# Following the Star

**Lesson Aim: To know God leads all of us to Jesus.**

## 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 to guide the Magi to Jesus.
**Key Verse:** Matthew 2:11

## THE WAY

**Christ Connection:** Genesis 1:16-17

## BIBLE MEMORY VERSE

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:10b, 11, 14a

| **Unit 10: The God Who Comes Near** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Bible Story | What He Has Done | Lesson Aim |
| 48 | Advent 1: Gabriel Visits Zechariah, Luke 1:18-20, 62-64 | God sent His angel Gabriel to tell Zechariah the good news. | To know God comes near to prepare our hearts. |
| 49 | Advent 2: Angel Visits—Gabriel and Mary, Luke 1:28-33 | God sent His angel Gabriel to prepare Mary for the birth of Jesus. | To know the Lord is with us. |
| 50 | Advent 3: Jesus Is Born, Luke 2:4-7 | Jesus was born. | To consider the miracle of the Savior coming near to us as a baby. |
| 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 the good news of Jesus' birth is for all people. |
| 52 | Following the Star, Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11 | God sent a star to guide the Magi to Jesus. | To know God leads all of us to Jesus. |

## 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 them with Your Spirit, so they may seek to worship You as the Magi did. Amen."

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| Segment | Minutes | Activity | Supplies |
|---|---|---|---|
| **THE WELCOME** | Up to 15 | **Meet & Greet** | None |
| | | **Game:** Follow the Star | Paper (red, yellow, and brown), basket, picture of a star |
| **THE WORSHIP** | Up to 20 | **Worship**<br>Sheet music and recordings for Bible Memory Verse Songs available at ResourceWell.org | **Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song:**<br>"I Bring You Good News"<br>**Other Bible Memory Verse Song Suggestions:**<br>"Search Me, O God"<br>"For God So Loved the World"<br>"You Will Seek Me"<br>**Additional Hymn Suggestions:**<br>"O Come, All Ye Faithful"<br>"Angels We Have Heard on High"<br>**Additional Song Collection Suggestions:**<br>Worship Jamz Christmas—Worship Jamz<br>Shout Praises Kids Christmas |
| | | **Worship Scripture Reading:**<br>Jeremiah 29:13 | Bible |
| | | **Offering** | Baskets |
| | | **Worship Illustration** | Lesson 52 High Seas Adventures script or storybook |
| **THE WORD** | Up to 10 | **Read the Word:**<br>Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11 | Map—Ancient Middle East, Bibles, Bible Story Scripture reference poster |
| **THE WAY** | Up to 25 | **Discussion** | Bibles, Christ Connection Scripture reference poster, flashlight |
| | | **Christ Connection:**<br>Genesis 1:16-17 | |
| | | **Golden Bowl** | Golden Bowl, pencils, note cards |
| | Final 5 | **Final Five Minutes** | Treasure Treat—Star-shaped treat or sticker, Daily Ways, basket, paper, pencils, crayons or markers, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News," CD player |
| **GOT TIME?** | Up to 10 | **Snack:** Star Sandwiches | Bread, jelly, star-shaped cookie cutters, plastic knives |
| | Up to 10 | **Game:** Miracle Charades | Index cards, pens or pencils, two bags or boxes, timer or clock |
| | Up to 10 | **Craft:** "Led to Worship" Star | Copies of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song lyrics, cardboard, yellow cardstock, pencils, scissors, glue, markers, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song, CD player, optional: glitter, stickers, or other craft supplies |
| | Up to 5 | **Discussion:** Magi Facts | Bible |
| | Up to 10 | **Bible Memory Verse Activity:**<br>Appearing Angel | Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, dry erase board and marker (or chalkboard and chalk or large piece of paper and pencil) |
| | Up to 5 | **Bible Memory Verse Activity:**<br>Memory Verse Circle | Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News," CD player |
| | Up to 5 | **Bible Timeline Review** | Timeline |

**RESOURCES:** Supplemental materials are available at ResourceWell.org.

Getting started

# THE WELCOME

To spark anticipation, encourage arriving children to meet and greet one another with today's question.
**Meet & Greet Question: What is the most amazing thing you have seen in the sky?**

## GAME: FOLLOW THE STAR

**Purpose:** To introduce the story of the Magi following the star to worship Jesus.
**Supplies:** Paper (red, yellow, and brown), basket, picture of a star
**Prepare:** Attach the star to the front of the basket. Cut the paper into 2-inch pieces. Make an equal number of pieces of the three colors and at least enough total pieces for each child to have one piece.

**In Bible times, the Magi were wise men from the east who studied the stars. In our story, we will discover how God sent a special star to lead the Magi thousands of miles to worship baby Jesus. They brought special gifts of gold, incense, and a perfume called myrrh for Jesus. For our game, you will pretend to be Magi following the star to bring their gifts to Jesus. Be sure you always know where the star is so you can deliver your gifts.**

**Directions:**

1. Divide the class into three teams.
2. The three teams each stand in a line in the center of the room.
   - Name a team the "Gold Magi." Lay the yellow squares (gifts) on the floor in front of their line.
   - Name a team the "Incense Magi." Lay the brown squares (gifts) on the floor in front of their line.
   - Name a team the "Myrrh Magi." Lay the red squares (gifts) on the floor in front of their line.
3. Ask a helper or child volunteer to be the "Star." He or she carries the basket with the attached star picture. During the game, the Star continuously walks around the room so "Magi" have to catch up with the Star to deliver their gifts.
4. On your signal, the Star begins to move around the room. The first Magi in each line picks up one paper (gift) and delivers it to the basket the Star is carrying. Magi then run back to their line, tag the next Magi, and go to the back of their team's line.
5. Once tagged, the next Magi in each line repeat the process of delivering a gift until all their gifts are delivered to the Star basket.
6. When a team has delivered all their gifts, they should sit down to show they are finished.

The God who comes near

# THE WORSHIP

**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 music as children move to the designated area.

**Today, we worship the God who came near to us by sending the star to guide the Magi to Jesus. God created the stars and He used one of them to lead the Magi to worship Jesus. Our worship is important to God. Just as He led the Magi, He leads anyone who wants to worship Jesus. He led all of us here today.**

Sing the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song: "I Bring You Good News."

**The Magi followed the star for a reason. They wanted to find Jesus so they could bow down, worship Him, and bring their offerings to Him. That is our goal, too. Today, we will bow down and worship Jesus. We will give Him our offerings of money, our songs of praise, and our prayers. We will praise Him for all He has given us this year and thank Him for sending His Son. The best offering we can give Jesus is our hearts. When we show our love to Jesus, that is worship.**

Read Jeremiah 29:13.

While collecting the offering, sing: "You Will Seek Me." You may choose to sing other songs that focus on seeking God.

Perform *High Seas Adventures* script or read storybook: God of Wonders Unit 10, Lesson 52.

God led the Magi to Jesus

# THE WORD

**Teacher Tip:** As you move from worship to instruction, change rooms or locations within a room to help redirect the children's focus to the Bible story. During this transition time, have each child write his or her name on a card and place it in the Golden Bowl.

**Before we read God's Word, let's go over our Class Covenant. A covenant is an agreement. Just as God made a covenant with His people, I ask each of you to make this covenant promise with me today. Listen as I read our Class Covenant: "I will keep my eyes on my teacher, my mouth in control, my ears on God's Word; knowing God is my goal."**

**Last time, we learned God used an angel to lead the shepherds to worship baby Jesus.** If a Bible Timeline is available, point to Jesus on Earth (Circa 1-33 A.D.). For a Bible Timeline Review activity, see the GOT TIME? segment of this lesson. **Today, we will discover how God led men who lived far away and east of Israel to worship Jesus in Bethlehem.** If a map is available, trace a path with your finger from the east of Israel to Bethlehem.

**If you brought your Bible, open it now and share with others.** Hand out spare Bibles. **Today's Scripture verse is behind the curtain** (or secret door, secret window, etc.). Child reveals Bible Story Scripture reference: Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11.

**Before we read, let's stand and ask God to open our eyes, ears, hearts, and minds to His Word today. Who would like to pray that for us?** Child prays aloud. **Be seated.**

**Many months (possibly a year or two) after Jesus was born, some very special visitors came to see Him. Let's read how they found Jesus.** Read Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11.

God leads us to Jesus

# THE WAY

**Additional Supplies:** Flashlight

**Magi is another name for wise scientists who studied the stars. When the Magi saw the star God sent, they knew it was very special. Why did God send the star?** (Point to Jesus' birthplace, lead the Magi to see baby Jesus in Bethlehem.) **The Magi called Jesus the King of the Jews. They traveled thousands of miles to see this little baby King. What did the Magi say they were coming to do?** (Worship Jesus.) **How did they worship Jesus?** (They bowed down and brought gifts to Him.)

Turn off the lights and shine a flashlight on the ceiling. If you cannot turn off the lights or if you have a very high ceiling, shine the flashlight on a wall or have the children close their eyes and imagine the star. **Pretend this light is the star. Pretend you are one of the Magi and are seeing the star for the very first time. Why would you decide to follow the star?** (Children respond.) **God knew the Magi would follow the star and He used it to lead them to Jesus.**

**Last time, we learned the shepherds worshiped baby Jesus. Who did God send to lead them to Him?** (An angel told them where to find baby Jesus.) **What did God send to lead the Magi to baby Jesus?** (The star.) **God sends everyone someone or something that can lead them to worship Jesus.**

Connecting the Old Testament, the New Testament, and Us

# CHRIST CONNECTION

**Do you remember how God first created the stars?** (Children respond.) **Let's read about it.**

**Everyone, place your Bible on your lap.** Choose a child to reveal the Christ Connection Scripture reference: Genesis 1:16-17. **Let's find this scripture.** Read Genesis 1:16-17.

**We know God created all the stars, but He created one special star to lead the Magi to Jesus. What do you think made this star different from all the others?** (Children respond.) **God creating a special star to announce Jesus' birth was an amazing miracle!**

**God used the star to lead the Magi to Jesus. God leads us to Jesus, too. Can you think of some ways God leads us to Jesus?** (He tells His story in the Bible. He makes our hearts want to know and love Jesus. He gives us family and friends who love Jesus. He does miracles to help us believe in Him.)

# THE WAY *continued…*

Revelation 5:8

## GOLDEN BOWL

**Teacher Tip:** Write the names of classmates, local church leaders, children in other nations, or others who need prayer on small pieces of paper. Place the papers in a golden bowl.

**Revelation 5:8 says our prayers are like sweet smelling incense in the golden bowls at God's throne. I will lift each one of your names to God's throne as you pray for each person silently. Then, we will pray the Lord's Prayer** (Matthew 6:9-13) **aloud together. Let's pray.**

**Lord God, we lift up to Your throne the name of each child here. We trust You to watch over us and our needs, the ones we say aloud and the ones hidden in our hearts. First, we lift up to You ___, ___, ___.** Read names in Golden Bowl.

**Now, we pray the prayer Your Son taught us: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

When only 5 minutes remain, begin this segment.

## FINAL FIVE MINUTES

**TREASURE TREAT: Today, your Treasure Treat is a star. Each time you look at the sky, think about the one special star God sent to lead the Magi to Jesus. Remember, God leads all of us to Jesus, too!**

**DAILY WAY CHALLENGE: Did anyone bring in a completed Daily Way from last time?** Praise or reward those who return a Daily Way. Distribute Lesson 52 Daily Way 5-day Bible study. **Complete this week's Daily Way at home and let God speak to you through His own words in the Bible. Join the Daily Way Challenge by returning your completed Daily Way.**

**Teacher Tip:** Collect Daily Ways in a basket or other container and periodically reward children as a group for completing the challenge.

**OFFERING OF ART: Until it is time to be dismissed, let's make an Offering of Art. For your offering, draw a picture of the Magi following the star.** The Offering of Art can be finished at home or given as an offering for the teacher to display.

**PRAYER REQUESTS:** As children work on their Offering of Art, ask how you can pray for them this week. Write requests in a prayer notebook.

**BIBLE MEMORY VERSE SONG:** Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song, "I Bring You Good News," in the background as children wait to be dismissed.

If time remains, choose from the connected activities below.

# GOT TIME?

## SNACK: STAR SANDWICHES

**Purpose:** To enjoy a snack while discussing the Magi and their travels.
**Snack Suggestion:** Bread, jelly, star-shaped cookie cutters, plastic knives

**Today, we learned how God sent a star to lead the Magi to worship Jesus. They followed the star for many miles and traveled far from home. Let's make star sandwiches. As we work and eat, I would like to hear about the furthest you have traveled from your home.**

**Directions:**

1. Show children how to use the cookie cutters to punch two star shapes from the bread, spread the jelly on one star shape, and put the two stars together to make a sandwich.
2. Serve drinks.
3. Ask a child to pray and thank God for the snack.
4. Ask the Snack Discussion Question: **Where is the furthest place you have traveled to from home?**

## GAME: MIRACLE CHARADES

**Purpose:** Children will act out stories of miracles from the Bible which they have learned.
**Supplies:** Paper, bag or box
**Prepare:** On slips of paper, write several of the miracles your class has studied this year. Make enough so there is at least one for every two children. Place the slips of paper in the bag or box. Some examples of miracles from this year are Jesus calming the storm, Jesus feeding the big crowd, Jesus' rising from the dead, creation, the burning bush, parting the Red Sea, manna from heaven, the Ten Commandments, Jacob and the angel, the walls of Jericho, Mary and the angel, the angel and shepherds, Jesus' birth, and the Bethlehem star.

**This year, we have learned about the miracles which the God of Wonders performed from the time He created the world to the time He brought down the walls of Jericho. We have also studied the miracles Jesus performed while He lived here on earth as a man. As we act out some of our favorite Bible miracles, let's think about what we learned about God from each one.**

**Directions:**

1. Choose two children to begin. The pair draws one of the miracles from the bag or box.
2. The pair silently acts out the miracle while the rest of the class guesses.
3. Choose another pair to act out another miracle. Continue playing until all the children have a chance to act out a miracle.

**Team Challenge:** You may choose to divide the class into two teams and have the teams take turns guessing the miracles. Each time a team guesses a miracle within a minute, they score a point. The winner is the team with the most points.

# GOT TIME? *continued…*

## CRAFT: "LED TO WORSHIP" STAR

**Purpose:** To remember God leads us to Jesus and to praise Him with our Bible Memory Verse Song.
**Supplies:** Copies of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song lyrics, cardboard, yellow cardstock, pencils, scissors, glue, markers, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song, CD player, optional: glitter, stickers, or other craft supplies
**Prepare:** Cut a few star templates from sturdy cardboard. Make sure the lyrics will fit on a star.

**Lyrics:**

**I Bring You Good News**
(Luke 2:10-14)
"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord.
Glory to God in the highest. Glory to God.
Glory to God in the highest. Glory to God.

**Today, we discovered God sent a special star to lead the Magi to Jesus. What did the Magi do when they found Jesus?** (Worshiped Him.) **God leads us to Jesus, too. One of the ways we can worship Him is to sing songs like our Bible Memory Verse Song. Let's each add the words to our Bible Memory Verse Song to star and decorate it. You can take the star home and teach the song to your family and friends. We can practice the song as we work.**

**Directions:**

1. On yellow cardstock, trace and cut out a star shape using a star template.
2. Trim the Bible Memory Verse Song lyrics so they fit on the star shape.
3. Glue the lyrics onto the star shape.
4. Decorate the star.

## DISCUSSION: MAGI FACTS

**Purpose:** To guide children in a discussion about the Magi.
**Supplies:** Bible

**Today, we talked about how God led the Magi to Jesus. How many Magi do you think followed the star?** (Children respond.) **Listen as I read our story again and see if you can count how many there were.** Read Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11. **How many Magi did you count?** (The Bible doesn't give a number.) **Many people say there were three Magi. Why do you think they say that?** (The Magi give three gifts.) **We don't know how many Magi really visited Jesus. We just know there was more than one!**

**What did the Magi give Jesus?** (Gold, incense, and myrrh.) **Do you know why these gifts are special?** (Children respond.) **They were gifts usually given to a king. Gold was very valuable. Incense was burned in worship to create a good smell. Myrrh was dried tree sap. It was used in making perfume and other good smelling things. The Magi knew Jesus is our King and so, they brought Him gifts fit for a king.**

# GOT TIME? *continued…*

## BIBLE MEMORY VERSE ACTIVITIES

"I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.
Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you;
He is Christ the Lord. Glory to God in the highest." Luke 2:10b, 11, 14a

## GAME: APPEARING ANGEL

**Purpose:** Children learn the meaning of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse: Luke 2:10b, 11, 14a.
**Supplies:** Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, dry erase board and marker (or chalkboard and chalk or large piece of paper and pencil)
**Prepare:** Display the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster.

**Directions:**

1. From the list below, choose one of the phrases of the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.
2. Draw one line for each letter in the phrase. Leave a blank space between each word.
3. Choose a volunteer to guess a letter.
   a. If the letter is found in the phrase, write it on every blank where it belongs.
   b. If it is not in the phrase, draw one part of an angel (Head, robe, hands, feet, eyes, nose, mouth, hair, etc.) The goal is to guess all the letters before completing the angel.
4. Choose another volunteer to guess a letter.
5. Continue playing until all the letters are revealed or until the angel drawing is complete.
6. Read the phrase to the class and use the description below to explain that part of the verse.
7. If time allows, play again using another phrase.

| Phrase | Description |
|---|---|
| "I bring you good news of great joy." | The angel brought an announcement from God. |
| "That will be for all the people." | The announcement was for everyone. |
| "Today in the town of David," | Both Jesus and King David were born in Bethlehem. |
| "A Savior has been born to you." | Jesus came to save the world. |
| "He is Christ the Lord." | Jesus is the Lord Himself, the Messiah. |
| "Glory to God in the highest." | The heavenly host praised God with these words. |

## GAME: MEMORY VERSE CIRCLE

**Purpose:** Children memorize the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse.
**Supplies:** Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse poster, Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song "I Bring You Good News," CD player

**Directions:**

1. Practice the verse together a few times.
2. Play the Unit 10 Bible Memory Verse Song and sing along.
3. Children sit on chairs or kneel in a circle.
4. Pick one child to stand and say the first word of the Bible Memory Verse, "I."
5. The next child stands and says "bring." Continue around the circle until the Bible Memory Verse has been completed.
6. Play as often as you like. Challenge the children to see how fast they can say the verse or try reversing directions.

# GOT TIME? *continued…*

## BIBLE TIMELINE REVIEW

God of Wonders Part Two studies the miracles and stories of the Bible from Genesis through Joshua. Review recent Bible stories to see the continuing story of who God is and what He has done.

**Joshua (Circa 1450 B.C.) Who replaced Moses as the leader of the Israelites?** (Joshua.) **How did Rahab help the two spies Joshua sent to Jericho?** (She hid them and helped them escape.) **What was God's plan for conquering Jericho?** (The Israelites marched around the city with the ark for six days. On the seventh day, after a long trumpet blast, everyone shouted and the wall crumbled to the ground.)

**John the Baptist (Circa 1 A.D.) Who did God send to prepare Zechariah for the special son he and his wife Elizabeth would have?** (The angel Gabriel.) **What happened to Zechariah when he didn't believe Gabriel?** (He could not speak until the baby was born.) **Who was the baby?** (John the Baptist.) **John prepared people for the coming of Jesus, our Savior.**

**Jesus on Earth (Circa 1 A.D.) A.D. stands for Anno Domini, which means "in the year of our Lord." A.D. begins with Jesus' birth and continues until the end of time. Everything written in Genesis through Malachi led up to the birth of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The books of Genesis through Joshua are filled with miracles from the God of Wonders. His greatest miracle of all was announced by angels to Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds. In this miracle, God gave Jesus, His only Son, so that whoever believes in Him will have life forever close with God.**

**How to create a Bible Timeline from Genesis through Joshua:**

1. Print each scroll on sturdy paper.
2. Choose a wall or other visible location to display the timeline.
3. Before each lesson, add the scroll for that lesson to the Bible Timeline using the list below. Add the two Unit 10 cards for God of Wonders Advent: Lessons 48-52.
4. To review the Bible Timeline, ask the corresponding questions as you point to the associated scroll.

Genesis through Joshua: Creation > Adam and Eve > Cain and Abel > Noah (Circa 2350.B.C.) > Tower of Babel > Abram (Circa 2100 B.C.) > Hagar and Ishmael (Circa 2065 B.C.) > Abraham and Isaac (Circa 2050 B.C.) > Isaac and Rebekah > Jacob and Esau (Circa 1900 B.C.) > Joseph (Circa 1850 B.C.) > Moses (Circa 1500 B.C.) > Joshua (Circa 1450 B.C.)

**Unit 10:** John the Baptist (Circa 7-2 B.C.) > Jesus on Earth (Circa 2 B.C.-33 A.D.)