



Week of January 5, 2020

Matthew 2:1-12

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,

² asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."

³ When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him;

⁴ and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

⁶ 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the wise men and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared.

⁸ Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage."

⁹ When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising, until it stopped over the place where the child was.

¹⁰ When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.

¹¹ On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹² And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.



Group Leader

Remember: you don't need to use all of the questions. Go with what works. Give people a chance to think before answering, but if a question falls flat, move on. Let the discussion go where it needs to go, as long as it remains centered around the lesson. Give the participants page 1. Use this page for yourself.

Gathering questions:

- A. What is a fear you had at one time, only to realize later you it was nothing to be afraid of?
- B. Have you ever received a message through a dream?

Bible Study Questions:

1. Why do you imagine that only the religious scholars knew of the prophecy that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem?
2. How do you imagine the star? How high in the sky? How bright?
3. Why do you think the wise men were "overjoyed" at finding the baby Jesus? As non-Jews (presumably), what do you think this meant to them?
4. Have you ever seen a proverbial "star in the sky" that was beckoning you to follow God? How do you determine whether it is a sign from God?
5. When have you felt that you were following God, only to come to believe that you were somehow mistaken? What did you learn in the process?
6. In verse 3, why do you think "all Jerusalem" was also frightened?
7. What are some fears that are stronger than they ought to be? How might you begin to lessen their impact on your life?

Closing prayer: particularly invite prayers about ways in which each person can try to be less fearful.