

Scripture and Background Information for December 16-22

In the Christmas season, the world seems to be filled with wonder. And for those who are curious, God has given a light to find. To prepare for discussion each week, group members should use the **Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scriptures at the bottom of this page. You will notice that we are continuing the pattern of your discussing scripture *after* the Sunday message on that passage.

Background for Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11

God has given us a light for the hopeless, a light for the nameless, and he has also given us a light for those who are curious—for those who are searching. Just as the Magi were given a light to find what they were seeking, a light has been given to those who are seeking today.

We may not know as much as we would like to know concerning the Magi, but what we do know is that they came sometime after the birth of Jesus. Mary, Joseph, and Jesus were now in a house in Bethlehem, and Jesus is now referred to as a child rather than an infant. The Magi's exact identity is impossible to determine. However, they were likely non-Jewish individuals of high rank from a neighboring land. Magi means "specialists in astronomy." For some reason, God had given them special revelation in the form of a light in the sky. The Magi followed this light in the sky and found it pointed to a house in Bethlehem about five miles south of Jerusalem.

God provided them a light that led the way, but their curiosity led them to take action. Their curiosity led them to an arrival and their arrival led them to worship.

Here are the Scriptures for group discussion for this series:

December 23-29

John 3:16-21