Preschool–Grade 6

The Wise Men

Sunday School Lesson for Kindergarten to 2nd Grade, 45 minutes

Main point: The wise men searched for Jesus and worshiped Him with great joy. We can seek Jesus and worship Him too.
Bible passage: Matthew 2:1–12. Read it before class.
Memory verse: "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." *Matthew 2:10 (KJV)*
You need: a Bible, a large star cut from yellow paper, 6 small paper stars, a marker, tape, crayons, and one take-home sheet for each child.
Before class: write the memory verse on the 6 small stars (see part 4). Put a bookmark in your Bible at Matthew 2.

1. Opening game: Follow the Star (5 minutes)

Hold up the big paper star and walk slowly around the room. The kids follow behind you in a line. When you stop and hold the star still, everyone stops and sits down right where they are. Then stand up and go again. Let a few kids take a turn carrying the star. Say: "Today we will hear about wise men who came to find Jesus. God's star went before them and stopped right over the place where Jesus was."

2. Bible story: The Wise Men Find Jesus (10 minutes)

Hold up your Bible open to Matthew 2, so the kids can see the story comes from God's Word. Tell it in your own words:

Jesus was born in the town of **Bethlehem**. At that time a man named **Herod** was the king (Matthew 2:1). One day, **wise men** came from the east to the big city of **Jerusalem**. The Bible doesn't tell us how many wise men there were. It just says "wise men from the east" (2:1).

The wise men asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" They said they had seen His star in the east, and they had come to worship Him (2:2). To **worship** means to bow down and honor God and love Him with all your heart.

When King Herod heard this, he was **troubled**. That means he was upset and worried. All the people of Jerusalem were upset too (2:3). Herod called the leaders who knew God's Word and asked them where Christ should be born (2:4). They said, "In Bethlehem of Judaea," because a prophet had written it long ago (2:5–6).

Then Herod called the wise men in secret. He asked them when the star first appeared (2:7). He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child." **Diligently** means carefully. He told them to come back and tell him when they found Him, so he could come and worship Him too (2:8). But Herod was not telling the truth. He did not really want to worship Jesus (2:13).

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The story continues: The wise men left to go to Bethlehem. And look! The star they had seen in the east went before them. It went ahead of them until it came and **stood over** the place where the young child was (2:9).

Read Matthew 2:10 from your Bible: "When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy." Say: "That means they were very, very happy!"

The wise men came into the **house**. There they saw the young child, Jesus, with **Mary** His mother. They bowed down low and **worshiped** Him (2:11). Then they opened their **treasures** and gave Him gifts: **gold**, **frankincense** and **myrrh** (2:11). Frankincense and myrrh were costly gums from trees that smell sweet.

Then God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went home to their own country a different way (2:12). God was taking care of Jesus.

3. Questions to ask (5 minutes)

1. In what town was Jesus born? *(Bethlehem, Matthew 2:1)*
2. What did the wise men see in the east? *(His star, 2:2)*
3. What did the star do? *(It went before them and stood over where the young child was, 2:9)*
4. Where did the wise men find Jesus? *(In a house, with Mary His mother, 2:11)*
5. What gifts did they give Him? *(Gold, frankincense and myrrh, 2:11)*

4. Memory verse: Star Verse game (5 minutes)

Tape the 6 small stars up in order: *When they saw / the star, / they rejoiced / with exceeding / great joy. / Matthew 2:10.* Explain the old words: **rejoiced** means they were very glad, and **exceeding great joy** means very, very big joy. Read the verse together. Then take one star away and read it again. Keep taking stars away, one each time, until the kids can say the whole verse by themselves.

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5. What this means for us (5 minutes)

Say: "The wise men looked for Jesus until they found Him, and then they worshiped Him. Why did they worship Him? Because Jesus is God! God loves you very much. But everyone has done wrong things. The Bible calls that sin: 'For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God' (Romans 3:23, KJV). That means none of us is as good as God. Jesus is God who came to earth as a man (1 Timothy 3:16). When Jesus grew up, He died for our sins, He was buried, and He rose again (1 Corinthians 15:3–4)! The Bible tells us how to obey the gospel, the good news about Jesus: 'Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.' (Acts 2:38, KJV) To **repent** means we are sorry for our sin and we turn away from it. We are **baptized**, buried all the way under the water, in Jesus' name, so our sins are washed away (Romans 6:4; Acts 22:16). **Remission** means God takes our sins away. And God fills us with the **Holy Ghost**, His own Spirit, and we speak in other tongues, words God gives us, just like the believers did in the Bible (Acts 2:4)."
Pray with the kids, and encourage them to talk with their parents and pastor about being baptized in Jesus' name and filled with the Holy Ghost. Never pressure a child.
This week: seek Jesus like the wise men. Talk to Him in prayer every day, and worship Him with a happy heart.

6. Activity (10–15 minutes)

Choose one: the **wise men word search** (vbshq.com/puzzles/wise-men-word-search), the wise men coloring page or craft (vbshq.com/bible-stories/wise-men), or **Where Did the Star Stop?:** one child turns around and covers their eyes while you tape the big paper star somewhere in the room. The child looks for it while the class claps softly when they are far away and louder as they get closer. When the child finds the star, they tell one thing from the story. Then a new child looks.

7. Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for coming to us in Jesus. Help us look for You every day, like the wise men did, and worship You with great joy. In Jesus' name, amen."

If a child asks "How many wise men were there?": say, "The Bible doesn't tell us. It tells us about three gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh (Matthew 2:11)."

If a child asks why God told them not to go back to Herod: answer simply. Herod did not really want to worship Jesus (Matthew 2:13). God warned the wise men, and God kept young Jesus safe (2:12–14).

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