



Discussion Guide — 01/04/2026

Series: Beyond the Manger | Stories of Christmas

Message: Magi's Story

Scripture: Matthew 2:1-12 (NRSVUE)

Opening Prayer

Light of the world, as you led seekers by a star to Jesus, lead us by your Spirit today. Open our eyes to your revelation, our ears to your Word, and our lives to your mission. Amen.

Introduction & Context

Matthew alone tells the story of the magi—learned outsiders who read a sign in the heavens and journey to honor a newborn king. Their arrival is an epiphany (a revealing): Israel's Messiah is also for the nations. The same news that draws the magi to worship unsettles Herod and "all Jerusalem." Joy and fear stand side by side. Guided by Scripture and a star, confirmed by a dream, the magi find Jesus, offer costly gifts, and return home "by another road." Epiphany reveals who Jesus is and re-routes those who truly encounter him.

Discussion Questions

1) Hear the Text

- Read Matthew 2:1–12 aloud. What single word or phrase captures your attention today? Why?
- What contrasts do you notice (outsiders/insiders, joy/fear, star/throne, homage/hostility)? How do these contrasts serve Matthew's message?

2) Outsiders and the Scope of the Gospel

- The first worshipers in Matthew are Gentile scholars. What does their presence reveal about the reach of Jesus' kingship?
- Who are the "outsiders" in your world that God may already be drawing toward Jesus? How might we recognize and welcome them?





3) Guidance and Discernment

- Track the guidance in the passage: a star, the Scriptures (Micah), and a dream. Which of these echoes how God has guided you recently? Which do you need to attend to more closely?
- The magi ask a humble question: “Where is the child...?” What questions are you bringing to Jesus in this season?

4) Herod’s Fear vs. Magi’s Joy

- Herod fears losing control; the magi are “overwhelmed with joy.” Where do you notice Herod-like defensiveness in yourself or the church? Where do you see magi-like joy?
- How can we cultivate responses of worship rather than control when God disrupts our plans?

5) Worship and Offering

- The magi kneel and open their treasures. What “treasure” (time, attention, skills, resources, hospitality) might God be inviting you to lay before Jesus now?
- Gold, frankincense, and myrrh have been read as royal, priestly, and sacrificial symbols. Which facet of Jesus’ identity (King, God-with-us, Suffering Savior) most anchors you today—and why?

6) “Another Road”

- After encountering Jesus, the magi go home “by another road” (v.12). Where might God be asking you to take “another road” in habits, relationships, or priorities?
- If you wrote a six-word memoir for Epiphany, what would it be? Share yours with the group.



Closing Prayer

King Jesus, you are light for all peoples. Turn our fear into joy, our questions into worship, and our journeys toward your mission. Send us by whatever road you choose, for your glory and our neighbor's good. Amen.

Key Takeaway

Epiphany reveals a universal King whose light draws outsiders in, re-routes insiders, and turns control into worshipful joy.

Next Step — P.A.R. (Pray • Act • Reflect)

Pray: For an awareness of “outsiders” you interact with.

“Jesus, light my way. Reveal where you are at work beyond my comfort zone, and show me one person or place ‘outside’ where you want me to carry your welcome this week.”

Act: Choose one outward-facing practice (do it within seven days):

- **Welcome:** Invite a neighbor or newcomer to coffee/a meal; learn a name and a story.
- **Witness:** Share—in simple words—why Jesus matters to you, and extend a clear invitation (worship, group, or service).
- **Worshipful Gift:** Offer a concrete gift that costs you something (time, presence, skill, or finances) to bless someone beyond your usual circle.

Reflect: Where did you sense God's guidance (star/Scripture/“dream” conviction)? What “another road” is opening for you? How did your action move fear toward joy—for you or for someone else?

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