



The Wise Men

God Directs Those
Who Are Sincere

*We saw His star in the east and have
come to worship Him.*

—Matthew 2:2

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Savior

Who were the wise men? They were astronomers who came from the east, probably from Persia. By the time they arrived, Jesus and Mary and Joseph were in a house. We find their story in Matthew 2:1–2:

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

How did astronomers in Persia know about the Jewish Messiah in Jerusalem? I think the answer is that seven hundred years earlier, that region had been introduced to the idea of a Messiah by the Old Testament prophet Daniel. Daniel was taken to Babylon in captivity, and he taught the magi in the king’s court. Through Daniel’s influence, the wise men knew that a Messiah was coming, not just for the Jews but for the entire world. So, when the wise men saw the star in the east, they followed it, searching for the Messiah.

The wise men remind us that God directs those who sincerely search for Him. Contrast the wise men’s response to King Herod’s response when he heard the Messiah had come. Matthew 2:3 says when Herod heard about this new king, “he was troubled.” We know from history that Herod suffered from paranoia. Herod didn’t want to give up his rule to anyone. When Herod sent the wise men to Bethlehem, he said, “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him” (v. 8). Herod didn’t want to worship the Messiah; he wanted to kill Him.

But notice how God protected His Son:

After hearing the king, [the wise men] went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way. (vv. 9–12)

Herod died in the darkness without finding Christ, but the magi who came all the way from Persia were led to Jesus. Think about your own experience of how God led you out of spiritual darkness into the light of His Son. God probably sent a “star” to lead you to Christ. It might have been a godly parent or grandparent; perhaps it was a pastor or a Sunday school teacher. But when God saw a heart that sincerely wanted to know Him, He sent the light

God with Us



into your life to lead you to Christ. God gives direction to those who sincerely want to know Him.

When you see the wise men in a nativity scene, ask yourself: “Am I sincerely seeking to know Jesus so I may worship Him?” If so, He will give you light. Jeremiah 29:13 says, “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”

God directs those who are sincere.

Questions for Reflection

1. Why do you think God guides those who are willing to seek to learn more about Jesus through His Word?
2. What can you do this Christmas season to seek Jesus sincerely and learn more about Him?