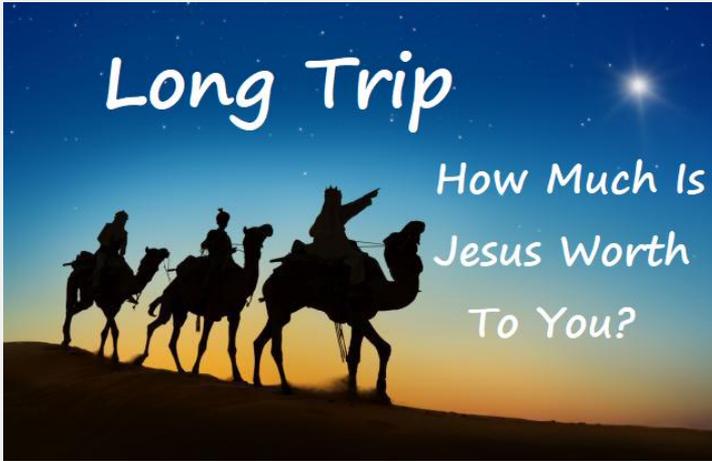


The Epiphany of Our Lord – 2024
Saturday, 1/6 at 4:00 | Sunday, 1/7 at 9:00



Text: Matthew 2:1-12 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: This is the time of year when the **CHURCH YEAR** is moving **VERY RAPIDLY**:

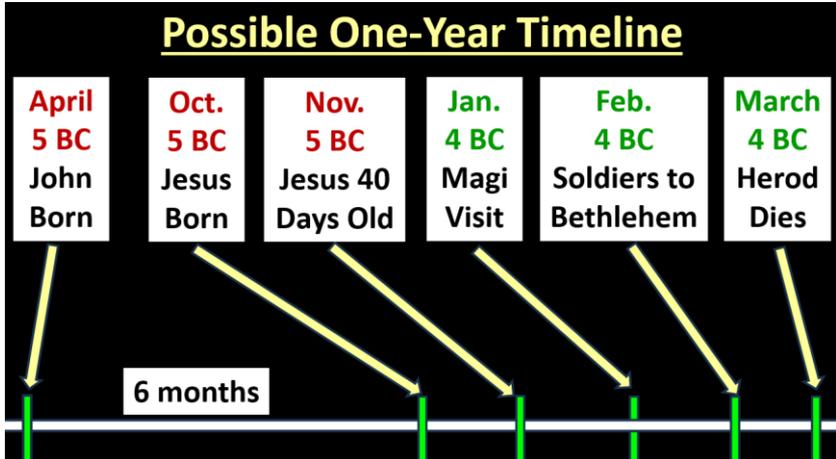
- 12/25/23 – We celebrate Jesus’ birth!
- 1/6/24 – We remember Jesus’ visit by the magi!
- 1/7/24 – We remember Jesus’ baptism!
- 1/14/24 – We remember Jesus calling His disciples!

In this sermon, we are focusing on Jesus being visited by the magi. If we step back and think about it, their trip to **find**, **worship**, and **gift** the Baby Jesus was VERY DIFFICULT:

- They left the comfort of their homes!
- They traveled hundreds of miles!
- They were exposed to countless dangers!

Since they **HIGHLY VALUED JESUS**, *they were willing to endure all such things!* Let us show our **HIGH VALUE OF JESUS** *in all we say and do!*

1. **Magi Searched for the Savior:** 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.



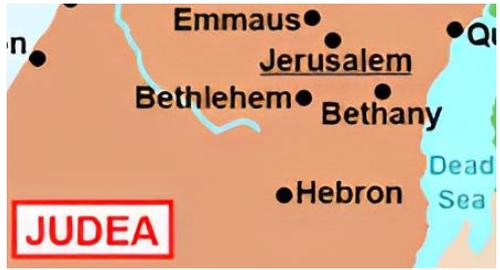
- The days of Herod the king: He reigned over Judea from 37 to **4 BC**. Since He sent soldiers to Bethlehem to murder the baby boys *in the winter of 4 BC*, we believe Jesus was born *in the fall of 5 BC*.
- Saw His star in the east: The magi came from the east, most likely, *modern-day Iran*, and traveled 800 to 900 miles. It seems likely they saw the star **ON THE DAY** Jesus was born, *then traveled for 3 months to visit Him*.
- Magi (μάγοι): We believe they ✦read and believed the OT, ✦recognized the value of the Christ, and ✦humbled themselves to worship Jesus. *Let us do the same!*
- Many were troubled: **Herod felt threatened by the Infant King! The people feared for their lives** – since

Herod had previously murdered many of his subjects under the suspicion they were plotting against him!

2. **Herod Learned the Birth Location:** ⁴ **Gathering together all the chief priests [descendants of Levi and high-ranking members of the priesthood] and scribes of the people [men who studied and wrote regarding God's Law], [Herod] 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 [in Micah 5:2]: 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.'" // As prophesied, so it happened!**
3. **Herod Tried to Deceive the Magi:** ⁷ Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared [the exact day Jesus was born]. ⁸ And he sent [the magi] 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." // Even though Herod the Great was "a brutal, ruthless, vindictive and dangerously high-strung tyrant,"¹ he tried to deceive the magi into revealing Jesus' location to him – so that he could **find Him and murder Him** 😞!
4. **The LORD Led the Magi to Jesus:** 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. //

¹ Herod the Great: Statesman, Visionary, Tyrant, by Norman Gelb, 2017.

When the **miraculous** star stopped, *they knew they had arrived at the location of the Baby Jesus – GREAT JOY!* Logically, the King of the Jews would be



born in the great city of Jerusalem. Actually – He was born in the little town of Bethlehem, *six miles to the southwest.*

5. **The Magi Worshipped and Presented Gifts:** 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.** // Jesus was ♦about 3 months old and ♦living in a house in Bethlehem. The magi were *important men*, **but** they bowed to worship – *putting their faces to the ground!* Then **gold** – *for the King of kings; frankincense* – *for the Priest of priests; and myrrh* – *pointing to Jesus' sacrifice, death, and burial.*
6. **The LORD Guided the Magi Home:** 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.** // God was at work, protecting His Son from Herod – *until years later, when He would forsake Him to save us!*

Let Us Pray: Dear Father, the magi were *not* Jews but, by Your grace, they believed and worshiped. **TY** for giving us faith to trust in Jesus! **Help us to VALUE HIM THE MOST!**

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