

## Matthew 2:1-5, 9:2, "Wise Guys and Gals for the 2023 New Year"

➡ How do we journey into this new year and show ourselves to be wise? Wisemen, A.k.a., Magi, these were a ruling class of individuals from Persia which by the time of Jesus' birth was called Parthia. Their tradition stretched back to Daniel who is considered the father of their teachings. Parthia and Rome were at war during the time of Christ's birth. This coming wouldn't have been the classic picture of 3 kings crossing the desert alone! 1. Nowhere does it say there were 3 kings. 2. The ruling class of an enemy nation travels into enemy territory, and only 3 of them come all alone? This was no doubt an enormous entourage that would stir up people in the entire region.

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### 1. What really classifies these guys as wise?

- ✓ Let me set the record straight and in defense of every male in this room, the fact that these men stopped to ask for directions was not the thing that made them wise! But this does bring up something interesting and very instructive for us, these guys had made a treacherous journey covering hundreds of miles, but they didn't know where they were going and, though they did know the king had been born, they didn't even know His name! Believe it or not, this is what made them WISE!!!

### 2. There are several things to point out here for our own gain in wisdom as we journey into a new year.

- 1) When God gives you a sign, follow Him! Don't wait until you've gotten it all figured out, get moving! In fact, we need to stand in awe of these guy's faith, because with no other information other than a Star they followed God. What does it take for you to follow Him? Do you suppose every night was a cloudless night? When you've seen a sign don't expect it to be as clear every day.
- 2) Expect Him to speak and lead you at any time. These guys' job was studying the stars, this is what they did for a living, so God spoke to them at work. They are not unique in their experience, many others have experienced God while they worked: Moses while shepherding flocks, Gideon while threshing wheat, Peter while mending nets, and Matthew while collecting taxes. Expect God to speak in the normal comings and goings of life.
- 3) Expect God to lead you through practically anything. If God can use a star, He can use practically anything. A book, conversation, song, sermon, television show, a chance comment. To the shepherds He spoke Hebrew. To the Wisemen He spoke astronomy. He can speak the language of Human existence because He became a man.
- 4) Find your way by consulting Scripture. They started out following a star, when they got sidetracked in Jerusalem, they consulted the Word of God. They could not get to their final destination without consulting God's Word. Lost your way recently? Before consulting a friend, consult the Word of God!
- 5) Don't let anything stop you. Think of all the obstacles these guys had to overcome hundreds of miles, culture, language, religious barriers, hostile king and indifferent religious leaders
- 6) You're not the leader, you're the follower. Their trip was, no doubt, not what they expected. What they found was probably not what they expected either. They found the King all right, but he didn't look it, He looked like a poor little Jewish baby. Be careful that you don't make your own plans about how it is to go what it will look like when you arrive. The entire Christmas scenario is about getting not what you expect, but what is best.
- 7) A final thing we can learn from the events surrounding the Wisemen's journey is that once you've beheld Jesus, you can't remain neutral. We see 3 types of people here with 3 types of responses. 1. The Wise Men, who to this point have needed nothing but a celestial disturbance to know that God Was speaking to them. Sometimes it is those seemingly furthest away who hear Him best. 2. The chief priests and scribes not only had the star, but they also had the Word of God memorized and, with all that, their schedules did not change. 3. Herod used all of these signs in order to plot an assassination.

**God always speaks loud enough for the willing ear to hear.**

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