



January 7, 2024 – The Wisemen – Epiphany of Journey

We often place the Wisemen at the manger on Christmas Eve...though they most likely didn't arrive until long after that party was over. Traveling vast distances, persevering and being open, the Wisemen followed the God who put signs in the skies and called to them. Our God does the same today – only we have to be ready to see it for what is really happening. Join us this weekend as we rejoice in the faith of the Wisemen and the love of a God who is willing to come to earth for us.

Scripture:

Isaiah 60: 1-5, 19-20a NLT

Arise, Jerusalem! Let your light shine for all to see. For the glory of the Lord rises to shine on you. ²Darkness as black as night covers all the nations of the earth, but the glory of the Lord rises and appears over you. ³All nations will come to your light; mighty kings will come to see your radiance. ⁴"Look and see, for everyone is coming home! Your sons are coming from distant lands; your little daughters will be carried home. ⁵Your eyes will shine, and your heart will thrill with joy... "No longer will you need the sun to shine by day, nor the moon to give its light by night, for the Lord your God will be your everlasting light, and your God will be your glory. ²⁰Your sun will never set; your moon will not go down. For the Lord will be your everlasting light.

Matthew 2:1-12 NLT

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, ²"Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." ³King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. ⁴He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?" ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote: ⁶'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.' " ⁷Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. ⁸Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!" ⁹After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! ¹¹They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

Questions:

- Think about the Wisemen's journey...if it helps read back over their story in Matthew 2. What preconceived notions might they have had to let go of to make this journey? What wisdom did they gain? What did they learn?
- Has there ever been a time(s) in your life when you gained an "epiphany"- an illuminating discovery or realization? If so, what was it? When did it happen? How has it changed your life?
- Take time this week in prayer, to ask God to open your heart to whatever epiphanies might come your way this year!

Reading for the Week:

Monday: 1 John 3:2

Tuesday: 1 Timothy 3:16

Wednesday: John 1:14

Thursday: Titus 2:13

Friday: Psalm 27