

Aim: Belt of Truth**Refer:** Luke 2; Ephesians 6:14

How many people were expecting Jesus when He was born? (Shepherds, Simeon, Anna, Elizabeth and the wise men)
Do you know how many people should have expected Him? (They all should have.)

They had no excuse – the Old Testament is full of prophecies about the Messiah, and the Scriptures were very important to the Jews. Some of the prophecies include:

- If you remember when we studied the prophecy of Daniel 9 we worked out when the Messiah would appear – and we found out He would appear in AD 34 – the people should have been excitedly waiting for Him.
- Micah 5:2-5 – He would come from Bethlehem
- Isaiah 7:13-14 – He would come from the family of King David and be born to a virgin

And there were many, many more – so why, when Jesus was born, were so few people watching for Him in Israel?

Where did the wise men come from? Matthew 2:2

Did the Priests and Levites know the prophecies about Jesus? Matthew 2:4-5

Did Herod really want to worship Jesus? Matthew 2:16

Do you remember what an object lesson is?

The gifts that the wise men brought are object lessons – they can teach us something about who Jesus was.
What were the three gifts? Matthew 2:11 (Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh)

Gold - was often given as a gift to a king. The Queen of Sheba gave gold to King Solomon when she visited him in 1 Kings 10:10;

Was Jesus a king? Yes – (The king of the world and the true King of the Jews)

Frankincense – was used by the priests in the Sanctuary services. (It is first mentioned Exodus 30:34-37 and then in many other places in Leviticus)

Jesus was a priest – Hebrews 4:14

Myrrh – was also used in the Sanctuary, but it was also used to prepare a body for being buried.

Read John 19:38-40

So the Gold reminds us that Jesus was God and king, the frankincense reminds us that Jesus is our High Priest and the myrrh that He died for our sins.

Today we are looking at the next piece of the armour of God. Ephesians 6:14a

Brainstorm: What do we use a belt for?

There are many lessons that a belt can teach us about truth – we will look at one of these lessons today and more of them tomorrow.

Read John 8:32 (The truth will set you free)

A belt can keep your hands free – if your pants were too big for you and you didn't have a belt what would your hands be doing? (Holding up your pants)

(Perhaps have a tradesman show their tool belt)

For a soldier, or a tradesman – having a belt to hold their extra tools or their sword scabbard – frees up their hands so they can do what they need to. When we know God's truth and we live truthful lives – we will be totally free to do what we need to do and live the way God wants us to.

Do you remember the story of David and Bathsheba?

David steals Uriah's wife and then has Uriah killed so that he won't find out. David was later sorry for his sin and God forgave David but David didn't forget what he had done and it affected his actions later on.

Do you remember the story of David and Absalom?

Another of David's sons, Ammon, hurt Absalom's sister and David should have punished him, but he didn't – maybe David was worried about what people would say, they might say something like, "The king can sin but no one else can, that's not fair." So David did nothing and Absalom eventually tried to steal the kingdom off David.

Because David hadn't always done what was true and honest – it was much harder for him to do what was right later on; he didn't feel free to do what he should have.

It is much easier to be truthful and honest all the time, to be like Daniel who always did what was true and honest and no one could ever accuse him of doing wrong.

That doesn't mean that if we have done the wrong thing we can't do what is right in future – it's just harder.

Read John 14:6 (I am the way, the truth)

Read John 8:44 (Father of lies)

God's way is truth; Satan's way is all about lies.

A few important Bible verses about truth

- 2 Timothy 3:16 (We can trust the Bible is true – remember the prophecies of Daniel)
 - Malachi 3:6 (God does not change – if necessary, talk about conditional prophecies like that of Jonah)
 - 1 John 1:9 (God is faithful to forgive)
 - Read Leviticus 19:11 (God wants us to be honest and truthful)
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What can we do to follow God's way of truth?

Read John 15:26 (The Holy Spirit of truth)

- We spend regular time with God in Bible study and prayer
- We study the Bible so we will recognise what is truth and what is lies
- We pray for the Holy Spirit to live in us
- The Holy Spirit will help us to do what is right, to be honest and truthful
- And when we sin? We ask God to forgive us and we know from the Bible that He will
- When we have any doubts or we worry that things that God said aren't true or we don't feel that things can be true. We say verses from the Bible, and we say, "God does not lie so it is true." We can also ask Jesus to help us believe.

(Could read the Jungle Doctor story of monkey crossing the equator)