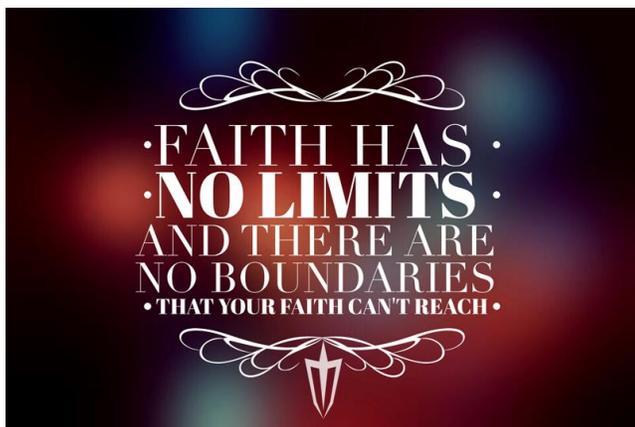


WINTER QUARTER SUNDAY SCHOOL 2017-2018
THEME – GENUINE FAITH IS EVIDENCED BY OUR ACTIONS
UNIT I – FAITH IN CHRIST DEMONSTRATED BY THE EARLY SAINTS

**“FAITH HAS NO LIMIT TO FULFILL ITS PURPOSE IN
AFFECTING OUR LIVES”**



Sunday School Lesson No. 4 – December 24, 2017
Presented by Rev. Frank A. Davis, III ~ Pastor-Teacher

Lesson Text: Matthew 2:1-18

Required Reading: Matthew 2:1-23

Motto Text: Matthew 2:10-11, “When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.”

Reliable Resources: Union Gospel Press Expositor and Illuminator; Standard Lesson Commentary; Precepts for Living (UMI); LOGOS Bible Software, Word Search 10 Electronic Library

INTRODUCTION

No one has ever affected the world like our Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. He has His fingerprint on everything from the Creation of the cosmos! His hand affected prophets and potentates, shepherds and angels, rich and poor, governments and religions. His arrival has changed the entire landscape of the universe. Let us go back in time and discover the far-reaching effects of Messiah’s arrival and the faith of some Gentile astronomers known as the Magi or wise men. They will teach us a great lesson in faith and obedience in their actions to totally fulfill God’s purpose. James 2:20 asks, *“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?”*

Matthew Chapter 2 describes times and circumstances of events following the birth of Jesus Christ. Some theologians believe, based on the request of King Herod to the Magi, that this series of events could have taken place up to two years following Christ’s birth. (Read Matthew 2:16).

Anticipated Power Points:

- **Its Affect on the Wise. Matthew 2:1-2, 9-12**
- **Its Affect on the Wicked. Matthew 2:3-4, 7-8, 16-18**
- **Its Affect on the Willing. Matthew 2:13-15**

LESSON EXPOSITION

Now what is faith, Biblically speaking? Hebrews 11:1 answers the question, *“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”* **NOTE:** Faith is built on intellectual assent and trust!

I describe this lesson from the eyes of the wise, wicked and willing. Faith has no limit on...

I. Its Affect on the wise. Matthew 2:1-2, 9-12

Christ’s arrival affected the Wise in the following ways:

A. The wise sought Him. vss. 1-2

In the season of the arrival of Christ on earth during His First Advent, Matthew declares that a group of Wise Men (Magi, “astrologers, magicians, or even sorcerers”) came from an eastern country, perhaps Persia or Arabia, to pay homage and respect to a new king in Israel. It is believed that through their curious arts they deduced by God’s will, this arriving king and left on a nearly two-year pilgrimage to render worship and honor unto Him.

Now upon arrival, the men of the East caused a great uproar because the king, Herod the Great, was a man that vanquished all rivals to the throne, and he had not heard of this new king. Now according to verses 3-6, King Herod inquired of his religious leaders, and it was revealed that the place of birth of the King of Israel would be Bethlehem. (Read Micah 5:2).

B. The wise shouted for joy! vss. 9-10

The star that led these noble astrologers to Jerusalem reappears as the Magi, left King Herod and led them to a house in Bethlehem. There they discovered the Christ Child and His mother, not at a stable but in a house, apparently without Joseph being present, at that time.

C. The wise shared their gifts and worshipped. vss. 11-12

The far-reaching affects of Messiah had even touched the lives of the Gentiles, and by faith, brought them forth to worship and honor Him, even as a little child. These wise men brought worshipful gifts to pay honor and homage unto the child king, Jesus Christ! What a lesson for our society...Jesus is worthy of our worship, honor and praise! Their gifts demonstrated their faith in the true God. Note the gifts and their meaning. Gold for His Kingship; Frankincense—He is worthy of worship; and Myrrh, an embalming spice representing His death!

Messiah's Arrival...

II. Its Affect on the Wicked. Matthew 2:3-4, 7-8, 16-18

The arrival of Jesus the Messiah definitely had a far-reaching affect on the wicked!

A. The wickedness of King Herod not falsified. vss. 3-4, 7-8

King Herod had a reputation of wickedness. According to notes found in Precepts for Living (12/2009), "Herod the Great was considered one of the cruelest rulers in all history. He had ten wives, murdered one of them, murdered a mother-in-law, and saw to it that a stepson was "accidentally" drowned. He also ordered two of his sons to be executed and later executed a third. Herod the Great also murdered a brother-in-law and an uncle." Beloved, he was the epitome of wickedness. Now as he interrogated the Wise men as to the time they first saw the sign of the star, and the revelation of the scribes concerning where Christ should be born, he was not looking for Him to worship Him. He falsified his inquiry to get privileged information to kill Christ!

B. The wickedness of King Herod brought fatalities. vss. 16-18

After God enlightened the Wise men not to return unto Herod in verse 12, Herod became enraged and his true wickedness was exposed! He had all the babies (boys?) killed from two years and under, within a ten-mile radius. The slaughter was so awful that it brought to mind the prophecy of Jeremiah concerning Rachel the mother of Joseph and Benjamin, Jacob's sons, to weep for the lost of Israel's children! The wickedness of King Herod led to many fatalities! (Read Isaiah 55:6-7). The Messiah's arrival personified Herod's faithless wickedness!

Messiah's Arrival...

III. Its Affect on the Godly Willing. Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23

There is a great enlightenment concerning the Godly willing and Messiah's affect on them.

A. The Godly willing are warned of God. vss. 13-15, 19-22

Like the wise men, God used His angel to give full warning to Joseph and Mary concerning the Christ Child. Note the warning to arise even at night and depart to Egypt to save the Child from the wickedness of Herod. God's willing people are never left in the dark! Hebrews 13:5 reminds us, "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*" This act of God's warning was done not only once but several times for the Godly willing. (Read Matthew 2:19-22)

Finally we note...

B. The Godly willing are in the will of God. vs. 23

Everything that takes place in the life of the Christ is according to God's will. Christ's arrival truly has far reaching affects on everyone and everything He touches. May it be ours to determine to live, walk, talk and carry on our lives in the perfect will of God! And may we remember, "**Faith Has No Limit To Fulfill Its Purpose.**" "*We walk by faith and not by sight.*" II Corinthians 5:7

Closing:

The Wise men rejoiced to see the star of their day, and we should rejoice to walk in the light of God's will in our day. "*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*" I John 1:7

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LOOKING AHEAD:

December 31, 2017

Ephesians 4:1-16

Please join us each Wednesday noon at Bibleway where Pastor Davis teaches the Sunday School lesson.

