

## Matthew 2

PRAY: Father, as I observe Joseph's response to his dreams in Matthew 2, please teach me the importance of obedience.

*Journal your prayer here:*

**PREVIEW:** In Matthew 2, we see the wise men worship Him who had been born King of the Jews, Herod's anger caused the death of male children, and Joseph's obedience kept the Child safe—and fulfilled several prophecies.

### **Matthew 2 Outline:**

Visit of Wise Men - Read Matthew 2:1-12

Flight into Egypt - Read Matthew 2: 13-15

Herod Kills the Children - Read Matthew 2:16-18

Jesus Returns to Nazareth - Read Matthew 2:19-23

### **Visit of Wise Men - Read Matthew 2:1-12**

1. After Jesus was born, wise men paid a visit to Him. Where did the men come from, and what drew them to Bethlehem (v. 2)?

**PROPOUND:** In Matthew 2:1, the word *after* is used. How long after Jesus' birth might the wise men have appeared? (See Matthew 2:16.)

2. Who did the wise men say they were looking for (v. 2)?

**PROPOUND:** The wise men were looking for the “King of the Jews.” Where else is this title of Jesus used? (See Matthew 27:29, 37.)

3. What was the purpose of the wise men's visit (v. 2)?

**PRODUCE:** Look carefully at the actions of the wise men once they found the Child. How is this response something that should be part of our personal time with Christ? (See also Revelation 4:10.)

4. When King Herod heard that the men had come to worship, he was troubled. Who else was troubled and why do you think this was so (v. 3)?

5. What did Herod do upon hearing about the wise men's appearance (v. 4)?

6. Herod connects the One "born King of the Jews" (v. 2) with "the Christ" (v. 4). What did he discover from the chief priests and scribes?

7. What did Herod say he wanted the wise men to do when they found the Child (v. 8)? What do you think his real intentions were (v. 13)?

**PROPOUND:** The priests and scribes were likely aware of the wise men's arrival and mission, yet they didn't go to worship Jesus. Why?

**PROPOUND:** What navigation system did the wise men use to find the Child?

8. How did the wise men determine the precise location of the Child in Bethlehem (v. 9)?

**PROPOUND:** Why did Herod want to determine from the wise men how long ago the star appeared? (See Matthew 2:7.)

**PROCEED:** Contrast the locations and the words used to describe Jesus during the shepherds' visit (Luke 2:16) with those of the wise men (Matthew 2:11). Share your findings with the group.

9. What did the wise men do when they saw the Child (v. 11)? Why should our response to Christ be the same as theirs?

10. What did the wise men present to the Child (v. 11)? (See also Psalm 72:10 and Isaiah 60:6.)

**PROPOUND:** What gifts did the wise men present to the Child? What did the gifts represent?

11. How were the wise men warned? What were they warned of (v. 12)?

## **Flight into Egypt - Read Matthew 2:13-15**

12. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream (v. 13) for a second time (see also Matthew 1:20). What did the angel instruct him to do, and why?

13. What time of the day did Joseph depart for Egypt (v. 14)? What was significant about this?

14. What might have happened if Joseph had delayed his obedience? Why is it important to quickly obey God?

PRACTICE: Very little is known about Joseph; what can we learn from his response to the four dreams? How is this something we can practice in our own lives?

15. How long did Joseph, Mary, and the Child remain in Egypt (v. 15)?

## **Herod Kills the Children - Read Matthew 2:16-18**

16. What words describe Herod's emotions when he realized the wise men did not do as he instructed (v. 16)?

17. What did Herod do in response to the situation (v. 16)?

**PROCLAIM:** God knew what Herod's intentions were all along—that's why He warned Joseph. Share with the group why it is important to obey God, even when it seems illogical or unreasonable.

## **Jesus Returns to Nazareth - Read Matthew 2:19-23**

18. Joseph was spoken to by an angel a third time (v. 19-21). What was he instructed to do? What did he do?

**PROTECT:** Joseph obeyed what was communicated to him in his dreams. Think about how God communicates to you. Do you obey when He speaks to you?

19. Where in Israel did Joseph, Mary, and the Child end up? Why (v. 23)?

**PROMOTE:** Share with the group why you think Matthew specifically mentions the fulfillments of four different prophecies in chapter 2.

**PROPOUND:** Matthew 2:23 speaks of a fulfilled prophecy. What specific prophecy does this refer to?

**PRAY:** Father, thank You for the examples set by the wise men and Joseph in Matthew 2. Please help me to do as they did.

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