

Christ Is Born: Significance of the Star

Pastor John Carmichael

[Mat 2:1-12 NASB95] 1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, 2 "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." 3 When Herod the king heard [this,] he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. 4 Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. 5 They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: 6 'AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH, ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG THE LEADERS OF JUDAH; FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME FORTH A RULER WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.'" 7 Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and 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." 9 After hearing the king, they 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. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 11 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. 12 And having been warned [by God] in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.

- The star, seen by the magi, was used to announce the birth of Jesus Christ.
- The magi lived in Persia (6BC). They interpreted signs. They were involved in astronomy and astrology. (Note: the Bible has verses that look like astrology. The difference is that astrology maintains that the stars and such control what happens according to fate. Biblical use of signs in the stars and such maintains that they only announce what God has decreed.)
- The star:
 - Characteristics
 - New appeared – Matt 2:7
 - Traveled slowly – Matt 2:2
 - Went ahead of them – Matt 2:9
 - Stood over Bethlehem – Matt 2:9
 - Stood over the house – Matt 2:11
 - Other
 - Signified birth of Jesus.
 - Signified His kingship.
 - His connection with the Jewish people.
 - Had a precise time.
 - Not appear to everyone
 - It moved.
 - Explanations - Johannes Kepler (1571-1630)
 - Comets
 - Supernova – Chinese and Koreans observed one in 6BC
 - Conjunctions
 - Jupiter, Saturn, Mars – 5 or 6 BC – possibly connected to Daniel 8 & 9 – Goat, Ram, and convergence – Occurs every approx. 800 years – coincided with the birth of Moses, Isaiah, possibly Christ, Charlemagne, and Reformation. If extrapolated to the coming of Christ – AD 2409.
 - Venus, Jupiter – 2 BC

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- Or something new and supernatural

What is the significance of the star as it relates to what we believe?

Here are four ways the star reveals what we believe.

- I. The star reveals our belief in the trustworthy nature of the Bible.**
 - a. There are prophecies that some say point to the star's involvement with the birth of Jesus.
 - b. [2Ti 3:16-17 NASB95] 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; 17 so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.
 - II. The star reveals our belief in miracles with or without natural explanations.**
 - a. God's involvement, regardless of explanation.
 - b. Sometimes, we can explain what happens, yet God is involved.
 - c. Sometimes, we can NOT explain what happens, yet God is involved.
 - d. Miracles happen that defy nature. (Walking on the water, virgin birth)
 - e. We must leave room for the plausibility of miracles.
 - III. The star reveals our belief that God is interested in everyone getting saved.**
 - a. [1Ti 2:3-4 NASB95] 3 This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.
 - b. The magi were not Jews. They were Gentiles. Yet, God was looking for them.
 - IV. The star reveals our belief that God knows how to reveal Himself to us.**
 - a. They were looking toward the stars. God wanted to reveal Himself to them.
 - b. He is not just trying to reach one people group. He desires all people to be saved.
 - c. His ability to speak to us is greater than our inability to hear Him.
- **God wants us to believe His Word and His ability to operate in our world to see people get saved and to reveal Himself to us.**