

The Star That Spoke

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Have you ever found yourself on a clear, moonless night gazing upward at the stars? The stars can be so very impressive. One moment they will look like so many precious gems scattered carelessly against the background of a black velvet sky. Or again they will remind one of the many lights of a distant city viewed from a hill top, making one feel so far away, lonesome, small and insignificant.

People throughout the ages have been impressed with the stars. Thousands have examined them, attempted to count them, speculated about them. They have marveled at their beauty. They have sought to find out what they are. They have wondered what their importance is.

In ancient times this study of the stars was considered to be among the most important of the sciences. It was thought that the stars were somehow directly related to events on the earth and the life and future of every individual. Astrologers made detailed studies of the stars and presented various formulas according to which they thought they could predict the future. Movement of the stars, eclipses, comets and meteors were all thought to have special significance influencing the life of man. The astrologers of old labored under the misconception that if only they would listen aright the stars would speak to them.

But once, or should we say twice, there was in those years of old a star that did speak to a small group of astronomers. It told them a story.

Almost two thousand years ago on a clear, cloudless night a small group of Magi, wise-men from the East were gathered together watching the stars. As they were watching that night, suddenly there appeared before them a star, a star that they had never seen before. They were astronomers, they knew the wonders of the skies, they knew the beauty of Orion, and the Pleiades; they knew the glory of the comets and the mystery of eclipses; but such a star as this they had never seen. This star surpassed them all, this star told them a story.

We don't know how that star spoke to them. It wasn't through mysterious signs or complicated formulas. It gave unto them a simple, clear revelation. Neither do we know how detailed was the story that it told. But what it told in essence we know. It told them that a king was born. One cannot help but think that these Magi had read the books of some faithful Jew, a member of the dispersion living in that Eastern land. Perhaps they had read Numbers 24:17, "There shall come a star out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel." They must have read the many beautiful prophecies about the Messiah. Thus when they saw that beautiful star, it spoke to them as a revelation from God proclaiming the wonderful story that that King, Redeemer of heaven and earth, was born.

And what is the most amazing of all, they believed. They believed that a king had arisen out of Jacob. And that king was not only the king of all who believed; He was **THEIR KING**.

Immediately they set out to find their King and to worship Him. Many must have been the miles that they traveled, but their faith did not falter. They came to Jerusalem and asked not, "Is it true that a king has been born?" No, their question was, "Where is He that **is born** King of the Jews?"

What a strange situation, yet how sad. Men from the East had to come and proclaim to the people that their King had been born. And how much sadder still, Jerusalem did not rejoice. They could tell the Magi where the child should be, but they themselves did not care to go and

worship the Child. Their only response was a feeling of fear lest someone might challenge the unjustly held throne of wicked Herod. They told the Magi to go to Bethlehem. They knew all about the Promised One, but knowledge cannot bring faith. The wise men left Jerusalem and went on their way alone.

But still the faith of the Magi did not faint or falter. God had revealed it to them through the star and they believed. Starting again on the road they looked to the sky. Again the star appeared. It reaffirmed the revelation and led them on the way. It brought them to Bethlehem and the very spot where the King lay. Truly an amazing star; it had told them that the child was born, and now it led them to where He lay.

It would have shocked men of lesser faith. The Child must have been in one of the poorer houses of Bethlehem. They heard how that the Child had been born in a stable – strange surroundings for a King. But the faith that had believed the star and brought them from the East, the faith that had stumbled not at the unbelief of Jerusalem, that faith did not hesitate at earthly surroundings. **By faith** the Magi understood that He was not a King of material wealth, but a king, THE KING, of spiritual believers. The star had been a manifestation, and they believed.

They bowed and worshipped the King of the Jews, their King. They worshipped the firstfruits of the Gentiles, taking the kingdom by force. They gave to the Child their gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Representative of their country, they stood for all the gentile world, worshipping the King.

We know little more of these wise men who followed the star. God told them not to return to Herod and they departed by another way. But we may be sure that although they left, their hearts remained always with the Child. They believed the star, that this was the King, their redeemer.

Originally Published in:
Volume 14 No 9 December 1954