

# Sermon Study Guide

## 12.6.2009 – Unexpected: Wisdom



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# Wise Men Still Seek Him

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Week of Dec 6, 2009

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## Discussion

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1. **When you need advice, to whom do you go for wisdom and what draws you to that person?**
2. **In your opinion, how do people pursue wisdom in our culture?**
3. **Read Matthew 2:1-12.** Discuss what you learn about these wise men and their role in Jesus' Story?

<sup>1</sup>After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi<sup>[a]</sup> from the east came to Jerusalem<sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east<sup>[b]</sup> and have come to worship him."

<sup>3</sup>When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup>When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ<sup>[c]</sup> was to be born. <sup>5</sup>"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

<sup>6</sup>" 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.'<sup>[d]</sup>"

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup>He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."

<sup>9</sup>After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east<sup>[e]</sup> went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

<sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup>On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

#### 4. Who were these Magi, Wise Men?

- They were magi from Persia or Arabia, perhaps from Parthia, near the site of ancient Babylon. As part of their religion, these priests or kings paid particular attention to the stars, and gained an international reputation for astrology, which was at that time highly regarded as a science.
- They could have been Jews who remained in Babylon after the exile and knew of the Old Testament predictions of the Messiah's coming. God gave them a unique revelation through their pursuit in astrology.
- Probably the Magi connected Balaam's messianic prophecy of a star that would rise out of Judah (Num. 24:17) with the Jewish King. Balaam evidently originated in their part of the world (Num. 23:7). The Jews in Jesus' day regarded Balaam's oracle as messianic.

5. People throughout the ages have considered God's Plan foolish and will not bow their knee in worship of Him. True wisdom is a gift from God to those who ask for it. In Scripture, Wisdom is regarded as a Divine Person, "**Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.**"

- **Read these verses of Scripture and discuss what you learn about God's Wisdom and man's wisdom.** (1 Corinthians 1:17-25; 2:6-10; and James 1:5, Romans 11:33-36.)
- God, the Creator, took on humanity by sending His Son, Jesus Christ (Immanuel – God with us) to live among us and die for our sins.

**Hebrews 1:2-3 says "but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe. <sup>3</sup>The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His being, sustaining all things by His powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.**

- Is this what the wise men came and worshiped? Why do you think it is considered the foolishness of God?

7. The Magi, who were among the wisest of their day, bowed their knee and worshiped Christ, the infant King. In Matthew 22:37, Jesus said: "**Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all you soul and with all your mind.**"

What does it mean to you to love Him with your mind?

8. A.W. Tozer observed that what you think about God is the most important thing about

you. Your entire life revolves around your view of God. Nothing escapes His notice, nothing can be hidden from Him, and nothing is forgotten by Him. He is perfect knowledge and wisdom.

Do you approach God as the greatest mind ever to walk on the earth?

9. Close in a time of prayer worshiping and praising Jesus, the Wisdom of the Ages.