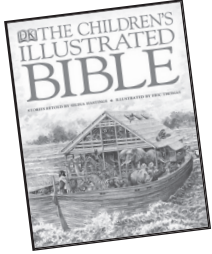


Epiphany



The Children's Illustrated Bible
pages 196–199

After Jesus was born, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the child who is king of the Jews? We saw his star, and came to honor him.” They followed the star until it stopped where the child was. They were overwhelmed with joy! They saw Jesus and they knelt down to worship him, and offered him gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

—Matthew 2:1–11 adapted

May all kings bow down before Jesus.

—Psalm 72:11 adapted

Arise, shine; for your light has come. Nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord.

—Isaiah 60:1,3,6 adapted

Jesus is the life and the light of all people. All who receive and believe in him become children of God.

—John 1:4,12 adapted

☐ Jesus Is the Light

Share the story of Epiphany from *The Children's Illustrated Bible* and Matthew 2:1–12. Show Bethlehem on the map in *The Children's Illustrated Bible*, page 196. Epiphany is the event of the Magi following a star and discovering Jesus. The Magi were wise spiritual leaders of another faith and culture. They were not Jews like Jesus and his family, but they knew the scriptural predictions of the birth of a king. On this day of Epiphany, all lectionary scriptures point to Jesus' birth and the light that Jesus brought into the world. Read Isaiah 60: 1, 3, 6 and Psalm 72:11.

Epiphany tells how Jesus came to everyone, no matter what their culture or beliefs. The early church celebrated Epiphany, not Christmas, as the birth of Christ, which began the tradition of giving gifts. The arrival and brightness of Jesus' star led the wise men to him. Read John 1:4, 12.

1. What do you think of wise men following the star to Jesus? He wasn't someone from their country or their own religion!
2. What does it mean to say “Jesus is the light”?

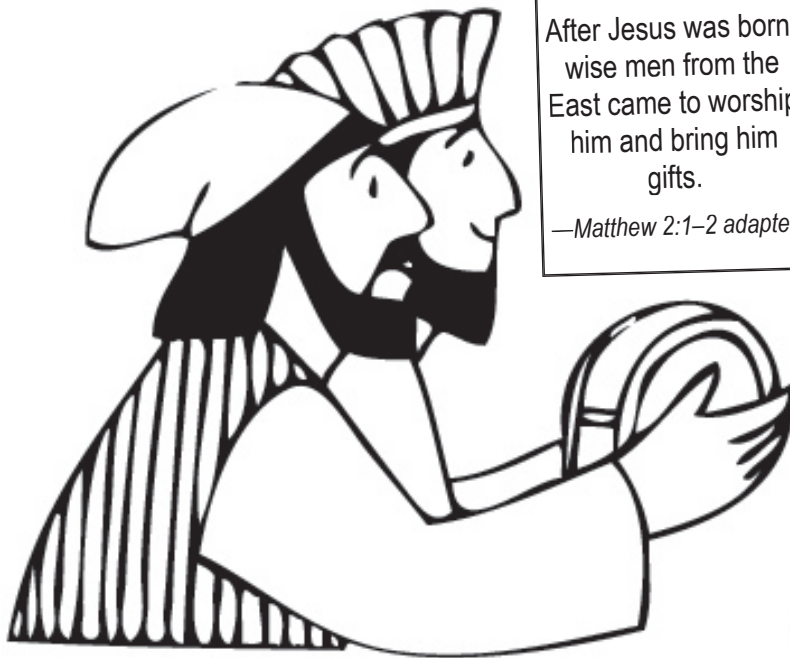
Retell the story of Epiphany using a round-robin method: Begin with one sentence such as “When Jesus was born, a new star appeared in the sky.” Then continue with each kid adding a sentence until the story is told.

☐ Treasure Hunt

Have kids search for the star as the Magi did. Cut out a five-point star and write today's scriptures on it. (See the star on the KidsPage.) Cut the star into pieces. Add directions to each piece such as “Go to the sanctuary to worship Jesus,” etc. Give kids one piece of the star which guides them to the next piece, treasure-hunt fashion. At the end of the search, have a model of Jesus and the manger from a life-size nativity or doll set inside a closet or in a place where the kids won't immediately see it. Along the way, kids can pick up gold, frankincense, and myrrh to take to Jesus. Frankincense was a holy anointing oil used for healing. It was valued more than gold! Myrrh was used for embalming. Frankincense and myrrh can be found at natural health stores in soaps, lotions, and oils. Gold can be play money or chocolate gold coins.

☐ King's Cake

Epiphany is the twelfth day after Christmas. The night before Epiphany is sometimes called “Twelfth Night.” One tradition of Twelfth Night is to bake a King's Cake—a circular cake like the circular path the Magi took to confuse Herod so he wouldn't find baby Jesus. The cake is decorated with purple, green, and gold colored sugar and icing to resemble a king's crown. A tiny, ceramic toy baby was baked into the cake to represent Jesus. Bake a King's Cake or coffee cake for class. Kids may decorate it with colored sugar. Whoever finds the baby Jesus (insert a plastic baby toy after the cake is cool) may choose a game to play or song to sing.

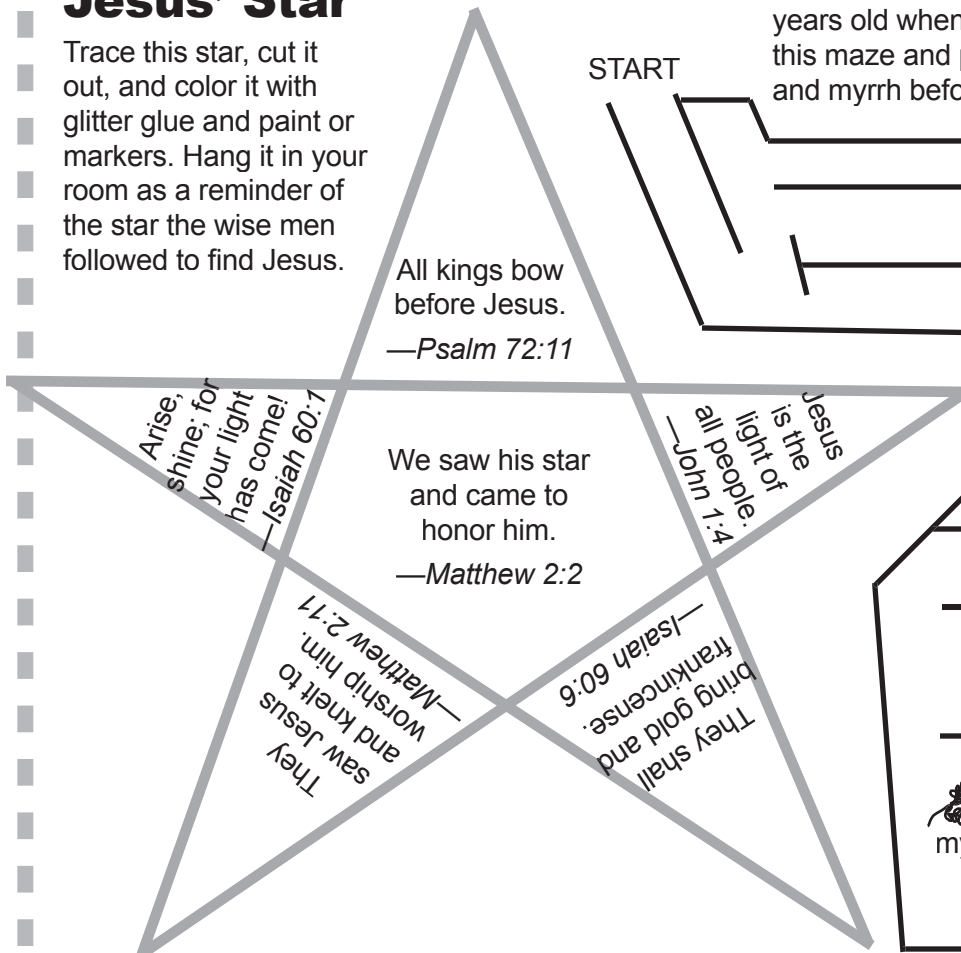


After Jesus was born, wise men from the East came to worship him and bring him gifts.
—Matthew 2:1–2 adapted



Jesus' Star

Trace this star, cut it out, and color it with glitter glue and paint or markers. Hang it in your room as a reminder of the star the wise men followed to find Jesus.



The Wise Men traveled a great distance to find Jesus. Jesus was probably about two years old when they arrived. Go through this maze and pick up gold, frankincense, and myrrh before meeting Jesus.

START

