

Word Aflame Jr. High

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Jr. High Teacher's Manual

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Unit Aim: This unit presents the story of Jesus' birth as told in three of the four gospels—Matthew, Luke, and John. Each author's unique perspective and distinctive focus paints a picture that will help students see Jesus more clearly than before.

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Unit Aim: As the new ruler of Israel, Rehoboam was given an opportunity to build upon the royal legacy of his father, Solomon, and also that of his grandfather, David. Instead, his decisions led to a divided kingdom and the destruction of his own soul. In this series, we will examine what caused Rehoboam to fail and how to avoid those same pitfalls along our own journey to achieve our purpose in the kingdom of God.

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LESSON 1

WHEN THE WORLD NEEDED A KING

WEEK OF DECEMBER 1, 2019

BIBLICAL PASSAGE

Matthew 1:1–2, 6, 16 

BIBLE POINT

Matthew presents us with a picture of Jesus that is regal, royal, and kingly because Jesus was that king the Jewish people had prayed and longed for, for so long. 

SUPPLIES

Student handbooks, pens, paper, smartphones with a Bible app, crowns (1 per student) and a scepter (use any objects to represent these items, such as a baton and Burger King crowns or construction paper crowns), *optional*: pictures of and books about the wise men's gifts

Legend:



PowerPoint Slide



Student Handbook



Activity

Unit Aim: This unit presents the story of Jesus' birth as told in three of the four gospels—Matthew, Luke, and John. Each author's unique perspective and distinctive focus paints a picture that will help students see Jesus more clearly than before.

EMBARK

A. Option 1—Discussion



1. Instruct teens to use their student handbooks for this exercise.
2. What do you know about Jesus' disciple Matthew?
3. What are some characteristics of a king?
4. In the Book of Matthew, Matthew wanted to present Jesus' birth as kingly. What are some things he wrote that make Jesus seem like a king?
5. If we are Jesus' children, that makes us children of a king; what does that mean?

B. Option 2—What Is in a Name?




1. Form small teams, ensuring that at least one student on each team has a smartphone.
2. From the list below (or from your own list), assign a Bible name (or two) to each group:
 - a. Noah
 - b. Abraham
 - c. Jacob
 - d. Joseph
 - e. David
 - f. Daniel
 - g. Peter
 - h. John
3. Each group should use an online search engine or a Bible app to answer the following questions:
4. What is the meaning of this person's name?
5. Does his name fit him? Why or why not?
6. Does his name tell us something about his character?
7. What does the name *Jesus* mean?


EXPLORE

A. A Nation Adrift




1. It is easy to listen to the Christmas story and forget it is a real story that happened in the real world. It is easy to forget that at the time of Jesus' birth, Israel had been enslaved to the brutal Roman empire for about sixty years.
 - a. This happened when Pompey laid siege to Jerusalem and entered the Temple in 63 bc.
 - b. But the Romans were not the first conquerors in Israel.
 - c. For more than five hundred years, Israel lived under one cruel conqueror or another—the Babylonians, the Persians, and the Greeks.
 - d. Going back even further, we find the Jews were often enslaved by the nations around them—the Philistines, the Amalekites, the Midianites, and so on.
2. In fact, the second book of the Bible (Exodus) begins with the Jews in Egyptian bondage (where they stayed for 430 years).
 - a. It is safe to say that while the Jews were God's chosen people, their idolatry and sin left them at the mercy of one wicked tyrant or another for hundreds of years.
 - b. **The Jews needed a real king.**  

B. The Attributes of a King


1. The plight of the Jewish nation motivated Matthew to focus his gospel on the fact that Jesus was a king; but what does it mean to truly be a king?
2. In James Withers' article "What Were the Responsibilities of a King," he lists four primary duties of a real king:
 - a. The Sanctification of Authority
 - (1) This is a mouthful, but it simply means: **any legitimate king needed to prove that God sanctioned his rule.**  
 - (2) Unlike presidents and prime ministers, kings do not obtain their power from the will of the people.
 - (3) Rather, they claim that their power and authority comes from God. Kings were viewed as God's divine representatives.
 - (4) As King, Jesus also demonstrated divine sanction.
 - (5) *Read John 10:24–25.* 
 - b. Securing Alliances
 - (1) Very few kingdoms are self-sufficient.
 - (2) The wise king understands that fostering peace, trade, and cooperation between kingdoms allows his people security, prosperity, and opportunity.

- (3) A good king also mediates disputes among his subjects. Both nationally and personally a good king needs to be a peacemaker.
- (4) As King, Jesus came to a world that was alienated from God.
- (5) *Read II Corinthians 5:19.* 

c. Waging War



- (1) Kings also need to understand that sometimes peace is impossible.
- (2) Evil is not something that can be ignored, tolerated, or reasoned with; it must be vanquished.
- (3) When alliances fail, kings defend their subjects by waging war.
- (4) C. S. Lewis said, “For this is what it means to be king: to be first in every desperate attack and last in every desperate retreat.”
- (5) **Good kings understand that wickedness must be opposed.**  
- (6) *Read Revelation 1:11, 18.* 


d. Administrating Government

- (1) Finally, kings are the administrators of their governments. Their responsibility is to provide for their subjects the things they cannot provide for themselves—protection, infrastructure, and judgment.
- (2) A good king creates a kingdom where his subjects can live without fear, possess the things they need to be successful, and clearly understand what is expected of them and their fellowman.
- (3) *Read Isaiah 9:6–7.* 


- e. It can be confidently said that when the world needed a king, Jesus came; He is King both in word and in deed.

C. Jesus Came from a Lineage of Kings


1. Matthew also wanted us to know that Jesus came from a lineage of kings.
 - a. Part of our Scripture text is: “Jesse was the father of King David. David was the father of Solomon Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat. . . . Amon was the father of Josiah” (Matthew 1:6, 8, 10, NLT).
 - b. In fact, **there are fifteen kings listed in the genealogy of Jesus.**  
 - c. Some of these kings accomplished and were known for many great things.
2. David
 - a. David was the shepherd-king chosen to replace the self-serving King Saul.

- b. He humbly led Israel as a man after God's own heart (I Samuel 13:14).
- c. Like David, Jesus came as a king and a shepherd.
- d. Read John 10:10–11. 

3. Solomon

- a. Solomon was the wisest man to ever live.
- b. Certainly Jesus possessed all the wisdom of God, but Solomon was also an alliance-maker. Here we see Jesus' mission.
- c. Jesus came to a lost and sinful world to repair the breach between God and humanity.
- d. Like Solomon, Jesus made peace between men and God.
- e. Read Romans 6:23. 


4. Jehoshaphat

- a. Jehoshaphat was a king who faced eradication at the hands of the Moabites, Ammonites, and the people of Mount Seir, but Jehoshaphat trusted the Lord.
- b. Jehoshaphat led his people in fasting and prayer.
- c. He sent a choir to sing God's praises on the battlefield.
- d. The result was a divine intervention, heavenly ambushments, and deliverance for the people of God. Like Jehoshaphat, Jesus came as a deliverer.
- e. Read Colossians 2:13–15. 



5. Josiah

- a. Josiah ascended to the throne when he was only eight years old. His father, Amon, was a blatant idolater—"he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord" (II Chronicles 33:22)—and was ultimately assassinated.
- b. Josiah, however, upon reaching adulthood, rediscovered the Law.






Activity — Oh, to Be King

1. You will need crowns (one per student) and a scepter.
2. Give a crown and the scepter to a student and ask the student to make a decree. Continue as time allows, giving each student a crown and passing the scepter from student to student as each one makes a decree.
3. Instruct students to pretend that each decree made is real in this imaginary world the class is creating. Make a list of all the decrees put forth by students.
4. Finally, discuss the rules and laws students put into place and discuss the pros and cons of having a single person make all the rules for a country or nation.
5. Emphasize that what makes Jesus different than a human king is His decrees are always holy and just. 


D. The Kingship of God

1. God's Kingship
 - a. Read II Chronicles 20:6.
 - b. Read Psalm 24:8–10.
 - c. Read I Timothy 1:17.
 - d. Read Revelation 19:6.
2. Jesus, the King
 - a. As the Son of the King, Jesus was born to be King.
 - b. We have already read that Isaiah called Him “the Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). And in Matthew’s telling of the Christmas story, he focuses us on Jesus’ true origin.
3. Jesus’ birth was not a natural event.
 - a. Read Matthew 1:20.
 - b. **He was born with a special name and purpose.**  
 - c. Read Matthew 1:21.
 - d. He was born so the eternal God could live among men.
 - e. Read Matthew 1:23.




E. Jesus Was Recognized as King by the Wise Men

1. Jesus is King by lineage and in action.
 - a. The Book of Matthew tells us that when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the truly wise recognized and worshiped Him as King.
 - b. Matthew 2 says the wise men came from a distance, came because of new illumination, came in joy and to worship, and ultimately left by another way.
2. Came from a Distance
 - a. The wise men came searching from the East.
 - b. Some say their journey lasted around two years.
 - c. **Wise men and women are still willing to close the distance between themselves and Jesus.**  
 - d. Read Matthew 11:28. 
3. Came Joyfully
 - a. The wise men came, not because of what they feared they would lose, but because of what they hoped they would gain.
 - b. Wise men and women recognize that Jesus possesses all they require.
 - c. The Book of Isaiah records a prophecy Jesus would later say He had come to fulfill.
 - d. Read Isaiah 61:1–3. 
4. Came to Worship
 - a. The wise men came to worship Jesus.
 - b. These men, who some say were kings in their own right, prostrated themselves before Him.
 - c. Wise men and women still acknowledge Him as King of kings.
 - d. Read Philippians 2:9–11. 

5. Came Bearing Precious Gifts

- a. The wise men brought Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
- b. They offered Jesus the most precious things they possessed.
- c. Wise men and women still offer Jesus everything.
- d. *Read Matthew 10:38–39.* 

F. They Left Another Way

1. The wise men left Jesus and walked a different path.
2. **Wise men and women still allow Jesus to change their direction.**
 
3. *Read Romans 6:1–4.* 
4. One important question is: “Will you acknowledge Jesus as King in your life?”

EXPAND

A. Option 1—Prayer

1. *Have a time of prayer, encouraging students to see Jesus’ identity and understand their own place in the kingdom of God.*
2. *Pray that students are empowered to overcome and to embrace their calling as children of God, moving forward spiritually with intention and love.*
3. *Minister to students in the class and take time to address personal needs.*
4. *Build expectation and assure students of their ability as children of the King.*

B. Option 2—Gifts for a King

1. *Form three groups, assigning one of the gifts of the wise men to each group. Provide a picture of each of the gifts.*
2. *Using smartphones, have students research these gifts and put together a list of traits that make these gifts so valuable.*
3. *Allow each team a turn to talk about what they found and share why they believe the gifts were good (or bad).*
4. *Finally, allow students to share what gifts they would have brought to baby Jesus and why.*