

YEAR A | QUARTER 4

13

Magi and the Messiah

Worship

We praise God for His greatest gift.

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).

KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 2:1-12
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 6, pp. 59-67
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 47-52
- Student lesson on page 142 of this guide

OUR BELIEFS

- No. 1, The Holy Scriptures
- No. 4, The Son
- No. 22, Christian Behavior

OBJECTIVES

The students will:

- **Know** that they can still give "gifts" to Jesus.
- **Feel** eager to worship Jesus by giving gifts to Him.
- **Respond** by giving their offerings, their praise, and their lives to Jesus.

POWERPOINT

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

The Bible Lesson at a Glance

The Magi come from the east and travel to Jerusalem to find the birthplace of the King of the Jews. They come to worship Him. They bring their precious gifts that represent the best they have to offer the baby King.

This is a lesson about worship.

When we give praise, offerings, and ourselves to God, we are also worshipping Him.

Teacher Enrichment

"The magi had been among the first to welcome the Redeemer. Their gift was the first that was laid at His feet. And through that gift, what privilege of ministry was theirs! The offering from the heart that loves, God delights to honor, giving it highest efficiency in service for Him. If we have given our hearts to Jesus, we also shall bring our gifts to Him. Our gold and silver, our most precious earthly possessions, our highest mental and spiritual endowments, will be freely devoted to Him who loved us, and gave Himself for us" (*The Desire of Ages*, p. 65).

What gift do I have to offer God? Whom does God accept as worshippers? How can I give my heart/self to Jesus?

Welcome

Welcome students at the door and direct them to their seats. Ask them how their week has been. Encourage learners to study their Sabbath School lesson regularly, and use several minutes to debrief students on the previous week's lesson.

Ask: **What was the most interesting part of the Bible story? What activity did you find the most helpful? Which activity was the most fun?** Invite students to share their experiences and/or the handiworks they created for Sabbath School during the week. (The leader should be familiar with the previous lesson to be able to direct the discussion.) This is also a good time to have students recite the power text.

Have students begin the Readiness Activity of your choice. »

Program notes

LESSON SECTION	MINUTES	ACTIVITIES	MATERIALS NEEDED
Welcome	Ongoing	Greet students at the door. Ask about their week.	
1 Readiness	10-15	*A. Giving the Best* *B. My Gift I Bring* *C. Nativity*	index cards, pencils, markers one gift-wrapped box items to add to manger scene
* Prayer & Praise	15-20	See page 137. Prayer & Praise may be used at any time during the program.	songbooks; world map; pushpins; gift box with slit; materials for prayer chain: colored strips of paper, glue, tape OR staples, pens/pencils, OR markers
2 Bible Lesson	15-20	Introducing the Bible Story Experiencing the Story Exploring the Bible	five copies of *Net Kids* script (p. 152) Bibles Bibles; Bible with marginal notes or concordance
3 Applying the Lesson	10-15	*Scenario*	
4 Sharing the Lesson	10-15	*Reason for the Season*	guest
* Closing		A. Prayer and Closing Comments B. Reminder to Parents C. Coming Up Next Week	

1

READINESS ACTIVITIES

Select the activity or activities that are most appropriate for your situation.

A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ index cards
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ markers

Giving the Best

Give each student five index cards. Ask them to write down (one per card) the five most important things in their lives. These could be objects, abilities, people, desires, ambitions, possessions, relationships. This is to be done without talking.

When students have completed their cards, ask them to number them in order of their importance, with number one being the one they would least like to lose (by robbery, death, accident, etc.).

Ask: **How difficult was it to decide? Which of these would you be willing to give as a gift to Jesus?**

Have the students take a marker and decorate any card they are willing to commit as a gift to Jesus. When they have completed decorating the gifts they are willing to give, ask them to take these to the "stable" (created two weeks ago and decorated with praise angels last week) and leave their gifts there.

Debriefing

Ask: **How was giving these "gifts" to Jesus like losing them?** (I don't have control over them.) **Do we lose when we worship God with gifts of offerings, praise, or our lives? Let's say our power text, 1 Chronicles 16:8, 9:**

"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).

Say: **As our power point reminds us:**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ one gift-wrapped box

My Gift I Bring

Have the students sit in a circle. Ask them to each think of something they are willing to bring (dedicate) to Jesus as a "gift." (Explain that these could be parts or all of themselves, talents, abilities, friendships, possessions, etc.) Pass the gift box to the first student on your right.

Say: **"I give Jesus my** _____ (something you would like to give Jesus: heart, car, service, arms, eyes), **and I give** _____ (student's name) ***this* gift."**

The student receiving the gift adds their own gift for Jesus, saying **"I give Jesus my _____, and I give** _____ (student's name) **this gift."** Then the "gift" box is passed on to the next student.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did you choose what you gave? How did it feel to commit your gift to Jesus? How could your commitment change your present life? In what way is giving this gift an act of worship? Let's say our power text together, 1 Chronicles 16:8, 9:**

"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).

Let's repeat our power point and remember that

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

Prayer & Praise

C

YOU NEED:
- ☐ items to add to manger scene

Nativity

If you created a "stable" from a box two weeks ago (and stationed "praise angels" around it last week), you could arrange to add to the scene this week with student creations or purchased figurines. Add any of the usual Nativity scene elements except for Baby Jesus. These could be the shepherds, a star, the Magi, animals, Mary, Joseph, even the manger.

Say: **Let's say our power text, 1 Chronicles 16:8, 9:**

"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).

Say: **As our power point reminds us:**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

Fellowship

Report the students' joys and sorrows (pleased and troubled) as reported to you at the door (as appropriate). If they have given you permission, share one or two special items from students' Bible study during the week. Acknowledge any birthdays, special events, or achievements. Give a special, warm greeting to all visitors.

Suggested Songs

"Joy to the World" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 125)

"O Come, All Ye Faithful" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 132)

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (*The Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*, no. 135)

Mission

YOU NEED:
- ☐ world map
- ☐ pushpins

Use *Adventist Mission for Youth and Adults* (go to www.juniorpowerpoints.org and click on MISSION) or another mission report available to you. For the mission story, have a map of the world where the students can identify the location of the mission story in comparison to where they live. They could use pushpins to mark the location of the mission story.

Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ gift box

Say: **Sharing our money with God through our offerings is as much a part of worship as is praise and singing.**

Prayer

YOU NEED:
- ☐ prayer-chain materials

Continue with the prayer chain. Materials may include: paper; glue, tape, or a stapler and staples; and pens, pencils, or markers to write prayer requests or answered prayers. You can use one color paper for requests, another for answers, and still another for praise.

Say: **As you make your prayer requests today, think about people who never receive gifts no matter what the season.** Close with a prayer for the students' joys and sorrows, for the birthday and other special event celebrants, as well as for the visitors.

2

BIBLE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ five copies of *Net Kids* script (p. 152)

Introducing the Bible Story

***The* Net Kids**

(Refer to Lesson 2 for background and setup information.)

Make five copies of the *Net Kids* script found on page 152 of this guide. Distribute to the students you have selected as early as possible. Allow practice time before using this activity. Present the skit.

Debriefing

Say: **Today we are reading about the Wise Men. We can bring gifts to Jesus just as they did. We can worship Him through what we do for others, through our praise, and even through the way we live our lives.**

As our power point reminds us,

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

Experiencing the Story

Have student volunteers read Matthew 2:1-12.

Say: **The gifts the Magi gave helped Mary and Joseph escape from Herod and live in Egypt till it was safe to return. Get into groups of six. Think of three gifts you would bring to Jesus if you were the Magi and the setting were today. Create a skit in which you bring the gifts to Mary and Joseph and explain to them what the gifts are and what is their value or significance.** Give the students time to work and present their skits.

Debriefing

Ask: **Why did your group choose the gifts that you did? How could you give those same gifts to people you know in real life today? How would you give them to Jesus today?** Say: **Let's repeat our power point:**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

3

APPLYING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ Bible with marginal notes OR concordance

Exploring the Bible

Say: **When the Wise Men set off to find Jesus, it was like going on a treasure hunt. They had some clues but didn't know where they would lead. As Christians we are in a treasure hunt, but we know where our clues lead. Our clues are found in the Bible. By following them, we will find the treasure—eternity with Jesus. Let's look at some texts to see the two unusual gifts (most of us know about gold) that the Magi brought for their worship and how these were generally used in biblical times.**

Assign one of the gifts to each of two groups. Have the students find the texts listed below:

Frankincense (incense in NIV): Exodus 30:1, 6-8; Psalm 141:2; Luke 1:9, 10; Revelation 5:8.

Myrrh: Genesis 37:25; Exodus 30:23-26; Esther 2:12; Mark 15:23; John 19:39, 40. Say: **As you read these Bible passages, think of the uses and symbolic meanings attached to these two spices in Bible times.**

Debriefing

Ask: **From your reading, why do you think the Magi chose the gifts that they did to worship Christ? What were these two gifts used for in the Old Testament? How are these related to some of Jesus' roles?** (Frankincense: used in the sanctuary and Temple to represent prayer and intercession; this symbolizes Jesus' high-priestly ministry as He intercedes on our behalf. Myrrh was also used in the Temple as a spice for consecration, and it was used for embalming for burial; as a gift it foreshadowed Jesus' sacrificial death for humanity.) **What could we give Jesus in worship that would be symbolic of our love and surrender to Him?** Say: **Let's say our power text, 1 Chronicles 16:8, 9:**

"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).

Say: **As our power point reminds us:**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

Scenario

Read the following to your students:

Ben and Serena have just finished reading about the journey of the Wise Men and the gifts they brought Jesus. They really want to make this Christmas different and spend more time and attention on gifts for God than for each other and their friends. They aren't sure what to do, though. It isn't as if they can take presents to a real baby Jesus. What would you suggest they do?

Debriefing

Ask: **What types of "gifts" can Ben and Serena give? To whom will they give their gifts?**

Say: **Let's remember to apply the principle we learned from our power point:**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

4 Closing

SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:
- ☐ guest

Reason for the Season

Ask students to share if they had the opportunity to invite someone to their home on Friday evening. What were their experiences? What was it like to spend time reflecting on the true meaning of Christmas? Did the visitors enjoy the time spent together?

Arrange for a guest to come and present a specific need that someone or some group has. Ask them to outline a way that students could contribute through offerings of money, supplies, or time to meet this need. If possible, find a need that relates to Christmas and one in which all students can be involved. (Contribute to and help staff a soup kitchen for Christmas Eve, provide a meal and gifts for a needy family, etc.)

Make plans regarding what each person is to do to supply this need. If necessary, write out reminder slips to send home with them. Say: **Let's say once again our power point, and remember that**

We worship by giving ourselves to Jesus.

Prayer and closing comments:

Pray that the students will become conscious of ways to worship God in their everyday lives.

Reminder to parents:

Say: **Check out the student Bible study guide to find Parents' Pages for your use in family worship, or however you wish to use them to spiritually guide your children. You may listen to the podcast of the lesson online at www.juniorpowerpoints.org/podcast.php?channel=1.**

Coming up next week:

Say: **Jesus gave us the gift of salvation. We give Him our hearts.**

Notes

Student lesson

Magi and the Messiah

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.

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 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.

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

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.







Sabbath

DO Do the activity on page 102.

Sunday

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

LEARN Write the power text 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 find 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.

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 meanings 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.