



KNOWING WHO IS THE LORD

Yesterday we celebrated the birth of Christ. Today, as it was 2000 years ago, many do not know who is the Lord. You would think that the people living in Israel would know and expect the birth of the Lord Jesus. You may even think that the religious leaders would know and be expecting the birth of the king.

Very few in Israel were expecting or even looking for the birth of the messiah. They were too close to see what God was doing, or what God's plan really was. The Bible tells of the few who were looking for the messiah, while the huge majority were too tied up with their own business.

The Bible tells us about wise men from the East who were not Jewish but were looking for the birth of the Jewish King. The Bible does not tell us exactly where the wise men were from, but they could have come from present day India, China, Iran, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, or any where east of Israel. The one thing that the wise men had was a yearning to know the messiah and the king of the universe. They were knowledgeable of the prophecies, and they were looking for the messiah.

Whereas the religious leadership in Israel was too busy with maintaining their position and worrying about the Romans, the wise men were diligently seeking and searching for the messiah while the rest of the world were tied up with their own lives.

Matthew 2:1-12

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

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11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

The wise men thought that the new king would be born and brought up in Jerusalem, the capitol of Israel. They did not know that Jesus was not part of Herod's family or lineage. As foreigners, they thought that the new king would be welcome in Israel and that the leadership of Israel would be welcoming and worshipping the new king.

Needless to say, the wise men's assumptions were all wrong and they realized that the political hierarchy of Israel wanted nothing to do with God or the Son of God. It is the same in the world today where the ones who are entrenched in power may talk about God but, in reality, hope that God will go away. Herod tried to kill the new-born king by having all of Bethlehem's babies executed.

The wise men listened to God rather than to Herod and went home another way. This shows me that the wise men were really seeking God and his wisdom. The wise men learned that God is not found among the rich and powerful, but among those who really are seeking him.

Mary and Joseph were seeking the Lord with their whole heart and God was with them. Mary and Joseph were on God's side seeking the will of God. The leadership on the other hand were busy seeking their own will and attempting to hold on to their power. Herod, along with the priesthood, was more interested

in power and influence. God was totally out of the picture just like he is out of the picture among the leaders of all of the nations today. You may not like to think that the leadership of your nation is against God, but look at the conversation between Jesus and Satan.

Luke 4:5-8

5 And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.

6 And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.

7 If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine.

8 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

Nowhere does Jesus tell the devil that he is lying when Satan says, "for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it." Looking at all of the corruption of all of the nations around the world, it is easy to see that every one is controlled by Satan.

If you are looking for the Lord, follow the wise men to a small hamlet and seek the Lord with all of your heart. You will find the Lord away from the rich and powerful. You will find the Lord among those who are seeking him with their whole heart.

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