

You've got to find the King!

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Memory verse Jeremiah 29:13

Explanation

Have you ever lost something? You look and look. Some people give up looking very quickly, others don't. If the thing you are looking for is very valuable you won't want to give up.

Our Bible verse tells us about looking. Listen as I read it and then tell me the word that is used instead of "look". (*Read Jeremiah 29:13*) The word is "seek". Seek means to look for.

This Bible verse is about looking for a person. Who is the person? It is God. Looking for God means that you want to know Him in your life.

When you look for God you don't look in places. You tell Him something like this, "Lord I need You, I really want to know You." You try to find out what the Bible teaches about Him.

I will tell you about two boys. One looked for God with all his heart.

Adam went to Christmas Club and really enjoyed it. On his way home, he thought about Jesus, God's Son, and how He came to earth. When he arrived at home he got busy with other things and didn't think of the Lord Jesus much again.

Simon was at the same club. He, too, thought about God's Son. When he went to bed he read over the little leaflet he'd been given. He thought how much he needed God's Son. His granny was a Christian and when he visited her he talked to her about being a Christian. She answered his questions. He thought for several weeks, he read the little leaflet over and over. One night he knew he must trust Jesus Christ as his Saviour and he did. Simon discovered, that by trusting Jesus Christ as his Saviour, he found God. That is the only way to God. Simon looked for God with all his heart.

God knows about every one who really wants Him. He makes sure that every one who looks with all his heart finds Him through Jesus Christ.

If you "find God" that means that you are forgiven all your sin, you become God's child and you belong to Him for ever.

You've got to find the King!

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12

Memory verse: Jeremiah 29:13

Lesson

James, Evi and Chloe were playing "Find the Treasure" with their Dad. He gave them one clue and they searched until they found the treasure.

He had said, "The treasure is under something green." It hadn't taken long for Evi to find it hidden under the bin!

Dad had said, "You're sure to walk on it." Where do you think they found the treasure? It was under the mat at the back door!

Next time Dad's clue was, "Maybe it's a treasure that grows." Where do you think the children should look? Yes, they headed for the garden. They searched and searched, but found no treasure.

"Dad, it's too hard," Evi whined. "Give us another clue."

"Ah," replied Dad, "The rule is only one clue, and this treasure is worth looking for."

"I'm not giving up," answered James, crawling under some bushes.

In Bible times there were men looking for a sort of treasure. At first they had only one clue...and they did not give up either.

Visual 1 (Wise men looking at night sky)

They lived in an Eastern land (Persia or Babylon). They were clever, well educated people, the scientists of their day. They spent a lot of time studying the stars. They believed that the stars could help them understand the world – and even the future.

One night they saw a spectacular star. We don't know what they said – perhaps it was something like this:

"Look! – there's a new one!"

"What a brilliant star. It must be new, we'd never have missed a star like that!"

"What does it mean? I wonder."

"I think it means the birth of a king."

"You know my grandfather used to talk about the Jews expecting a King to come – an extraordinary King. Could it be that He has come?"

"I think so...the King of the Jews must have come."

"Wow, this is exciting! If this king has been born, we must find Him!"

Somehow these wise men knew that this "King of the Jews" was a Person they had to find. Obviously God wanted them to find Him, too, for He put a special star in the sky to announce the birth to them.

The King was God's Son who had become a baby. He had left Heaven and had come to earth. He was a real baby, but He was also God. He is the greatest Person who ever was born. "King" is the right title for Him, because He is far above everything and everyone. There is no-one like Him. You need to find Him. There is nothing more important than knowing and loving this King. Somehow the wise men knew that, so they started to prepare for a long journey.

Visual 2 (Wise men on camels in desert)

What would they need to bring with them? (*Allow children to make suggestions: food, warm clothes or blankets for cold nights, gifts for the King.*) They headed in the direction of Judah where the Jews lived. Sometimes the journey could have been dangerous with robbers lying in wait for such wealthy travellers. At times the journey was tiring and hot, but they would NOT give up. They were determined to find the King. He was a King like no other – He was God's only Son. He had made all the stars the wise men studied. He knew all about them. Before, and since, there has been no-one like Him. He didn't just come to visit the earth for a while: God, His Father, sent Him for a special reason. He came to live a perfect life. He came to die on a cross and be punished for the wrong that you and I have done. He came to come back to life, never to die again. He is alive now. That is why you can know Him as your

King, if you really want. Listen to God's promise, "You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart" (Jeremiah 29:13).

That's just what the men from the East were doing – they put their whole heart into finding this King. Once they arrived in the land of Judah, they decided that the best place to go was Jerusalem, the main city. As they entered the city, they began to ask questions.

"Excuse me, can you tell us where to find the new King of the Jews?"

"We are looking for the new-born King, where should we go?"

"We saw His star when it appeared and we have come to worship Him."

People looked blankly at them. They had heard nothing about a new King. Nobody could give any helpful advice. Perhaps some said, "Herod's our king and he is not likely to quit," or "New-born king? – that's news to me."

The appearance of these wealthy Eastern travellers caused quite a stir in the city. People were nervous, they knew exactly how King Herod dealt with anyone who tried to take his place in any way – he got rid of people like that. Someone thought that the king should hear about the story and hurried to the palace to report the matter to King Herod.

Visual 3a (Herod talking with religious leaders)

When King Herod heard of the visitors and their questions he was full of fear and anger. He knew the strangers must be talking about the special King for whom the Jews were waiting. They called him the Messiah. The king summoned the religious leaders.

"Where is the King of the Jews to be born?" he demanded.

They knew the answer, for 700 years before God had had it written down in the Bible (in the part they had at that time).

The religious leaders replied, "In Bethlehem in Judea. In the Scriptures we read, 'You, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah...out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel'" (Matthew 2:6). The religious leaders went to the right place to find the answers about this King – they went to the Bible. You will find out everything you need to know about Jesus in the Bible.

Who is He? – The Bible says He is God's only Son. He became man. He is God and man.

Why did He come? – The Bible says, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners" (1 Timothy 1:15). The sinners are you and I. We all disobey God (*give a specific relevant example*). Jesus Christ grew up and never, ever did the wrong things you and I do. Although He never sinned, He chose to die and be punished for our sin. He alone can forgive all your sin and bring you to God.

Where is He now? – The Bible says He is in Heaven, ruling as King.

We are not free to think up our own ideas about Jesus. The real Jesus is the One we read about in the Bible. He is the One you need to have ruling in your life.

Visual 3b (Herod talking with wise men)

Herod had his answer and already he had worked out his own cruel, crafty plan. He didn't want any more fuss about the new King, so he secretly called the wise men. "I have been told that the King of the Jews will be born in Bethlehem," he told the travellers. "Go and have a good look there. When you have found Him, come and tell me where He is. I'd like to come and worship Him myself." Herod was telling lies. He had no intention of worshipping. His plan was to kill the new King and he was using the wise men as his private detectives in Bethlehem!

He is not the only one who didn't want the Lord Jesus. Today many people don't want Him, they want to be in charge of their own lives, they want to keep on going their own way. When Jesus Christ becomes your King, He forgives all your sin because He died for you and He makes you a new person who wants to go God's way. He is your King when He is in charge of your thoughts, your attitudes and your behaviour. He is a wonderful King who rules your life in the best possible way. At the end of your life you will go to Heaven to be with your King forever. Herod didn't want Him. He had the idea that this King would take over his palace!

Unlike Herod, the wise men wanted to find Him. They left the royal palace, knowing where they should go. Where was it? Yes, Bethlehem – about six miles away.

Visual 4 (Wise men following the star)

Surprise, surprise! – there was the star once more. This time it was moving! “What an unusual sight!” these star experts thought. All they had to do was follow. God was making sure that the wise men would find His Son. He was keeping His Word. “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

Before long they arrived in Bethlehem. Now, which house? It would take quite a while to go around the houses one by one. There was no need to worry. The star kept on moving and the wise men followed. It stopped over one particular house. What do you think that meant? (*Allow children to participate.*)

This was just an ordinary house – not the stable, where Jesus had been born. Joseph had found a better place to stay. The house was not a palace, but the wise men knew that the King must be there. They dismounted, got their gifts and went to the door.

It was so exciting...

Visual 5 (In the house; the wise men bow before the Child)

The door was opened. There was a lady there, the baby’s mother Mary. There was a man there – Joseph who was Mary’s husband; and there was the little Child – the King. He looked like any other little child. He did not have a halo. But they were sure He was the King. These were wealthy, clever men, yet they bowed down and worshipped that little Child. Somehow they knew He was far greater and far more important than they. Were they right? Yes, that little Child was _____ (*allow the children to review what they have learned by filling in the words*). He had lived forever in _____. He had made the _____. He was used to angels worshipping Him. He had become a _____, but He was still _____. The wise men did the right thing when they bowed down before Him – they had indeed found the King!

Have you? Perhaps you know about Jesus, but is He your Saviour and King? You don’t go to a house to find Him. You learn about Him from the Bible and you must come to Him in your heart and tell Him something like this: “Dear Lord Jesus, I know my sin keeps me away from God. Thank You for coming down to earth for me, thank You for dying for me. Please forgive my sin and be my King.”

If you come sincerely, you will find Him. “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).

God made sure the wise men found His Son. They brought out their presents: gold, incense and myrrh. These were very expensive gifts. Were they too much for a little child in an ordinary house? (*Draw out from the children as to why they were not too much.*) I’m sure the wise men were happy to give those gifts. It is just like that when you come to know Jesus Christ; you will love Him and want to give to Him. You won’t be able to give gifts like these, but you can give Him your hands – to do jobs for people because He is your King. You can give Him your lips – to speak about Him to others. You can give Him your love. Tell Him that you really love Him and that He is a wonderful King.

The wise men’s search was over. They needed to return home – back to Jerusalem first? God knew Herod’s wicked plans, so He warned the wise men in a dream not to go anywhere near Herod. They travelled home another way.

We do not know their names. We do not know how many there were. We don’t know for sure what land they came from. But we do know they found the King and that is far more important. Have you found Him? Remember, you need Him more than anything or anyone else. Without Him your sin will never be forgiven; without Him you cannot live as God wants you to live; without Him you will never be in Heaven. God wants you to be serious about Jesus. Remember what God said, “You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13).