



JOY PERSONAL STUDY GUIDE

DECEMBER 20, 2020

TAKEAWAY:

The birth of Christ was accompanied by multiple signs and wonders. One of those signs is the arrival of kings from the East who bore gifts fit for a king and who bowed down and worshiped the child, Jesus.

WHY IT'S IMPORTANT:

Embedded in this story is a simple description of their countenance as they drew near to where the child was. Matthew recorded that they were "overjoyed." (Matt. 2:10)

GOSPEL CONNECTION:

Those who have been the recipients of the benefits of the person and work of the Son of God come in flesh ought to be a rejoicing people!

INTRODUCTION

- 1 What does it mean to have joy? Is it different than happiness? Explain.
- 2 According to the world, how can a person be a joyful, happy person?

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

> Read Matthew 2:1-12.

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." ³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶ " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'" ⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹ After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

- Why do you think these men felt such intense emotion upon finding the child?
- What is the role of rejoicing in the life of the Christian?
- Paul said to rejoice in the Lord always. Does it seem reasonable to you to be always rejoicing? What makes this difficult?
- Is it possible to produce true joy in our own hearts by our own strength? Explain.
- How exactly does the Holy Spirit produce joy in Christians? What is our part in that process?
- What exactly should Christians meditate upon as they seek to rejoice? How have you experienced rejoicing in these truths?

APPLICATION

- 1 What is the difference between the joy of the Lord and the happiness of the world?
- 2 Do you think that most people would say you are a joyful person? What might this say about what you regularly set your mind on?
- 3 What makes you joyful? Is your joy typically based on favorable external conditions or something deeper?

THIS WEEK

- Memorize Matthew 2:10
- Read Matthew 2:1-12 on Monday
- Read Matthew 2:13-18 on Tuesday
- Read Matthew 2:19-23 on Wednesday
- Read Matthew 3:1-6 on Thursday
- Read Matthew 3:7-12 on Friday
- Read Matthew 3:13-17 on Saturday