

## **Home For Christmas: Advent Series**

### **Part 1**

#### **“Willing to Go Where You Send Me: Iran”**

***“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,” Matthew 2:1***

#### **A. Leaving our home in Iran to search for the King...**

***“Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.” Matthew 2:2 NLT***

1. The wise men must have traveled anywhere up to 800 miles to find the King of the Jews.
2. They followed “His” star to Jerusalem.
3. The wise men numbered more than three.
4. The wise men most likely traveled by horse.

#### **B. “We saw His star in the east”...**

1. There are many things we do not know about the star. There are some things that we do know:
  - a. It signified birth.
  - b. It signified kingship.
  - c. It had a connection to the Jewish nation.
  - d. It rose in the east, like other stars (due to the rotation of the earth).
  - e. It appeared at a precise time.
  - f. Herod didn’t know when it appeared.
  - g. It endured over time.
  - h. It was ahead of the wise men as they traveled south from Jerusalem to Bethlehem.
  - i. It stopped over Bethlehem.
2. It is possible that the wise men were aware of Balaam’s prophecy.

***“I see him, but not here and now. I perceive him, but far in the distant future. A star will rise from Jacob; a scepter will emerge from Israel.” Numbers 24:17***

3. It is possible the wise men were Jewish descendants of Daniel and knew the timing of the Messiah’s appearance. It would have been 483 years after the Persian emperor gave the command to rebuild Jerusalem.

***“A period of seventy sets of seven has been decreed for your people and your holy city to finish their rebellion, to put an end to their sin, to atone for their guilt, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to confirm the prophetic vision, and to anoint the Most Holy Place.***

***Now listen and understand! Seven sets of seven plus sixty-two sets of seven will pass from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem until a ruler—the Anointed One—comes. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defenses, despite the perilous times.” Daniel 9:24-25***

4. It is clear the wise men did not know exactly where the birth would be.

***“But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, are only a small village among all the people of Judah. Yet a ruler of Israel, whose origins are in the distant past, will come from you on my behalf.” Micah 5:2***

5. The King of the Jews by birth was clearly a threat to the king of the Jews by appointment.

***“Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first appearance.” Matthew 2:16***

#### **C. The gifts of the wise men were significant...**

***“They 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.” Matthew 2:11***

1. Gold was the gift for a King.
2. Frankincense was an incense to burn which represented prayer. It was used by the priests and indicated His priestly role as Messiah.
3. Myrrh was a fragrant perfume used in embalming bodies indicating the death of the Messiah.
4. They bowed down in worship to the Messiah—Jesus Christ—Prophet, Priest, and King!

#### **D. What do you learn from the wise men leaving their home?**

1. It is very possible they waited for years for the birth of the Messiah.  
*Do you become weary when you are not seeing the results you might be expecting?*

***“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9***

2. The wise men left their homes, their families, and all their comforts to search for Jesus.

*Are you willing to surrender all in your pursuit of Jesus?*

***“If you try to hang on to your life, you will lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake and for the sake of the Good News, you will save it.” Mark 8:35 NLT***

3. The wise men brought gifts that were exactly what God directed them to bring.

*What is God asking you to give as evidence of your love for Him? Are you spiritually sensitive enough to hear His voice in your giving?*

***“Remember this—a farmer who plants only a few seeds will get a small crop. But the one who plants generously will get a generous crop. You must each decide in your heart how much to give. And don’t give reluctantly or in response to pressure. ‘For God loves a person who gives cheerfully.’ And God will generously provide all you need. Then you will always have everything you need and plenty left over to share with others.” 2 Corinthians 9:6-8***

4. The wise men knew the first priority of all followers is to offer yourselves fully in worship.  
*Are you offering a whole-hearted worship to God? Are you offering a worship that is not withholding anything...bitterness, hard feelings, anger, possessions, relationships, disappointments, recreation, entertainment, etc.?*

***“And you must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.” Mark 12:30***

***“The Lord your God is one; so love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.” The Message***

#### **Coming soon:**

December 4: ***A Home to Grow: Nazareth***

December 11: ***A Supportive Home: Jerusalem***

December 18: ***The Predicted and Celebrated Home: Bethlehem***

December 25: ***I’ll Be Home For Christmas***

***You can pick up the DVDs in the foyer on Sundays in December!***