

The Epiphany of Our Lord

Late Elementary · Parent Edition

For the parent: Read each part aloud and work through the questions together. Your answers are printed in blue italics, so no preparation is needed. Your child uses the Student Edition.

Step 1 Understand the Collect

A collect is a short prayer the pastor prays for the whole church. Here is today's collect:

O God, by the leading of a star You made known Your only-begotten Son to the Gentiles. Lead us, who know You by faith, to enjoy in heaven the fullness of Your divine presence; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Words to know. *Only-begotten Son:* God's one and only Son. *Gentiles:* people who are not Jewish; the nations. *Divine presence:* being with God Himself. *Wise men* (in the Gospel): learned men from the east who studied the stars. *Frankincense:* a sweet-smelling resin burned in worship. *Myrrh:* a spice used to prepare the dead for burial.

1. God made His Son known by the leading of a _____.
Answer: Star.
2. God showed His Son to the _____, people who were not Jewish.
Answer: Gentiles.
3. We ask God to lead us to heaven to enjoy His divine _____.
Answer: Presence.

Step 2 Understand the Gospel

Matthew 2:1-12

1 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, **2** 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." **3** When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; **4** and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. **5** They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: **6** 'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

7 Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. **8** And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him." **9** After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. **11** 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. **12** And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

1. What did the wise men follow?
Answer: A star (verses 2 and 9).
2. Why did the wise men come?
Answer: To worship the newborn king (verse 2).

3. Where did the Scriptures say the Christ would be born?

Answer: *In Bethlehem (verses 5-6).*

4. What gifts did the wise men bring?

Answer: *Gold, frankincense, and myrrh (verse 11).*

Step 3 Find the Collect in the Gospel

Say to your child: Our prayer says God used a star to lead people from far away to Jesus, and it asks Him to lead us too. Let's find our prayer in the story.

1. The collect speaks of *the leading of a star*. Read verse 9. What did the star do?

Answer: *It went before them and stopped over the place where the child was.*

2. The collect says God made His Son known to *the Gentiles*. Where did the wise men come from?

Answer: *From the east, far away (verse 1). They were not Jewish.*

3. The collect asks God to *lead us*. What did the wise men do when they found Jesus?

Answer: *They fell down and worshiped Him and gave Him gifts (verse 11).*

Parent note. The wise men were led by a star, but God leads us by something clearer: His Word. The Scriptures told everyone where the Christ would be born (verses 5-6), and the Scriptures lead us to Jesus today.

Step 4 The Small Catechism

The Second Petition. Thy kingdom come. **What does this mean?** The kingdom of God certainly comes by itself without our prayer, but we pray in this petition that it may come to us also. **How does God's kingdom come?** God's kingdom comes when our heavenly Father gives us His Holy Spirit, so that by His grace we believe His holy Word and lead godly lives here in time and there in eternity.

1. The wise men were outsiders who came into God's kingdom. What do we ask for in the Second Petition?

Answer: *That God's kingdom would come to us also.*

2. How did God's kingdom come to the wise men?

Answer: *God led them to Jesus, and they believed and worshiped Him.*

Step 5 Wrap It All Up

Pray today's collect together one more time. Then ask:

1. What does Jesus do for people from every nation, including you?

Answer: *He came to be the Savior of all people. He leads me to Himself through His Word, just as the star led the wise men.*