

“THEY SEARCHED FOR HIM”

Matthew 2:1-10

Series: “The Search”

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INTRODUCTION:

Everybody wants to have a “meaningful” Christmas. What makes Christmas meaningful is focusing on the meaning. Christmas is all about the greatest miracle of all time: God became a man.

So for the next three weekends leading up to Christmas, when we get together, let’s focus on the meaning of Christmas: The birth of Jesus Christ.

For the next three weeks we’re going to study the account of the wise men visiting Jesus in Matthew 2. The wise men were the first to search for the true meaning of this event. May this study reignite in us a genuine hunger to meet Jesus, a passion to search for him with as much faith as the wise men did.

[Mat 2:1-12 NIV] 1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem 2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

3 When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.

5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

6 " 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

7 Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

I. EXPLANATION: UNDERSTANDING THE MAGI AND THE STAR

A. THE MAGI

The word “magi” was originally a _____ word.

- Magi were a special class of people in Persia who were advisors to kings.
- They were astrologers and astronomers.
- They advised kings about future events.
- The word “magi” is often translated “wise men.”

NOTE: How many magi came to visit? _____

It probably took the magi _____ months or longer to reach Jerusalem.

B. THE STAR

Was it a miraculous star that shone like a spotlight down on the manger?

- Why didn't anybody else notice it?
- Why did they go to Jerusalem to ask for directions?
- How did they know the star would lead to a king born in Israel?

Possible theories about the Star of Bethlehem...

Link to Dr. Craig Chester article:

<https://imprimis.hillsdale.edu/the-star-of-bethlehem/>

Link to Rick Larson documentary, “The Star of Bethlehem”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=caJnwpcOkIA>

Ps. 19:1: “The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”

[Mat 2:9 NIV] 9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

What about the star stopping?

Dr. Craig Chester explains “retrograde loop” of stars.

[Mat 2:10 NIV] 10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

How did they express their joy...?

II. APPLICATION: LESSONS FROM THE MAGI

Over next few weeks we’ll learn 3 lessons from the magi:

- 1) They searched for the Lord
- 2) They worshiped the Lord
- 3) They obeyed the Lord

One lesson today: The magi searched for Jesus.

A. IF YOU’RE A BELIEVER...

Can you make this December a search for more moments with him instead of a search for the things of this world?

B. IF YOU’RE NOT YET A BELIEVER...

- 1) Like the magi, follow the evidence.
- 2) Like the magi, read the Bible.

[Heb 4:12 NIV] 12 For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.

- 3) Like the magi, don’t be afraid to take a step of faith.

CONCLUSION:

[Jer 29:13 NIV] 13 You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

Maybe you came today because something happened in your life that was a sign from God, and like the magi, you felt compelled to take a step of faith and come

to church. Keep searching, take another step of faith. Don't quit till you find the truth in Jesus.