

Follow the Star

by Erlo Stegen

The sermon emphasizes the importance of following God's guidance and not relying on our own understanding or intelligence, as seen in the story of the Wise Men's journey to find Jesus.

Duration: 1:02:53

Scripture: Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:1-8, Matthew 2:13, Matthew 2:16, Matthew 2:19-20

Topics: "Birth Of Jesus"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of staying focused on the word of God and not straying away. He uses the example of Sarah and Abraham, who went astray and caused bloodshed and sorrow in the Middle East. The speaker warns that not following the teachings of the Bible will lead to trouble in one's family and future generations. The sermon also mentions the story of the wise men who followed the star to find Jesus and worshiped him, offering gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Transcript

Let's pray. We ask you, Lord, to be with us now and speak to us through your word. Work in a wonderful way and let your name be glorified.

Amen. We ask you, Lord, to be with us now and speak to us through your word. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, Where is the one who has been born, King of the Jews? For we saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

When King Herod heard this, he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. But he said to them, I am the one who has been born, King of the Jews.

I am the prophet of the Jews. And they said to him, I am the one who has been born, King of the Jews. But you, Bethlehem and the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah, for out of you will be born the King of the Jews.

For come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel. Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and make a careful search for the child.

As soon as you find him, report to me so that I too may go and worship him. After they had heard the King, they went on their way, and the star that they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child, with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, incense, and myrrh.

And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. We'll read this part. We'll speak about these wise men from the East.

We're not exactly sure where, for it simply says the East. Whether it was China, or one of those lands there, that doesn't trouble us exactly where, but we do know that they travelled from afar to come and worship this child. Neither do we know exactly how they were told or who told them that Jesus was born.

For it is only the Bible that makes reference to this. It was only the Bible. There were no other historical references for the Bible was for the Hebrews.

But we do know that there had been prophets in those regions like Daniel who had prophesied about the Messiah. And other prophets as well. Perhaps they had gained and understood the mystery from them.

They saw the star. And they said, this indicates that a king has been born in Israel. And then presuming since he's born in Israel that it must be the capital in Jerusalem because that's the royal city.

So they started their journey, a very long journey from their region. Aiming for Jerusalem. Knowing that Jerusalem is the city of where the kings reigned from.

And they removed their eyes from the star. And instead headed for Jerusalem. That's their first mistake.

It was their presumption that surely if the king of Israel is born it must be in the royal city of Jerusalem. They put the two and two together. Instead of it making four, it made twenty-two.

We can't depend upon our mind. And so they travelled and travelled until Jerusalem. When they got there, they began asking around, where is the king that has been born in Israel? For we saw his star in the east.

Then they were directed to Herod. They thought surely Herod of his stature, he should know where the king, the Messiah has been born. However, when Herod heard this, he was troubled, together with all Jerusalem.

Why was Herod disturbed? What was it that caused him in Jerusalem to be troubled? Because he was an elderly king already. And if it was a baby to be king, it was a long way off. He was troubled by his thinking that a king born now is a threat to Jerusalem.

You see, position and power are very troublesome. Power and position causes the mind to not work properly. They are so intoxicated with their power.

So when Herod heard this, he thought, oh no, now there's a threat to my position. He should have known. He should have known.

Herod should have known that he was old by then and this child that was born, it would still be another 30 years. Or could it be that he was troubled by his own children, that he thought they deserve to be king? Grasp this. When there is sin in your life, your head cannot think properly.

You go astray. Off the mark. Instead of rejoicing that the Messiah had been born, instead he was poisoned by this poison that was infecting him.

He should have said, well, if he is going to take my place as king one day, then that will be wonderful. Then he will rule the whole earth. So he called the priests and the scribes and the Pharisees, everyone that was an expositor of the scriptures.

He wanted to know where this child was to be born because as a pagan he did not know the Bible. Non-Christians do not read the Bible, they are not aware of what it contains. And the heathen do not know what is written in the Bible.

They do not know what is in the Bible. If a heathen's child becomes sick, his first instinct is not to go to God, but to the witch doctor to find out who has bewitched his child. The heathen does not think of the child getting a cold because of the witch doctor.

He does not think of it being cold and neglected. Instead he wants to know who has bewitched, somebody has bewitched his child. They go to their gods or to the ancestral spirit and they look for particular spirits and they throw bones or whatever it means. And the spirits of the nations, to the Zulus those are well known.

And to the traditional spirits known by name. All nations are pagan and worship their gods. Even the Germans of old worship their gods.

Not worshiping God and Jesus. Pagan Germans worship Wotan. Wotan was the highest god of the Germans.

Hundreds of years ago Wotan was the highest god of the Germans. Hundreds of years ago Wotan being the chief god. The leading god among the gods like the Zulus have the ancestral spirits.

Our forefathers, our German forefathers worshipped these gods before the gospel came. And Donar. The god of thunder.

There were gods worshipped by the Germanic folk. And then Freya the god of love. God of love.

God of love. Their witchcraft was one of not using bones like is used among the Zulus but rather they used horses. By the sounds that the horses made they would predict or prophesy.

And Ostara. The god of the harvest. And of fruitfulness, abundance.

Whether it was literally a harvest or perhaps a woman was barren they went to their gods. They worshipped their idols. Until the gospel came.

The word of God. That was around about the year 400. But then it went down they lost the gospel.

Around about 600 AD. Some Englishmen brought the gospel back to the land of our forefathers. Now they, the Germans couldn't pronounce his name properly so they called him Winfried.

And in just a year, 30,000 Germans repented. The first experience of the gospel in the land of our forefathers was the first experience of the gospel in the land of our forefathers. The first experience of the gospel a few hundred years earlier was rootless.

It didn't go down deep but when Winfried then came with the gospel. That's why the Germans should be grateful to the English for bringing the gospel. Then hundreds of years later our forefathers experienced revival under Louis Harms.

Now Louis Harms said build a boat go and preach in Africa. For one day the gospel will die out in Germany and Africans need to bring the gospel. So they brought the gospel back to Germany.

So history tells us that. So when these men from the east came to Jerusalem they asked where is the king that has been born for us? Here in the court. These knowledgeable people to one side secretly.

Asking not tell me honestly when was this child born? We called the wise men to one side and said now tell me. Give me the full information where when was this child born? For I too want to go and worship him. Make it very plain to me and clear.

The time, the place. Because I want to go as well. And worship the child.

But he was lying. He had no intention of worshiping the Christ child. Instead he wanted to know where he was so that he would go and murder him.

Lying, phariseeism, hypocrisy is something found all over. And it's a terrible thing. Liars they are.

Deceiving people. I want to pray as well. And worship the child.

And he wants to kill it. These wise men could have thought well a revival is breaking out. Even the king, this pagan king even he wants to worship the child.

But nothing of the sort. He wanted to kill him. Call the scribes, the pharisees.

He wanted them to explain the scriptures where the Messiah would be born. You see truth is found only in the scriptures. In this book you don't find truth elsewhere except in the Bible.

The Bible. The Bible. So they answered Herod very confidently from the scriptures.

Micah 5 verse 2. For it says there, they told him, you Bethlehem, though you are small but from you will come forth the ruler of Judah. The one who has no beginning and no end. He will rule over the whole world.

So then Herod said to the wise men, now hurry off and find the child because I long to worship him too. Maybe we would have praised God as well. God is working.

He is working in this man's and this king's heart. He is not working, the devil is working there. He wants to kill the saviour.

Off they went, these wise men from the east. Now it is said that historically some say that there were three of them, these wise men. Just a legend.

It's a legend. We don't know whether it's true. Could be just a fairy tale.

But legend has it that there were three wise men or kings. Even if there were three, well, they would not have been alone. They would have had an entourage with them, their personal aides.

Off they went, heading for Bethlehem. As they left Jerusalem, suddenly there was the star again. They had parted from the star when they decided to go into Jerusalem.

And how they rejoiced when they saw the star once again. The same star that they had seen in the east. All this way they weren't led by that star.

Only in the beginning. After that, they were led by their own brains. By their own thinking.

Their own cleverness, intelligence. Presuming he must be born in Jerusalem, no other place would be fit for him. They looked up no longer.

I'd be so happy if every Christian amongst us would catch on now. And grasp this. Let it be a lesson for you.

For the rest of your life. Removing their eyes, they went astray. Much blood was to be spilt because of their going astray.

But Sarah, Abraham, and Hamas. And Solomon. And all of Judah.

And all of Christ. And all of Babylon. And Sarah.

And Abraham. And all of Christ. And all of Israel.

And all of Israel. The same with Sarah. she thinking that it was too late for them to have an heir, the promised heir said to Abraham, well just take my servant and of course it has resulted till today in much bloodshed and sorrow think of Hamas and groups like that that have resulted and are with us till today and who hate Christians too.

If you are not led by that heavenly star that shines brightly in the Bible you will have endless trouble in your own family and all your generations to come and you will regret it and say what a fool I've been, why didn't I do what the Bible says Dear friends I don't know whether you understand, do you register what it's all about. By this you'll bring the blessing upon your life and your generations or you'll bring the curse from below the Bible says remember where you have fallen and where have you fallen you fell when you took your eyes away from the star, when they saw the star again they rejoiced and they followed it closely right until it was above the place of the birth and they went in, they found the child, bowed to him worshipping him, that's the first thing, they worshipped him, then they took out their gifts, much gold, they presented to the child, giving him this gift of gold frankincense and myrrh, marvellous, gold, symbolic of royalty, in the Bible gold signified kings and royalty, they worshipped this child because they knew him as the king secondly they took out frankincense incense signified the divinity they worshipped him as king, as God and then with myrrh too myrrh is something very bitter and this myrrh signifying suffering and death it is correct that they were called wise men by the gifts they signified that this child born was the Lord the King and the gift secondly signified divinity and myrrh signifying death, myrrh was used in those days as an embalming agent how marvellous, for this was revelation from God for they worshipped him as king, not just king, but as God but though he was God, he would suffer and die, he would die we don't know how many they were but we will perhaps meet with them in heaven Remember they were pagans. These were heathen men from the depths of heathendom in the east.

The first time that the heathen came and they came when you were still a child and in what they did they prophesied like few prophets. The first heathens got faith. Though they were heathen they understood far more about this child than the scribes and religious experts in Jerusalem.

Those are the first heathens that got saved and they preached the sermon like very, very, very few people can preach in a clearer way. Heathen kept on worshipping the child, telling the whole world this is the king, he's divine, he's God and in spite of that he'll suffer and he'll die for the whole world. He's a heathen, he is a heathen, he's a heathen, he is a heathen, he's a heathen, he's a heathen... Now, the wise men had been instructed by Herod, when you have finished there in Bethlehem, come by me and tell me where the child is, so that I too can worship him.

They didn't yet realize that this Herod was no worshiper. He was a fox. And isn't it strange that God used a dream? He can even use dreams to save you, and save your spiritual life, and save Jesus who is in you, because the devil will want to kill him.

When these wise men were to leave, they heard a voice saying, O Herod, I have come to save you. Now, though they had promised Herod that they would return, maybe up to this point they still thought that he was a genuine worshiper, but God that night gave them a dream and said, Now don't go via Herod. Take a different road.

And they took a different road. If they wouldn't have done it, it could have been the death of Jesus, not on the cross, somewhere else. And if it wouldn't have been for Joseph who had an ear to hear, during the night, a dream, quickly go down to Egypt, take the mother, take the child, and they had to flee to save the baby's life.

When Joseph had fallen asleep, he heard a voice saying, I have come to save you from the devil. I have come to save you from the devil. He got up, obeyed Joseph, said, Mary, get up.

He got up and said, I have come to save you from the devil. I have come to save you from the devil. I have come to save you from the devil.

I don't think that Mary complained and said but Joseph how can you do this to me I'm still sore I don't see that I can go out into the cold and be on a donkey and take such a long journey I don't think so for she was chosen. Does this make sense to you can I stop now. What you've heard have you grasped it? Has it found a place in your heart? Has it sunk in? Or will it disappear again? I'm going to leave it at this point.

But my prayer is that your listening to this would not have been in vain but bring forth much fruit. And that your future life will benefit because of it if not I will really complain and say but why were you here in the service after all you should have rather stayed at home. I'll cry say why did you come and trouble yourself coming here you should stay it have stayed at home because it's just been in vain.

Let me tell you this if you hear God's Word and God speaks to you and you don't follow him you deserve a double hell not an ordinary one a double hell. Jesus said it would have been better had you never heard but you who have heard woe to you. Let us not only be hearers but doers by God's grace doers of the Word of God.

Let's not be foolish pagans but we've heard about wise pagans today and I My prayer is that you won't be a foolish pagan and that it's been in vain that you have been here but that your future life will benefit

because of it and that you never never forget it even if your parents go into the grave you remain and keep it even if you should go home and all your people forsake you and your friends but that God's Word won't forsake you and you won't forsake his I hope and trust that this will be enough for you for today and the rest of your life. Shall we pray? Please Lord Jesus let this hour not be in vain but may this time and may these words be to benefit our future life. Not only in this world but even in the world to come.

May your grace, O God, be with us all. Not being in vain but rather bringing grace to each one and the love of the Father which sent our Lord Jesus and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all forever. Amen.

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