

**Glenview New Church Sunday Morning Program**  
**Preschool Lessons, Phase 2 – Lesson 12**  
**The Star of Bethlehem (Numbers 24:17, Matthew 2:9-10)**

**Theme:** Christmas

**I. Underlying Ideas for the Teacher**

- A. A "star" signifies knowledge of what is good and true, especially about the Lord.
- B. Because the wise men had knowledge about the Lord's Advent from the representatives, which were among them, they saw the star, and it went before them.
- C. It went to Jerusalem first, because that holy city represented the Church as to doctrine and as to the Word; and then it went to the place where the infant Lord was.

**II. Story Circle**

A. Introduce the Story

- 1. Christmas is coming! Why do we celebrate Christmas? Because the Lord was born on earth, and that makes us very happy!
- 2. Before the Lord was born, people were very confused about who God was. The Lord sent many prophets to tell the people that the Lord would soon be born on earth. God told them what to say. Many of these prophecies were written down in the Word. That way the world could get ready for the Lord to be born.
- 3. Today we will learn about one of these prophecies. Remember that the wise men followed a star to find where the Lord was born? Well, a long, long time before that happened (1500 years), a prophet named Balaam knew it would happen. He wrote down the things God told Him to say, and we will read about this prophecy now.

B. Tell/Read the Story

- 1. Numbers 24:17  
"I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall rise out of Jacob; a scepter shall rise out of Israel . . . ."
- 2. Matthew 2:9-10 "...behold, the star which they had seen in the East..."

C. Ideas to Discuss

- 1. What were the people called who told the world that the Lord would be born? (Prophets)
- 2. Who told the prophets what to say? (The Lord)
- 3. Where are many of these prophecies written down? (The Word)
- 4. What was the name of the prophet that gave this prophecy? (Balaam)
- 5. When Balaam said, "I see Him" whom was he talking about? (The Lord)
- 6. What did Balaam say would "rise out of Jacob?" (A star)

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### D. Further Ideas

1. A star did rise up in the sky above the land of Jacob, which is the land of Israel.
2. This star showed that the Lord was born in Bethlehem, and so sometimes we call this special star "The Star of Bethlehem."
3. Who followed this star to find the Lord? (The wise men)
4. They saw the star "in the east" because that is always where the Lord is.
5. Why did the wise men want to find the Lord? (They wanted to worship Him)

### III. Enrichment Activities

#### A. Music

1. The chorus of "We Three Kings" ("Star of Wonder, Star of Might")

#### B. Activities

1. Have a cardboard "Star of Bethlehem" that you can hold up in the sky. Let the children take turns holding the star, while the others follow it. You can tell the children: "We can be like the wise men, who looked for the star. And we can follow the star too, by worshipping the Lord."

#### C. Projects

##### 1. Star Cookies

- a. Before class prepare a big batch of sugar cookie dough.
- b. In class have the children cut out star shapes, and decorate them with sprinkles or colored sugar.
- c. Bake them in the oven and let the children eat one. Send a few to each home in a baggie with a text slip enclosed.
- d. Text slip: "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall rise out of Jacob; a scepter shall rise out of Israel..." (Numbers 24:17)

##### 2. Plastic Stars

- a. You need to make the "plastic" one or two days before class. The timing is important: if it is left too long before shaping it will become brittle.
- b. "Plastic" recipe:
  - 1 envelope of unflavored gelatin
  - 3 T water
  - A few drops of food color
  - Put ingredients into small saucepan and cook over medium heat until all the grains of gelatin dissolve. Remove from heat. Pour mixture into plastic coffee can lid. Push bubbles to the edges. Let harden one or two days, until the edges are dry but the center still feels rubbery.

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- c. In class children can lift the edges and remove the disc from the can lid. They can then cut the piece into any star shapes with scissors or cookie cutters. If you want them to be tree ornaments punch a hole at the top with a straw.
  - d. These will still need to dry for another day until completely stiff. Send home a note to parents that tell them to lay the star flat for a day until hanging.
3. Cardboard star ornaments
- a. Provide children with a few pre-cut cardboard stars each, and let them decorate them to their hearts' content. Use glitter, pieces of paper, shiny foil paper, stickers, material scraps, old Christmas cards, etc.
  - b. Send the set of ornaments home in a baggie with the text slip enclosed.

### IV. Teaching Aids

- A. A cardboard "Star of Bethlehem" that you can hold up in the sky.

### V. Further Reading for the Teacher