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Dreams, Journeys, and a Star

Key References: Matthew 2:1-15; *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 6, pp. 59-67; *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 47-56; Our Beliefs, nos. 1, 18, 8















powertext

"The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail" (Isaiah 58:11).

Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 102.

powerpoint

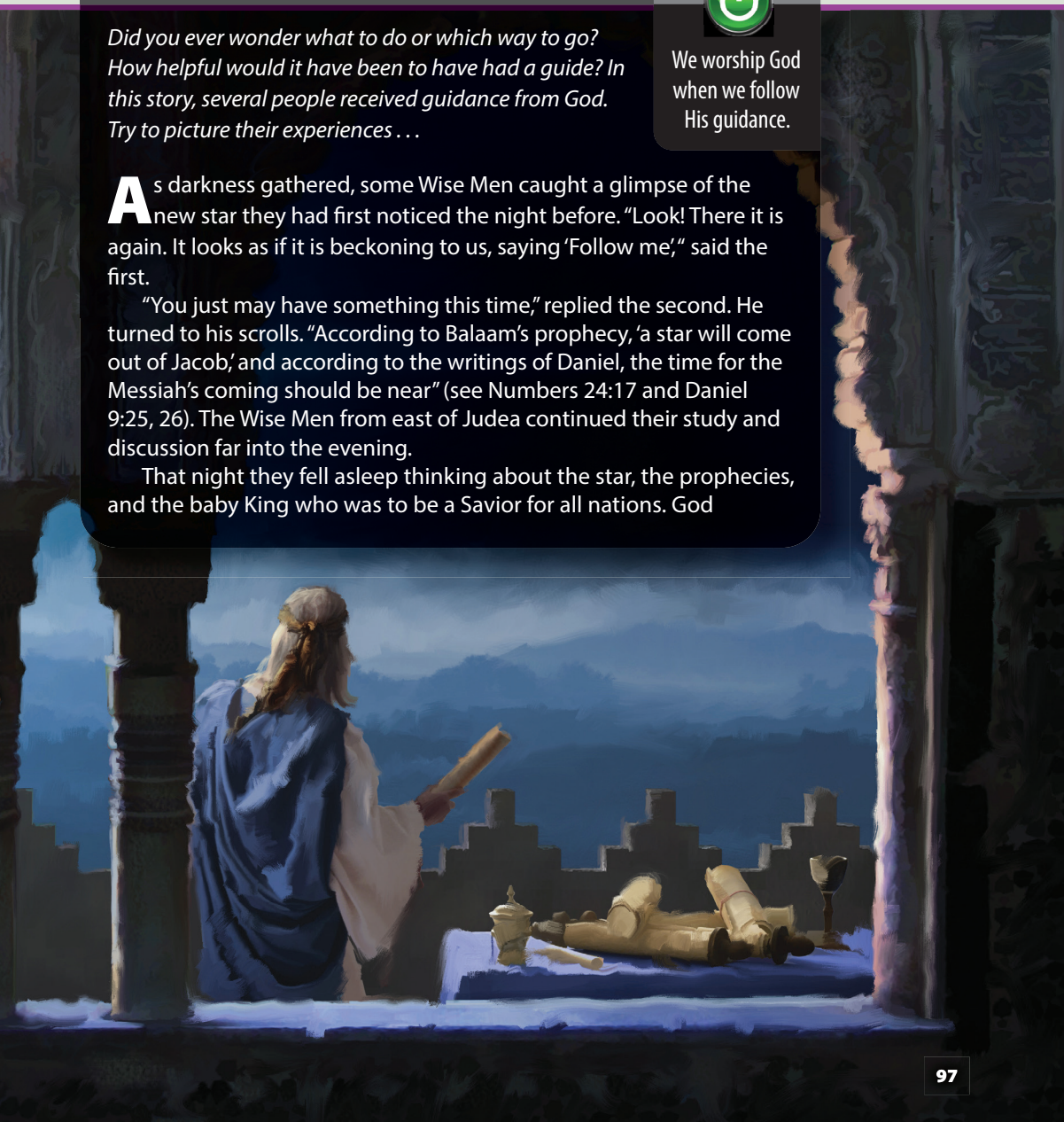
We worship God when we follow His guidance.

Did you ever wonder what to do or which way to go? How helpful would it have been to have had a guide? In this story, several people received guidance from God. Try to picture their experiences . . .

As darkness gathered, some Wise Men caught a glimpse of the new star they had first noticed the night before. "Look! There it is again. It looks as if it is beckoning to us, saying 'Follow me,'" said the first.

"You just may have something this time," replied the second. He turned to his scrolls. "According to Balaam's prophecy, 'a star will come out of Jacob,' and according to the writings of Daniel, the time for the Messiah's coming should be near" (see Numbers 24:17 and Daniel 9:25, 26). The Wise Men from east of Judea continued their study and discussion far into the evening.

That night they fell asleep thinking about the star, the prophecies, and the baby King who was to be a Savior for all nations. God



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Sunday

READ Read Isaiah 58:11 and this week's story, "Dreams, Journeys, and a Star."

LEARN Begin to learn the power text, Isaiah 58:11.

CREATE Find materials around your house (draw, paint, or sculpt) to create a replica of a "well-watered garden."

PRAY Praise God for His willingness to guide you.

Monday

READ Read Matthew 2:1-3.

THINK Why was Herod disturbed when the Wise Men asked about a newborn king?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write what you would tell someone who is interested in getting to know Jesus.

CREATE Draw/sculpt figures of the Wise Men and their gifts. Place them in your room as a reminder of the story.

PRAY Pray that you will be open to God's leading.

Tuesday

READ Read Matthew 2:4-6.

THINK If the priests knew where Jesus was born, why didn't they try to find Him themselves?

WRITE In your Bible study journal, write how you would have answered Herod's question if he had asked you.

CREATE Draw or sculpt (from clay or chenille wire) a star to hang from the ceiling (or to mount high on a wall or door).

PRAY Ask God to give you the boldness to follow when you see Him guiding.

impressed them, possibly in a dream, that they should go to find the baby Messiah.

The following night as they observed the star, they made plans for their journey to go and worship Him. They had no idea where they were going, but they all agreed that they would just follow the star. Each had been impressed that God was leading them.

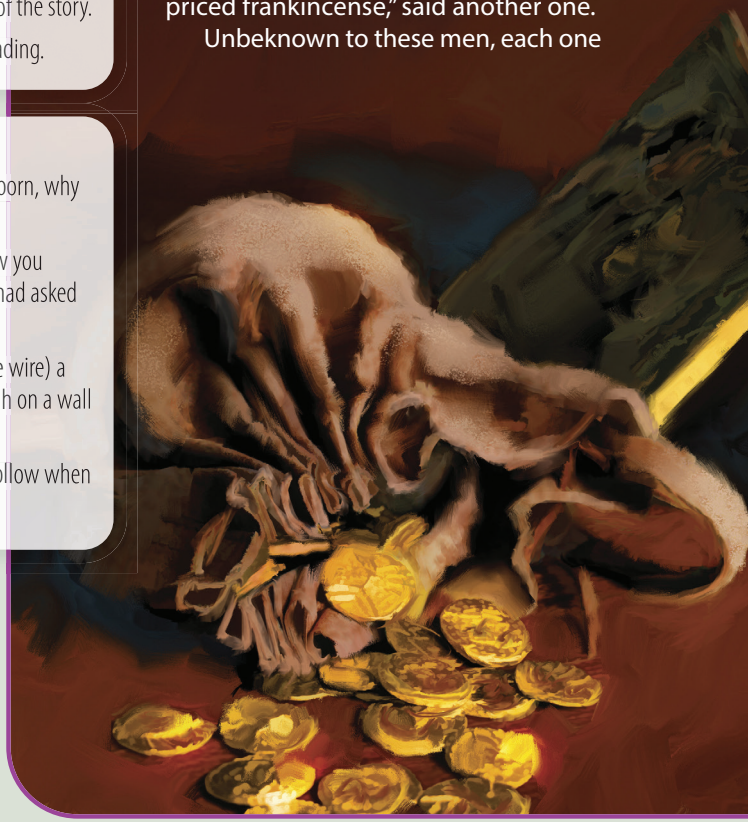
"What should we bring as gifts?" asked one of them.

"I think we should each bring Him a gift," said the first. "I will bring Him gold."

"That's a good idea. I could bring Him some of my aromatic myrrh," proposed a second wise man.

"Well, then I will bring some of my priced frankincense," said another one.

Unbeknown to these men, each one



of their gifts had a significance related to Jesus' life. The gift of gold symbolized His royal origins from David's lineage as well as His eternal rulership as the King of kings. Because myrrh was used to embalm the dead for burial, such a gift prefigured Jesus' death as sacrifice for our sins. Frankincense was used in the Temple by the priests, so it would symbolize Jesus' role as our High Priest who intercedes for the forgiveness of our sins.

After the necessary preparations for the journey, the Wise Men saddled their camels and left to find the newborn King. The star that they first saw at the time Jesus was born would guide them by night. For many weeks and months the travelers patiently followed the star. At last they saw the golden dome of the Temple in Jerusalem. They made their way into town with great anticipation. "Where is the new King of the Jews?" they asked excitedly. Their inquiries were met by blank, confused looks.

The news spread quickly. King Herod invited them to stay as his guests for a while until he could discover some information for them. The information would be useful to him as well, as he planned how to get rid of any potential competitor for the throne that might have been born.

Herod sent for the priests, who looked at the old prophecies. From them he learned that it was foretold that a king would be born in Bethlehem. Herod



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Wednesday

READ Read Matthew 2:7-12.

REFLECT Think about the significance of gold, frankincense, and myrrh as they were used in Bible times.

WRITE What are the "gold, incense, and myrrh" in your life? How can you offer these to Jesus? Write your answers in your Bible study journal.

PRAY Ask Jesus to make you willing to offer everything to Him.

Thursday

READ Matthew 2:13-15.

THINK God guided Joseph, Mary, and Jesus to safety in Egypt. How is this encouraging when you find yourself in difficult situations from which you do not see a way out?

TALK Talk with an adult about a time God guided them. How did they know?

PRAY Pray that God will make you ready to follow His leading no matter what the circumstances.

Friday

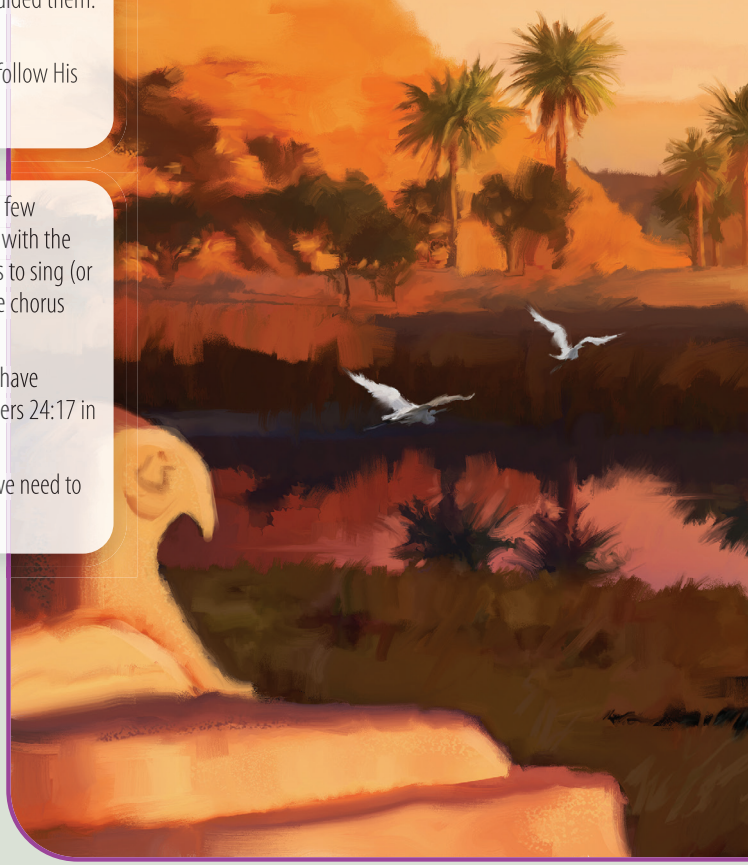
SING To begin family worship, sing or play a few of your family's favorite Christmas carols. End with the song "We Three Kings." Ask different members to sing (or read) one verse each and everyone to sing the chorus together.

READ Read Matthew 2:1-15 together. Then have someone read Isaiah 9:6, 7; Micah 5:2; Numbers 24:17 in order as listed.

PRAY Thank God for giving us all the signs we need to worship Him by following His guidance.

called the Wise Men to tell them what he had discovered. He asked them to return to Jerusalem with news of the baby's place of birth so that he, too, could go and worship the new king.

Again the Wise Men followed the star. It stopped on the outskirts of Bethlehem. When they reached where it had stopped, they were in front of a very humble dwelling. Inside they found Mary, Joseph, and the child Jesus. When they saw Jesus, they knew that their journey had not been a waste of time. In spite of the unlikely surroundings, God

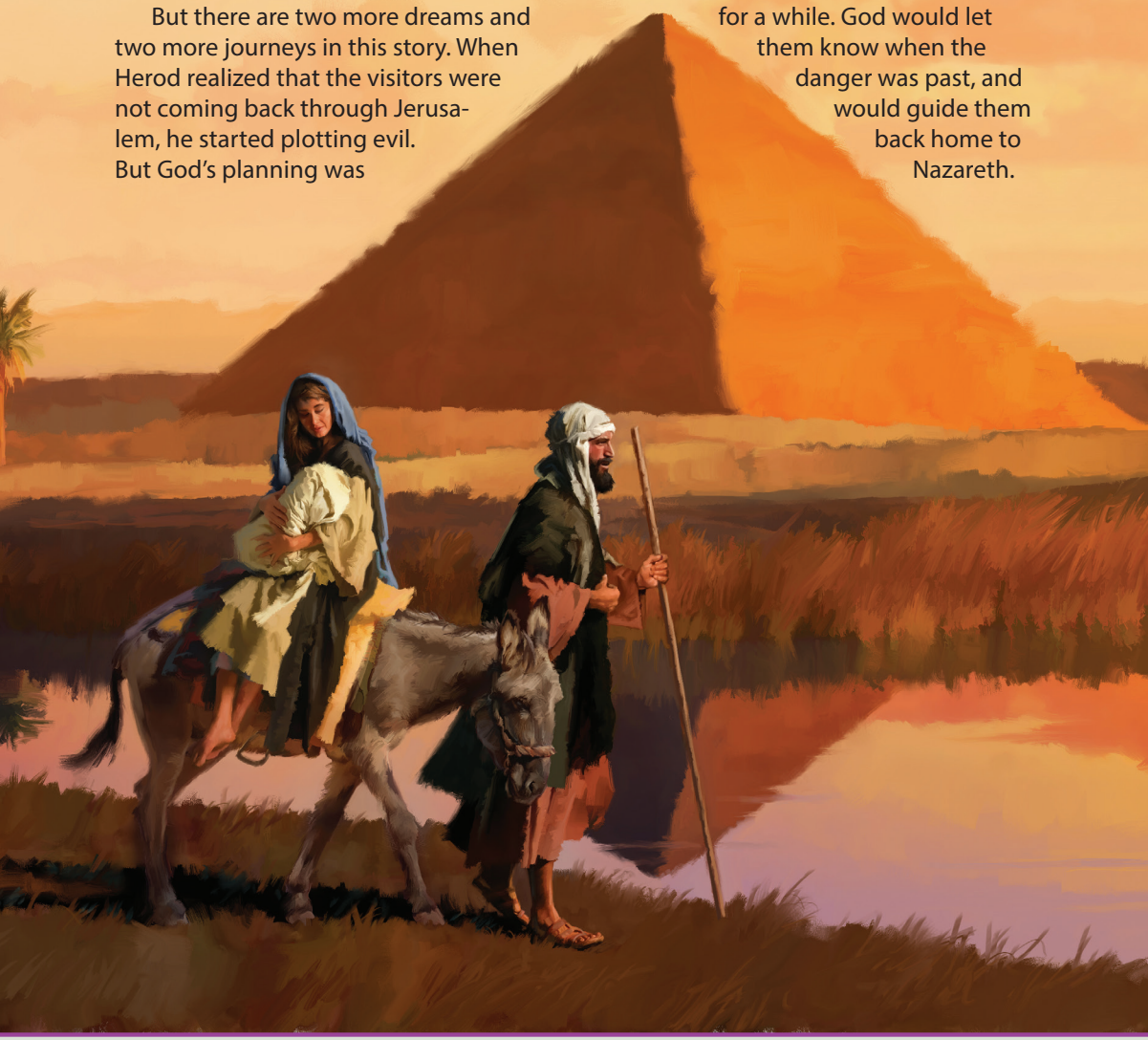


impressed them that they had found the One they were looking for. They worshipped Him and gave Him their gifts.

Once again God was guiding the plans of those who trusted Him. Through a dream He warned the Wise Men not to return to Herod but to go home another way. They obeyed and returned to their homes to spread the wonderful news about Jesus.

But there are two more dreams and two more journeys in this story. When Herod realized that the visitors were not coming back through Jerusalem, he started plotting evil. But God's planning was way ahead of Herod's. Once again He used a dream to impress Joseph to take Mary and Jesus and leave immediately for Egypt.

By trusting God's care and guidance, Joseph was able to lead Mary and Jesus to safety in Egypt, far from Herod and his evil schemes. With the gifts brought by the Wise Men, the little family was able to live in a foreign country for a while. God would let them know when the danger was past, and would guide them back home to Nazareth.



PUZZLE
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WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, THEY WHO BELIEVE CALL ON JESUS

Instructions: Below are two Bible verses that are mixed up. For each row, reading down, choose one or two words from one column or the other. The leftover words form the other verse. These verses give us encouragement to follow God's plan for our lives even when the going gets tough.

In ----- Do
not ----- this
let ----- world
you will ----- your
hearts ----- have
trouble. ----- be
troubled. ----- But
You ----- take
believe ----- heart!
in ----- I
have ----- God;
believe ----- overcome
the ----- also
in me. -----world.