

WISE MEN FROM THE EAST

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Lesson: Matthew 2

In the Lord's Word it is written:

“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, 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.... 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy...and fell down and worshiped Him.” (Matthew 2:1-2, 9-11).

“Behold,” it is written, “*there came wise men.*” And at once we see them, across the desert of time—a little company of men riding across the sand after a Star—men with thoughtful eyes and, simple, noble manners. Night after night and day after day they travel, with patience and perseverance. Sometimes they are very tired; and sometimes they are told that they ought to go back—that they will find nothing but ordinary people in Bethlehem. But they do not turn back. They have one idea in their minds and hearts: “The Lord has come into the world, for thus it is written.”

And this is why they were called wise men. Because the chief quality of wisdom is to see at once that a thing is so, or is not so, and to act accordingly. Therefore, when the wise men saw the Star in the east, they knew at once that this was the star which was to appear when the Lord came into the world; and they set out at once to follow it, even to Bethlehem of Judea.

We are told in the Writings that: “This Star which went before them signified knowledge from heaven” (*De Verbo* 7:5). And these wise men were indeed following knowledges from heaven. They came from the east, from the land of Syria—a land in which some knowledge from heaven was still preserved, some remains of what people had once known about the Lord, which had been mostly lost because people were too busy with knowledges about the earth and about themselves. But the wise men still had knowledge about spiritual things. They still believed the old prophecies, the old stories and traditions, because in their hearts they knew these were messages from the Lord.

“For thus it is written!” they said to the clever men at home in Syria, who laughed at their faith and scoffed at their journey.

“For thus it is written!” they said to King Herod, who did not believe in the Lord, but feared a rival king.

“For thus it is written!” they said to comfort each other when the nights were long and their hearts were tired.

And so it *was* written—in ancient history—in the living hope of wise men’s hearts—and in that great Star burning in the sky like the eye of heaven. And even so it came to pass.

“The star which they saw in the east went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.... And they fell down and worshiped him.”

And so—if you wish to be wise, and to be made happy with an exceeding great joy, you too will follow the Lord’s star; that is, you will follow knowledge from heaven—the knowledge in the Lord’s Word.

Never mind what clever people say against the Lord’s Word. There were many clever people in the east at the time of the Lord’s birth; but only a few wise enough to believe in the Lord’s Word, to obey His voice, and to follow His star.

It is like that today. There is much knowledge from the earth, about the earth. And there are clever people who can tell us all about it—except where it came from, and where it is going to, and what it is that is happening to us all. And some people may laugh at us for believing in traditions that nobody can prove. But because we wish to become wise and happy people—from the deepest, truest, and best knowledge in the world—we shall believe in the Lord’s Word. We shall follow His star. And His star appears wherever the knowledges of heaven are seen and obeyed. And that is where we shall find our Lord.