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Magi and the Messiah

Key References: Matthew 2:1-12; *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 6, pp. 59-67; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 47-52; Our Beliefs, nos. 1, 4, 22.















Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 102.

power**text**

"Give praise to the LORD, proclaim his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts" (1 Chronicles 16:8, 9).

power**Point**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

Have you ever gone to an unknown place, with only a few clues about how to get there? The Magi were in that kind of situation while searching for Jesus. About the only thing they knew was that He was a king. Even though their journey was going to be long, their ultimate goal was to find and worship Him.

During the time Jesus was born in Bethlehem there lived in the East a group of wise, honorable, and educated men who were awaiting the coming of the Messiah. They were not part of the Jewish nation, yet they were seekers after the truth. These men of noble character recognized God as the Creator of the universe as they contemplated His works in nature. They also studied the Hebrew Scriptures and discovered with growing interest that the coming of the Messiah was near. In their sincere desire to know more about such a significant event, they were alert to identify the signs of His coming.

Around the time the angels announced to the humble shepherds in Bethlehem the news about the birth of Jesus, the men from the East also discovered what seemed to be an unusual star. Not knowing how to account for it, they looked for an explanation in the Scriptures, and their attention was drawn to Balaam's prophecy:

"A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel" (Numbers 24:17).

The Wise Men welcomed the light of God's revelation with open hearts. They were receptive to follow the star and find the Messiah, as the Lord told them in a dream. Soon the small group of Wise Men set out for the long journey. They traveled by night, following the star. During the day the travelers rested and eagerly studied the prophecies, being reassured of God's leading.

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Sunday

READ Read Numbers 24:17 and this week's lesson, "Magi and the Messiah."

LEARN Write the power text with the reference on both sides of a paper star. Hang it where you can see it. Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God that He gives you the desire to worship Him.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 2:1, 2.

THINK What techniques did the Magi use while looking for Jesus? What questions did they ask?

MAKE Create a treasure hunt for a younger child, using printed-out memory verses from their Sabbath School lessons. Help them memorize them as they found them.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Thank God for allowing us to seek after Him and to find Him.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 2:3-6.

THINK Why weren't the priests looking for the Baby? How did they feel after Herod asked them about the place where the Messiah was to be born?

CREATE Make a greeting card and write a message to Jesus. Place it where it will remind you to praise Him.

REVIEW Review the power text.

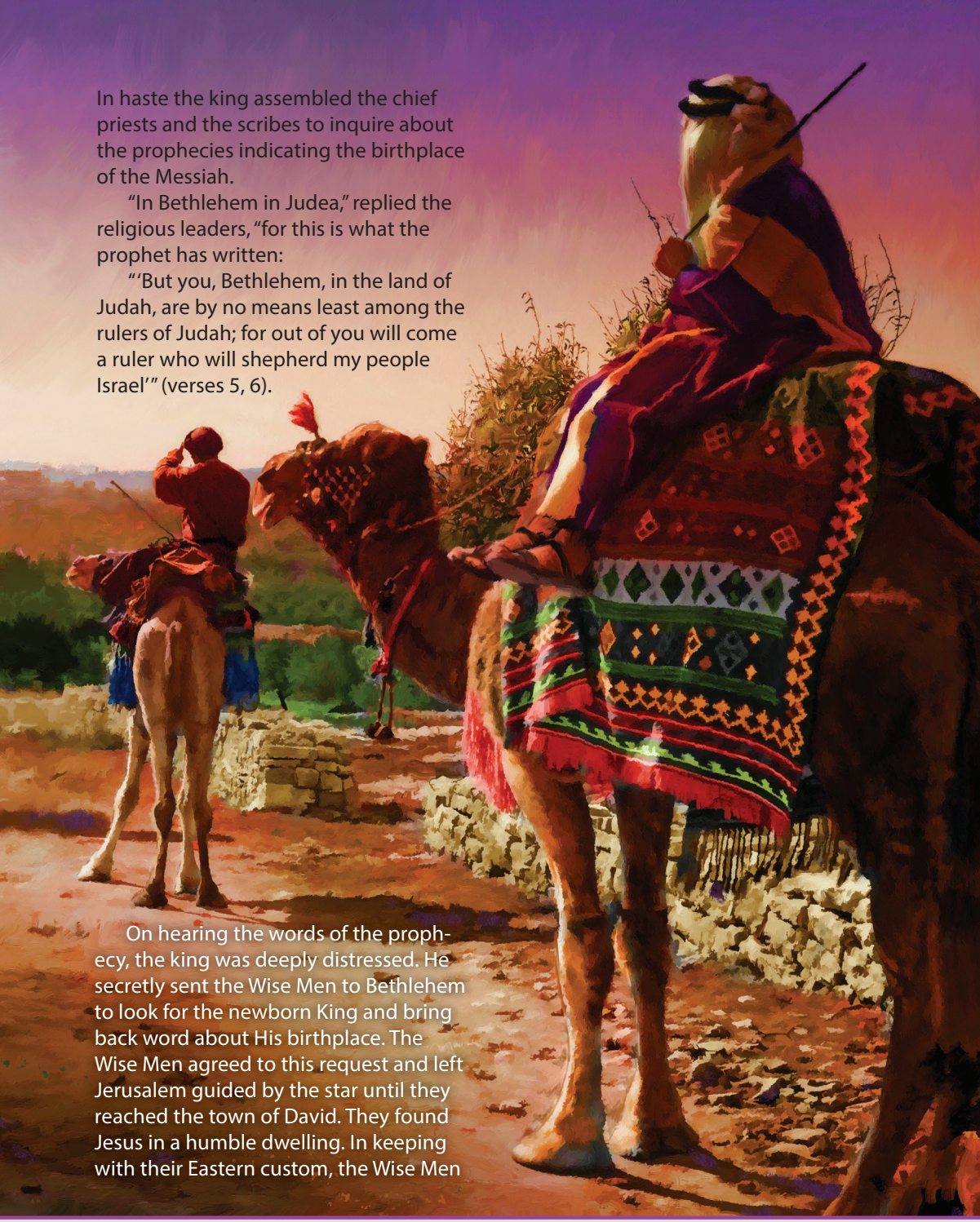
PRAY Tell Jesus how much you love Him.



Once they arrived in the land of Israel, the star guided the travelers to Jerusalem and stopped over the Temple. With growing anticipation the travelers started to inquire: "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him" (Matthew 2:2).

To the Wise Men's surprise, their question was treated with indifference. The people seemed ignorant to the glorious event that had taken place in their nation.

The news of the Wise Men's visit reached the palace of King Herod and filled him with fear, anger, and jealousy.



In haste the king assembled the chief priests and the scribes to inquire about the prophecies indicating the birthplace of the Messiah.

"In Bethlehem in Judea," replied the religious leaders, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel'" (verses 5, 6).

On hearing the words of the prophecy, the king was deeply distressed. He secretly sent the Wise Men to Bethlehem to look for the newborn King and bring back word about His birthplace. The Wise Men agreed to this request and left Jerusalem guided by the star until they reached the town of David. They found Jesus in a humble dwelling. In keeping with their Eastern custom, the Wise Men

Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 2:7, 8.

THINK Why do you think Herod had a secret meeting with the Magi? Did Herod want to worship the Baby?

INVITE Talk with your family about inviting someone to share Friday supper and worship with your family.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Ask God to help you share His love with others.

Thursday

READ Read Matthew 2:9-12.

SEARCH Find "gold," "frankincense," and "myrrh" in your dictionary or encyclopedia and read about their meaning and their uses.

LIST What kind of gifts would you give Jesus today? List them in your Bible study journal.

REVIEW Review the power text.

PRAY Offer God your best gifts.

Friday

READ With your family, read Matthew 2:1-12.

REPEAT Repeat the power text aloud from memory.

CELEBRATE If you have invited guests for Friday supper, enjoy your meal together and then talk about Jesus' birth and what you could offer Him as a gift.

SING Sing "We Three Kings" (*The SDA Hymnal*, no.137).

PRAY Pray together, offering your hearts to Jesus.

presented Jesus with precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and, bowing down, they worshipped Him.

But while in Bethlehem the Wise Men were instructed by an angel not to return to King Herod, so they went home by another way. Similarly Joseph was told in a dream to flee to Egypt with his family because Herod was seeking to murder the Child. Without hesitation Joseph took his family and went to Egypt. The gifts received from the Wise Men served to supply the family's daily necessities while they lived in Egypt. After an angel told Joseph of the death of King Herod, he and Mary and Jesus journeyed back to Israel and established their home in the town of Nazareth, in Galilee.

God's Word, the Bible, is a trusted guide (see Psalm 119:105). The Bible, when studied prayerfully, will lead us into a saving relationship with Jesus. "Yes, the whole Bible tells of Christ. From the first record of creation—for 'without Him was not anything made that was made'—to the closing promise, 'Behold, I come quickly,' we are reading of His works and listening to His voice. John 1:3; Revelation 22:12. If you would become acquainted with the Saviour, study the Holy Scriptures" (Ellen G. White, *Steps to Christ*, p. 88). Like the Wise Men from the time of Jesus, we too can choose to be guided by the light of God's Word, for the Bible will lead us to the Savior.



PUZZLE
13

SING TO THE LORD!

Instructions: In the Bible verse below, each different letter has a different number. Use the clues at the bottom to help you decode the verse.

1	2	3	4		5	3	6		7	5	8	9		7	10	1	2	11			
18	14	13	7		12	13	10	14		15	9	5	14	16							
16	13		16	15	9		17	13	14	6											

. . .

Clues:

1	16	14	2	3	4	9	6		2	3	1	16	14	10	7	9	3	16	1		

= devices whereby slender lengths of material are caused to vibrate by being stroked, plucked, or struck to produce music.

6	14	10	7	1	16	2	11	8	= stick for beating drum

15	5	14	7	13	3	12	= a combination of sounds considered pleasing to the ear

17	12	14	2	11	1	= words of a song

18	17	10	16	9	= a wind instrument held horizontally by the player.