

CHRISTMAS

at Chets

RESPONDING TO THE BIRTH OF JESUS

BIG IDEA: Worship should be our response to the love that God showed when He gave Jesus for us.

DATE: Wednesday, December 10 and Sunday, December 14, 2025

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:1-12

OPENING QUESTION

What is the most expensive gift that you have ever given? Maybe it cost you a great deal financially or maybe you had to give up some other resource (time, energy, reputation, etc.). **What motivated you to give this gift? Was it worth the sacrifice?**

THE SETTING

Unlike other parts of the Christmas story, the Wise Men only appear in the Gospel of Matthew. Writing to early Christians that were Jewish converts, Matthew intended to prove that Jesus Christ is the promised Messiah, and His birth wasn't just good news for the Jews, but for all people. Matthew offers no specifics about their identity, number, or place of origin. He's also vague about the timeframe of when they arrived. Some refer to them as kings (such as the Christmas carol, "We Three Kings") while most simply call them generic names like Wise Men or Magi because so little is known about them. *Magi* is derived from a plural Greek word that implies learned men, astrologers, or priests.

STUDY THE BIBLE

Matthew 2:1-12 (NIV)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

DISCUSSION

As you answer these questions about the passage, look for similarities and differences with the way that we live and how others in our culture live.

	King Herod	Religious Leaders	Wise Men (Magi)
Who were they?			
Where did they come from?			
What did they know about the coming Messiah?			
How did they respond to the news of Jesus' birth?			

As you discussed the passage, did you notice anything about individuals who prioritize themselves over the ways of God?

We often talk about the Wise Men as givers of expensive gifts. Does it broaden your perspective on what it means to worship when you think about the long and difficult journey that they must have taken?

How was meeting Jesus different from other encounters with newborn dignitaries that the Wise Men might have had? How do you think the experience changed them? How has it changed you to know Christ?

RESPONSE

The Wise Men set out on what must have been a challenging journey with expensive gifts and prized possessions. They followed God's leading and worshiped Jesus even though their destination was undoubtedly different than what they had in mind when they departed. The gift of Christ's birth, life, death, and resurrection proves God's love for us. **How do you need to worship Him this Christmas?** Is it by changing an attitude of ungratefulness, by doing something that you know will require sacrifice or discomfort, or simply by thanking Him for His many blessings?