



Christmas From the Outside Looking In #2
12/11/16

Discussion Guide
References: Isaiah 7:14, 9:6-7 & 11:1-10

ICE BREAKER

What is one thing you REALLY want for Christmas? (Please make this more specific than “Peace in the Middle East” or “Happiness in the hearts of all children around the world.”)

QUESTIONS

Last week we focused on Christmas from the perspective of the people who were waiting for the One whom God promised would come and bring peace to the people. This week we focus on how the “willing” viewed Christmas.

The wise men were educated, wealthy, Gentile rulers from Persia who observed the stars. They may have read about the Old Testament prophecies that spoke of a special star in the Scriptures that the captured Jews brought with them when they were exiled to Persia hundreds of years before Jesus was born. There were probably many “wise men” that traveled with their families and households and likely came about two years after Jesus was born. By that time Jesus was no longer in the stable.

1. What is the significance of having these Gentile rulers coming to worship this new Jewish king?

2. What do the Scriptures reveal about who would come to receive and worship the new King?
 - a. Isaiah 49:6

 - b. Revelation 5:9-10

3. Have you experienced or seen people from different nations coming together to worship the Lord? If so how do you think this was possible?

4. From the wise men’s experience with following the star we also learn the awesomeness of God. Read the verses below to understand His relationship to the stars.
 - a. Psalm 115:3

 - b. 1 Corinthians 8:6



5. How have you seen the sovereignty of God in your life?

6. Though the men who came to worship Jesus were called “wise men,” through the Scriptures we can learn something important about wisdom. What do the following verses say about wisdom?
 - a. Jeremiah 33:33
 - b. Colossians 2:2

7. The shepherds were the lowest class of people in Israel, poor, uneducated, dirty and not even allowed to testify in court, yet God chose to reveal the birth of Jesus to them first. What does this reveal about Christmas?

8. Everyone experiences hard times. If Christmas is for those who are the “lowest of the low” in society what encouragement do the Scriptures give us about finding meaning and purpose in our trials? Read John 14:1 & 27.

9. During the time of Jesus the nations around the Mediterranean were experiencing the “Pax Romana” or “Roman Peace,” a time when there were no wars over 200 years. This peace was only external or circumstantial and did not address the need for “Shalom” or wellbeing, health, prosperity, security, soundness and completeness of character. Have you experienced God’s peace in the midst of difficult circumstances? What was that like?