

# Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Feast of the Epiphany — January 6, 2024

*“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 saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”*

– Matthew 2:1-2 –

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and since that time we have been able to see God’s hand in the movement of all His creation. The stars have been used from the beginning to tell time and to recognize the order of the seasons. Along with the practical reasons for studying the night sky, changes in the stars were often interpreted as signs and omens foretelling of things happening in the world. Some magi in the East noticed the sudden appearance of a new star; they had knowledge of the promises and prophecies of Hebrew scripture and recognized that the star pointed to the birth of a new king in Israel. They traveled great distances to find the baby and worship him.

God created the heavens and earth, so it is no surprise that He would use a star to guide those wise men to Bethlehem. God is intimately involved in every aspect of His creation which he uses to manifest His promises before the whole world. The wise men followed a star that seemed to move as they moved, guiding them to the place where they would find the child. They traveled a dangerous and difficult journey to worship this new king based on a sign in the heavens.

This was a miraculous visitation, but the wonder continues as we see the gifts that the wise men delivered to the newborn king. The gold had a practical purpose; it would be used to care for Jesus in the world, especially during the escape to Egypt. The gold also represented Jesus’ rule and authority as King over all God’s creation. The frankincense was a sign of Jesus’ ministry, a foreshadowing of his role as High Priest when He would present Himself as the perfect lamb to atone for the sins of the world. Myrrh was an expensive ointment that was used only for the anointing of the dead. We are invited to join the wise men in worshiping the Son of God, our King, Priest and Savior, the fulfillment of all God’s promises.

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