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The Wise Men Visit Jesus

Matthew 2:1–12 · Sprout · Ages 5–8

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, some wise men came from lands far to the east. They studied the stars, and they had seen a new star rise. They believed it meant that a great king had been born for the Jewish people, and they wanted to worship him.

They traveled all the way to Jerusalem, the big city, and asked where the newborn king was. King Herod heard about this and was upset. He asked the teachers of God's Law where the Messiah, God's promised king, would be born. They told him: in Bethlehem, just as God's prophet had said long ago.

Herod called the wise men to meet him in secret. He sent them to Bethlehem and asked them to come back and tell him where the child was.

The wise men set out, and there was the star again, going ahead of them! When it stopped over the place where the child was, they were filled with joy. They went into the house and saw Jesus with his mother, Mary. They knelt down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure boxes and gave him gold, frankincense and myrrh. Frankincense is a sweet incense, and myrrh is a sweet-smelling perfume made from tree sap.

God warned the wise men in a dream not to go back to Herod. So they went home another way.

The Church celebrates this day as the Epiphany, a word that means showing. God showed Jesus to people from every land. Many people call the visitors three kings and give them names, but those come from later tradition. The Bible says they were wise men and that they brought three gifts.

Talk about it

1. Why did the wise men travel so far?
2. How did the wise men feel when they saw the star again?
3. What gift could you give Jesus today?

Key verse: Mt 2:10–11. Look it up in your Bible.