

BIBLE STUDIES FOR CHILDREN

MATTHEW



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THIS BOOK IS A GUIDE FOR TEACHERS OF CHILDREN. IT IS WRITTEN TO HELP TEACHERS TO MENTOR CHILDREN AS THEY STUDY TOGETHER THE BIBLICAL BOOK OF MATTHEW. EACH LESSON INCLUDES A VERSE FOR MEMORIZATION, A BIBLICAL COMMENTARY, A LIST OF IMPORTANT WORDS, AND SOME ACTIVITIES. LESSONS ALSO INCLUDE A BIBLICAL STORY TOLD IN SIMPLE LANGUAGE. AFTER THE STORY, DISCUSSION QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO APPLY TO LIFE WHAT THEY LEARN.

THE GUIDE ALSO CONTAINS THE BASIC INSTRUCTIONS YOU WILL NEED TO ORGANIZE A QUIZZING PROGRAM FOR CHILDREN. THIS PROGRAM WILL CHALLENGE THE CHILDREN'S KNOWLEDGE OF BIBLICAL TEXT. THE COMPETITIVE GAMES INSPIRE CHILDREN TO STUDY THE BOOK OF MATTHEW. EACH LESSON INCLUDES BASIC AND ADVANCED REVIEW QUESTIONS. THIS BOOK INCLUDES THE CHILDREN'S QUIZZING OFFICIAL RULES AND PROCEDURES, AN ATTENDANCE SHEET, AND A SAMPLE SCORE SHEET FOR QUIZ COMPETITION.

**Children's
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Bible Studies for Children

Matthew

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The first Children's Bible Quiz, created by Rev. William (Bill) Young, was introduced with three demonstration teams from the Kansas City District – Kansas City First, Kansas City St. Pauls, and Overland Park – at the 1968 General Nazarene Young People's Society Convention in Kansas City, Missouri (USA).

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welcome

WELCOME!

Welcome to *Bible Studies for Children: Matthew!* In this collection of biblical studies, the children learn about God's holiness and his faithfulness to his people, even when they make bad choices.

Bible Studies for Children: Matthew is one of six books in the *Bible Studies for Children* series. These studies help children to gain an understanding of biblical chronology and the meaning of biblical events. As the children learn about the lives of the people in these studies, they discover God's love for all people and their place in his plan. God sometimes uses miracles to achieve his purpose. He often works through people to accomplish what he wants to do.

The philosophy of *Bible Studies for Children* is to help the children to understand what the Bible says, to learn how God helped the people, and to know God through a relationship with him. This includes biblical study, biblical memorization, and application of biblical teachings in real life situations.

Bible Studies for Children uses the *New International Version* of the Bible.

BOOKS

The following is a short description of the books in this series and the way that they interact with each other.

Genesis provides the foundation. This book tells how God created the world from nothing, formed a man and a woman, and created a beautiful garden for their home. These people sinned, and they experienced the consequences for their sin. Genesis introduces the plan of God to reconcile the broken relationship between God and the people. It introduces Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. God made a covenant with Abraham (in Genesis 15) and renewed that covenant with Isaac and Jacob. Genesis ends with the story of Joseph who saves civilization from famine. The famine compels the people of God to move to Egypt.

Exodus tells how God continued to keep his promise to Abraham in Genesis 15. God rescued the Israelites from the slavery in Egypt. The Lord chose Moses to guide the Israelites. The Lord set up his kingship over the Israelites. He led and ruled the Israelites through the establishment of the priesthood and the Tabernacle, the Ten Commandments and other laws, and the prophets and the judges. At the end of Exodus, only a part of the covenant of the Lord with Abraham is complete.

Joshua/Judges/Ruth tells how God completed his covenant that began in Genesis 15. Finally, the Israelites conquered and settled into

the land that God promised to Abraham. The prophets, the priests, the Law, and the worship rituals declared that God was the Lord and the King of the Israelites. The 12 tribes of Israel settled into the promised land. This study emphasizes these judges: Deborah, Gideon, and Samson.

In **1 and 2 Samuel**, the Israelites wanted a king because the other nations had a king. These books tell about Samuel, Saul, and David. Jerusalem became the center of the combined nation of Israel. This study shows how the people react differently when someone confronted them with their sins. While Saul blamed others or used an excuse, David admitted his sin, and he asked God for forgiveness.

Matthew is the focal point of the entire series. It focuses on the birth, the life, and the ministry of Jesus. All the previous books in the series pointed to Jesus as the Son of God and the Messiah. Jesus ushered in a new era. The children learn about this new era in several events: the teachings of Jesus, his death, his resurrection, and the mentoring of his disciples. Through Jesus, God provided a new way for the people to have a relationship with him.

At the beginning of **Acts**, Jesus ascended to heaven, and God sent the Holy Spirit to help the Church. The good news of salvation through Jesus Christ spread to many parts of the world. The believers preached the gospel to the Gentiles, and missionary work began. The message of the love of God transformed both the Jews and the Gentiles. There is a direct connection between the evangelism efforts of Paul and Peter to the lives of the people today.

CYCLE

The following study cycle is suggested specifically for those who will participate in the optional Quizzing aspect of *Bible Studies for Children*.

Matthew (2011-12)

*Acts (2012-13)

Genesis (2013-14)

Exodus (2014-15)

Joshua/Judges/Ruth (2015-16)

*1 & 2 Samuel (2016-17)

Matthew (2017-2018)

* Indicates a World Quiz year.

SCHEDULE

Bible Studies for Children has twenty studies. Allow 60 to 120 minutes of class time. The following schedule is a suggestion for each study.

- 15 minutes for Activity
- 30 minutes for Biblical Lesson
- 15 minutes for Memory Verse
- 30 minutes for Additional Activities (optional)
- 30 minutes for Quizzing Practice (optional)

PREPARE

Thorough preparation of each study is important. The children are more attentive and gain better understanding of the study if the teacher prepares it well and presents it well. **Bold** text in each study indicates suggested words for the teacher to say to the children. The following steps are some guidelines for the teacher as he or she prepares each study.

Step 1: Quick Overview. Read the Memory Verse, Biblical Truth, Focus, and Teaching Tip.

Step 2: Bible Passage and Biblical Commentary. Read the verses in the Bible study passage and the information in the Biblical Commentary, and any Words of Our Faith, People, Places, or Things.

Step 3: Activity. This section includes a game or other activity to prepare the children for the biblical lesson. Become familiar with the activity, the instructions, and the supplies. Bring any necessary supplies to the class with you. Set up the activity before the children arrive.

Step 4: Biblical Lesson. Review the lesson and learn it so that you tell it as a story. The children want the teacher to tell the story rather than to read it from the book. Use the Words of Our Faith, People, Places, and Things from each lesson to provide additional information as you tell the story. After the story, use the review questions. They will help the children to understand the story and to apply it to their lives.

Step 5: Memory Verse. Learn the memory verse before you teach it to the children. A list of the memory verses and suggested memory verse activities are on pages 135-138. Choose from the activities to help the children to learn the memory verse. Become familiar with the activity that you

choose. Read the instructions and prepare the supplies. Bring with you to the class any necessary supplies.

Step 6: Additional Activities. The additional activities are an optional part of the study. These activities will enhance the children's biblical study. Many of these activities require additional supplies, resources, and time. Become familiar with the activities that you choose. Read the instructions and prepare the supplies. Bring with you to the class any necessary supplies.

Step 7: Quizzing Practice. Quizzing is the competition part of *Bible Studies for Children*. Quizzing is an optional part of the study. If you choose to participate in Quizzing, spend time with the children in their preparation. There are practice questions for each study. The first ten questions are for a basic level of competition. There are three possible answers for each question, and these questions are simpler. The next ten questions are for an advanced level of the competition. There are four possible answers for each question, and these questions are more comprehensive. Children, with the guidance from their teacher, choose their level for the competition. Based on the number of children and the resources that are available, you may choose to offer only the Basic Level or only the Advanced Level. Before you ask the practice questions, read the scripture passage to the children.

children's Bible quizzing

CHILDREN'S BIBLE QUIZZING

Children's Bible Quizzing is an optional part of *Bible Studies for Children*. Each church and each child decides whether to participate in a series of competitive events.

Quizzing events follow the rules outlined in this book. Children do not compete against each other to determine a single winner. Churches do not compete against each other to determine a winner.

The purpose of Quizzing is to help the children to determine what they learned about the Bible, to enjoy the competitive events, and to grow in the ability to display Christian attitudes and Christian behaviours during competitive events.

In Quizzing, each child challenges himself or herself to attain an award level. In this approach, children quiz against a base of knowledge, not against each other. Quizzing uses a multiple-choice approach that allows every child to answer every question. Multiple-choice questions offer several answers, and the child chooses the correct one. This approach makes it possible for every child to be a winner.



QUIZZING SUPPLIES

Each child needs Quizzing numbers to answer the questions. Quizzing numbers are four cardboard squares that each have a tab at the top with the numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. The numbers fit inside a cardboard box.

You can order cardboard Quizzing boxes and numbers, pictured here, from the Nazarene Publishing House in Kansas City, Missouri, United States of America.

If cardboard Quizzing boxes and numbers are not available in your area, you can make your own Quizzing numbers from paper, paper plates, wood, or whatever you have available. Each child needs a set of Quizzing numbers.

Each group of children will need a person to score their answers. There is a reproducible score sheet on page 140. Use this score sheet to keep track of the answers of each child.

If possible, provide some type of an award for the performance of the children in each Quizzing event. Suggested awards are certificates, stickers, ribbons, trophies, or medals.

Please follow these rules. Competitions that do not operate in accordance with the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures* will not qualify for other competition levels.

Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures

AGE AND GRADES

Children in grades 1-6* may participate in Children's Quizzing competitions. Seventh graders, regardless of age, participate in Teen Quizzing.

*For countries other than the United States, grades 1-6 are generally ages 6-12.

BASIC LEVEL COMPETITION

This competition level is for younger or beginning quizzers. Older quizzers who prefer an easier level of competition may also participate in the Basic Level. The questions for the Basic Level are simpler. There are three answers for each question, and there are fifteen questions in each round. The district or regional Children's Quizzing director determines the questions and the number of rounds at each Quizzing competition. Most competitions have two or three rounds.

ADVANCED LEVEL COMPETITION

This competition level is for older quizzers or experienced quizzers. Younger quizzers who want a greater challenge may participate in the Advanced Level. The questions for the Advanced Level are more comprehensive. There are four answers for each question, and there are twenty questions in each round. The district or regional Children's Quizzing director determines the questions and the number of rounds at each Quizzing event.

SWITCHING BETWEEN LEVELS

Children may switch between Basic Level and Advanced Level only for invitational Quizzing competitions. This helps the leaders and the children determine the best level for each child.

For the zone/area, the district, and the regional competitions, the local director must register each child for either Basic Level or Advanced Level. The child must compete at the same level for zone/area, district, and regional competitions.

TYPES OF COMPETITION

Invitational Competition

An invitational competition is between two or more churches. Local Children's Quizzing directors, zone/area Children's Quizzing directors, or district Children's Quizzing directors may organize invitational competitions. Individuals who organize an invitational competition have the responsibility to prepare the competition questions.

Zone/Area Competition

Each district may have smaller groupings of churches that are called zones. If one zone has more quizzers than another zone, the district Children's Quizzing director may separate or combine the zones to create areas with a more equitable distribution of quizzers. The term area means combined or divided zones.

The churches located in each zone/area compete in that zone/area. The district Children's Quizzing director organizes the competition.

Questions for the zone/area competitions are official questions.

E-mail ChildQuiz@nazarene.org to request these questions from the General Children's Quizzing Office.

District Competition

Children advance from the zone/area competition to the district competition. The district Children's Quizzing director determines the qualifications for the competition and organizes the competition.

Questions for district competitions are official questions. E-mail ChildQuiz@nazarene.org to request these questions from the General Children's Quizzing Office.

Regional Competition

The regional competition is a competition between two or more districts.

When there is a regional Children's Quizzing director, he or she determines the qualifications for the competition and organizes the competition. If there is not a regional director, the participating district directors organize the competition.

Questions for the regional competitions are official questions.

E-mail ChildQuiz@nazarene.org to request these questions from the General Children's Quizzing Office.

World Quiz Competition

Every four years, the Children's Ministries International Office sponsors an international World Quiz. Children's Ministries International determines the dates, the locations, the costs, the qualifying dates, and the overall qualifying process for all World Quiz competitions.

E-mail ChildQuiz@nazarene.org for more information.

DISTRICT CHILDREN'S QUIZZING DIRECTOR

The district Children's Quizzing director operates all competitions according to the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*. He or she has the authority to introduce additional Quizzing procedures on the district as long as the procedures do not conflict with the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*. The district Children's Quizzing director contacts the General Children's Quizzing Office in Children's Ministries International, when necessary, to request a specific change in the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures* for a district. The district Children's Quizzing director makes the decisions and solves the problems within the guidelines of the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*. The district Children's Quizzing director contacts the General Children's Quizzing Office for an official ruling on a specific situation, if necessary.

REGIONAL CHILDREN'S QUIZZING DIRECTOR

The regional Children's Quizzing director creates a regional Children's Quizzing leadership team that consists of all of the district Children's Quizzing directors on the region. The regional Children's Quizzing director remains in contact with this team to keep the procedures consistent across the region. He or she operates and organizes the regional competitions according to the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*. The regional Children's Quizzing director contacts the General Children's Quizzing Office in Children's Ministries International to request any changes in the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures* for a specific region. He or she resolves any conflicts that

arise with the help of the guidelines of the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*. The regional Children's Quizzing director contacts the General Children's Quizzing Office for an official ruling on a specific situation, if necessary. He or she contacts the General Children's Quizzing Office to place the regional quiz date on the general church calendar.

In the United States and Canada, the regional Children's Quizzing director is a developing position. Currently that person does not preside over district Children's Quizzing directors on the region.

QUIZMASTER

The quizmaster reads the competition questions at a Quizzing competition. The quizmaster reads the question and the multiple-choice answers two times before the children answer the question. He or she follows the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures* established by the General Children's Quizzing Office and the district Children's Quizzing director/regional coordinator. In the event of a conflict, the final authority is the district/regional Children's Quizzing director who consults the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*. The quizmaster may participate in discussions with scorekeepers and the district/regional Children's Quizzing director about a challenge. The quizmaster may call a time-out.

SCOREKEEPER

The scorekeeper scores a group of children's answers. He or she may participate in discussions with scorekeepers and the district/regional Children's Quizzing director about a challenge. All scorekeepers are to use the same method and the same symbols to insure correct tabulation of the scores.

OFFICIAL COMPETITION QUESTIONS

The district Children's Quizzing director is the only individual on the district who may obtain a copy of the official zone/area and district competition questions.

The regional Children's Quizzing director is the only individual on the region who may obtain a copy of the official regional competition questions. If there is not a regional Children's Quizzing director, one participating district Children's Quizzing director may obtain a copy of the official regional competition questions.

Order forms for annual official questions will be sent by E-mail each year. Contact the General Children's Quizzing Office at ChildQuiz@nazarene.org to update your E-mail address. The official questions will arrive by E-mail to the people who request them.

COMPETITION METHODS

There are two methods of competition.

Individual Method

In the individual method of competition, the children compete as individual children. The score of each child is separate from all other scores. Children from the same church may sit together, but do not add together the individual scores to obtain a church or a team score. There are no bonus questions for individual quizzers.

The individual method is the only method to use for the Basic Level competition.

Combination Method

The combination method combines individual and team Quizzing. In this method, churches may send individual quizzers, the teams, or a combination of these to a competition.

The district Children's Quizzing director determines the number of children needed to form a team. All teams must have the same

number of quizzers. The recommended number for a team is four or five children.

The children from the churches that do not have enough quizzers to form a team can compete as individual quizzers.

In the combination method, teams qualify for bonus questions. The bonus points awarded for a correct answer to a bonus question become part of the total score of the team, instead of a score for an individual quizzer. There are bonus questions with the official questions for zone/area, district, and regional competitions. Bonus questions typically involve the recitation of a memory verse.

The district Children's Quizzing director selects either the individual method or the combination method for the Advanced Level of the competition.

TIE SCORES

Ties between individual quizzers or the teams remain as tied scores. All individual children or teams who tie receive the same recognition, the same award, and the same advancement to the next level of competition.

BONUS QUESTIONS

Bonus questions are part of the Advanced Level, but only with teams, not individuals. Teams must qualify for a bonus question. Bonus questions occur after questions 5, 10, 15, and 20.

To qualify for a bonus question, a team may have only as many incorrect answers as there are members on the team. For example, a team of four members may have four or fewer answers that are incorrect. A team of five members may have five or fewer answers that are incorrect.

The bonus points for a correct answer become part of the total score of the team, not of the individual score of a child.

The district Children's Quizzing director

determines the way that the children answer bonus questions. In most situations, the child verbally gives the answer to the scorekeeper.

Prior to the reading of the bonus question, the local Children's Quizzing director selects one team member to answer the bonus question. The same child may answer all of the bonus questions in a game, or a different child may answer each bonus question.

TIME-OUTS

The district Children's Quizzing director determines the number of time-outs for each church. Each church receives the same number of time-outs, regardless of the number of individual quizzers or teams from that church. For example, if the district director decides to give one time-out, each church receives one time-out.

The district Children's Quizzing director determines if an automatic time-out will occur during the game and the specific point at which the time-out will occur in each game.

The local Children's Quizzing director is the only individual who may call a time-out for a local church team.

The district Children's Quizzing director or quizmaster may call a time-out at any time.

The district Children's Quizzing director, prior to the start of the competition, determines the length of the time-outs for the competition. All time-outs are to be the same length.

SCORING

There are two methods for scoring. The district Children's Quizzing director selects the method.

Five Points

- Award five points for every correct answer. For example, if a child answers 20 questions correctly in an

Advanced Level round, the child earns a total of 100 points.

- Award five points for every correct bonus answer in an Advanced Level team Quizzing round. For example, if every member of a team with four persons answers 20 questions correctly in an Advanced Level round and the team answers four bonus questions correctly, the team earns a total of 420 points.

Basic Level points will be lower as there are only 15 questions per round, and it is individual competition only.

One Point

Award one point for each correct answer as follows:

- Award one point for every correct answer. For example, if a child answers 20 questions correctly in an Advanced level round, the child earns a total of 20 points.
- Award one point for every correct bonus answer in an Advanced Level team Quizzing round. For example, if every member of a team with four persons answers 20 questions correctly in an Advanced Level round and the team answers four bonus questions correctly, the team earns a total of 84 points.

Basic Level points will be lower as there are only 15 questions per round, and it is individual competition only.

CHALLENGES

Challenges are to be an exception and are not common during a competition.

Request a challenge only when the answer marked as correct in the questions is actually incorrect according to the Bible reference given for that question. Challenges is-

sued for any other reason are invalid.

A quizzer, a Children's Quizzing director, or any other competition participant may not request a challenge because they dislike the wording of a question or answer or think a question is too difficult or confusing.

The local Children's Quizzing director is the only person who may issue a challenge to a competition question.

If an individual other than the local Children's Quizzing director attempts to issue a challenge, the challenge is automatically ruled as "invalid."

Individuals who issue invalid challenges disrupt competition and cause the children to lose their concentration. Individuals who consistently issue invalid challenges or create some problems by arguing about a challenge ruling will lose their privilege of challenging the questions for the remainder of the competition.

The district Children's Quizzing director, or the quizmaster in the absence of the district Children's Quizzing director, has the authority to remove the privilege of challenging questions from any or all individuals who abuse the privilege.

The district Children's Quizzing director determines how to challenge a competition question prior to the start of the competition.

- Will the challenge be written or verbal?
- When can a person challenge (during a game or at the end of a game)?

The district Children's Quizzing director should explain the procedure for the challenges to local Children's Quizzing directors at the beginning of the quiz year.

The quizmaster and district Children's Quizzing director follow these steps to rule the challenge.

- Determine if the challenge is valid or invalid. To do this, listen to the reason for the challenge. If the reason is valid, the answer given as the correct answer

is incorrect according to the Bible reference, follow the challenge procedures outlined by the district.

- If the reason for the challenge is invalid, announce that the challenge is invalid, and the competition continues.

If more than one person challenges the same question, the quizmaster or district Children's Quizzing director selects one local quiz director to explain the reason for a challenge. After a question has one challenge, another person may not challenge the same question.

If a challenge is valid, the district Children's Quizzing director, or quizmaster in the director's absence, determines how to handle the challenged question. Select one of the following options.

Option A: Eliminate the question, and do not replace it. The result is that a game of 20 questions becomes a game of 19 questions.

Option B: Give every child the points he or she would receive for a correct answer to the challenged question.

Option C: Replace the challenged question. Ask the quizzers a new question.

Option D: Let the children who gave the answer that was listed as the correct answer in the official questions keep their points. Give another question to the children who gave an answer that was an incorrect answer.

AWARD LEVELS

Children's Quizzing has the philosophy that every child has an opportunity to answer every question, and every child receives recognition for every correct answer he or she gives. Therefore, Children's Quizzing uses multiple-choice competition, and ties are never broken.

Children and churches do not compete against each other. They compete to reach an award level. All of the children and all of the churches who reach the same award level re-

ceive the same award. Ties remain as tied scores.

Recommended Award Levels:

- Bronze Award = 70-79% correct
- Silver Award = 80-89% correct
- Gold Award = 90-99% correct
- Gold All Star = 100% correct

Resolve all scoring and challenge decisions before presenting awards. The quizmaster and scorekeepers should be sure that all final scores are accurate prior to the presentation.

Never take an award from a child after the child receives an award. If there is a mistake, children may receive a higher award but not a lower award. This is true for individual awards and team awards.

COMPETITION ETHICS

The district Children's Quizzing director is the person on the district who has the responsibility to conduct the competitions in accordance with the *Children's Quizzing Official Competition Rules and Procedures*.

1. Hearing Questions Before the Competition. Since competitions use the same questions, it is not appropriate for the children and the workers to attend another zone/area, district, or regional competition prior to their participation in their own competition of the same level. If an adult Quizzing worker attends another competition, the district Children's Quizzing director may choose to disqualify the church from participation in their competition. If a parent and/or child attends another competition, the district Children's Quizzing director may choose to disqualify the church from participation in their competition.

2. Worker's Conduct and Attitudes. Adults are to conduct themselves in a professional and in a Christian manner. The discussions about disagreements with the district Children's Quizzing director, quizmaster, or scorekeepers are to be private. Adult Quizzing workers should not share information about the disagreement with the children. A cooperative spirit and good sportsmanship are important. The decisions and the rulings of the district Children's Quizzing director are final. Relay these decisions in a positive tone to the children and to the adults.

CHEATING

Any cheating is serious. Treat the cheating seriously.

The district Children's Quizzing director, in discussion with the district Children's Ministries Council, determines the policy to follow in the event that a child or an adult cheats during a competition.

Make sure that all local children's ministries directors, children's pastors, and local Children's Quizzing directors receive the policy and the procedures of the district.

Before accusing an adult or a child of cheating, have some evidence or a witness that the cheating occurred.

Ensure that the quiz continues and that the person accused of cheating does not suffer embarrassment in front of other people. Here is a sample procedure.

- If you suspect that a child cheated, ask someone to serve as a judge to watch the areas, but do not point out any child whom you suspect. After a few questions, ask the opinion of the judge.

If the judge did not see any cheating, continue with the quiz.

- If the judge saw a child who was cheating, ask the judge to affirm it. Do not act until everyone is sure.
- Explain the problem to the local Children's Quizzing director, and ask the director to talk with the accused person privately.
- The quizmaster, the judge, and the local Children's Quizzing director should watch for continued cheating.
- If the cheating continues, the quizmaster and the local Children's Quizzing director should talk with the accused person privately.
- If the cheating continues, the quizmaster should tell the local Children's Quizzing director that he or she will eliminate the score of the child from official competition.
- In the case that a scorekeeper cheated, the district Children's Quizzing director will ask the scorekeeper to leave, and a new scorekeeper will take his or her place.
- In the case that someone in the audience cheated, the district Children's Quizzing director will handle the situation in the most appropriate manner.

UNRESOLVED DECISIONS

Consult with the General Children's Quizzing Office regarding unresolved decisions.

one

Matthew 1:18–2:23

Memory Verse BIBLICAL COMMENTARY

“She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21).

Biblical Truth

Jesus is God the Son, the Saviour that God promised to us.

Focus

In this study, the children will learn that God keeps his promises.

Teaching Tip

As you lead the Bible study, remind the students that Jesus is God’s Son. He is fully God and fully human. In this study a virgin is an unmarried woman.

Many times in the Old Testament, God asked his people to remember what he taught them and what he did for them. God desired that what they learned from the history of their interactions with him would guide their lives. The people learned that God is consistent, both in his actions and in his character.

If a prophet claimed to be sent from God but the message of the prophet was not consistent with what they learned about God, that prophet was false. Therefore, it was very important for Matthew to tell the Jewish-Christian community that Jesus fulfilled Old Testament prophecies. Jesus was the promised Messiah and his mission was a continuation of God’s plan.

What does it mean that Jesus fulfilled those prophecies? The fact that Jesus’ life paralleled previous events in salvation history (like the Exodus) was remarkable proof that God was personally involved.

CHARACTERISTICS OF GOD

- God sent his Son, Jesus, to save us from our sins.
- God keeps his promises.

PEOPLE

Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God.

Jesus is God’s only Son, the Saviour of the world.

Jesus is fully God and fully human.

The **Magi** were wise men from the East who came to visit Jesus.

King Herod was the king of Judea at the time of the birth of Jesus.

A **prophet** is someone whom God has chosen to receive and to give special messages from him.

PLACES

Bethlehem is the city where the birth of Jesus occurred.

Jerusalem is the main city where the Jews went to worship.

Nazareth is the town in Galilee where Jesus lived.

THINGS

Frankincense is a sweet-smelling substance that a person burned as an offering to God.

Myrrh is a liquid that people used in oil, in perfume, and for preparing bodies for burial.

ACTIVITY

Before class, designate clear boundaries in the area (indoors or outdoors).

Choose three children who will be the “Magi.” Explain that at the time of the birth of Jesus, Magi were wise men from the East. In this game, the “Magi” will close or cover their eyes and count to 50. While the “Magi” count, the other players scatter and find some places to hide. The “Magi” will then search for the children. The last

three children whom the “Magi” find will become the new “Magi.” If time permits, play this game until every child has the opportunity to be one of the “Magi.”

Say, **Today we will learn about some Magi who searched for a special gift.**

BIBLICAL LESSON

Prepare the following story, adapted from Matthew 1:18--2:23 before you tell it to the children.

Mary and Joseph announced publicly that they would marry. Before their marriage, Mary realized she was “with child through the Holy Spirit.”

Joseph wanted to divorce her quietly. However, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.

This fulfilled what the Lord said through the prophet: “‘The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel’--which means, ‘God with us.’”

Joseph awoke and did what the angel said. When Mary gave birth to the child, Joseph named the baby Jesus.

After the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem in Judea, Magi from the East came to Jerusalem to worship the newborn King of the Jews. The Magi asked the king, “Where is

the one who was born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and came to worship him.”

When King Herod heard about this, he became disturbed. The chief priests and teachers of the Law said that the birth of the baby would happen in Bethlehem. King Herod asked the Magi to tell him when and where they found the Christ child.

The Magi followed the star until it stopped over the place where the child lived. When the Magi saw the child, they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they presented to Jesus their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. However, God warned them in a dream not to go back to King Herod. So they returned to their country by another route.

After the Magi left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. The angel told Joseph to take the child and his mother and to escape to Egypt. Joseph did what the angel said. They stayed in Egypt until King Herod died.

When King Herod heard what the Magi did, he was extremely angry. He gave the orders to kill in Bethlehem and in the surrounding areas all of the boys who were two years old or younger.

After King Herod died, an angel appeared to Joseph again and told him to take the child and his mother to Israel. Joseph did this. God gave to Joseph another warning in a dream. So, Joseph and his family moved to the district of Galilee,

to the town of Nazareth. This fulfilled the words of the prophet that Jesus was a Nazarene.

Encourage the children to answer the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers. These questions will help the children to understand the story and to apply it to their lives.

1. Has someone ever promised you something? Did that person keep the promise? How do you feel about a person who does not keep a promise?
2. Jesus is fully God and fully human. How is this statement true? How does this affect our lives?
3. Do you think it took courage and faith for Joseph to follow the instruction of the angels? Why or why not?
4. Why did King Herod want Jesus to die?
5. How does the memory verse, Matthew 1:21, relate to this story? How does this verse give you hope?

Say, Think about a promise someone made to you. Did you wait a long time to receive what the person promised to you? God promised to send to his people a Messiah—a Saviour. They waited a long time for this Messiah to come.

Israel expected their Messiah to come as a king who would save them from

their enemies. Instead, God sent them the promised Messiah as a baby—a baby who was both God and man. Jesus is God, the Son.

MEMORY VERSE

Practice the study's memory verse. You will find suggestions for Memory Verse Activities on pages 137-138.

ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Choose from any of these options to enhance the children's Bible study.

1. Say, **Pretend that you are one of the Magi. Would you listen to King Herod or to God?** Make a chart to compare the advantages and disadvantages of each decision.

2. Encourage the children to imagine the trip to Egypt with Mary and Joseph. Jesus was very young, and the family had to travel a long distance to keep Jesus safe. Use a map and map scale to calculate how far that Mary and Joseph travelled. Create a display to illustrate the things that Mary and Joseph needed on their journey.

QUESTIONS FOR BASIC COMPETITION

To prepare the children for competition, read Matthew 1:18--2:23 to them.

1 Who pledged to marry Joseph? (1:18)

1. Elizabeth
2. **Mary**
3. Rachel

2 What did an angel tell Joseph to do when he thought he would divorce Mary? (1:19-20)

1. **To take her home as his wife**
2. To divorce her quietly
3. To marry her secretly

3 Why was Joseph to name the baby Jesus? (1:21)

1. It was a good name in his family.
2. **Jesus would save his people from their sins.**
3. All of the important people had the name of Jesus.

4 After the birth of Jesus, who came from the East to Jerusalem? (2:1)

1. **The Magi**
2. King Herod
3. Some of the cousins of Jesus

5 Why had the Magi come from the East? (2:2)

1. To worship King Herod
2. To worship Mary and Joseph
3. **To worship the newly born king of the Jews**

6 What did the Magi do when they saw Jesus? (2:11)

1. They bowed down and worshiped him.
2. They presented him with gifts.
3. **Both answers are correct.**

7 Who searched for the child (Jesus) to kill him? (2:13)

1. The Pharaoh of Egypt
2. **King Herod**
3. The king of Persia

8 How long did Mary, Joseph, and Jesus stay in Egypt? (2:15)

1. Until Jesus was 12 years old
2. Until Joseph died
3. **Until the death of King Herod**

9 After King Herod died, what did an angel tell Joseph to do? (2:19-20)

1. **"Take the child and his mother to Israel."**
2. "Take the child and his mother to Bethlehem."
3. "Take the child and his mother to the Temple."

10 How did the prophets say that people would describe Jesus? (2:23)

1. A miracle-worker
2. **A Nazarene**
3. The greatest man who lived

QUESTIONS FOR ADVANCED COMPETITION

To prepare the children for competition, read Matthew 1:18--2:23 to them.

- 1** What happened before Mary and Joseph married? (1:18)
 1. Mary decided not to marry Joseph.
 2. Joseph secretly married another girl.
 3. The parents of Mary stopped the relationship.
 - 4. Mary was with child through the Holy Spirit.**
- 2** What kind of man was Joseph? (1:19)
 1. Arrogant
 2. Sinful
 3. An important businessman in Nazareth
 - 4. Righteous**
- 3** What did Joseph name the baby? (1:25)
 - 1. Jesus**
 2. Joseph
 3. John
 4. Moses
- 4** When King Herod heard what the Magi said, what did he do? (2:4, 7)
 1. He called together the chief priests and teachers of the Law.
 2. He asked the priests and teachers where the birth of Christ would happen.
 3. He secretly met with the Magi, and he asked them when the star appeared.
 - 4. All of the above**
- 5** Why did the Magi return to their home by another route, rather than to report to King Herod? (2:12)
 1. They wanted to return home more quickly.
 - 2. They were warned in a dream not to go to Herod.**
 3. They wanted to see other parts of the world.
 4. They forgot to report to Herod.
- 6** After the Magi left, what did the angel of the Lord tell Joseph? (2:13)
 1. Take the child and his mother to Egypt.
 2. Stay in Egypt until God told him to return.
 3. King Herod would search for Jesus to kill him.
 - 4. All of the above**
- 7** When King Herod learned that the Magi tricked him, what did he do? (2:16)
 1. He went to Bethlehem by himself.
 2. He sent soldiers to capture the Magi.
 - 3. He gave orders to kill in and near Bethlehem all of the boys who were two years old or younger.**
 4. He went to Egypt to find Jesus.
- 8** What happened after Herod died? (2:19-20)
 - 1. An angel told Joseph to return to Israel with Mary and Jesus.**
 2. A king in Egypt tried to find and to kill Jesus.
 3. Mary and Joseph decided to stay in Egypt permanently.
 4. Some prophets came to visit Jesus in Egypt.
- 9** How did Mary, Joseph, and Jesus fulfil a prophecy when they went to Nazareth? (2:23)
 1. All true prophets came from Nazareth.
 - 2. People would call Jesus a Nazarene.**
 3. Jesus would have a happy childhood in Nazareth.
 4. All of the above
- 10** Finish this verse: "She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because . . ." (Matthew 1:21)
 - 1. "... he will save his people from their sins."**
 2. "... I command this."
 3. "... that is what the prophets said to name him."
 4. "... it is a good name."