

Bible Studies for Life: December 29

Looking Forward in Worship • Matthew 2:1-11, 16-18

By Sydney Charlton



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As the infant King's cries rang out in the manger, animals likely gathered around Him wondering what was taking place. When the angel proclaimed His birth to the shepherds nearby, they were compelled to rush to the scene. And when the star rose in the dark sky, the wisemen knowingly started their journey to meet the long-awaited King.

Hearing of Christ's coming compelled the wisemen to worship. They were willing to go out of their way to make much of what had occurred: the Savior was born!

As we look ahead to the new year, we should look forward with worship-filled hearts. For Christians, worship is not merely a service on Sunday or something to work into our busy

schedules. Worshipping the King of kings and Lord of lords should come naturally to us, as it did for the wisemen.

Worship doesn't only take place when we sing praise or spend time in prayer, though those are important aspects of growing in our faith. Worship is choosing to honor God in all we do. When we stop to notice a beautiful sunset or when we are bewildered by the laughter of a child, we rightfully become awestruck by God's creativity in every detail of the world. When we choose to work unto the Lord and not man, we worship Him in our workplaces and in our homes (Colossians 3:23, NIV). Jesus deserves our worship. If we stay silent, creation will cry out to ensure He receives the praise due to His name (Luke 19:40, NIV).

Matthew 2:1-6

The wisemen didn't need to seek council or ask for various opinions when they saw the star shining against the dark sky. They didn't stand in confusion, instead they began their journey to Bethlehem confidently. The wisemen traveled with purpose: they went to Jerusalem to worship the king of the Jews.

The Magi traveled hundreds of miles to meet the long-awaited Messiah and offer Him their best gifts. They knew Jesus was worthy of their worship, and they were not moved by inconvenience.

It has become far too easy to snooze the alarm when we should prepare to worship with fellow believers on a Sunday morning. We choose to get cozy on our couches and stream worship services instead of making an effort to be part of what God is doing in the local church. We have allowed the conveniences of our culture to compromise the steadfastness seen in the lives of the wisemen. They made the effort to worship Jesus, despite difficult conditions, because they knew being in His presence changes everything!

Matthew 2:7-8, 16-18

Finally! The wisemen arrived in Jerusalem after their long journey and they met Jesus. King Herod heard of their intent and slyly explained to the Magi that he also wanted to go to Bethlehem to worship Jesus.

King Herod felt threatened and devised a plan to kill Jesus. Herod's heart wasn't pure, and he lived in opposition to Christ. This is true of many today. Surrendering is difficult because our culture teaches us to only look out for ourselves. Acknowledging our sinfulness moves us to recognize we are in desperate need of a Savior.

The wisemen recognized Herod's devious plan and they never returned to share details with him. He remained threatened by Another being called "King" and ordered for all young boys to be killed, just as Jeremiah prophesied. But God's plan for redemption prevailed!

Matthew 2:9-11

The wisemen continued to be guided by the star and rejoiced when they came to the house where it rested (v9-10). At last, they were with Jesus and they fell down and worshipped Him!

We would do well to remember the example of the wisemen. They sought to be with Jesus and to worship Him by giving Him their very best. While we don't offer gifts of frankincense, gold, and myrrh, followers of Christ must be willing to surrender our will to be aligned with His plans and purpose. Christ alone is worthy of all of our worship and praise!

Let this coming year be marked by worship of the only One worthy of all praise!

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