

# ADVENT WEEK 4 — DAY 1

## WHEN THE KING IS BORN, THE NATIONS COME

**Theme Verse:** *Matthew 2:1–2*

**Additional Reading:** Psalm 72:8–11; Isaiah 60:1–6; Revelation 21:22–26

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### Devotional (≈480 words)

The Christmas story widens dramatically in Matthew 2.

In chapter 1, the focus was on Israel—Joseph, Mary, David’s line, Abraham’s promise. But now the scene shifts to the **nations**. Strange visitors from “the east” appear in Jerusalem asking an astonishing question:

**“Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?”**

These men—Magi—are not Israelites.

They are Gentiles.

Foreigners.

Outsiders.

Astrologers, scholars, seekers.

And yet, they are the first to recognize that a **King has come**.

Before the disciples follow, before Israel understands, **the nations come searching for Jesus**. The One born in Bethlehem is not a tribal deity or a regional savior—He is the global King promised from the beginning.

The Magi teach us something important about Advent:

**The birth of Christ is the turning point not just for Israel, but for the whole world.**

Isaiah foretold this moment: nations would come to the light, kings to the brightness of His rising. Psalm 72 said distant peoples would bow before the Messiah. Revelation shows the nations bringing their glory into the New Jerusalem.

Here in Matthew 2, the first rays of that promise dawn.

The Magi also show us the difference between **spiritual curiosity** and **spiritual hunger**. They don’t simply notice the star; they respond. They don’t merely admire the sign; they pursue the Savior behind it. Their journey was costly, long, uncomfortable, and risky—but they believed the King was worth it.

Meanwhile, the religious leaders—who knew the Scriptures by heart—did not travel five miles to Bethlehem.

The difference?

The Magi were hungry for God.

Herod was threatened by God.

The religious elites were indifferent to God.

Advent still reveals hearts today.

Some resist Jesus because He threatens their control.

Some ignore Him because spiritual truths feel familiar.

Others pursue Him with joy, like the Magi—because they know that if Jesus truly is King, then He is worth everything.

The Magi remind us that Jesus is the King for all nations, all peoples, all backgrounds. And they remind us to seek Him—not half-heartedly, but with eager longing.

Today, ask yourself:

If Jesus is King, what journey is He calling you to take?

What step of obedience, sacrifice, or worship might He be inviting you into?

Like the Magi, those who seek Him will find Him.

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## Reflection Questions

1. What does the arrival of the Magi teach you about Jesus' global mission?
2. Where do you see yourself in this story—curious like the Magi, threatened like Herod, or indifferent like the religious leaders?
3. What step toward Jesus is He inviting you to take this Advent?

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## Prayer

Lord Jesus, King of all nations, give me a heart like the Magi—eager, humble, and hungry to seek You. Help me follow wherever You lead. Amen.

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# ADVENT WEEK 4 — DAY 2

## WHEN RELIGION KNOWS THE TRUTH BUT MISSES THE KING

**Theme Verse:** *Matthew 2:3–6*

**Additional Reading:** Micah 5:2–5; Matthew 23:1–5; James 1:22–25

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### Devotional (≈470 words)

When the Magi arrive in Jerusalem asking for the newborn King, Herod is troubled—and so is “all Jerusalem with him.” Herod gathers the chief priests and scribes and asks where the Messiah is to be born. Without hesitation, they quote Scripture:

**“In Bethlehem... from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.”**

They know the right answer immediately.

They know the prophecy.

They know the location.

They know the promise.

But they do **not** go.

Bethlehem is only about five miles away—a short walk. Yet not a single religious leader makes the journey. The people who know the most do the least. The ones with Scripture memorized won’t move their feet. Meanwhile, Gentile seekers travel hundreds of miles because they believe the promise is true.

This is one of the quiet tragedies of the Christmas story:

**It is possible to be close to the truth and far from Christ.**

Knowledge is not the same as worship.

Familiarity is not the same as faith.

Information is not transformation.

The scribes knew the prophecies, but they weren’t hungry for the King. Herod knew enough to fear the child, but not enough to surrender to Him. Only the Magi responded with action, obedience, and joy.

This is a warning we need during Advent—especially those who grew up around church or Scripture. We can hear the story so many times that it becomes background noise. We can study the Bible without letting it shape how we live. We can admire Jesus from a distance without walking toward Him in obedience.

The question Advent presses is not “Do you know the story?”

The question is **“Are you moving toward the King?”**

Do you respond to God’s Word with action?

Do you follow where it points?

Do you seek Jesus with hunger and expectation?  
Or has truth become familiar, comfortable, and distant?

The Magi remind us that Jesus is found by those who respond.  
Not by those who merely acknowledge.  
Not by those who are theologically accurate but spiritually unmoved.  
Not by those who know the right answers but stay where they are.

Advent is a season to awaken spiritual hunger—to refuse passive faith and pursue the living King.

If Jesus truly is the Messiah, then He is worth more than knowledge—He is worth your feet, your time, your obedience, your life.

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## Reflection Questions

1. Where are you tempted to settle for knowing truth instead of responding to it?
2. What keeps you from moving toward Jesus with the eagerness of the Magi?
3. What concrete step of obedience can you take today in response to God's Word?

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## Prayer

Lord, save me from a faith that knows the truth but does not move toward You. Awaken my heart, stir my hunger, and help me follow You with joy and obedience. Amen.

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# ADVENT WEEK 4 — DAY 3

## THE JOURNEY THAT REQUIRES JOY

**Theme Verse:** *Matthew 2:10*

**Additional Reading:** Psalm 16:11; Nehemiah 8:10; John 15:9–11

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### Devotional (≈475 words)

The Magi have traveled far—across deserts, mountains, unfamiliar cultures, and many dangers. Their journey has been long, costly, and uncertain. But Matthew tells us that when the star reappears and leads them to the precise place where Jesus is, something beautiful happens:

**“They rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.”**

It is one of the strongest expressions of joy in the entire Bible.

Literally: *they rejoiced with a mega-joy exceedingly.*

Why?

Because the King is near.

This joy is not shallow emotion—it is the fruit of faith.

It is the joy of those who have sought Christ with their whole hearts and now stand on the threshold of seeing Him face to face. Their joy is overflowing, unstoppable, explosive.

And here is the Advent truth we must see:

**Obedience to God’s leading is often hard, but it is always joyful in the end.**

The Magi did not experience joy at every mile of the journey.

They likely felt tired, discouraged, unsure, and confused at times.

But they kept going. They kept following the light God gave. They kept moving toward the promise.

Their joy came *after* persevering obedience.

Too often we want joy *before* obedience—

joy before faith,

joy before surrender,

joy before sacrifice.

But Scripture consistently shows us that joy comes **as we follow**, not as we wait for perfect conditions.

The Magi’s joy also reveals something important:

**true joy comes from finding Jesus, not from the gifts we bring Him.**

Their joy begins *before* they open their treasures.

Their joy is not in their own worship, but in the One they are about to worship.

And this joy is available to you.

Not the fragile joy of circumstances.

Not the shallow joy of entertainment.  
Not the temporary joy of accomplishment.  
But the deep, soul-steadying joy of God's presence.

Jesus promises:

**"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full."**

Advent is a season of joy—not because life is easy, but because the King is near.

Wherever your journey has taken you this year—through deserts of disappointment, mountains of stress, or valleys of uncertainty—joy is waiting when your steps lead you toward Jesus.

You may feel weary today.  
You may feel spiritually dry.  
You may feel far from God.  
But take one step toward Him... and then another... and then another.

You will find Him—and you will find joy exceeding.

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## Reflection Questions

1. What has made your spiritual journey difficult or tiring this year?
2. How does Matthew 2:10 challenge your understanding of joy?
3. What step toward Jesus can you take today that will lead you closer to joy?

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## Prayer

Lord Jesus, lead me toward the joy the Magi found. Help me follow You even when the journey is long or confusing. Fill my heart with the joy that comes from Your presence. Amen.

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# ADVENT WEEK 4 — DAY 4

## THE KING WHO DESERVES OUR BEST

**Theme Verse:** *Matthew 2:11*

**Additional Reading:** Psalm 96:7–9; Romans 12:1; 2 Samuel 24:24

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### Devotional (≈475 words)

When the Magi finally arrive at the house, Matthew’s description is simple but profound:

**“They fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures...”**

Worship comes first.

Gifts come second.

The order matters. The Magi did not give so that they could worship—they worshiped because they had found the One worthy of everything they could give.

And notice what they bring: **gold, frankincense, and myrrh**—costly treasures associated with royalty, deity, and sacrifice. These were not leftovers or symbolic trinkets. They were extravagant, intentional acts of honor. The Magi gave Jesus their best.

This raises an Advent question:

**What do we give to a King who has everything?**

We give Him our worship—our hearts, our obedience, our time, our trust.

We give Him our treasures—our best, not our leftovers.

We give Him our surrender—our plans, our desires, our pride.

We give Him our lives—joyfully, willingly, completely.

True worship is not merely singing or admiring Jesus—it is offering ourselves fully to Him.

Romans 12:1 says, “present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”

That means your entire life—your work, relationships, finances, habits, thoughts, and decisions—can be an offering to Christ.

But the Magi also show us something deeper:

**Worship is costly.**

It requires effort, sacrifice, and intentionality.

It requires placing Jesus above comfort, convenience, and self.

The Magi traveled hundreds of miles to give Jesus their best.

We often struggle to give Him a quiet ten minutes.

They crossed deserts and mountains; we sometimes hesitate to cross the room.

They offered treasures; we often offer excuses.

Yet Advent invites us to rethink our priorities:  
If Jesus is King—truly King—then nothing given to Him is wasted.  
No sacrifice is too great.  
No offering is too costly.  
No act of obedience is insignificant.

Worship is not about the size of the gift but the posture of the heart.

And here is the wonder of grace:  
Jesus, the One worthy of all treasures, came not to receive but first to **give**—His life, His righteousness, His presence.

We give Him our best because He has given us Himself.

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## Reflection Questions

1. What “treasure” is God prompting you to offer Him—time, forgiveness, generosity, obedience, surrender?
2. How do the Magi challenge your understanding of what true worship looks like?
3. What step could you take today to give Jesus your best rather than your leftovers?

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## Prayer

King Jesus, You are worthy of my very best. Teach me to worship You with joy, sacrifice, and surrender. Receive my life as an offering of love and obedience. Amen.

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# ADVENT WEEK 4 — DAY 5

## GOING HOME BY ANOTHER WAY

**Theme Verse:** *Matthew 2:12*

**Additional Reading:** Romans 12:2; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 4:20–24

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### Devotional (≈475 words)

After worshiping Jesus and offering their treasures, the Magi prepare to return home. But Matthew ends the story with a quiet, powerful detail:

**“Being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.”**

Another way.  
A different road.  
A changed path.

This is more than geography—it is theology.  
No one encounters Jesus and goes home the same.

Herod’s way was the way of fear, control, and self-protection.  
The religious leaders’ way was the way of indifference and comfort.  
But the Magi’s way—after meeting Jesus—was transformed.

Their outward path changed because their inward life changed.

This is the transforming power of Advent:  
**Jesus not only draws us to Himself; He redirects our lives.**

When Christ becomes King in your heart, you cannot continue on the same road of self-rule, pride, compromise, or sin. He leads you into a new way of living—one shaped by obedience, humility, holiness, and joy.

The Magi show us three marks of transformation:

### 1. A New Allegiance

They no longer serve Herod’s interests; they serve Christ’s.  
Meeting Jesus demands a shift in loyalty—from self to Savior.

### 2. A New Direction

They literally walk a new path.  
Following Jesus leads us away from destructive patterns, toxic influences, and old temptations—and toward righteousness and life.

### 3. A New Identity

They leave not merely as travelers but as worshipers.

Their defining story is no longer their homeland or their wisdom, but the King they bowed before.

We often want Jesus to save us while allowing us to continue on the same road. But Scripture is clear:  
A new King requires a new way.

Jesus doesn't just forgive your past; He transforms your future.

He doesn't just cleanse your heart; He redirects your steps.

He doesn't just bless your life; He becomes your life.

Where is Jesus calling you to take a different road?

A different response in conflict?

A different habit in your daily rhythm?

A different attitude toward a difficult person?

A different direction in your decisions?

Following Jesus means traveling “by another way”—the way of grace, surrender, trust, obedience, and joy.

The Magi's journey ended not where it began, but where God led.

Yours can too.

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### Reflection Questions

1. What “old road” is Jesus calling you to leave behind this Advent?
2. What new direction or act of obedience is He inviting you into?
3. How does the Magi's transformed path encourage you to trust God's leading?

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### Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You that encountering You changes everything. Lead me in a new way—away from sin and self, and toward obedience, joy, and holiness. Redirect my steps according to Your will. Amen.

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# ADVENT WEEK 4 — FAMILY WEEKEND DEVOTIONAL

## WORSHIPING JESUS WITH JOY

**Reading:** *Matthew 2:1–12*

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### Family Devotional (≈365 words)

The Magi traveled a very long way to see Jesus. They didn't come because they were bored or curious—they came because they believed this child was the promised **King**. When they finally arrived, Matthew tells us something beautiful:

**“They rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.”**

That means their hearts were overflowing with happiness! They were excited—not because of gifts or decorations or celebrations, but because they had found **Jesus Himself**.

Then the Magi did two important things:

1. **They bowed down and worshiped Him.**
2. **They opened their treasures and gave Him their best.**

This is what Christmas is all about—responding to Jesus with joy, love, and worship.

Sometimes Christmas becomes all about presents, activities, and traditions. These can be wonderful gifts, but they can't give us the deep joy the Magi had. Real joy comes from knowing Jesus, loving Him, and giving Him our hearts.

Your family can worship Jesus this Christmas just like the Magi did:

### 1. With Joy

Jesus came to save us, forgive us, and be with us forever. That's a joy nothing can take away.

### 2. With Worship

Worship doesn't mean just singing. It means putting Jesus first—listening to Him, trusting Him, obeying Him, and loving Him.

### 3. With Gifts from the Heart

We may not have gold or frankincense or myrrh, but we can give Jesus our best:

- our time
- our thankfulness
- our kindness

- our obedience
- our generosity
- our love

God loves it when we give Him our hearts.

At the end of the story, the Magi went home “by another way.” Meeting Jesus changed them. And when we love and worship Jesus, He changes us too—helping us become more loving, joyful, and obedient.

As your family celebrates Christmas, remember that Jesus is the greatest gift of all—and He is worthy of our worship.

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## **Family Discussion Questions**

1. What do the Magi teach us about how to worship Jesus?
2. What gift from your heart could you give Jesus this Christmas?
3. How can our family show joy and worship together this week?

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## **Family Prayer**

Jesus, thank You for coming as our King and Savior. Help our family worship You with joy, give You our very best, and follow You wherever You lead. Amen.