



# Small Group Study Guide for January 6, 2019

*Our Savior Lutheran Church and School*

**Theme:** The Christmas Season concludes with the celebration of the visit of the Wise Men to the child Jesus. This also launches us into a new season of light and worship – Epiphany. The Wise men were seeking a new born king, and God led them to find the desire of the nations. This shows us how God leads and guides us to seek Him and worship Jesus.

## **Getting Started:**

1. What was the most spiritually impactful moment of your Christmas celebrations?
2. How did you see God at work in your life or in the life of the people close to you over the holidays?

## **In the Word: Matthew 12:1-12**

3. Herod the Great ruled Judea from 37-4 B.C. Why do you think he was disturbed by the arrival of the wise men and their request to see “the one who has been born king of the Jews”?
4. Look closely at the locations given for the route of the wise men. Look through the passage and find where they came from, where they went first, next, and last.
5. The religious leaders and chief priests knew that the prophet Micah foretold the location of the Messiah’s birth (vs. 5-6). Who else was born in Bethlehem that made it such a special little town?
6. Do you think the star was visible to many people, or just to the wise men? What do you think it was? (there is no right answer here)

7. The wise men did not find the stable with shepherds and a baby lying in the manger (as recorded in Luke 2). Where did they have to go to find the child? How does this relate to the familiar Christmas story in Luke 2?

**Read: Matthew 12:13-23**

8. Herod the Great was a ruthless ruler. He was a Non-Jew (Idumean) who was granted power by the Roman Senate. He murdered his wife, three sons, mother-in-law, brother-in-law, uncle, and many others. How does what we know of Herod from historical annals match up with how he is portrayed in this passage from Matthew's Gospel?
9. God communicated with the wise men and Joseph through dreams. Do you think God does this today?
10. Based on Herod's edict to kill the baby boys of Bethlehem, according to the time of the star's appearing as given by the wise men, how old might Jesus have been at this point?
11. Matthew records how Joseph, Mary, and Jesus flee to Egypt, and then return after Herod the Great's death (around 4 B.C.). Where does Joseph and his family ultimately end up? (vs. 23)

**Putting it all Together**

12. Why is it so important to note that the wise men were non-Jews?
13. How does God guide people as they seek Him, and where does God want to ultimately lead us?

**Prayer:** Ask God to help us seek Him in the New Year, and to grow each day in faith, hope, and love. Ask for God's help in welcoming all nations to worship the Savior.

**Next Week:** The Baptism of Our Lord celebrates Jesus' baptism and ours! Luke 3:15-22