

DECEMBER 16, 2012

THE SEARCH IS OVER

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, [a]magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 2 "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him." 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the [b]Messiah was to be born. 5 They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written [c]by the prophet:

6 'And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah;
For out of you shall come forth a Ruler
Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

7 Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them [d]the exact time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him." 9 After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they [e]fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.

The Legend of the Magi

- * Magos or magi denotes a magician, astronomers, astrologers, interpreter of dreams, or sorcerers.
- * The bible is unclear about how many magi there were but they have been assumed to be 3 based on the number of gifts they had presented to the child Jesus

So where did these magi come from?

- * they came from the east, the medo-persian empire
- * Scholars estimate that they may have traveled anywhere from 500—1000 miles, so it must have taken them around 3—12 months of travel added to that is the time they needed in order to prepare for the travel
- * So we can assume that this was not an ordinary trip for them. They had really set aside time and resources in order to make that trip

But why did they do this?

- * In Matthew 2:2 they give us the reason why — "**Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.**"
- * They came to worship the child Jesus. We have to bear in mind that worship is only given to deity.

How did they know about Jesus?

- * Daniel 9:25-26 foretells the coming of the Messiah
- * This knowledge of the coming of the Messiah may have been handed down to them through the generations since the time of Daniel. This meant that they have been waiting and anticipating His arrival

In the story, when Herod heard of the magi and their purpose of coming to Israel, he had his soldiers search for them to inquire from them what they knew. And although he was threatened by the news they brought, he did not let them know instead in Matthew 2:8, he told them to send him the information of the whereabouts of the child so that he too can go and worship. But when the magi did not return, what did he do? In verse 16, his evil plot became known.



380 S. Rosemead Blvd
Pasadena, CA 91107

Sundays
945 AM
Heart
Preparation

1000 AM
WORSHIP

Dgroup Schedules

Tuesdays
700 pm
1102 E Swanee Lane
West Covina, CA

Thursdays
730 pm
2617 N Parish Place
Burbank, CA

Fridays
700 pm
5124 Ashworth St
Lakewood, CA

Fridays
730 PM
4706 Ivar Ave
Rosemead, CA

Please contact Rey Bejerano at
6263545717 for venue changes

What guided the magi to Jesus?

- * they followed a star that led them to where the where the Child was
- * More often that not God gives us signs and wonders to draw us to Himself
- * In Exodus 13:21, He sent the Israelites a cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night
- * What this is telling us that if we are really looking for God, God is really looking for us . . . And He will continue to give us clues, markers, and signs as to where He wants us to go
- * Today He continues to guides us through His word. He has given us His written Word and THE Word — Jesus declares in John 8:12 “**I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.**”

God continually reaches out to us. We say we are looking for God, but the truth is, He has been looking for us. . . And all the time we go around in circles, even procrastinating — He has been showing us the way. Leading us with different markers and signs . . . And yet we continue to choose to ignore and be blind to the path the He wants us to take.

When the magi found Jesus, how did they respond?

- * in Matthew 2:11 it says they fell to the ground, worshipped Him and then presented Him with their gifts
- * This is a reminder that when we come to worship, we should not come empty handed. We do not come because of what we want to receive but rather we come because we want to give — to give glory to God for all that He has done in our lives. Worship is not about us . . . It is about God. It is about how we give thanks for His blessings, how we acknowledge His character, how we accept His grace.

What were the gifts that the magi gave to Jesus?

1. gold—is a gift fit for a king
2. Frankincense—is a very special spice, a gift fit for diety
3. Myrrh—is also a spice, an aloe that is used for embalming, fit for a condemned person

They offered these gifts to Jesus because these magi understood who and what Jesus was — He was king, He was God made flesh and He was the anointed one, the chosen one who will be sacrificed for all.

When we think about this — we realize that even at birth Jesus was already condemned. . . And this is why we cannot separate Christmas from the cross. Because He was born our Jesus, our Immanuel, our King and our Messiah. He came because of love for us, so that we may not perish from eternal death.

When the magi came and worshiped — they did not only present Jesus with their gifts but most importantly they came an offered Him their hearts.

The magi had found what they were looking for. They found the King of the Jews, the prophesied Messiah.

Have we been searching? Have we found our King? Our Savior? Our Lord? Our Messiah?

Perhaps for the longest time we have been filling our lives with a successful career, a family, material possessions — and yet somehow continue to feel that there is something lacking, that something doesnt fit, that despite everything — we are still incomplete . . . Perhaps today our search can be over.

Solomon wisely said *He has made everything appropriate in its time. He has also set eternity in their heart, (Ecc 3:11)*. Perhaps we have been looking in the wrong places for too long — today it is time we looked deep into our hearts. To whom does our heart belong to? To whom do we belong?

This Christmas, you can re-commit your life to Jesus. You can give Him your heart. . . Just say this prayer.

Dear Jesus,

I recognize you as the Messiah, God with us, King of kings, and Lord of lords. I humbly come to you in worship and ask you to save me from the penalty of my sins. Please come into my heart today as my Savior and Lord. Give me the peace and joy I have been searching for all my life. Thank you for coming into the world, and into my life. My gift to You on your birthday is my heart. Thank you for loving me just as I am. Help me to be the kind of Christian you want me to be.

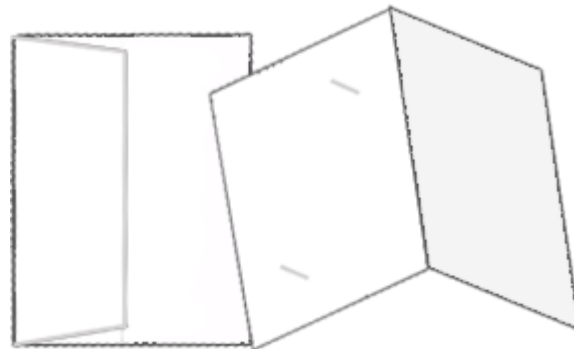
WORKS: Journaling task

What is in my heart?

- * what are the things occupying my heart? Is it love for my career? Love for power? Love for money? Or maybe anger? Bitterness? Selfishness? Pride?
- * Have I really offered my whole heart to Jesus?
- * If not, what is stopping me from doing so?



Write a birthday card or letter to Jesus



How has this message made me grow in the process of Discipleship in terms of:

SUPREME LOVE OF GOD

STUDY & DEVOTION TO GOD'S WORD

SELF DENIAL

CHRIST-LIKE LOVE
