

WHY WERE THE WISEMEN WISE? Matthew Chapter 2

Never was any child born into this world like our Lord Jesus. The very heavens declared His Coming with a dignity deserving the King of kings and Lord of lords.

How many stars have detached themselves from their galaxies or constellations to herald the birth of any other of earth's monarchs?

What star guided scientists, or wise intellectuals, to your or my birthplace? To whom did Gabriel come and announce our birth on earth? What angelic choir celebrated your arrival?



Matthew, who records this important event and detail of Christ's Coming, does so to set forth Christ as King of all Mankind, everywhere. It was Luke who gives us the account of the very first visitors to Christ's birthplace.

These Jewish shepherds came first to worship Him. Into such a lowly place, it would be more appropriate for shepherds to find themselves at home than in a mansion or a palace. **Also, spiritually speaking, it is more likely that the humble and lowly will find Christ sooner than the more intellectually minded. The scholarly and worldly have to travel a much longer course, wading through their books, reasoning, discussions, and arguments to get to Jesus. But Jesus is for both classes - the wise and the unwise, the great and the lowly.**

WHY WERE THE WISEMEN WISE?

- 1. They did not allow their rank and station in life to pump them up with pride and self-sufficiency so as to prevent them from coming to worship the Lord Jesus.**

Suppose you were asked, as they likely were, 'Where are you going?' Your answer or response would have made you the laughing stock of the whole community.

- 2. They did not allow racial prejudice to obstruct them from coming to worship the King of the Jews.**

The Jewish people were lightly esteemed everywhere, yet this was no hurdle from which they could not climb over.

3. The wisemen were wise because they carefully searched the scriptures as spoken to us in John 5:39.

As a result, they discovered a golden nugget of truth from **Numbers**, prophesied by one of their own prophets, which says:

Numbers 24:17: I shall see Him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

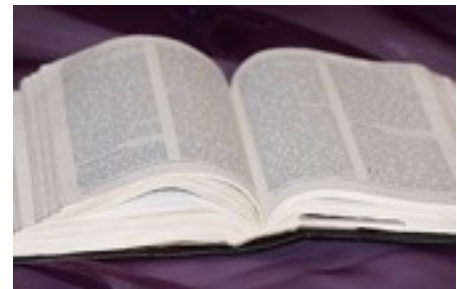
John 5:39: Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have Eternal Life: and they [the Scriptures] are they which testify of Me [Jesus].

How did the Scriptures fall into the hands of these Far Easterners?

Very likely the Queen of Sheba brought the scriptures with her upon her return from the Holy Land and her visit with King Solomon. She was favorably impressed with his wisdom and his God.

4. The wisemen were wise because they did not reject the Holy Scriptures, even though their prophet had gone sour.

He became a position-seeking, money-hungry man who lost touch with God which cost him his life.



5. The wisemen were wise because they exercised unwavering faith in the prophecy of the Coming King of Israel, and acted their faith by watching for His Star to appear in the Heavens.

They were astronomers, in their day, and with their scientific knowledge searched the Heavens until they found and discovered this unusual and unique star.

Then, they also acted their faith by following the star which showed them the way to Him, who is born King not only of the Jews but of the entire world.

There are 2 kinds of Faith –

I. Living - Active Faith

II. Inactive - Dead Faith.

You will find this fact brought out very clearly in the book of James.

James 2:17: Even so Faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.

James 2:20: But wilt thou know, O vain man, that Faith without works is dead?

James 2:26: For as the body without the spirit is dead, so Faith without works is dead also.

Spirit leaving the body Scriptures:

Luke 23:46: And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into Thy Hands I commend My spirit: and having said this, He gave up his spirit.

Luke 8:55: And her spirit came again, and she arose straightway: and He commanded to give her meat.

Ecclesiastes 12:7: Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God Who gave it.

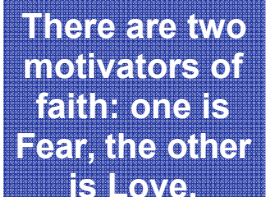
Ecclesiastes 3:21: Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?

Genesis 35:18: And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Benoni: but his father called him Benjamin. [the passing of Rachel]

There are two motivators of Faith: one is Fear, the other is Love.

Fear caused Herod to want to destroy Christ while Love caused Paul to serve the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:14: For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead:



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Fear caused the one-talent man to bury his talent and lost all; while Love caused the others to lovingly activate theirs and gain ruler-ship over 15 cities in the Millennium.

So, when God gave these wisemen light and truth, they were willing and glad to walk in it.

6. The wisemen were wise because they were willing to leave their homelands, families, and friends and reputations behind and take this long journey to seek and find the Lord.

Not that the Lord Jesus was lost, but as the prophets declared:

Isaiah 55:6: Seek ye the LORD while He may be found, call ye upon Him while He is near:

Jeremiah 29:13: And ye shall seek Me, and find Me, when ye shall search for Me with all your heart.

How many living near to the house of the Lord do not even bother to come, while many who live far off are willing to travel many miles to be in God's house to express their love and worship of Jesus the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

WHEN WERE THE WISEMEN NOT WISE?

1. When they got their eyes off the guiding star and began following the crowd who were going up to Jerusalem on the Jericho road.

Human reason may tell us that such a King would be born in the capitol city of Jerusalem. When we resort to following our own senses, we will turn in the wrong direction.

Now they have to ask everybody where "He that is born King of the Jews is?" They met with many blind leaders of the blind, who were shocked and dismayed. The Bible says "troubled", and so was king Herod when he met this group of kingly wisemen from the east. They weren't so wise in going to this wicked king for directions — a type of the devil who comes to kill, steal and destroy. Herod demanded of the rabbis where Christ

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should be born. They pointed his attention to **Micah 5:2**, but why didn't they follow the wisemen?

John 10:10: The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I [Jesus] am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Micah 5:2: But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. [Prophecy of the Birthplace of Jesus]

2. The wisemen were wise when they got smart and started looking up once more for their faithful guiding Star.

There it was, patiently waiting for their recognition of its presence, wanting to lead them to the exact place where Christ was residing. When they saw His Star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Divine revelation always does this to the hungry heart, far more than human and carnal reasoning.

3. The wisemen were wise because they were not selfish.

A selfish Christian is a contradiction. No one can be tight fisted who has met Jesus at Calvary and has received eternal life, which is nothing less than complete unconditional love. Gifts like this cannot be purchased with money. The gifts they brought were: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These costly treasures speak of full honor and homage worthy only of a King.

Sacrificial giving to Christ accompanies a transformed heart. David said:

2 Samuel 24:24: . . . neither will I offer burnt offerings unto the LORD my God of that which doth cost me nothing. So David bought the threshingfloor and the oxen for fifty shekels of silver.

- a. **Gold:** Acknowledging Christ as the owner of their gold for He created it. This is what our gifts signify if or when given out of love. It is the common false idea that the Cause of Christ is in great distress, therefore, we must help bail poor churches and God out.



1 Corinthians 2:8: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

Acts 3:17: And now, brethren, I wot that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers.

Acts 13:27: For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew Him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning Him.

This is not the proper motive for our giving to Christ's Cause. This really is an insult to God who said:

Psalm 50:9-12:

9 I will take no bullock out of thy house, nor the goats out of thy folds.

10 For every beast of the forest is Mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.

11 I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are Mine.

12 If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is Mine, and the fullness thereof.



- b. **Frankincense:** One of the four special spices used in the Tabernacle is Frankincense. It speaks of our worship and was consecrated wholly to this use. Mary gave her alabaster box of costly ointment to Christ.

Matthew 26:6-13:

6 Now when Jesus was in Bethany, in the house of Simon the leper,

7 There came unto Him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on His [Jesus'] head, as He sat at meat.

8 But when His disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?

9 For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor.

10 When Jesus understood it, He said unto them, Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon Me.

11 For ye have the poor always with you; but Me ye have not always.

12 For in that she hath poured this ointment on My body, she did it for My burial.

13 Verily I say unto you, Wheresoever this Gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her.

Mark 14:3: And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as He sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and poured it on His [Jesus] head.

Luke 7:37: And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment.

- c. **Myrrh:** It speaks of the death of Jesus. It was used commonly to anoint the deceased loved ones. Thus, we see the symbol of suffering even in Jesus' birth.

4. The Wisemen were wise because they worshipped Him.

Isn't it strange that these Gentiles would come from so long a distance to worship this Jewish Messiah? NO. It's not strange when we have obtained a divine revelation of Him. In Bible prophecies, the Gentiles will have Jesus as their light and will come offering gifts to Him.

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Isaiah 11:10: And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious.

Isaiah 42:6: I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles;

Isaiah 49:6: And He said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to rise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be My salvation unto the end of the earth.

Acts 13:47: For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth.



Jeremiah 16:19: O LORD, my strength, and my fortress, and my refuge in the day of affliction, the Gentiles shall come unto thee from the ends of the earth, and shall say, Surely our fathers have inherited lies, vanity, and things wherein there is no profit.

Malachi 1:11: For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same My Name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense shall be offered unto My Name, and a pure offering: for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of Hosts.

In God's foreknowledge, these wisemen were to come as prophesied .

Psalm 72:10-15:

¹⁰ The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents: the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts.

¹¹ Yea, all kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him.

¹² For He shall deliver the needy when he crieth; the poor also, and him that hath no helper.

¹³ He shall spare the poor and needy, and shall save the souls of the needy.

¹⁴ He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence: and precious shall their blood be in His sight.

¹⁵ And He shall live, and to Him shall be given of the gold of Sheba: prayer also shall



be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised.

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