



— **Week 4** —

*The Promise for All Peoples:
The Journey of the Magi*



Week 4

FAMILY DISCIPLESHIP TIME

Set aside ten minutes one night this week to talk about how only God is worthy of all glory. Consider sitting outside as you talk about the journey of the Magi, drawing particular attention to the stars in the night sky above you. The only materials needed are five candles, matches, and a Bible.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Have one member of the family light the candles from the first three weeks and a fourth candle.

SCRIPTURE READING

Have one person read the following passages out loud.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." **MATTHEW 2:1-2**

The journey that had begun so many centuries before had led three Wise Men here. To a little town. To a little house. To a little child. To the King God had promised David all those years before. **THE JESUS STORYBOOK BIBLE**

And going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. **MATTHEW 2:11-12**



REFLECTION

Have an adult read the commentary below.

The first people God told about Jesus' birth were the shepherds. He used a spectacular mass of angels to shout from the skies that Jesus had come. But the angels were not alone in proclaiming the good news that night, and the shepherds were not the only people to learn of the Rescuer's coming.

That same night, God placed a special star in the sky, a bright body of light that announced the birth of the King. Some men in a faraway country saw this star. These men were called Magi. They were educated men who studied the skies and nature. Most scholars believe these men came from Persia, or modern-day Iran. There was something very special about these men.

Throughout the Bible, God promised to send a Rescuer to save the Israelites from their sins. But these Magi were not Israelites. They were Gentiles. That means they were not from Abraham's family and likely did not know and worship God. But that night, God did something that no one expected.

By placing that star in the sky, God showed unbelievable mercy toward all people. In showing the Magi that Jesus, the King of heaven, had been born, God was extending salvation to people of all nations.

When the Magi saw the special star that God had placed in the sky, they left their home country to find Jesus. Their journey took a long time. They did not arrive in Bethlehem the night Jesus was born. In fact, it may have taken them up to two years to reach the place where Jesus was.

The Bible tells us that when the Magi found the place where Jesus was living with Mary and Joseph, they entered the house, bowed down, and worshiped this small child who had come to save sinners. They then gave Jesus precious, costly gifts.

Ask: Why do you think the Magi were willing to leave their homes and families and travel for such a long time to find Jesus? What did they know and believe about Him? Why do you think they brought baby Jesus such special, expensive gifts?

Throughout the Advent story, we see that God is generous. He sent a company of angels to shout the good news of Jesus' birth to the shepherds, and He put a special star in the sky to guide men from a faraway country to Jesus. He desires that all people know, love, trust, and



obey Him. And God promises that one day men, women and children from every tribe, tongue, and nation will worship Jesus. God will rescue people from all over the world, and we will worship Him as He deserves.

God shows us many things about what He's like through the birth of Jesus. How do you see that God is worthy—that only He deserves all glory—in this part of the Advent narrative? What other attributes of God do you see?

PRAYER

Have one family member say a prayer to praise God and ask Him to show people of all nations the good news that Jesus came to save sinners.

SONG

As a family, sing or listen to “O Come All Ye Faithful.” As you do, read carefully through the lyrics and explain any words that might be unfamiliar to your kids. Ask them what they learn about Jesus from this song.

*O come all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant
O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem;
Come and behold Him born the King of angels;
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.
Sing choirs of angels, sing in exultation
Sing all ye citizens of heaven above;
Glory to God in the highest:
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*

*Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to thee be glory given;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him
O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.*



FAMILY ACTIVITY

Spend time this week looking at a map of the world. Play a game where you name a country and your kids try to find it. Talk together about what it would be like to live in a different culture with a different language and customs. Point out places in the world where people aren't free to openly worship Jesus or talk about Him.

Look together at the list of missionaries on our church website. Pick one person or family and pray for them by name. If possible, write them an email or note of encouragement.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

(Examples can be found on The Village's Pinterest board.)

Continue making your nativity set. This week, create the Magi pieces and add them to the set.

Create luminaries for your front yard, sidewalk, or porch to remind your family of the star God put in the sky to tell the Magi of Jesus' birth. Take paper lunch bags and draw or punch out a star on each bag. Fill the bottom of the bags with sand to keep them from blowing away. Place a battery-operated candle inside.