



Title: Behold, There Came Wise Men

Text: Matt. 2:1-12

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

Introduction:

1. Chapter 2 presents events that are touching three geographic areas: Bethlehem (v.1), Egypt (v.13), and Nazareth (v.23) each one a fulfillment of prophecy.
2. Our text today will take a closer look at the “wise men” (magi), Herod the Great, and the apathy of Israel.

I. When did the “wise men” appear?

1. The Lord Jesus was described as a “young child” (παιδίον – *paidíon*) meaning a little child vs. “infant” (βρέφος – *bréphos*) or baby (Lk. 18:15).
2. The “wise men” came “into the house” (v.11) not a manger.
3. The offering of Joseph and Mary during the “days of her purification” (Lk. 2:22-24) which was a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons would not comport with just having received gold, myrrh, and frankincense.
4. They must have taken residence in Bethlehem because Joseph contemplated returning to Judea (Galilee) instead (v.22).
5. King Herod the Great ordered the killing of the Hebrew boys two years old and below. (v.16) – “children” is literally *pantas tous paidas* (masculine) therefore male-children.
6. Matt. 2 indicates a past tense event (aorist) “was born” (v.1) or having been born. Jesus’ birth had already taken place – there had been a lapse of time since the baby’s birth.

II. Who were these “wise men?”

1. “wise men” (μαγοί – *magoi*) meaning great, powerful men, who specialized in the study of astrology, and enchantments or magic from the Babylonians, Medes and the Persians. They are eastern king-makers. Rome was the then known super-power of the West but the Magoi were the powerful men of the East. They worshipped Jesus!
2. They must have consulted Daniel, and read the books of Moses (Numbers – Balaam’s Star & Septre – Num. 24:17). Joseph was a “wise man”; Daniel was a “wise man.” Truth matters most! And these wise men knew that the King of the Jews had been born.
3. They came to worship Jesus (cf. Acts 10:25-26 – Peter refused the worship of Cornelius – this is the same word translated “worship” – to fear, to reverence, to bow down, to adore as if to a deity).
4. Jesus is worthy of worship. The supernatural movement of the star points to the deity of Christ.

III. The Reception of the King:

- A. The Apathy of Israel. – They were blind to their own King. Jesus is not just a regional Messiah.
- B. The Antagonism of Herod the Great. – We will focus on this a bit more, next week.
- C. The Adoration of the Wise Men. – Gentiles worshipped the King of the Jews.