



Why Would The Wise Men Follow A Star?

One of the things that can be puzzling for our modern thinking is the pursuit of a star by the wise men.

It has been the subject of a lot of extended study. While the wise men are often depicted as kings, it's unlikely that kings would have traveled without servants. A common theory is that the wise men were, in fact, well-educated

Persian astrologers that had heard of the Jewish story (they were not Jews) of the birth of a new ruler. That combined with an exceptional celestial occurrence, the bright, unusual light in the night sky that was rumored to appear at the birth of a powerful, new leader, made the pursuit particularly enticing for learned astrologers. So, what was that star, exactly? Once again, there is a lot of speculation and study about this astronomical event that is referenced by a variety of sources during the historic window of time in which Jesus would have been born. Novas, supernovas, and amazing planetary alignments have been suggested.

Grant Mathews, a theoretical astrophysicist at University of Notre Dame, believes an April 17, 6 B.C., alignment is the most likely candidate and he thinks the wise men, as Zoroastrian astrologers, would have recognized the planetary alignment in

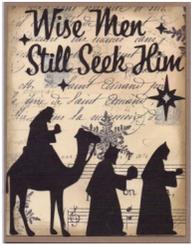
Aries as a sign a powerful leader was born. "In fact it would have even meant that (the leader was) destined to die at an appointed time, which of course would have been significant for the Christ child, and may have been why they brought myrrh, which was an embalming fluid," Mathews said. "Saturn there would have made whoever was born as a leader a most powerful leader because Saturn had the strength to do it, in their view."*

Mathews' findings are fascinating but when we look at these events through a Christian lens they are even more so. The story of our creative God using the history and prophecy of the Jewish people and the journey of Persian astrologers to bring man in the presence of the light of the world, Jesus Christ, is amazing! Regardless of their position in the world, the wise men were wise to follow the light to seek Jesus and we continue to do the same.

Discuss these questions:

Was there any time when you were afraid of the dark? How did being in the dark when you wanted to see make you feel? Did you want to stay in the dark or seek out the light? Did you look for light? When you found it how did it make you feel? Did you want to share it? How are the feelings of finding light similar to those we experience when we find God?

*www.nbcnews.com/id/22347641/ns/technology_and_science-space/t/why-did-wise-men-follow-star-east/#.XC5yV_ZFyUk



Family Prayer & Blessing For January 6-EPIPHANY

Our Focus is WISE

Today we learned the story in **Matthew 2:1-12**, “**The Wise Men Seek Jesus.**” The wise men had heard the Jewish story anticipating the arrival of a new king. When they saw an unusually big and bright star they knew it as a sign that the new king had arrived. They journeyed to find Him. They wanted to worship Him and give Him gifts. When the wise men told the ruler at that time, King Herod, that they were seeking out the baby king, Herod became fearful and asked them to report back as to where to find the child so he too could meet Him. When the wise men followed the star to Bethlehem and found Jesus they kissed Him and left their expensive gifts (frankincense, gold, and myrrh) which were worthy gifts for a king. As they prepared to return home, an angel appeared in their dreams and told them to take another route so they could avoid Herod who actually wanted to harm baby Jesus so He wouldn’t be a threat. The travelers truly were **wise** as they knew that they needed to protect this tiny, special king, the light of the world.

Try the Stargazer’s Prayer this week. When you’re able, as a family, step outside before bed and marvel at the stars. Then think about the brave faith that was needed for the wise men to search for Jesus by just following the light of a star.

Dear Jesus,

We are so grateful the wise men looked for you by the light of a star.

You remain the light of the world every day.

Amen!

Remember to bless each other at the end by making the sign of the cross on the forehead and saying
“Bless this child _____(insert name) who is so precious to both God and me. In Jesus’ name. Amen.”