

GLENVIEW NEW CHURCH SUNDAY MORNING PROGRAM
Primary Lessons: Phase 1 – Lesson 4
Adoration of the Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12)

I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher

- A. The Lord came into the world when there was no longer any good, consequently no truth.
- B. If the Lord had not come into the world, mankind would have destroyed itself.
- C. The New Testament doesn't say there were three kings. The number may be tradition, perhaps because of the three gifts. The Writings mention the number three only once (in *Coronis*, an unpublished work).

II. Story Circle

A. Introduction

- 1. The Lord was born into the world, but this was not the beginning of the Lord. He had always lived. He was the Person who told the prophets what to say about His birth for hundreds and hundreds of years before He was born into the world!
- 2. The Lord had to be born into the world. Do you remember why? (Most people had forgotten what was true and how to be good.) But there were still a few good people left. Can you name some of them? (Mary & Joseph, the shepherds)
- 3. Our story for today is about some other good people who came to see the Lord quite a while after the shepherds had left. Do you know who they might be?

B. Tell/Read the Story:

- 1. Read aloud Matthew 2:1-12.

C. Ideas to Discuss

- 1. How did the wise men know that the Lord was going to be born? (Because of the prophecies in the Old Testament)
- 2. The wise men also knew from prophecies that something would appear when the Lord was born into the world, so they followed it when it did appear. What was it? (A star) [**Note:** Be sure to say that the wise men saw the star in the East and that they journeyed from the East since this is what the Word says. Don't say they traveled "westward" because the Word does not say this. "East" represents the Lord, but "west" has less savory correspondences!]
- 3. Where did the wise men stop before they found Jesus? (In Jerusalem)

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4. They asked someone where they could find the baby Lord. Who was it? (King Herod) Was Herod happy to hear of the Lord's birth? (No, he was troubled, that is, worried.)
5. Where did King Herod send the wise men to find Jesus? (To Bethlehem)
6. What did Herod want them to do when they found the baby Lord? (Come back to Jerusalem and tell him where the Baby was). Did the wise men do this? (No) Why? (They were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went home another way.)
7. What did the wise men do when they found Jesus? (Fell down and worshiped Him)
8. What three gifts did they present to the Lord? (Gold, frankincense, and myrrh)
9. Frankincense is a nice-smelling gum that comes from a special kind of tree. It is burned to make the air smell good. Myrrh is also nice-smelling stuff gathered from a certain kind of shrub (bush), and it smells good when it is burned too. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh were very precious things.

D. Further Ideas

1. The wise men had to travel a long way to find the Lord. Long journeys took a very long time in those days - walking, riding camels and donkeys - no airplanes or cars! So by the time they arrived, the Lord was no longer a tiny baby lying in a manger but was probably a toddler not yet two years old. The wise men arrived in Bethlehem to worship Him a long time after the shepherds had left.
2. Like the wise men, we can bring three gifts to the Lord. They are:
 - a. Our love, which is like gold.
 - b. Our faith, which is like frankincense.
 - c. Our obedience, which is like myrrh.
3. The star that led the wise men was a light from the spiritual world which they could see because the Lord specially opened their spiritual eyes. (We can't see spiritual things with our worldly eyes. This was a miracle the Lord did for the wise men!)

III. Enrichment Activities

A. Music

1. "We three kings," *Hymnal* #207.
2. "From the eastern mountains," *Hymnal* #208.

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B. Activities

1. Flannel Board
 - a. Give felt figures (wise men, Herod, star, Jesus, Mary, Joseph, camels) to children and have them add their pieces to the flannel board at the appropriate time as you tell/read the story.
 - b. Teacher could illustrate the story with felt figures as she tells/reads it to the children.
2. Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh
 - a. Burn some frankincense and myrrh to let children experience the strong fragrances. (A boxed set of frankincense and myrrh is available from Abbey Press, a Christian mail order catalog. You may be able to get tincture of myrrh from the pharmacist or health store. (The *Sunday School Activity Book* recommends Lhasa Karnak Herb Co., 2413 Telegraph Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94704 for power and whole myrrh gum "tears.")

C. Project

1. Mobile with Symbols
 - a. Continue from last week, adding the star and the crown pieces. (See Lesson #3.)
2. The Three Gifts
 - a. Make gold, frankincense, and myrrh containers by decorating little boxes, bottles, and other containers with fabric, ribbon, glitter, paint, stamping, etc. (Craft stores now sell little cardboard boxes of various shapes.) You may wish to put something in each box to represent each gift. (Note: Another description of this project can be found in the *Sunday School Activity Book for Lesson 102*.)
3. Wise Men's Crowns
 - a. This project is described in the *Sunday School Activity Book*, for Lesson 102 (the white volume).

IV. Teaching Aids

- A. Pictures of the wise men traveling, talking with Herod, and worshiping the Child.
- B. Gold, frankincense, and myrrh

V. Further Reading for the Teacher

- A. Dole's *Bible Study Notes*, Vol. 4, "The Visit of the Wise Men" (Matthew 2), pp. 257-272.