



Matthew 2:1-12
Advent- Love
Study Guide

1. What are your observations on how we tend to look for love down here, rather than above, with God? How are we conditioned to look for love in the world today? Discuss.

2. Read Matthew 2:1-2.

"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him."

What do you know about King Herod? Where do you think he had most of his attention? What do you know about the wise men? Where was their attention?

3. Read Matthew 2:3-8 & 12

"When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶ "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.' Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, 'Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.' ¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way."

Describe Herod's reaction to the news that an unprecedented world ruler was being born in Bethlehem (see Micah 5:2-4). How can we become "disturbed" when our focus is only on worldly things here below?

4. Read Matthew 2:9-11

"After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹ And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."

Describe the reaction of the wise men as they found the Christ-child. How can we prioritize our lives to find the love that we are looking for? Discuss.

Application: During the Christmas season, pray and ask God to help you place your attention on what God may be doing around you rather than just on earthly values that may not be as important.

Advent Love Matthew 2:1-12

Love is...

>add each on click<

ahabah- personal affection, platonic admiration, loyalty, benevolent concern.

eros- sexual attraction.

shachah- worshipful admiration; to bow down.

chesed- steadfast love.

"The Lord is slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, forgiving iniquity and transgression." (Numbers 14:18).

Big Idea: Look for love above.

A. Herod- Looking Below (v.1a)

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king,...

B. Wise Men- Looking Above (v.1b-2)

...behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, ² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.

God in the Heavens

>add each on click<

Ps. 19:1a- "The heavens declare the glory of God."

Job 9:9- "He is the Maker of the Bear and Orion, the Pleiades and the constellations of the south."

Isa. 40:26- "Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these stars, The One who leads forth their host by number, He calls them all by name."

Luke 21:25- "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars..."

Num. 24:17 "A star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel..."

Psalm 19:1a- "The heavens declare the glory of God."

Rick Larsen, www.bethlehemstar.net

Image- Jupiter crowns Regulus

Genesis 49:10

"The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until he comes to whom it belongs and the obedience of the nations is his."

Image- Jupiter Venus

Image- Bethlehem Star

Galatians 4:4- "But when the **fullness of the time** came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman."

C. Misguided Worship! (v.3-8 & 12)

³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

⁴and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: ⁶"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Micah 5:2b&4

"whose coming forth is from of old..."

"...And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth."

C. Misguided Worship! (v.3-8 & 12) continued

⁷Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him."

¹²And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Big Idea: Look for love above.

D. True Worship! (v.9-11)

⁹After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. ¹¹And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Big Idea: Look for love above.

