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SERMON TITLE

Wisdom of the Wise Men

SERIES

DATE

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KEY SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2

SYNOPSIS

HIGHLIGHTS



☛ Wisdom of the Wise Men

Matthew 2:1-12

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, 2 "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." 3 King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. 4 He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?" 5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote: 6 'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.'" 7 Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. 8 Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!" 9 After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. 10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! 11 They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. 12 When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

We can learn from the wisdom of these wise men.

The word translated "wise men" (magi) refers to a group of scholars who studied the stars. Their title connects them with magic, but they were probably more like astrologers. Even though these Magi were pagans, God chose to reveal himself to them. That's good news for everyone. **You don't have to be a perfect person for God to reach out to you.**

The wise men were not satisfied with looking at the star and admiring it; they did something about it, and set out following it.

"From the east" is not very specific, but many scholars believe they came from Babylon. They **persevered in their search** and in following the star for 800-900 miles. In Ezra 7:9 we learn Ezra's group took four months to travel from Babylon to Jerusalem. So, that gives us a ballpark idea of their timeline. If they came from Persia, as some believe, it would have been even further and longer. They were determined to find this newborn king.

It's reasonable the Magi came to Jerusalem because that was where they expected to find any Judean king. Jerusalem was an important trade center and the Magi must have come with quite an entourage for the whole city to notice them.

They would end up going to Bethlehem, a small town less than a ten-mile walk from Jerusalem. What is remarkable is that the priests knew the Scriptures and pointed others to the Savior, but they would not go to worship Him themselves! They were only a few miles from the very Son of



God, yet they did not go to see him. Sometimes God is right there but we are oblivious to his presence.

☞ Recently, we've been talking about **paying attention to see God at work in everyday life**. I don't want to be like these priests who didn't seem very interested in what God was doing.

The wise men persisted for nearly a thousand miles, but the priests couldn't be bothered to travel just 10. Herod was opposing the King, and the Jewish priests were ignoring the King, but the wise men were seeking the King.

Wise men still seek Him by Lanny Wolfe...

Wise men still seek Him today. His light still shines to point them to the way. Though fools have said in their hearts "There is no God". Wise men still seek Him today.

☞ Let's be wise and not give up pursuing God. Let's take a cue from the wise men and **persevere in seeking the Lord**.

The wise men were not discouraged in their search by doubtful religious leaders. There's a lot of doubt and even derision in our world today, but we don't have to be discouraged by it.

☞ **The Lord is still worth pursuing in spite of any doubts.**

Apparently, the star reappeared at just the right time, and they rejoiced when they saw it.

☞ **God is always right on time**, neither too soon nor too late. And, when he intervenes in our circumstances it's a great thing! When you know God is working in your life it stirs something in your soul.

When the wise men arrived at the destination the star led them to, they entered in. Just being in the general vicinity was not enough. They pressed in. This reminds me of our recent series about the Deeper Walk. I don't want to just know about God, I want to personally know him. I don't want to just have a taste of his presence, I want to be fully immersed in it. Let's be like the wise ☞ men and **enter into the presence of the Lord**. Through his death and resurrection, Jesus opened the way for us to freely enter into the presence of God. So, let's take advantage of the opportunity and draw near to the Lord.

When the wise men entered in, they worshipped. They gave extravagant gifts and they bowed down in humility before this child king, worshiping him. The word for worship in Greek is proskuneo which literally means to draw near in order to kiss. In the culture at the time this means they were showing great reverence to Jesus. This bowing and worshiping was not only a body position but also an attitude of reverence and honor.

When we meet someone's new baby, we typically ooo and aww, admiring the infant. But we don't bow down in worship. This act of the wise men was a profound moment. And, when they worshipped, it was to give something, not just empty-handed adoration. When we worship, let's



not just oo and aww over Jesus; let's not just go through the motions; let's honor him from the heart and **give ourselves fully to the Lord.**

These men were indeed wise, and we can learn a lot from them.

--Charles Spurgeon... We see a wonderful pattern: "Those who look for Jesus will see him: those who truly see him will worship him: those who worship him will consecrate their substance to him."

video ...O Come Let Us Adore Him