

Read: Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi Meet the King

Matthew 2:1-2

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

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

It's a new year! Of all the people making predictions for the year ahead, who do you trust?

In our last devotion we heard a prediction God made through the prophet Isaiah: “Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.” Today's reading tells us how that prediction came true. It's the story of the first people from other nations who came to worship Jesus, the light of the world.

The story of the Magi's visit to Jesus actually starts before they boarded the camels bound for Bethlehem. The Magi were very well-educated people who lived in the nations east of Bethlehem. These studious people knew that the Jewish nation was waiting for a Messiah to be born. How did they know? Several generations earlier, the Jewish people had spent years in captivity in the eastern nation of Babylon. The Magi likely learned about the promised Messiah while the Jews were living among them. Jewish prophets like Isaiah had called the Messiah a king. That information was passed down through generations. So the Magi began to look for the “King of the Jews.”

Although Jesus was called the King of the Jews, the story of the Magi shows us that Jesus is a King for all nations. God made it possible for the Magi to learn about Jesus, even though they lived far from where He was born. God made them curious about the predictions. Then by putting the unique star in the sky, God made it possible for the Magi to find Jesus and worship him. The Magi learned something very important: This God—the one worshiped by the Jewish people—was trustworthy and his promises came true.

Notice that the Magi's journey to Jesus began with God's Word and promises. Those promises were talked about and kept alive for generations. By his grace, God continues to lead people to Jesus through his true and trustworthy Word. When your family gathers together around God's Word, you are listening to the most credible and trustworthy voice you can find. Want to know how much God loves you? It's in the Word. Want to know the plans God has for your future? It's in the Word. Want to point someone to Jesus and his forgiveness? Share the Word.

Every prediction in God's Word has already come true, except one—Jesus' return on the last day of the earth's existence. Until then, let us worship our king and share what we know about him with all people of all nations!

The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.

Questions for the Younger Children

- How did God make it possible for the Magi to find Jesus?
- Give two ways or places that God makes it possible for you to find Jesus.

Questions for Elementary Age Children

- What does the story of the Magi teach us about Jesus?
- A star guided the Magi's way to Jesus. What are some ways that God leads people to see Jesus today? (cf. 2 Peter 1:19-21)

Questions for Middle School and Above

- Why do you think the Magi were so interested in finding "the King of the Jews?"
- Identify promises God makes in his Word that you have found to be trustworthy and true in your life.

Closing Prayer:

Oh Jesus, my King, thank you for leaving your heavenly throne to live here on earth and be my Savior. I know that everything written about you is true. As you led the Magi to meet you, lead me closer to worship you through your Word. In your name I pray. Amen.

Hymn: CW 81:2,4 – Arise and Shine in Splendor

See earth in darkness lying,
The heathen nations dying
In hopeless gloom and night.
To you the Lord of heaven—
Your life, your hope—has given
Great glory, honor, and delight.

Your heart will leap for gladness
When from the realms of sadness
They come from near and far.
Your eyes will wake from slumber
As people without number
Rejoice to see the Morning Star.