

YEAR C | QUARTER 4

13

# Dreams, Journeys, and a Star

## Grace in Action

God reveals His love and protection.

### POWER TEXT

"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).

### KEY REFERENCES

- Matthew 2:1-15
- *The Desire of Ages,* chap. 6, pp. 59-67
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 47-56
- student story on page 142 of this guide.

### OUR BELIEFS

- No. 1, The Holy Scriptures
- No. 18, The Gift of Prophecy
- No. 8, The Great Controversy

### OBJECTIVES

**The students will:**

- **Know** that God still guides His children today just as He guided the Wise Men and Joseph.
- **Feel** a desire to follow God's guidance.
- **Respond** by choosing to follow God's plan for their lives.

POWERPOINT

**We worship God when we follow His guidance.**

## The Bible Lesson at a Glance

Wise Men from the East, in search of a newborn king, follow an unusual star to Jerusalem. King Herod hears about their desire to worship the baby Jesus. Feigning a desire to worship the Baby, he tells them to go first and report back to him. After they find the Baby and offer gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, in addition to their worship, God warns them in a dream not to go back to Herod. They take a detour home. After the Wise Men leave, God warns Joseph that Herod is looking for the Child to kill Him. Mary and Joseph escape to Egypt with Baby Jesus.

## *This is a lesson about grace in action.*

The Wise Men, Mary, and Joseph all received explicit instructions from God. They didn't have to comply, but they chose to. Following His leading was an act of worship. We too can worship God by choosing to follow His leading.

## Teacher Enrichment

"In a dream [the Wise Men] received a divine message to hold no further communication with [Herod]. Avoiding Jerusalem, they set out for their own country by another route.

"In like manner Joseph received warning to flee into Egypt with Mary and the child. . . . Joseph obeyed without delay, setting out on the journey by night for greater security. . . .

"Satan was bent on shutting out the divine light from the world, and he used his utmost cunning to destroy the Saviour. But He who never slumbers nor sleeps was watching over His beloved Son. . . . And through the gifts of the magi . . . the Lord supplied the means for the journey into Egypt and the sojourn in a land of strangers" (*The Desire of Ages,* pp. 64, 65).

*How does God speak to people today? How does He speak to me? What choices am I making to follow where He leads, even though it may seem to be off the path I think He has chosen for me?*

# 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 door.<br>Ask about their week. | |
| 1 Readiness | 10-15 | *A. Gift Hunt*<br>*B. Blind Guides* | Bible, individual treats (wrapped), clue sheets<br>Bibles, two cups, two containers of water, two blindfolds, table or bench |
| * Prayer and Praise | 15-20 | See page 137. Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program. | songbooks, gift box, offering device, world map, pushpins |
| 2 Bible Lesson | 15-20 | Introducing the Bible Story<br>Experiencing the Story<br>Exploring the Bible | <br>Bibles, paper, markers, pencils, rulers, art supplies, Bible reference books, world map, costumes<br>Bibles |
| 3 Applying the Lesson | 10-15 | *Scenario* | guest (optional) |
| 4 Sharing the Lesson | 10-15 | *My Story* | paper, pens/pencils, poster board, art supplies |
| * Closing | | A. Prayer and Closing Comments<br>B. Reminder to Parents<br>C. Coming Up Next Week | |

# 1

## READINESS ACTIVITIES

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

### A

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bible
- ☐ wrapped healthy treats
- ☐ clue sheets

### Gift Hunt

Have individual healthy treats (i.e., fruit, nuts) for the students wrapped with their names on each and extras labeled "Guest." (Be aware of any food allergies and adjust accordingly.) Hide the gifts ahead of time in various places around the room. Make about one third of them impossible to find (you may put a few outside of the room). Create a list of clues for each of the treats. Tell the students you have gifts for them, but they have to find them. Tell them that as they are searching, if they find a gift that does not belong to them, they should leave it and not give clues to others. Tell them to stop after about a minute of searching. You will probably hear cries of protest, but ignore them. Distribute the clue sheets. When everyone has received one, allow them to resume searching. When everyone has found their gift, allow them to open it. [Note: If your class is large, do this activity with a small group of students as the others watch.]

***Debriefing***

Ask: **How did you feel when I told you I had gifts for you?** (excited, happy, grateful) **How did you feel when I told you you had to find them?** (puzzled, annoyed) **Those of you who found your gifts right away, how did you feel?** (excited, etc.) How about those of you who couldn't find them? (frustrated; wondered if you had forgotten me; left out; embarrassed) **How was it after I gave you the clue sheet?** (Much easier. We could finally get what you had for us.) **Who chose not to use the clue sheet I gave you? Why?** (Because you are the one who knew where you had put the gift.) **How much sense would it make not to follow God's guidance in our lives?** (None. He made us and knows what is best for us; can see the end from the beginning.) **Our power text, Isaiah 58:11, promises that God will guide us. Let's look at it.** Have a volunteer read it:

***"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).***

Say: **Our power point this week is:**

***We worship God when we follow His guidance.***

### B

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ two cups
- ☐ two containers of water
- ☐ two blindfolds
- ☐ table OR bench

### Blind Guides

Ask for six student volunteers. Make a clear path through the center of the room. Have two students stand at one end of the room, two at the other, and ask two to wait. Beside two volunteers place a small table or bench with two empty cups on it. Show the two volunteers at the other side of the room two containers filled with water, tell them to look carefully at the room setup. Explain that they are going to carry the containers of water you hand them to the other side and fill the cups. Then blindfold them and send them on their way. Tell the rest of the class they may not give directions. The blindfolded volunteers must feel/remember their way to the other side to fill the cups.

When the blindfolded students have reached the cups and filled them, they may take off their blindfolds and give them to the two volunteers waiting to carry the cups back to the starting place. The difference this time is that the two volunteers who were asked to wait will guide each of these blindfolded volunteers verbally and by placing their hands on their shoulders. When the cups of water have arrived back at the starting place, debrief.

***Debriefing***

Ask: **How did it feel to try to navigate through the class blindfolded with a container of water?** (May say: Unfair because they didn't get verbal encouragement and the others got verbal/physical guidance.) **Those of you who were guided, how did you feel about your guides?** (grateful) **What made it difficult to chose to follow their leading? How was this exercise like or unlike how God treats us?** (Like: He gives us every kind of guidance we need. If we follow, we'll be OK. Even though He surprises with His methods, He is always with us. Unlike: God does not abandon us nor leave us without guidance.) **Our power text this week promises that the Lord will guide us always. Let's look at it in Isaiah 58:11.** Have students look it up and read it aloud:

# Prayer and Praise

***"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).***

Remind them that:

***We worship God when we follow His guidance.***

**Accommodations for students with special needs:**
Students with physical disabilities may not be able to participate in the activity wearing a blindfold. Allow them to volunteer to guide the blindfolded volunteers (on the second part of the activity) or have them simply observe and then participate in the debriefing.

## 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

"We Three Kings" (*The SDA Hymnal,* no. 137)
"Angels We Have Heard on High" (*The SDA Hymnal,* no. 142)
"O Little Town of Bethlehem" (*The SDA 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 and compare it to where they are. You could use pushpins to mark where the mission story takes place.

## Offering

YOU NEED:
- ☐ gift box

Say: **Some people may bring an offering because they think the church needs the money, but an offering is more than that. It's an act of worship. Giving an offering is a practical way to give God the honor that is due Him as maker of everything.**

## Prayer

Hold hands to form a circle. Start the prayer by thanking God for the gift of His guidance, then go around the group allowing each one to say a thank-you sentence about a time when someone/something gave them guidance or helped show them the way.

*Prayer and Praise may be used at any time during the program.

2

BIBLE LESSON

## Introducing the Bible Story

Say: **Most nations of the world, while they were being formed, had warriors or soldiers who were sent out on "quests." For example, in medieval England these people were called knights; in ancient Japan they were called samurai. In our country they are called** [mention group in your country who historically did the same type of thing]. **They were traditionally men. These men were sent to right wrongs, explore new lands, form alliances (partnerships) with other nations or conquer them, discover riches, or rescue their ruler or someone else from danger. The knights and samurai couldn't just decide, "Today I think I'll conquer an island." They had to be assigned by the ruler. Not only would he give them their instructions, he would make sure they had everything they needed to fulfill their quest: food, clothing, bedding, money, gifts, people, transportation, weapons. In return they gave him their loyalty. In some countries these men even worshiped their commander-in-chief. Today we are going to talk about three men who were guided by God in their quest to find the baby Jesus. God supplied the star and in turn they worshipped Him. The Wise Men's worship gifts enabled Mary and Joseph to take care of Jesus in His early years.**

YOU NEED:

- ☐ Bibles
- ☐ paper
- ☐ pencils
- ☐ markers
- ☐ rulers
- ☐ art supplies
- ☐ Bible reference books
- ☐ world map
- ☐ costumes

## Experiencing the Story

Read Matthew 2:1-15 together as a class. Then divide the class into three learning centers, designating the number of people allowed in each center. Allow the students to select the center in which they want to work until the number is reached. Provide supplies for each center.

1. Music/Drama
   Write and present a short drama about the Wise Men's search for Jesus and the flight of Mary and Joseph to Egypt. Include at least one original song.
2. Math/Science
   Draw a map or construct a diorama showing the possible route of the Wise Men. Explain what physical obstacles they would have had to overcome. Calculate how many miles/kilometers they traveled and how long it took. Start with Matthew 2:1.
3. Writing/Research
   Find Old Testament prophecies that would give people waiting for the Messiah clues about where and how to find and identify Him. Start with Matthew 2:4-6. Find other places in the Bible where gold, incense, and myrrh were used and tell what they were used for. (If students are stumped, have them refer to Exodus 30:23; Esther 2:12; Psalm 45:8; Proverbs 7:17 for myrrh.)

Have the groups share the things they have done. Say:

**Remember:**

***We worship God when we follow His guidance.***

YOU NEED:
- ☐ Bibles

## Exploring the Bible

Have a student volunteer read Micah 5:2 and another read Matthew 2:6. Ask: **Why was it important that Jesus be born in Bethlehem?** Have another student read Numbers 24:17, first part, and another read Revelation 22:16. **Why do you think the Magi needed to find Jesus to worship Him? What does our power point say?**

***We worship God when we follow His guidance.***

## *Scenario*

YOU NEED:
- ☐ guest (optional)

Share with the students (or bring in a guest to share) a personal experience in which you could sense God's guidance and chose to follow it.

For example, a person who has been searching for God and wanting to study the Bible sees a flyer for a series of meetings. It comes in the mail. Then they see an ad for the same meetings in a newspaper. Then they see the original flyer, which they had thrown away, as they are throwing out the trash. They feel God is trying to tell them something. They have to decide whether or not to go to the meetings.

Ask your students to share experiences they have had that they feel were God guiding them. Ask them how they chose to respond.

### *Debriefing*

Ask: **What did you learn from this experience?** Say: **Our power text, Isaiah 58:11, tells us that the Lord will always guide us.** Ask: **And what does it say will be the results?** (We will be like well-watered gardens.) **What does a well-watered garden do?** (Produces beautiful flowers, plants, trees, or food.) Say: **Like a garden that produces plants or produce, it gives back to the one who planted it. When we worship God, we are like a well-watered garden. We give back to Him gratitude for giving us life.**

***We worship God when we follow His guidance.***

# 4

## SHARING THE LESSON

YOU NEED:

- ☐ paper and/or poster board
- ☐ pens/pencils
- ☐ art supplies

### *My Story*

Distribute large paper and/or poster board as well as art supplies.

Say: **I am sure that right here in our Sabbath School class there are all kinds of stories of God's guidance and individuals who chose to follow it. Wouldn't it be great to learn more about those experiences? Today you can choose one of the ways to share your story with the rest of the class. You may write a short story of God's guidance, or you could illustrate it creatively with the art supplies that are provided.**

At the end, allow the students to share the stories with the rest of the class.

**Accommodations for students with special needs:**
Students with learning disabilities or other special needs may not be able to participate in the activity unless they receive help. Allow these students to work with partners who could assist them while working on their own projects as well.

# Closing

### Prayer and closing comments:

Close by praying for each student and for the people who will share their stories of following God's guidance, as the Wise Men and Joseph and Mary did.

### 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 is dedicated. Living in harmony with God's will is our gift of worship to Jesus.**

## Notes

# Student lesson

## Dreams, Journeys, and a Star

*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 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 will 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 burrial, 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 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.

**KEY REFERENCES**

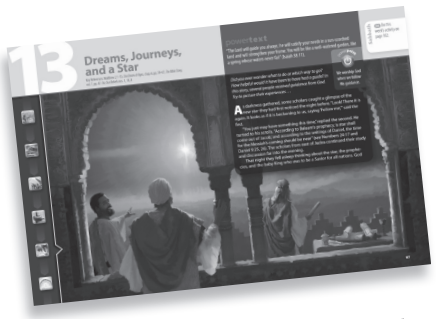
- Matthew 2:1-15
- *The Desire of Ages*, chap. 6, pp. 59-67
- *The Bible Story* (1994), vol. 7, pp. 47-56
- Our Beliefs, nos. 1, 18, 8

**POWER TEXT**

"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).

**POWER POINT**

We worship God when we follow His guidance.








## Sabbath

DO Do this week's activity on page 102.

## 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.

## 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 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 rough 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.