



Following the Star

Lesson Aim: To know the wise men followed a star.

THE WORSHIP

Who God Is: The God Who Comes Near

THE WORD

Bible Story: Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11

What He Has Done: God sent a star.

THE WAY - BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a

Unit 10: The God Who Comes Near			
	Bible Story	What He Has Done	Lesson Aim
48	Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah, Luke 1:11-22, 62-64	God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news.	To know God gets believers ready for Christmas.
49	Advent 2: Gabriel and Mary, Luke 1:28-33	God sent His angel Gabriel to prepare Mary for the birth of Jesus.	To know God is with us.
50	Advent 3: Jesus Is Born, Luke 2:1-7	God gave us His Son, baby Jesus.	To know Jesus was born in a manger in Bethlehem.
51	Advent 4: An Angel Visits the Shepherds, Luke 2:8-16	God sent an angel to announce the birth of Jesus to the shepherds.	To know God sent an angel to tell the shepherds about Jesus.
52	Following the Star, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	God sent a star.	To know the wise men followed a star.

TEACHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT

This week, read Psalm 95:1-6. Please join us in praying, "Thank You, Lord, for all You have taught Your children this past year. Fill each of them with Your Spirit that they may seek to worship You as the wise men did. Amen."

TEACHER'S TIP

What about Santa? Many cultures incorporate the story of Saint Nicholas (Santa Claus) into their family traditions at Christmas. However, not every family follows this tradition. To honor all parents, our role as Bible teachers is not to address (validate or invalidate) this tradition, but to redirect the children's focus to celebrating the gift of God's Son.



THE WORSHIP THE WORD & THE WAY

Segment	Minutes	Activity	Supplies
THE WELCOME	Up to 20	Treasure Chest	Treasure chest, stamp or sticker of a star
		Coloring Center: The Night Sky	Coloring pages of the wise men, crayons, optional: star stickers or stamps
		Play-Dough Center: Gifts for Jesus	Play-dough, cookie cutters, play-dough tools
		Block and Car Center: From the East	Blocks, cars
		Game Center: The Bethlehem Star	Laminated star
		Nativity Center: The Wise Men Came	Nativity set, Christmas music
		Preparing for Worship	None
THE WORSHIP	Up to 20	Worship Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs are available at ResourceWell.org.	Praise music (you may choose to sing favorite Christmas praise songs), optional: musical instruments Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "I Bring You Good News" Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions: "Give Thanks to the Lord" "His One and Only Son" "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" "Sing Praises" "The Lord Is Faithful" "We Love"
		Offering	Baskets
		Worship Illustration	<i>The Adventures of Delbert and Lello</i> puppet script or storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 52
THE WORD	Up to 10	Watch the Word: Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Matthew 2:10 Visual: Picture of the Bible story, map of the children's wing, large laminated star
THE WAY	Up to 25	Craft: Bethlehem Star Ornament	Star template for Ages 2-3 (available at ResourceWell.org), sturdy white or yellow paper, assorted craft materials (stickers, foam shapes, yarn, paints, and paint brushes, etc.), craft stick, glue, tape, crayons
		Game: Follow the Star	"The Bethlehem Star" craft sample, flashlight
		Game: Where Is Baby Jesus?	Flashlight, small baby doll or picture of a baby
	Snack: Star Bright	Star-shaped cookies or crackers	
	Final 5	Final Five	Ponder, Pray & Play: Unit 10 Lesson 52
GOT TIME?	Up to 10	Say & Do: Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11	None
	Up to 10	Game: Glory to God!	Ribbons or strips of cloth or crepe paper, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"
	Up to 10	Game: Quiet Time	Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"
	Up to 10	Story Time	Any story about the birth of Jesus

RESOURCES: Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.



The God who comes near

THE WELCOME

Welcome each child as they arrive. **Hello _____. I am glad you are here! Come open the Treasure Chest to find today's treasure.** Child unlocks the Treasure Chest to receive a sticker or stamp of a star. **Let this stamp (or sticker) of a star remind you that the wise men followed the star to find Jesus.**

Teacher's Note: These activity centers are designed to reinforce the lesson through hands-on learning experiences either individually or in small groups with the guidance of the teacher. Choose the Bible Activity Centers that best suit the children in your class. Set up the activity centers around the room before children arrive. Allow children to move freely among them.

COLORING CENTER: THE NIGHT SKY

SUPPLIES

Coloring pages of the wise men, crayons, optional: star stickers or stamps

DO

Children color their pictures while talking about the story. Optional: Children add star stickers or stamps to their coloring pages.

TALK ABOUT

Today, we will learn about the wise men who came to see baby Jesus. God put a very special star in the sky so the wise men could find Him. Where is the special star on your coloring page? Can you color it and make it special? Optional: Let's put some stars in the sky on our coloring pages.

PLAY-DOUGH CENTER: GIFTS FOR JESUS

SUPPLIES

Play-dough, cookie cutters, play-dough tools

DO

Children create gifts for Jesus with the play-dough while discussing today's lesson.

TALK ABOUT

After Jesus was born, wise men came from far away to see Him. They knew He was the King who would save the world. They were very happy to find Him and brought Him gifts fit for a king. Can you make a gift for King Jesus with your play-dough?

BLOCK AND CAR CENTER: FROM THE EAST

SUPPLIES

Blocks, cars

DO

Children travel from far away like the wise men did to find Jesus.

TALK ABOUT

The wise men who came to see Jesus came from far, far away. They would have ridden camels to travel to Bethlehem. Would you like to ride a camel? (Children respond.) When your family has to travel a long way, how do you get there? (Car, bus, plane, train.) Let's pretend to take a long trip like the wise men did. Where would you like to go?

THE WELCOME *continued ...*

GAME CENTER: THE BETHLEHEM STAR

SUPPLIES

Laminated star

DO

Children search for the Bethlehem star.

TALK ABOUT

What do you see in the sky at night? (Moon, stars.) **Who put the moon and the stars in the sky?** (God.) **The wise men searched the sky every night waiting for the star that would show them Jesus had been born. Close your eyes. I'm going to hide this star somewhere in our room. When I tell you to open your eyes, see if you can search and find the star like the wise men did.**

NATIVITY CENTER: THE WISE MEN CAME

SUPPLIES

Nativity set, Christmas music

DO

Children play with the nativity set. Have the children identify each of the figures in the nativity set. Play Christmas music while children play.

TALK ABOUT

Each week we have learned about some of the people who knew Jesus had come. Can you tell me who each of the figures are in our nativity set? (Children respond.) **Today, we will hear how wise men came to see Jesus after He was born. They were excited to find Jesus.**

PREPARE FOR WORSHIP

It's time for Praise Time. Let's sing a "Clean Up Song" as we put things away. Praise children as they help clean.

**Clean up! Clean up! Everybody, everywhere!
Clean up! Clean up! Everybody do your share!**

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SIGN LANGUAGE

(For visual demonstrations, see www.signingsavvy.com.)

**"Glory
to God**

Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.

in the highest."

(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.

Luke 2:14a

Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.

Adding sign language or motions to the Bible Memory Verse helps children recall what they are learning.



The God who comes near

THE WORSHIP

Supplies: Praise music (you may choose to sing favorite Christmas praise songs), optional: musical instruments

Teacher Tip: To help children identify time set aside for worship, designate a special corner or area for singing, collecting offering, and watching the worship illustration. Play "Praise Time: Love the Lord Your God" as children move to that designated area.



All of heaven and nature sang when Jesus was born. We can sing and praise God for Jesus' birth, too. Before we do that, let's pray. Have the children bow their heads and close their eyes. **Dear God, joy came to the world when You sent Your Son to come near to us. Help us to come near to You every day. Amen.**



Sing: "The Lord Is Faithful."

The wise men had heard about baby Jesus. They wanted to worship Jesus and to bring Him their offerings. Let's bring our offerings to Him now. Sing: "His One and Only Son" while collecting the offering.



God sent a star to lead the wise men to Jesus. Let's see if Delbert and Lello have heard about the wise men who followed the star. Perform *The Adventures of Delbert and Lello* puppet script or read storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 52.



The wise men were full of joy when they found baby Jesus. They wanted to give their biggest and highest praise and thanks to God. Let's give our biggest and highest praise by saying our Bible Memory Verse together. Practice with the motions.

"Glory	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion.
to God	(God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.
in the highest."	(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.
Luke 2:14a	Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.



Imagine that bright star as we sing of the good news that Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Let's march around the room as we sing and pretend we are traveling on a long journey like the wise men did. Children march around the room as they sing: "I Bring You Good News."



God sent a star

THE WORD

Supplies: Teacher's Bible with bookmark at Matthew 2:10, picture of the Bible story, map of the children's wing, large laminated star

Before we begin our Bible Time, let's say our Classroom Promise with the motions.

With my eyes on my teacher;	Point to eyes.
My mouth quiet as can be,	Place index finger over mouth as quiet sign.
I will listen to hear,	Cup hand around ear.
How God loves you and me.	Hug self, point to others, and then self.

Let's reach deep in our pockets and pull out our listening ears. Reach in your pocket and cup your hands behind your ears as if listening.

Hold the map. **I think I'm lost. I was looking for the nursery. Are there any babies here? (No.) No? I have this map. Do you think it will help? Let's see if I can find where we are.** Point to your location on the map. **Oh, here I am! I'm in the insert location.**

When the wise men were looking for Jesus, they didn't have a map to find their way. Do you know what they used? (A star.) That's right, a star. Show the children the star. **Let's listen to the story of the wise men.** Handle Bible as a special treasure, leaving it open to Matthew 2:10.



WATCH THE WORD: MATTHEW 2:1-2, 9-11

Read the story below or retell the passage in your own words. To illustrate the story, show a picture of the Bible story from a children's Bible, the coloring page, or other source.

- **When Jesus was born in Bethlehem,**
- **The wise men wanted to worship Him.**
- **They traveled very, very far.**
- **They found Him by following the star.**

- **To Bethlehem, it led their way.**
- **It stopped at the place where Jesus stayed.**
- **The wise men, they were full of joy.**
- **They bowed down and worshiped the little boy.**

- **Their treasures to Jesus they did bring.**
- **They brought Him gifts fit for a king.**
- **Incense, myrrh, and gold they gave,**
- **For He was the King who came to save.**

How did the wise men feel when the star stopped over the place where Jesus was? (Happy, filled with joy.) What did the wise men see up in the sky? (A star.)



The wise men followed the star

THE WAY

Teacher Tip: Craft and games can be presented at the same time in different areas or one at a time depending on class size and teaching style.

CRAFT: BETHLEHEM STAR ORNAMENT

Purpose: Children create a star to remember the wise men who followed the star to Jesus.

Supplies: Star template for Ages 2-3 (available at ResourceWell.org), sturdy white or yellow paper, assorted craft materials (stickers, foam shapes, yarn, paints, and paint brushes, etc.), craft stick, glue, tape, crayons

Prepare: Print and cut out the star template from sturdy white or yellow paper. Punch a hole in the top of the cut out.

Adaptation for Ages 2-3: This craft has been adapted from the curriculum for ages 4-5.

Directions:

1. Before or after the children decorate the star, thread the yarn through the hole in the top of the ornament and tie the ends together for a hanger.
2. Color and decorate the front of the star with assorted craft materials. Children may choose to draw the three wise men onto the star.

Craft Discussion:

- **Who saw the star?** (The wise men.)
- **Where did the star lead them?** (To the place where Jesus was.)
- **Who made the stars?** (God.)
- **What is your favorite thing about stars?** (Brightness, twinkle, shape, etc.)

THE WAY *continued...*

GAME: FOLLOW THE STAR

Purpose: Children remember the story by following a star around the room.

Supplies: "The Bethlehem Star" craft sample, flashlight

Teacher Tip: If possible, allow the "star" to lead the "wise men" out of the classroom and down nearby hallways to symbolize the wise men's long journey from the east to Bethlehem.

Let's imagine what it was like to follow the star!

Directions:

1. One child marches around the room holding the Bethlehem Star created in Craft Connection.
2. Remaining children form a line to "follow the star" wherever it goes.
3. If a flashlight is available, the teacher dims the lights, and points the flashlight at the Bethlehem Star to make it shine!
4. Be sure each child has a turn as the leader carrying the Bethlehem Star!

GAME: WHERE IS BABY JESUS?

Purpose: The star's light (flashlight) helps children find the hidden baby.

Supplies: Flashlight, small baby doll or picture of a baby

Let's pretend we are the wise men following the star's light to find baby Jesus.

Directions:

1. Divide the children into groups of 2 to 4 wise men. Children close their eyes as the teacher or a child volunteer hides the baby doll (or picture of a baby).
2. Teacher points the light around the room as the first group of wise men search everywhere for the baby doll.
3. After a few minutes of searching, the teacher focuses the light over the place where the baby doll is hidden until the wise men find the doll.
4. Find a new hiding place for the baby doll and start the game over with a new group of wise men.
5. Play until each group of wise men have searched and found the baby doll.

THE WAY *continued...*

SNACK: STAR BRIGHT

Purpose: To remember the story of the wise men following the star to Jesus.

Snack Suggestion: Star-shaped cookies or crackers

Directions:

1. Serve snack and drink.
2. **Let's sing the "Blessing Song."** Sing to the tune of "Frere Jacques" or another familiar tune.
**God our Father, God our Father. Once again, once again,
Thank You for our blessings. Thank You for our blessings. Amen. Amen.**
3. Lead discussion below while children enjoy their snack.
 - **What did the wise men do when they saw the star?** (They followed it to Jesus.)
 - **The wise men brought their treasure to Jesus. Do you remember what the gifts were?** (Gifts for a king: gold, incense, and myrrh.)
 - **What gift would you like to give Jesus?**



When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

FINAL FIVE MINUTES

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

Gather children in a circle sitting or standing and practice the words and motions.

"Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:14a	Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up. (highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body. Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.
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PRAY

Let's pray together. Say a closing prayer with the children.

PLAY

Allow children to play with selected toys or centers or choose a book to read to them.

DISMISSAL

Have children take home their coloring page, craft, and a copy of the Ponder, Pray & Play for 2-3's.



If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

GOT TIME?

SAY & DO: MATTHEW 2:1-2, 9-11

Purpose: This pantomime version of the Bible Story helps children remember the story details.

Supplies: None

Directions: With each phrase, the teacher says the phrase and leads the children in doing the hand motions.

- **When Jesus was born in Bethlehem,** (Rock baby in arms.)
- **The wise men wanted to worship Him.** (Raise palms in worship.)
- **They traveled very, very far.** (Walk in place.)
- **They found Him by following the star.** (Point to the star.)

- **To Bethlehem, it led their way.** (Walk in place.)
- **It stopped at the place where Jesus stayed.** (Stop walking.)
- **The wise men, they were full of joy.** (Smile.)
- **They bowed down and worshiped the little boy.** (Bow head and fold hands in prayer.)

- **Their treasures to Jesus they did bring.** (Hide imaginary treasure in hand.)
- **They brought Him gifts fit for a king.** (Open hand to show the treasure.)
- **Incense, myrrh and gold they gave** (Make giving gesture.)
- **For He was the King who came to save.** (Point up to heaven.)



BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"Glory to God in the highest!" Luke 2:14a

GAME: GLORY TO GOD!

Purpose: To help children memorize and review the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.

Supplies: Ribbons or strips of cloth or crepe paper, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"

God sent an angel to the shepherds with good news. Do you know what that good news was? (Baby Jesus was born.) **The angel said, "Glory to God in the highest." Let's say that together, "Glory to God in the highest." Glory is the praise and thanks we give to God. As we sing, let's dance and wave these ribbons as a way to praise God for sending Jesus to us.**

Directions:

1. **Listen for the words, "Glory to God in the highest," and sing along.**
2. Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News."
3. Lead the children in waving the ribbons as they dance about the room. Encourage them to sing along when they hear "Glory to God in the highest!"

GOT TIME? *continued...*

GAME: QUIET TIME

Purpose: To take a moment of silence to think about God's goodness.

Supplies: Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News"

Zechariah could not say a word for about 300 days. Since he was not talking, he had plenty of time to think about God and to listen. Let's take a minute to be quiet and hear what the angel said to the shepherds about baby Jesus.

Directions:

1. Invite children to get in a comfortable position either by laying their heads on a table or by resting on the floor.
2. **Listen for the words: "Glory to God in the highest." Glory is the praise and thanks we give to God. Glory to God in the highest means we give our biggest and highest praise and thanks to Him.**
3. **It is good to take time to be quiet and think about God. Let's be quiet and think about God while we listen to our Bible Memory Verse Song.** Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News." Children rest quietly as they listen.



STORY TIME

Gather the children and read a favorite story. This can be a Bible Story, a chapter from *The Adventures of Delbert & Lello*, or a story about the birth of Jesus.

PONDER, PRAY & PLAY

Unit 10, Lesson 52: Following the Star

PONDER! Gather your family to read Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11. Discuss what it is like to take long trips. How did the wise men feel when the star finally stopped? Talk about what kind of treasure you would like to give Jesus.

PRAY! Pray this prayer each day this week: "Lord, thank You for the star that led the wise men to You. Help us be like the wise men who wanted to worship You and bring You their treasures. Amen."

PLAY! Create a sparkly star. Now hold it up high and lead your family on the wise men's journey all through your home or neighborhood. End your journey by gathering around a Bible and reading Matthew 2:9-11.

BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"Glory
to God

in the highest."

Luke 2:14a

Hold palms together. Top hand moves upward as fingers make wiggling motion. (God) The open right hand, fingers together and palm facing left, moves upward and then down the center of the face with fingers facing up.
(highest) Held together, pointer and middle fingers point to the side and are raised in front of the body.
Hold hands open, as if holding a Bible.