

Encountering Christmas

Exceeding Expectations

Matthew 2:1-12

MAIN IDEAS

The magi were men who:

1. Read and believed God's Word
2. Sought Jesus
3. Humbled themselves to worship Jesus
4. Obeyed God rather than man.

Read Matthew 2:1-12.

What was it that the magi saw that prompted them to go to Jerusalem and why was it significant? See Matthew 2:2 and Numbers 24:17.

Why did the magi from the east arrive in Jerusalem? What did they want to know? How did they know this baby was the Messiah? See Matthew 2:2, Micah 5:2, and Daniel 9:24-27.

Why did Herod summon the magi? What did he tell them to do? See Matthew 2:7-8.

What did the magi do when they saw the child with his mother? See Matthew 2:11.

Why did the magi not do as Herod commanded? See Matthew 2:12.

PERSONAL RESPONSE

The magi did not obey Herod. Instead, they listened to God. Consider Romans 13 and Acts 5:27-29. Is there a time when we should intentionally disobey the law of the land?

GROUP RESPONSE

The Bible does not tell us the significance of the gifts, but according to tradition, there may be a deeper meaning. For instance, Jesus was presented with myrrh at his birth and at his death. Consider Exodus 30:34-38, Leviticus 2:1-3,14-16, and Leviticus 24:5-9 (frankincense); and Exodus 30:22-33, Mark 15:23, and John 19:38-42 (myrrh) and discuss.

The magi *rejoiced exceedingly with great joy* when they saw the star, and upon seeing the child, they *fell to the ground to worship him*. Is this how you approach Jesus?

For many people, this holiday season is difficult and joy tends to get lost. Ask God to give you this type of joy. Share with your group and ask for prayers as well as encouragement.

REPRODUCE

In spite of Herod's command, the Magi seemed to follow God's warning with no fear or trepidation. They were united in heart, mind, and direction. How can we as a group face fear while doing hard things together?

Key Verses

- Exodus 30:22-33
- Exodus 30:34-38
- Leviticus 2:1-3
- Leviticus 2:14-16
- Leviticus 24:5-9
- Numbers 24:17
- Daniel 9:24-27
- Micah 5:2
- Matthew 2:1-12
- Mark 15:23
- John 19:38-42
- Romans 13
- Acts 5:27-29