



Seeking the King Bible Study
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Christmas is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. We know that Jesus wasn't born on December 25th of course, but this is the time we set aside to celebrate His birth, his first physical appearance on earth. The miraculous birth of this small baby is the introduction to world of the one true King. His birth and the reaction of those we see in this bible passage are important reminders to us of how we should continue to seek Him even still. While there are many distractions especially in this special season, we are reminded in this passage of scripture that we can get back on track and that we will be rewarded by His very presence when we do. Let this season be an opportunity to seek Jesus, our King, above all else.

Matthew is the first of four gospels which opens the New Testament. Written by Matthew (Levi) shortly after Jesus walked the earth. Matthew was called by Jesus to be one of His disciples as he was busy collecting taxes (not the most honorable or favored career). Matthew wrote this account of Jesus' time on earth in hopes of confirming to the Jewish Church that Jesus was, in fact, the Messiah by showing the fulfillment of many, though not all, of the Old Testament prophecies. Chapter one begins with the lineage of Jesus and ends with His birth. Our study, Chapter 2, verses 1 – 12 leads us into the visit of the Magi and King Herod's plot to destroy Jesus. This portion of Scripture speaks to us about two kings. The earthy ruler of the time, Herod, and the King of Kings, Jesus. Let's follow along as these men, seek their King.

Read Matthew Chapter 2:1-12

Verses 1-6

The Magi, or wise men, arrive in Jerusalem and inquire as to where they can find the Messiah since they saw His star, and followed it to worship Him. However, when King Herod hears this news, we see he is troubled and asks where he, too, can find the Messiah.

Many people seek the Messiah, but not everyone has good intentions. King Herod knows of the prophesy and understands that Jesus is the rightful ruler. He is undoubtedly concerned. The Bible says he is "troubled" at the birth of the Messiah, and he is sure that Jesus will one day want to take possession of the throne while either he himself sits on it or his offspring. However, we also see these three wise men, travel a long distance, from the east, to find the Messiah. They have come to worship Him. One looks to destroy the Messiah and the others look to worship Him.

1. What is your motive in seeking the King?
2. What is the benefit of checking our motive? (see Proverbs 21:2, 1 Corinthians 16:14)
3. What are some ways we can help others to seek Him?

Verses 7-12

In the second half of our study, we see that Herod is determined to find the Messiah. He calls the Magi to him to get more information about when exactly they first saw the star, then he sends them

to go find Jesus and then report back to him, under the guise that he, too, wants to worship the Messiah. After leaving Herod, the wise men continue to follow the star, which brings them to the exact spot where Jesus is. When they come into the house, they fall to the ground to worship the true King and offer their gifts. God then warns them in a dream not to return to Herod but to go home via a different route.

I'm struck in this last passage by the Magi's interaction with King Herod. It was not in their plans to take this detour on the way to seek the Messiah, yet they find themselves rerouted. Distracted by this earthly king, whose motive we know is not actually to worship Jesus, but to destroy Him. Nonetheless, they get back on track and eventually make it to Jesus. Their journey to seek the King does indeed end successfully. How many times in our own journey have we been re-routed, distracted, or waylaid by the enemy?

I often find that when I intentionally set aside time to worship or study or seek Jesus, that the distractions are at their strongest. However, we can be encouraged by the steadiness of the Magi, that if we get back on track, despite the detours, that we, too, will have our time to worship. God is not hiding from us. He put a large, bright star in the night sky pointing the wise men straight to Jesus. The second half of Hebrews 11:6 tells us that **he rewards those who earnestly seek Him**. Just as the Magi were rewarded by being in the very presence of the Messiah so, too, can we find this same reward.

1. What are some distractions or detours that try to keep you from worshipping?
2. What can you do to get quickly back on track after a distraction or detour, however long?
3. What are the rewards of remaining faithful in our journey to seek the King? (See Matthew 6:31-33, Psalm 34:4)

There can be many distractions through the Christmas season. Parties to attend, gifts to buy and wrap, volunteering to be done, memories to be made, but we can see that even in the midst of distractions and detours, God is not hiding. In fact, we read in Luke 19:10 that **Jesus came to seek and save the lost!** Us!! So, as we go about celebrating this season of Jesus' birth, let's remember to be intentional seekers of Him. Let's be reminded to check our motives as we do all the wonderful things that make this season so beautiful.

And finally, if we do find ourselves distracted, or re-routed, we can easily get back on track and find that our journey to seek Him will eventually lead to Him, and we can enjoy His goodness and presence.

Prayer

Lord, as we read these verses today, I ask that You speak to our hearts. Teach us the importance of seeking You and of doing so with a right heart. Help us to set aside the things that try to distract us and route us away from You and to focus on the true meaning of this season. We are so thankful, Jesus, that You willingly came as a baby and made the way for our redemption. We give You all the glory and honor as we worship You, Lord. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

