

# Responding to the Birth of the King

---

December 9, 2018



**Open:** How does your family interact with the story of Jesus' birth throughout the Advent season?

**Read:** Matthew 2:1-12

**Discuss:**

1. Based on this account, what do we know about the "wise men" (or Magi)? In their question to King Herod in verse 2, what do the Magi reveal to be true about Jesus?
2. Knowing the Magi were not Jewish, how does God's use of the Magi align with what Jesus would accomplish in the world through the Gospel? Why is it important in our Christmas reflections that we remember the Gospel is for all nations?
3. How would you describe Herod's response to the news that "the King of the Jews" had been born (vv. 3-4; 7-8)? How might people today respond in similar ways? What truths would you offer as comfort to someone who is afraid of surrendering control to Jesus?
4. The chief priests and scribes knew the Old Testament, yet seem to lack appropriate response to the Messiah's coming. How should they have responded? What must accompany our knowledge of Scripture to ensure our response is appropriate?
5. For the Magi, God used a star to point them to Jesus. What are some of the means God uses to point people to His Son today? How did God enable you to see the hope of the Gospel? What lessons can we learn from these insights as we consider the many unsaved people around us?
6. Worship can be defined as our response to what we value most. The Magi worshipped Jesus by traveling a long distance to find him, bowing to him, ascribing him authority, and bringing him valuable gifts. Which of these expressions of worship (time, talent, submission, or treasure) are easiest for you? Which is the most difficult? Are there other ways you worship Jesus?

**Apply:** What's your motive for worshiping Christ this Christmas? What influences threaten your commitment to worship Christ this Christmas Season? What steps can you take to maintain a spirit of worship as we move forward toward Christmas?

**Pray:** Pray that we will be people who worship Jesus with all we are and who encourage others to do the same! Pray that God will work to save many people for His Glory this Christmas.

## Matthew 2:1-12

<sup>[1]</sup> 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, <sup>[2]</sup> 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." <sup>[3]</sup> When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>[4]</sup> and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>[5]</sup> They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

<sup>[6]</sup> "'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.'"

<sup>[7]</sup> Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. <sup>[8]</sup> 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." <sup>[9]</sup> 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. <sup>[10]</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>[11]</sup> 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. <sup>[12]</sup> And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

(ESV)