

Countdown Video Snow Scene 3

Music Video:

Slide Background: Bringing Christmas Home

Video Illustration: ` The First Coming

Title: Looking for the Star

It won't be long before we will wake up to the day children young and old alike look forward to each year. Christmas has so many things which remind us that it is that time of the year. The department stores start earlier and earlier each year to get the jump on their competitors to entice people to buy their Christmas giving in their stores. Then the radio stations play the beloved Christmas carols. There is also the songs which are not considered carols but yet still songs of Christmas. Gene Autry's song "Here Comes Santa Clause". We must not forget the all-time hits such as Nate King Cole's "The Christmas Song" and one of my favorites "White Christmas". Of course there the decorations which people have put on their houses and their homes, places of business, and some even decorate their automobiles and even themselves. There is no mistake Christmas is in the air.

While Christmas is a joyous time of the year and it is important to remember what Christmas is all about. "Jesus is the reason for the Season", yes, without the birth of Jesus we would have no Christmas. In the book of Matthew 2, the scripture tells us how it all began. Herod the King knew of the prophecies concerning the coming King, the King of the Jews. Never in the history of the world has so much been prophesied, written not only in word but also song and events. Yes, Christmas is in the air what does it really mean. Jesus is the only single solitary person who has truly impacted the world. Not just in the events but also in the physical and spiritual lives of every person who will listen. This morning we are going to look at the star which marked announced the birth of the Savior of the world. First we want to consider the wise men and **(1) "Their Inquiry"** then we will consider the **(2) Their Encouragement**, and we should not forget the **(3) "Their Example"**. (C.H. Spurgeon)

Sermon Text: Matthew 2:1-11 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, 2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen 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 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. 5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'" 7 Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." 9 When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen 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 exceedingly great joy. 11 And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. NKJV

1. Their Inquiry (vs. 2-3)

Matthew 2:2-3 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen 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. NKJV

- a) The "wise" men who are searching for the baby that is prophesied to be the "King of the Jews" have seen the star in the heavens announcing the birth of this king. It is important to note that it is not Jews who are searching but these men are gentiles and they have seen the star and know of the prophecy concerning His coming.

Numbers 24:17 "I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; A Scepter shall rise out of Israel, And batter the brow of Moab, And destroy all the sons of tumult. NKJV

Matt 2:2 saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." NKJV

2 Peter 1:19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; NKJV

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." NKJV

Ps 45:6 Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. NKJV

Isa 9:7 Of the increase of His government and peace, There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice. From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. NKJV

Heb 1:8 But to the Son He says: "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of Your kingdom. NKJV

Text Illustration: WISE MEN SEARCHING-In Biblical times wise men searched for the savior. They searched by looking for his star. When they found the star, they knew that God's promise had been fulfilled.

Today, wise men are still searching. They are searching, not necessarily for a specific star in the heavens, but for a sign that God is keeping promises made to the faithful

Tradition speaks of three wise men however; scripture doesn't record the number which were seeking the babe in a manger. Tradition provides the names of the wise men yet scripture does not. The wise men are not what is important, it is the birth of the incarnate Son of God. Isa 9:6 identifies this babe in a manger:

Isaiah 9:6 For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. NKJV

What are you searching for, peace happiness, joy, they can't be found in the world, they can't be found in a celebration called Christmas without including Christ. The world is moving to take CHRIST out of Christmas, to not know Jesus is to not have peace, and to know Jesus is to know peace for He is the Prince of Peace. He brings peace in to the hearts and lives of men, women, boys and girls.

2. Their Encouragement (vs. 5-6)

Matthew 2:5-6 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: 6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'" NKJV

- a) Mathew records that the coming King will be a Shepherd to God's people. Just as God's people were looking for the coming of the deliverer that would lead them out of Egypt. Yet the world is not looking for the King to set them free from the bondage of sin. God told Adam and Eve that on the day they ate of the forbidden fruit they would die, yet in that pronounced sentence He, God outlined a way for us to avoid the punishment of sin.
- b) Must note that a King would be born in a small insignificant town called Bethlehem in the land of Judea.

Text Illustration: Max Lucado in his book, *The Applause of Heaven*, puts it like this: "A small cathedral outside Bethlehem marks the supposed birthplace of Jesus. Behind a high altar in the church is a cave, a little cavern lit by sliver lamps. You can enter the main edifice and admire the ancient church. You can also enter the quiet cave where a star embedded in the floor recognizes the birth of the King. There is one stipulation, however. You have to stoop. The door is so low you can't go in standing up. The same is true of the Christ. You can see the world standing tall, - - but to witness the Savior, you have to get on your knees. So. . . . {out there in Bethlehem, the night when Jesus was born} while the theologians were sleeping, and the elite were dreaming, and the successful were snoring, the meek shepherds were kneeling. They were kneeling before the One only the meek will see. They were kneeling in front of Jesus."

Text Illustration: FROM THE "HOUSE OF BREAD"

Christ was born in Bethlehem. The literal meaning for the name Bethlehem is "The House of Bread." Jesus was not born in the house of royalty, or the house of riches, or the house of celebrity. Jesus was not born in Jerusalem, or in Rome, or in Athens or Alexandria. Jesus was not born in any political, commercial, cultural, educational, or socially significant city of the day. When Micah, the Old Testament prophet, foretold the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem, he emphasized its lack of significance to the world. "But thou, Bethlehem, Ephrath, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from old, from everlasting." (Micah 5:2)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem, "The House of Bread" because bread is one of life's most common things. God wanted his Son to be "common" in one sense. God wanted Jesus to be available to all. SOURCE: Brian Atwood in "Why Jesus Was Born in Bethlehem, The House of Bread" on www.sermoncentral.com. Edited by SermonCentral Staff.

Micah 5:2 <The Coming Messiah>

2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah,
Though you are little among the thousands of Judah,
Yet out of you shall come forth to Me
The One to be Ruler in Israel,
Whose goings forth are from of old,
From everlasting."
NKJV

3. Their Example (vv. 9-11)

Matthew 2:9-11 When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen 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 exceedingly great joy. 11 And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. NKJV

- a. What can we learn from these wise men who sought the coming King? First, we can learn of their determination. They traveled a long distance to find the King, they were willing to stop and ask for directions, when they inquired of Herod as to the location of his birth. And even though they had to continue their search they kept going until they found their prize. And for all their searching and travels they worshiped a babe in a manger and brought Him valuable gifts.
- b. These men were certainly wise, but do you have the wisdom of these men? The wise men are not the central focus of the story of Christmas, they are seekers and they were seeking the King of the Jews, We sing of the wise

men, we sing of the shepherds in the fields, we need to put Jesus in the center and look to Jesus as the Savior of the world. Wise men, women, boys and girls will seek Him, will you?

Text Illustration: Albert Einstein dreamed of finding a single theory that would embrace all of nature's laws. But in his quest for this unified theory, Einstein came up empty-handed. Others followed and pursued what has come to be known as the Theory of Everything, seeking to define all the laws of the universe in one theory. Proponents of the theory of everything see the universe as a grand cosmic symphony. If the universe is a grand cosmic symphony, who's writing the music? Who's conducting the orchestra? In Colossians 1, Paul writes the "original" theory of everything. For Paul, Jesus is the source of holding life together. (Sermon Central)