

Moses' successor as Israel's leader. It means "Jehovah is salvation" (see ch. 1:21). Forty days after His birth, Jesus was presented to the Lord in the temple, according to the law (Luke 2:22-24), and was then taken back to Bethlehem.

I. JESUS SOUGHT.—1, 2. *Bethlehem of Judaea*; the home of Naomi and Ruth (see Lesson X., Ruth 1:14-22), and Boaz, who became Ruth's husband. From these two descended the world's Saviour, now born in the very place where they had dwelt long before. *Herod the king*; known in history as Herod the Great, a powerful, but very wicked and cruel ruler, who reigned in Jerusalem from B. C. 40 to B. C. 4. He was not an independent ruler, but was subject to the Roman Emperor. *Wise men*; that is Magi, members of a class of priest sages, who devoted themselves to the study of the sciences, especially astrology, medicine, and dreams. *From the east*; the regions beyond the Euphrates, the birthplace of Abraham, whence he migrated to Canaan. *To Jerusalem*. The wise men naturally expected to find the new born king in the capital of the Jews. *Star*. A remarkable conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn, which takes place every 800 years, occurred three times in the year 7 B. C. In the following year Mars joined this conjunction. When it

occurred in A. D. 1603-4, Kepler discovered a new, brilliant, and peculiarly colored, evanescent star between Jupiter and Saturn. This star was noted in the tables of the Chinese, and astronomers have calculated that it made its first appearance in Feb. B. C. 4, which would be about the time the wise men left Jerusalem.

II. JESUS FOUND.—3-10. *Herod . . . troubled*; dreading the overthrow of his throne. *All Jerusalem*. They had no desire for a king who would condemn their sin and selfishness, and require them to live righteously. *Chief priests and scribes*; the religious leaders and teachers. *Prophet*. See Mic. 5:2. *Not the least*; but a very important place as the Messiah's birthplace. *Princes*; heads of families in Israel. Bethlehem is represented as a person standing amongst these. *Privily*; secretly.

III. JESUS WORSHIPED.—11, 12. *Opened . . . treasures*; that is, the caskets or chests containing the treasures. *Presented unto him gifts*. It was, and still is, the custom in the East to approach a king with gifts. *Warned of God*; who thus foiled the plans of Herod. *Departed . . . another way*; so that, while Herod waited their return, Joseph and Mary might have time to escape with Jesus into Egypt, v. 13.

FOR TEACHERS OF THE LITTLE ONES

Lesson Subject—Christmas gifts.

Introduction—Draw a heart with CHRISTMAS printed on it. If we could look into the heart of each little boy and girl to-day, what is the biggest thought we should find there, do you think? What are you all thinking a great deal about? Yes, Christmas, of course. You are thinking of the merry Christmas you hope to have, and of all the stockings full of good things, and of Christmas trees laden with gifts, and of Christmas parties, and I hope you are also thinking of the surprises and good things you have ready to make some others merry on this Christmas day. Here is a picture of a Christmas tree (outline), and some stockings (outline), and some boxes of good things (outline). These are all very good, and give great happiness for a while; but there is one

Gift that God has sent for us all—and for all the year round, and forever. Repeat Golden Text.

The Great Gift—This is the real reason why Christmas should be a joyful day for every body. All hearts should be glad and thankful. If Jesus had not come, we should have no Christmas and no Christmas joys (explain).

Don't you think we may rub out Christmas from this heart and print, JESUS OUR SAVIOUR? Let us think more of Jesus than of other gifts we hope to get.

The Gifts of the Wise Men—Tell the Lesson.

Giving Others the Saviour—A missionary thought may be given here.

Gift to Jesus—What are you going to give to Jesus on His birthday?

Sing—Hymn 535, Book of Praise.

Something to Think About—Jesus wants me.