



Group Guide

Wisemen Visit the King

December 14, 2025

Main Passage: Matthew 2:1-12

Theological Theme

The Magi followed the guidance of a star to visit the child Jesus, worship Him, and give Him gifts fit for a king.

Introduction

- ❓ What's the best gift you've ever received?
- ❓ What's the best give you've ever given someone else?

1. Wise Men from the East (Matthew 2:1-2)

The king in view here is Herod the Great, a prolific builder in ancient Israel (some of his building projects are still around today!). He started building the temple in Jerusalem that existed in Jesus's day (known as the Herodian temple) around 20 BC (work on it was still ongoing in Jesus's lifetime, John 2:20). Herod was known for being both tyrannical and vengeful, and we get an underlying taste of that tendency in our reading today.

- ❓ What details did the Magi give in their question to Herod? Why did this get Herod's attention?
- ❓ This story only appears in Matthew's Gospel. How does this account add to the gospel narrative?
- ❓ Application: How was God at work in unexpected ways in this passage? Where might God be at work in unexpected ways in your life now?

2. Herod's Plot (Matthew 2:3-8)

Matthew recorded that the Magi's pronouncement "disturbed" (v. 3) both Herod the Great and all of Jerusalem. Herod would have been disturbed because of the threat this posed to his claim to the throne, and the people would have been disturbed because they knew of Herod's vicious nature (having previously gone as far as killing his favorite wife and son to protect his power). In Matthew 2:16, we learn the people of Jerusalem were right to be disturbed.

- ❓ What indicates that Herod's motives were not pure in his request to also come visit the Messiah?
- ❓ How does the quote from Micah 5 point to Jesus as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy?
- ❓ Application: What do these verses teach us about the way different people can respond to the same truths about Jesus?

3. Visiting the King (Matthew 2:9-12)

The star the Magi had followed to Jerusalem guided them to Jesus's home. Worshiping the sun, stars, and moon were all forms of idolatry mentioned in the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 4:19).

- ❓ How did the wise men display faith in God in multiple places in this passage?
- ❓ How might God have used this visit to further confirm the words He had already spoken to Mary and Joseph about the child?
- ❓ Application: We may not bring Jesus actual gifts like these regularly, but what are we to bring to Him in worship regularly?

Conclusion

- ❓ How might this account of the Magi challenge our ideas about who belongs in the family of God?
- ❓ How do you respond when you feel threatened by God-ordained change in your own life? How can we encourage and challenge one another in the way we respond in these moments?
- ❓ How have you seen God use unusual methods to draw people to Himself? Who might He be calling you to have a gospel conversation with this week?