



VISITORS TO THE HOUSE

Matthew 2:1–12

¹Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, ²saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”

³When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ⁶‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

⁷Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

⁹When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.

¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

¹²Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

—Matthew 2:1–12

Read Matthew 2:1–12

You never know what visitors will turn up at the house when Jesus is in residence! His first visitors were from the lowest rung of society, but in Matthew 2, foreign intellectuals with expensive gifts came to see the young Child.

These noble visitors were not secretive about the reason they had traveled such a great distance, nor about the sign that had led them there—*For we have seen His star in the East and come to worship Him*. They were so intent on worshipping the King of the Jews, that they were forthright and publicly asked their question, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?” Perhaps these wise men were astounded that no one else in Jerusalem was aware, searching for Him, or concerned about this momentous occasion. Nevertheless, these intrepid visitors were undaunted. Their quest would not be complete until they had entered the house, seen the Messiah, fallen at His feet in worship, and presented their gifts to Him. Though Jesus was only a child, they recognized the kingship and honor of the One who was residing in the house.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Attentiveness to the star indicates that the wise men were astrologers; their awareness of the OT (perhaps Num. 24:17) suggests that they were from Babylonia, where Jews were numerous. The men were Gentiles which anticipates Gentile acceptance into the Kingdom of God. Throughout the entire gospel, unlikely Gentiles worship the Jewish Messiah, while the Jewish leaders oppose him.³

Today, we live in a world where few are aware, searching for, or even care that the Son of God has come into the world to save men and women from the condemnation of sin. Yet, to those who are relentless in their quest to find the One who has been born the King of the Jews, He is accessible and ready to invite them into His presence. God has promised, *And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart* (Jeremiah 29:13).

As you delve into your study this week, allow the Lord to stir in you the same passion and determination as the wise men displayed in their determined quest to find the house in which Jesus was residing and worship the One born King of the Jews.

1. From Matthew 2:1, note the following:
 - a. The time

- b. The days
 - c. The visitors
 - d. The location
2. Write out the question that the wise men asked.
Matthew 2:2
- a. According to what the wise men testified:
 - 1) What had they seen?
 - 2) For what purpose had they come?
3. Who was troubled by the wise men's request? Matthew 2:3
- a. Why do you think they were troubled?
4. Use Matthew 2:4–8 to comment on the following:
- a. Those Herod inquired of

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

*I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not
near. A star will come
out of Jacob; a scepter
will rise out of Israel.
He will crush the
foreheads of Moab,
the skulls of all the
people of Sheth.*

—Numbers 24:17, NIV

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

To be king, Herod bought his position with bribes to Rome. So, the arrival of a true king was a threat not only to Herod, but also to the corrupt religious and political leadership in Jerusalem.

- b. What Herod inquired about
- c. What they told Herod
- d. Herod's response to his inquiry
- e. Herod's directive to the wise men

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

The movement of the star suggests that it is not a natural phenomenon but was supernatural, perhaps a guiding angel that appeared as a star, or perhaps some specifically created heavenly phenomenon that has the brightness of a star.⁴

- 5. According to Matthew 2:9–10:
 - a. What did the wise men see when they departed from Herod?
 - b. Where did it lead them?
 - c. How did they respond to this sight?
- 6. Use the following phrases from Matthew 2:11 to capture the apex of their worship:
 - a. *Come into the house*

- b. *They saw the young Child*
 - c. *Fell down*
 - d. *Worshiped Him*
 - e. *Opened their treasuries*
 - f. *Presented gifts to Him*
 - g. *Gold, frankincense, and myrrh*
7. Use Matthew 2:12 to describe the wise men's exit.
8. What is your greatest takeaway concerning the visitors at Jesus' house?

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Gold, frankincense, and myrrh were costly gifts. The latter two are aromatic resins. Frankincense was used in making incense and perfume (see Exodus 30:34–35). Myrrh was used as an ingredient in anointing oil (30:23–25), and as perfume (Psalm 45:8), and in burial preparations (John 19:39).⁵