



#59963

RESOLUTIONS

A New Year Devotion/Bible Study

Open with prayer: Dear Lord, as the old year has passed away and a new year has come, we thank You for the grace given us through Your death and resurrection to live as redeemed heirs in Your kingdom. Keep us steadfast in the faith throughout this year and during our lifetime. In Your holy and blessed name. Amen.

An old year has passed on and a new year has come.

How many of you made New Year's resolutions on December 31st?

How long do you expect to keep your resolutions?

What is the longest you have kept a New Year's resolution?

Have you ever kept a resolution for an entire year or until it was accomplished?

Epiphany is celebrated in the church on January 6th and is the culmination of the Advent and Christmas seasons. The "twelve days of Christmas" is the period between Christmas Day and Epiphany. Epiphany is the commemoration of the wise men or Magi and their visit to worship the newborn king, Jesus. It is also celebrated as the time when the Christ Child was revealed to the Gentiles.

Read Matt. 2:1-2.

From where did the Magi come?

What city did they travel to and why?

What led them?

Probably the Magi had traveled a great distance over a lengthy period of time. The trip would have involved planning for long days on the road. Their resolution to follow through on their original commitment did not waiver, even when they reached what at first appeared to be an abrupt and empty end to their search.

Read Matt. 2:3-8.

Did the Magi find the newborn king where they expected Him to be? Why not?

How were the Magi guided further in their search for the newborn king?

What was Herod's request of the wise men?

The Magi had one final leg of their journey to complete before seeing the king of the Jews.

Read Matt. 2:9-12.

What once again appeared in the heavens to lead them?

What was the Magi's reaction to finishing their quest and fulfilling the resolution they had set for themselves?

What gifts did they bring to the Savior?

The end of the journey had come, the gifts had been given, and now they must leave.

Did they return to Herod as requested?

Where did the Magi go?

The Magi made a resolution to seek the newborn king of the Jews. With God leading them, they fulfilled their resolution through much time, effort, and even danger.

What are some resolutions we can make as a commitment to our Lord?

Consider committing to daily or group Bible study, reading through the Bible in a year, a renewed effort in church attendance, a mission trip you have often thought about taking, or inviting an unchurched friend or neighbor to join you at worship next Sunday?

May we resolve with God's help to keep these resolutions and the others we might make.

Join in the hymn "As with Gladness Men of Old" *LSB* 397, *LW* 75, *TLH* 127

We close with prayer: Dear heavenly Father, as You revealed Your Son to the wise men of old and the world, let us ever be mindful of the great commission to make disciples of all nations. Bless the gifts we give of our time, money and talents to further Your kingdom. Help us to keep the resolutions we make this year as a commitment to You. Keep us within the one true faith as we minister in the world. In Your Son's name we pray. Amen.