

Soli Deo Gloria

Mt 2:1-12

Intro: Many of the manger scenes we possess or see during the Christmas season present the quaint scene of the Wise Men worshipping the newborn Savior along with the shepherds at the manger. It's a nice picture. But, unfortunately, it is probably incorrect. The Magi probably visited the Christchild a month or town after his birth. Scripture records that by the time the Wise Men had visited, Jesus already had been circumcised and had been presented at the temple and consecrated to the Lord which was forty days after his birth. In addition, Matthew records that the Magi visited Jesus in a house and not at the stable. Nevertheless, even though the timing is off, the story of the Magi has great significance to Christians. It was at this time that **The Gentiles Found Their Savior**. As we learn from Matthew 1) **God led the Magi to their Savior**. And when they found him 2) **The Magi worshipped their Savior**.

I. God led the Magi to their Savior (1-11a)

A. Identify the Magi

1. men from the east
 - a. Casper, Belthasar, and Melchior
 - b. those are the names traditionally given to the Magi or the Wise Men as many of us know them
 - c. we know that those are really not their
 - d. indeed, we know very little about these Magi
 - e. we do know, according to Matthew, that they were **“from the east”**
 - f. to the Jewish mind the east was beyond the Syrian desert

- g. and past the Euphrates River
 - h. many people, therefore, believe that the Magi were from Babylon
 - i. from among the people of the empire of the Medes and Persians
2. define Magi
 - a. these men seem to have been astronomers and astrologers
 - b. men who were skilled at looking at the sky and observing the stars
 - c. hence their moniker ‘Wise Men’ as we are accustomed to saying and hearing
 - d. and, these men were Gentiles
 - e. a fact that is significant as we shall see momentarily
 3. searching for the King of the Jews
 - a. these Magi had come to Jerusalem shortly after Jesus was born in Bethlehem
 - b. during the reign of wicked and unbelieving Herod the Great
 - c. diligently searching for the One they called the King of the Jews
 - d. which was a term that referred to the Promised Savior
 - e. these Gentile men were looking for the promised Savior
 4. had come to faith through the Word
 - a. but how had these Gentile men, living in the east, heard about the Savior
 - b. and why were they looking for him?
 - c. these men had been exposed to the OT prophecies concerning the Savior, the King of the Jews

- d. prophecies mentioned, no doubt, by the many Jews who had come to live in Babylon during the Babylonian Captivity
 - e. Jews like Daniel, who was made the presiding officer over the wise men and astrologers in Babylon
 - f. and those prophecies were promulgated down through the centuries
 - g. until the time of the Magi
 - h. these prophecies which the Magi had heard concerning the coming Savior
 - i. had sparked faith in their hearts
 - j. and they were ever anticipating his birth
 - k. through his Word, God had given these Gentile men faith in the promised Savior, the King of the Jews
- B. God led them to the Savior
- 1. the star God created for them
 - a. GPS – you know what that is
 - b. that little gizmo on your windshield or built into your smartphone
 - c. which, by means of a satellite, leads you precisely to your destination
 - d. God’s GPS for the Magi
 - e. that which would lead them to the exact place where the Savior would be
 - f. was a star
 - g. this star appeared in the east where the Magi lived
 - h. being avid and intelligent astronomers, this star would have caught their eye
 - i. but this was no ordinary star
 - j. it did not behave like regular stars

- k. as we learn from its erratic, yet precise, movement
 - 1. nor was it a comet, meteor, or conjunction of stars as some propose
 - m. no, this was a miraculous star
 - n. created by God for this very special purpose of leading the Magi to their Savior
 - o. and, because God had given them this knowledge somehow
 - p. the Magi knew this star was **“his star”**
 - q. that it would lead them to the promised Savior
 - 2. the star started and completed their journey
 - a. this star started their journey to the King of the Jews, their Savior
 - b. it led them to Jerusalem
 - c. and to Herod and the chief priests and teachers of the law
 - d. from whom they found out the place where the King of the Jews was to be born
 - e. Bethlehem, according to the prophecy of Micah
 - f. and, then, the star, their God-given GPS, led them to the precise location where the Christchild was
 - g. and there they found him in a house with his mother Mary
 - h. the star had started their journey
 - i. and now it helped them complete it
- Trans: Through his Word and by the star he created, God led the Magi to their Savior. And when they found him...

II. The Magi worshipped their Savior (11b)

- A. Magi overjoyed at finding their Savior
 - 1. more than overjoyed

- a. Matthew tells us that the Magi were overjoyed when they arrived at the house
 - b. and saw the Christchild and his mother Mary
 - c. the Greek construction of that sentence is difficult to accurately reproduce in English
 - d. because it is quite emphatic in its entire construction
 - e. in English we would have to say something like:
 - f. ‘they rejoiced a great joy exceedingly’
 - g. and even that falls short of the Greek construction
 - h. to say that the Magi were “overjoyed” is an understatement
 - i. they were beyond overjoyed!!
2. why?
- a. why?
 - b. because the star had led them to the Star that would come out of Jacob as prophesied
 - c. they knew they had found the King of the Jews, their Savior
 - d. even though their eyes saw an infant child
 - e. their hearts and their faith saw much more
 - f. they saw their God and their Savior
- B. The Magi worshipped their Savior
1. bowed before him
 - a. and they acted accordingly
 - b. immediately they bowed down before him
 - c. out of respect and in honor
 - d. as humble subjects of their King
 - e. and modest worshippers of their Savior
 2. presented gifts to him
 - a. and, then, they gave to the infant Jesus their treasures
 - b. treasures of gold, incense, and myrrh

- c. these were, indeed, gifts fit for a king
 - d. the Magi held nothing back
 - e. they gave their God and Savior their very best
- C. God revealed the Savior to all Gentiles
1. God fulfilled his prophecies
 - a. there is great significance to this event involving the Magi
 - b. God’s intention all along was for the Savior to be for all people
 - c. Jews and Gentiles alike
 - d. last week we heard from aged and contented Simeon that Mary and Joseph’s child was going to be (Lk 2:32, “...a light for revelation to the Gentiles...”)**
 - e. and, here, through the Magi, he accomplished this
 - f. the Gentiles had found *their* Savior
 - g. as God had prophesied through Isaiah (Is 60:1-3, “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the people, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.”)**
 2. good news for all Gentiles
 - a. this is good news for every Gentile
 - b. like all of us who have no Jewish blood coursing through our veins
 - c. we have a Savior whose light, as Isaiah said, has shone upon us
 - d. his light has dispelled and dispersed the darkness of sin that enveloped us and the dark cloud of death and hell that overshadowed us

- e. and given us the peace of forgiveness for our sins, the joy of salvation, and the sure hope of eternal life in heaven
3. God led us to our Savior
- a. just like the Magi, God led us to our Savior
 - b. someone we could not find on our own
 - c. now, even though he did not use a miraculous star to lead us to our Savior
 - d. our journey to the Savior is, nonetheless, just as miraculous
 - e. God led us to our Savior through his Word
 - f. that Word did something miraculous
 - g. it kindled faith in our hearts
 - h. even though our hearts were dead, cold, and hard with unbelief
 - i. that Word made such recalcitrant hearts warm and alive with faith in Jesus
 - j. a miracle indeed!
 - k. and, like the Magi, we are filled with joy at finding our Savior
 - l. this Christmas our hearts rejoiced
 - m. and we sang our Christmas songs with gusto
 - n. even though we have heard this message for 10 or 30 or 50 or 80 years
 - o. why? because we have found our Savior!
4. act like the Magi
- a. and, because we have a Savior, we will follow in the footsteps of the Magi
 - b. we will be humble subjects of our King
 - c. and modest worshippers of our Savior
 - d. as we glorify and honor him with righteous behavior and godly attitudes
 - e. and, as we give him our best

- f. our best offerings and our best labors
- g. so that others might find their Savior also

Concl: We agree with the hymn writer who wrote:
'As with joyful steps they sped, Savior to your lowly bed, There to bend the knee before You whom heaven and earth adore, So may we with willing feet Ever seek your mercy seat. As they offered gifts most rare At your cradle rude and bare, So may we with holy joy, Pure and free from sin's alloy, All our costliest treasures bring, Christ, to you, our heavenly King.'