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## Joseph and the Magi



**Part 7** (021215AM)

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The greatest invasion of all time was not Normandy at D-Day, nor the Gulf War or the coming Iraqi Invasion - it was the night God came to live on His Planet Earth.

There are 1189 chapters in the Bible, 250 in the New Testament and 89 in the Four Gospels. Of all those chapters in God's Word there are four that detail the Birth of Jesus. There are four chapters of The New Testament that describe this night. They are Matthew 1-2 and Luke 1-2. From these chapters comes an intriguing and very powerful cast of characters. If all seventeen were listed they would be:

- Six Saints
- Several shepherds
- Three sinners
- A Prophet
- A Host of Angels
- A bunch of stuffed Robed Religious big shots
- Some mysterious Magi from the East
- Gabriel the Archangel
- And the Savior of the World.

From this cast, let's draw out a few of them. Through their response to the Birth of Christ we can learn and follow. Don't miss out on the blessings and wonders of the 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas. You won't if you learn from these.

So which ones were looking for Jesus? Let's just zero in on a few of these folks and try to heed what God is trying to tell us. Okay? Who were they? Well, Matthew lists a cast of 6 (turn to Mt. 1-2).

1. **Mary** - pondering, worshiping, trusting and obeying
2. **Joseph** - fearful, faithful, obedient, seeking and sacrificing
3. **Magi** - willing to follow anywhere to find their king
4. **Herod** - more concerned about his crown, his women, his wine, his building projects, his businesses, his security -- **than his soul**
5. **Chief priests and religious leaders** - they used the Scriptures, but didn't obey them. They knew about the prophets, but they did not believe prophecy
6. **Jesus**

On the first Christmas when God invaded the time space prison of earth, there were many different people who were around. Those who were looking for Him, found Him and that day the greatest in their lives, the other who were not looking for Him, and missed the greatest opportunity in their lives.

How about it? Are you looking for Jesus this Christmas? Or is this Christmas flying by so fast you will miss what God is offering you? Everyone who was looking for Jesus to come enjoyed His arrival. As we examine their lives we can often see ourselves. Who are you like?

Let pause and read the story again [Matthew 1:18-2:12](#)

Joseph: Faithful and Following Second Fiddle ([Matthew 1:18-25](#); 2:13,19)

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Part: 3 Lessons in Worshiping Christ

Part: 2 Anna: Living a Life of Praise

Part: 2 God In A Manger

Part: 1 The Fullness of Time: The Day Jesus Was Born

- Willing to be obedient and obscure!
- Obey even if you don't understand what God is doing.
- Joseph sought the Lord with his problems (1.18-20a)
- Joseph listened to the Lord for His guidance (1.20b-23)
- Joseph obeyed the Lord by his actions (1.24-25a)
- Joseph honored the Lord through his obedience (1.25b)

Chapter 2 contrasts three characters: the Magi, Herod, and the religious leaders.

The Magi were INSISTENT.

Herod was INSECURE.

The Religious Leaders were INDIFFERENT.

The INSISTENT Magi: God can use the rich and powerful (Mt. 2:1,7,16)

- Come to Him (they didn't send their gifts, they came. God wants you, in person, to come to Him).
- Sacrifice your time, freedom, and comfort for Him (they traveled 1100 to 1200 miles across deserts and mountains from the regions of Babylon or Persia or Media)
- Present what you have to Him (a little boy's lunch; an upper room; an unbroken colt; an unrequested flask of perfume ...)
- Personally Worship Him (they came, bowed and worshiped Him).

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king;

Peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled."

Joyful, all you nations, rise; join the triumph of the skies;

With angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

**Leader:** Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

**Response:** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Leader:** And this shall be a sign for you:

**Response:** You will find the baby wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

**Leader:** And suddenly there was, with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host praising God.

**Response:** Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth!

Angels we have heard on high, sweetly singing o'er the plains,

And the mountains in reply, echoing their joyous strains.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Shepherds, why this jubilee? Why your joyous strains prolong?

What the gladsome tidings be which inspire your heav'nly song?

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Come to Bethlehem and see him whose birth the angels sing;

Come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the newborn king.

Gloria in excelsis Deo! Gloria in excelsis Deo!

PRAYER

Christ, by highest heav'n adored, Christ, the everlasting Lord,

Late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.

Veiled in flesh the Godhead see! Hail, incarnate deity!

Pleased as man with us to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel!

Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

SCRIPTURE [LUKE 1:26-33](#)

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?

This, this is Christ the king, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;

Haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!

So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, peasant, king, to own him.

The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.

Raise, raise the song on high, the virgin sings her lullaby.

Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!

SCRIPTURE [ISAIAH 9:6-7](#)

Oh, come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant!

Oh, come ye, oh, come ye to Bethlehem.

Come and behold him born the king of angels.

Oh, come, let us adore him ... Christ the Lord!

**CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:**

**THE BREAD**

SCRIPTURE [LUKE 2:1-7](#)

Joy to the world! The Lord is come:

Let ev'ry heart prepare Him room,

And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n and nature sing,

And heav'n and heav'n and nature sing.

Joy to the earth! The Savior reigns;

Let men their songs employ;

While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains

Repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat the sounding joy,

Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

Hail the heav'n-born Prince of Peace! Hail the Sun of Righteousness!  
Light and life to all he brings, ris'n with healing in his wings.  
Mild he lays he glory by, born that we no more may die,  
Born to raise each child of earth, born to give us second birth.  
Hark! The herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn king!"

RESPONSIVE READING JOHN 1: 1-5 AND 14

**Leader:** In the beginning was the Word,

**Response:** and the Word was with God,

**Leader:** and the Word was God.

**Response:** He was in the beginning with God.

**Leader:** All things were made through Him,

**Response:** and without Him nothing was made that was made

**Leader:** In Him was life,

**Response:** and the life was the light of men.

**Leader:** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

**Response:** and we beheld His glory,

**Leader:** the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,

**Response:** full of grace and truth.

#### CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER:

##### THE CUP

O little town of Bethlehem,  
How still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
The silent stars go by;  
Yet in the dark streets shineth  
The everlasting Light;  
The hopes and fears of all the years  
Are met in thee tonight.  
  
How silently, how silently  
The wondrous gift is giv'n!  
So God imparts to human hearts  
The blessings of His heav'n.  
No ear may hear His coming,  
But in this world of sin,  
Where meek souls will receive Him, still,  
The dear Christ enters in.  
  
O holy Child of Bethlehem!  
Descend to us, we pray;

Cast out our sin, and enter in,  
Be born in us today!  
We hear the Christmas angels  
The great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us, abide with us,  
Our Lord Immanuel!

(When lighting candles tip only the unlit candle to the lit one to prevent hot wax spills!)

#### [Isaiah 9:2](#)

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light;

Response: Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined.

#### [2 Corinthians 4:6](#)

Leader: For it is the God, who commanded light to shine out of darkness,

Response: who has shone in our hearts

Leader: to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God

Response: in the face of Jesus Christ.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, love's pure light

Radiant beams from your holy face,

With the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at your birth, Jesus, Lord, at your birth.

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;

Give ye heed to what we say: Jesus Christ is born today;

Ox and ass before him bow, and he is in the manger now.

Christ is born today! Christ is born today!

Good Christian friends, rejoice with heart and soul and voice;

Now ye hear of endless bliss: Jesus Christ was born for this!

He has opened heaven's door, and we are blest forevermore.

Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

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