

THE WISE MEN



Passage to Study: Matt. 2:1-23.

Read with the class: Matt. 2:1-18.

Text for memorization:

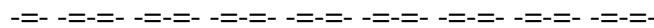
Younger: Matt. 1:21.

Older Matt. 1:21.



OBJECTIVES: To teach that:

1. **The Wise Men arrived some two years after the birth of Jesus.**
2. **God provides spiritual light to guide those that seek Christ.**
3. **People can possess a real knowledge of the truth and yet not act on the basis of that knowledge.**
4. **Jesus’ birth was unusual and Satan sought to destroy Him right from the start.**
5. **Today it is not the child Jesus we seek but rather the King of Glory, now enthroned.**



SCENE No. 1. On a country road

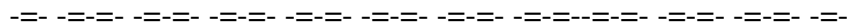
DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- The Wise Men were Astronomers, scientists that study the heavenly bodies.
- The Lord guides each one to a knowledge of where to find Christ and uses different means to awaken people’s interest.
- The way opens before them bit by bit as they move forward, believing the truth.
- The Wise Men travelled a long way knowing only that a King has been born. They have no further knowledge.

Cns. This knowledge was enough for them to keep on their journey.

Apl. How many with greater knowledge take no action on the basis of what they know?

Sug. Some students in the class will have Christian parents and relatives. Ask them if they are as eager as the Wise men to seek the Saviour.



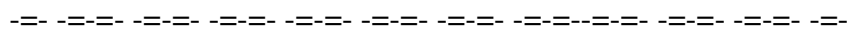
SCENE No. 2. At the entrance of Jerusalem.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

- Upon reaching Jerusalem, the Wise Men ask for the King, showing their intense interest in locating the place where the Child could be found.
- They do not know His name, only that He is a King.
- Jesus’ birth had taken place less than two years earlier. This can be calculated by the maximum age that was stipulated for the slaughter of the children that Herod ordered.
- The king “called the wise men and inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared”.
- Herod tries to ascertain how old “the King” might be.
- The arrival of visitors from a distance and their different dress, plus the question they asked must have awakened the interest of the population.

Cmt. The residents of Jerusalem had been near the place where this event occurred without knowing about it.

Cns. The testimony of Anna, of Simeon and the shepherds seems not to have reached a very large circle of people. Would some have denied it could be true? Might others not have believed it?



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SCENE No. 3. In Herod’s palace with the priests and scribes.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

These interpreters of the law knew all the prophecies about the Lord Jesus, without deriving any benefit from them.

Apl. One can know all about the gospel without receiving Christ as Saviour.

Cns. The lost ones in hell now know that the gospel is truth, but they are beyond its reach.

- King Herod pretends to be interested in going to worship the Child when in truth, he wanted to eliminate any hint of danger to his position as king.

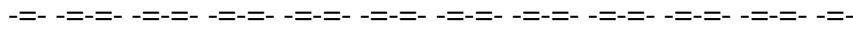
- The Wise Men did not promise to return to Herod.

- In the palace on this occasion, there were some who sought the Lord Jesus. Others had knowledge of what the Bible said, but were indifferent, while still others were totally opposed to the new king.

- Those who were truly wise did not rest from their search for Christ.

Apl. The mark of wisdom is seen in those who seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Afterwards comes the addition of the “all things” pertaining to life for which the King assumes responsibility.



SCENE No. 4. In a house, with the Lord Jesus, Mary and the Wise Men.

DEVELOPMENT of the lesson:

- Jesus would be somewhere around two years of age when the Wise Men arrived. They came, not to a stable, but to a house.

- Jesus is probably a young child now, able to walk.

Cmt. This detail is not specifically stated but is mentioned to show he was not a babe in arms.

- The gifts the Wise Men brought are given TO JESUS, not to Mary.

Apl. Imagine how the wise men would recount their experience after they returned to their native land.

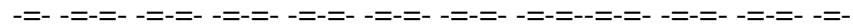
- God overturns the purposes of Herod, instructing the Wise Men to return by another route and not talk to Herod.

Apl. We see the divine protection over the Lord Jesus Christ in His humanity.

- Herod was probably reluctant to order their arrest since they were not his subjects.

- On finding himself foiled, Herod orders the slaughter of the children.

Cmt. The wickedness in the heart of man knows no bounds and extends to killing innocent children to satisfy the deep-seated jealousy of a politician who occupied a precarious place of importance in a Roman province.



SCENE No. 5. Application.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE LESSON:

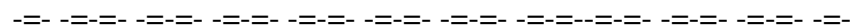
- Whereas the Wise Men had the star as a sign the King had been born, we have the light of the Holy Scriptures with its divine revelation of the truth.

- It is not the stars that guide us today to the Son of God, but the light of His Word.

- There is a throne ready for the Lord Jesus to occupy. He is already King and creation longs for the time when He will take control. Rom.8:18-21.

- He is already King in heaven.

Apl. Just as the Wise Men followed the light of truth they knew about the coming King, our students must follow the light of the Scriptures to get to know Christ as their personal Saviour.



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NOTE:

Much is made today of the horoscope and it's system of future predictions depending on a person's birth. Astrologers, (not astronomers), have imagined that stars or galaxies have certain supposed powers to control the destinies of individuals born in the time frame when these celestial bodies are supposedly in a certain position. Astrology tries to make a connection between the stars in heaven and events here on earth. This Satan-inspired belief does not take God into account.

The saying, "to thank your lucky star" is derived from belief in this error. A New Age philosophy about "your guiding star" originates in this error of astrology. Sunday School teachers should be aware that some New Age proponents use the story of the Magi as proof of their teaching. The star seen by the Wise Men was a sign given to reveal to them the King had been born. We do not find there is reference to the star guiding them. They were guided to go to Jerusalem by what they knew, the time to go was given by the signal of the star.

Upon arrival, they did not ask IF he had been born; they asked WHERE he might be found. Their awareness of a coming king might have had it's origins in Daniel's writings. See Dan. 2:48. See also Isa.11:1-10. The nations were to hope in the branch out of the root of Jesse.

An example of God repudiating this philosophy is seen when he descended in judgment and confounded the language when they were building the Tower at Babel.