Herod ordered that EVERY baby boy who was 2 years old and younger be killed! He thought that Jesus would be one of those children who were killed.

Well, we know Jesus wasn't killed. He was protected. Listen as I read Matthew 2:13 and tell me how Jesus was protected. Listen carefully! *Read Matthew 2:13 emphasizing the answers to the questions below.*

? Who is this verse about? *Joseph.*

? Who appeared to Joseph? *An angel of the Lord.*

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream!

? What did the angel say? Where did the angel tell Joseph to take the young child, Jesus? *To Egypt.*

God protected Jesus again. He sent an angel to tell Joseph to take Jesus and Mary away to Egypt. God knew that King Herod wanted to destroy Jesus.

? Look at #5 on your class notes. How did God protect Jesus? Will someone read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Herod.* Finish the word. Let's read that sentence together.

? And what about #6? God protected Jesus in another way. Who can read that? What is the answer? *Assign a reader. Away.* Finish the word. Let's read that sentence together.

Let's think about this for a minute. Even though Herod reacted to King Jesus with hate and jealousy, God was still in control of everything. God protected Jesus. First, in a dream the wise men had and then in a dream Joseph had. God knew what was going on. He knew His Son needed protection even before anything happened.

? What is the attribute that speaks of God knowing ALL things! *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Omniscient.* Let's say that word together. Repeat "omniscient" together.

Yes! God is omniscient. He knows all things—past, present, and future! He knew what King Herod had planned. And He warned Joseph and the wise men to get out of Bethlehem! God protected Jesus!

OMNISCIENT

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

## Discover the Truth

Wow! What a way to start your life as a King! Even as a little baby, Jesus had an angry, jealous king wanting to kill Him! AND Jesus had wise men, powerful men, bowing in worship to Him and bringing Him gifts.

That is because Jesus IS who He said He was! Jesus IS God! Jesus IS the Messiah! Jesus came to change the world! Some men hated Him, and some men loved and worshipped Him.

## SOVEREIGN

(Refer to Attributes Poster)

- ? Take a look at #7 on your class notes. Who would like to read that and answer it for us? *Assign a reader. Loved. Hated.*

We know God was in control! He protected Jesus. And all through the entire Bible, we can trust that God was in control! Everything was happening according to God's plan. God was doing His will.

- ? What is the attribute that speaks about God being in control of all situations? *Refer to the Attributes of God Poster. Sovereign.*

Yes! And God is STILL sovereign. And we must remember that.

We can't always understand everything God does. But we can know and trust that God is in control. We can trust that He is wise and good, and that what He is doing is for our good and His glory! We know He is in control of everything! He is sovereign.

- ? Now look at #8 on the class notes. Who wants to read that for us? How will you answer it? *Assign a reader. Control.*



## Review Relay

### MATERIALS

- ☐ 16 Review Relay Cards
- ☐ Review Relay Answer Key
- ☐ 2 clothes pins

### INSTRUCTIONS

Scatter the Review Relay Cards face down on the floor at the front of the class. Divide the class into two teams. Give each team a clothes pin. Teams will take turns using the clothes pin to pick up one of the Review Relay Cards and return it to you. Read the question and let the team answer. If the question is answered correctly, the team will keep the card and get a point. If not, the card should be returned to the floor. The team with the most cards/points for correct answers is the winner.

We are going to divide into two teams. Each team will earn points by answering the

questions from today's lesson on the Review Relay Cards. If you need help reading it, I'll help you. And if you get the answer right, you will keep your card and your team will get a point. *Play the game.*

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Good job! The wise men traveled from the East to see the child Jesus. They worshipped Him. At the same time, King Herod became jealous and very angry when he heard about the new King. Some men loved Jesus. And some men hated Him. Today it is the same. Some people worship Him. Some people reject Him.





## Memory Verse Review Game (Optional)

**Philippians 2:8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

*If you find you have extra time, please consider reviewing the memory verse with your class using this activity.*

### MATERIALS

- ☐ One set of Memory Verse Cards from Come On In Activity
- ☐ Masking tape

### INSTRUCTIONS

*Allow students to look at the Memory Verse Poster and say the verse together as a class a couple of times. Remove or cover the poster before the game begins. Tape the Memory Verse Cards onto 10 students' backs. Students will work together to put themselves in order according to the memory verse. Once they think they are standing in order, check the verse by reading the words out loud according to how they are standing.*

*If you have fewer than 10 students, tape more than one card in the proper order, on some students. If you have more than 10 students, assign the students without the cards to put the students with the cards into the proper order. Repeat if time allows.*

We're going to practice our memory verse. Let's say the verse together a couple times.

*Cover the poster before starting the game.*

*Tape the 10 cards onto the students' backs. Now I am going to tape these 10 Memory Verse Cards to 10 backs! Once I have done that, I want you to work together to get into the right order.*

We'll check the verse when you are finished. You have to work together and help each other get in order.

*Most groups may need a time limit to encourage them to move at a quick pace. If so, let them know the limit and use a timer to count down the time. Once the students think they are in the right order, check them by reading the words out loud.*

### CONNECT TO THE TRUTH

Our verse reminds us that even though Jesus was fully God, He humbled Himself, came to earth, and obeyed even to death. Jesus was born in a humble and simple way, knowing that He would die on the Cross to save sinners.



## Applying God's Word

### WHAT YOU HEARD IN THE WORD

These were very different reactions to this little baby who lay in a manger in the small town of Bethlehem. You would think it would have happened differently. But Herod, the king of Judea, was filled with anger, jealousy, and hatred at the thought of another king. He wanted to kill Jesus and stop Him right then and there!

But then, there were the wise men who traveled more than a thousand miles on a long and difficult journey just to see this new King born in

Bethlehem. And these powerful, wise, wealthy men from a foreign land came to worship King Jesus! When they saw the boy Jesus, they knew this was the one who would bring salvation and peace to sinners! They offered expensive treasures—gifts that were fitting to be given to a king! Their hearts were filled with joy and peace as they traveled back to their own country!

Even today we see these same two reactions to Jesus. People either realize that He is the Christ, the only way to God the Father, and they worship Him, or they reject Him like Herod did.

## **GOD’S WORD IN THE REAL WORLD**

Last week we talked about the birth of Jesus Christ. And we discussed things that are often seen in “Christmas scenes” that really aren’t written in the Bible. Remember how we said that the word “inn” as used in the Bible didn’t mean a hotel in Jesus’s time? It meant an upstairs room where guests stayed in a house. In fact, the room Jesus was born in may have been just downstairs from that guest room.

We sometimes see angels in our Christmas scenes, too. But the Bible tells us that the angels appeared to the shepherds out in the fields. It doesn’t say there were angels right there where Jesus was born.

? So what about what we read today? How many gifts did the wise men give to Jesus? Do you remember? *Re-read Matthew 2:11 counting on fingers. Three.*

Yes, the Bible tells us they brought Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

? And how many wise men came to see Jesus? *Allow discussion.*

We often see three wise men, right? Because there were three gifts! Well, the Bible tells us that the men from the East did bring three gifts—gold, frankincense, and myrrh. But it doesn't tell us anywhere how many wise men came. In fact, other history books from that time tell us that the wise men from other countries often traveled in large groups. So there may have been many wise men who traveled together to see Jesus, the King of the Jews.

? How old was Jesus when the wise men came to visit Him? *Allow discussion.*

Again, we often see the wise men at the nativity scene right after Jesus was born—while He was still an infant. But we don't really know that either. It is believed that Jesus may have been two years old by the time the wise men came to visit.

I think that a Christmas scene is a wonderful reminder of the night Jesus was born. But we need to remember to be careful that what we hear or read about Jesus and the Bible matches what we read in the Bible. Be good students of God's Word. It isn't always easy, and sometimes things are confusing. But God likes it when we work hard to know Him better and to read His Word correctly.



➤ Pass out the Student Take Home Sheets and remind the children to practice the memory verse this week.



## Group Prayer Time

- Praise God that He has made Himself known to us through His Word.
- Thank God for the people who worship and bow down to Jesus like the wise men did.
- Pray that your students will fall in love with Jesus as they learn more about Him.

[illegible]