

## BIBLE DISCUSSION GROUP STUDY QUESTIONS

In preparation for Sunday, December 17, 2006

Passage: Matthew 2:1-12

Memory Passage: Matthew 2:2

**TODAY:** *From your study this past week, what is one thing that impressed you that can be of help in your life?*

### DAY 1 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Matthew 2:1-12.** There are many traditions and myths in church history about the Magi. List as many of them as you can remember. In light of this passage, what can we really know about the Magi? List the details we know.
- (b) Who might the Magi be? Are they kings? In Daniel 1:20; 2:2; 4:4; and 5:7, the word “magi” appears. What word might be interchangeable with this word? What does this tell you about who these were?
- (c) What caused them to begin their search for Jesus? What might this tell us about the background of the Magi?
- (d) How would the appearance of a “star” cause them to look for “the King of the Jews?” Consider Numbers 24:17. What does this verse prophesy?
- (e) How might these magi have heard about this verse? Where might they have come from? How does the connection with the book of Daniel help us understand the coming of the Magi?
- (f) *Family:* Read Matthew 2:1-12. Talk about the Magi. Who were they? How did they know about the birth of Jesus? What does this tell us about the importance of the Scriptures for our lives? How do you see the sovereign providence of God working in sending Daniel and the Jews into captivity? Thank God for giving us His Word.

### DAY 2 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Matthew 2:2-8.** Herod, the religious leaders, and the Magi might depict three responses to Jesus today. How would you characterize each of the responses? How are they similar and different?
- (b) What does this passage tell us about Herod and his character? Why do you think “all of Jerusalem” was troubled?
- (c) What do the religious leaders teach us about the problem with having only “head knowledge?” Consider James 2:19 also.
- (d) In verses 5 & 6, these leaders quote a verse about the coming Messiah. Look up Micah 5:2. What have they left out? Why would they leave it out? What does it tell us about Jesus?
- (e) Look up 2 Samuel 5:2. What have they combined with the passage from Micah? Is this also significant regarding what they were looking for the Messiah to do? Does Jesus fulfill this prophecy also?
- (f) *Family:* Read Matthew 2:2-8 and Micah 5:2. Discuss the importance of prophecy in knowing who the Messiah would be. How would the Jews know who the Messiah would be? What did all the chief priests know about the Messiah? How did Jesus fulfill this prophecy? Does knowing the truth make you a Christian? Explain. Pray for someone who needs to know Jesus as Savior.

### DAY 3 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read Matthew 2:8-12.** What does this chapter tell us about Jesus and the visit of the Magi that is not normally told at Christmas? How is this visit different from that of the shepherds? How old was Jesus at the time of the visit? How can you tell?
- (b) Read Isaiah 60:5-6 and Psalm 72:10-11. How might these verses provide some insight to the gifts given by the Magi?
- (c) How do the Magi respond when they finally find the child? What do the following verses tell us about their view of who Jesus was: Ezekiel 1:28; Revelation 1:17; and John 20:27-28?
- (d) How is God directly involved in the events mentioned in chapter 2? (Consider especially verses 6, 15, 18, and 23). What were some of the difficulties the Magi might have faced in obeying God?
- (e) *Family:* Read Matthew 2:8-12 and discuss the difficulties that the Magi faced in obeying God. What difficulties do you face in obeying God? How did they respond when they saw the baby? Talk about what real worship is. Pray that you might have a heart to worship Jesus just as the Magi did.

### DAY 4 – ASK FOR INSIGHT

### READ THE PASSAGE

- (a) **Read John 18:33-40.** How did Jesus answer Pilate’s question? What does this tell us about the rule of Jesus as King?
- (b) What did Jesus tell the Pharisees about his kingdom in Luke 17:20-25? What did he say had to happen before the coming of the kingdom?
- (c) What kind of kingdom did Jesus come to establish (Colossians 1:12-14; Romans 14:17)?
- (d) Read John 19:1-7. What conclusion did Pilate reach about Jesus? Why didn’t he let him go? What accusation did the Jews bring against Jesus that required capital punishment?
- (e) What did Jesus tell Pilate about his authority (John 19:8-13)? How did Pilate react after this? How did the Jews respond to his efforts (John 19:14-22)?
- (f) *Family:* Read John 18:33-40 and Colossians 1:12-14. Talk about the kingdom that Jesus came to establish. How is it different than the kingdom that the Jews expected? What are people expecting today when they talk about “peace of earth?” What kind of peace did Jesus bring and how did he provide it? Thank God for the peace that Jesus has given us (Romans 5:1).

**DAY 5 – ASK FOR INSIGHT****READ THE PASSAGE**

- (a) **Read John 1:11-13.** What does it mean for Jesus to be the king of the Jews? Why did this cause Herod concern?
- (b) What kind of king were the people looking for (John 6:14-15)? How did Jesus respond to their attempt?
- (c) In John 12:12-19, how do the people receive Jesus as king? What irony is there in the way he came to them as king?
- (d) What does he do to accept their acclaim (Luke 19:35-44)? What did he do that showed where his concern was? What prophecy does he give regarding the future of Jerusalem? Why does he say this will happen to them (Luke 19:44)?
- (e) How is God's judgment on all who know about the coming of Jesus but do not accept him (Matthew 11:21-24; 2 Corinthians 6:2)? Read John 1:11-13. What must a person do to become a child of God?
- (f) *Family:* Read John 1:11-13. Talk about the rejection of Jesus by the Jewish people. How did the Jews respond to the coming of Jesus? How do people respond today? Why do people celebrate Christmas when they don't believe in Jesus? What can we do to make clear the real meaning of the birth of Jesus? Pray for opportunities to talk to others about the real meaning of Christmas.

**DAY 6 – ASK FOR INSIGHT****READ THE PASSAGE**

*Think back through what you have learned each day this week.* Read Matthew 2:1-12. What does it mean for Jesus to be called the "King of the Jews?" Why did this cause just trouble in Jerusalem? What was prophesied about this king in Micah 5:2? What does this tell us about who this king was? How did the Magi respond to the coming of this king? Pray for your worship services tomorrow that Jesus might be worshipped as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords!

**DATE:** December 17, 2006

**PASSAGE:** Matthew 2:1-12

***King of the Jews***

*"Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?"*