

# Jack Michael Outreach Ministries

A Ministry of the Watchman on the Walls, preparing God's People for the End Times

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## Word from the Watchman – Who were these Wise Men from afar?

*"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, **WISE MEN FROM THE EAST** came to Jerusalem, saying: Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." (Matthew 2:1-2 NKJV).*

There is much speculation about the identity of these **WISE MEN** (or, **MAGI** – teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams). From Christmas Cards, and other seasonal items, we often see Wise Men with Arab-like features, or black faces, or oriental faces, but who were these Wise Men?

I believe they were Hebrews (Israelites, Jews), descendants of those who had been carried away captive earlier in their history. The Old Testament gives us accounts of the ten northern tribes of Israel, who were carried away captive by the Assyrians; and Judah, who was carried away captive by the Babylonians. During the captivities, their enemies carried away the brightest and best of Israel.

The Wise Men asked the question: *"...Where is He who has been born **KING OF THE JEWS...**?"* Who else but Jews would be interested in the King of the Jews?

Yet, here is my main reason for believing the Wise Men were Jews: They did not come to Jerusalem only because of a star in the sky. They came because of a **PROPHECY**.

In Numbers, chapters 22-24, we read about Balak, King of Moab, hiring Balaam to curse Israel. Instead, God opened Balaam's spiritual eyes, and put his words in Balaam's mouth, and he blessed Israel. In one of his oracles, Balaam actually prophesied about the birth of Jesus:

*"**I SEE HIM**, but not now; **I BEHOLD HIM**, but not near; **A STAR SHALL COME OUT OF JACOB**; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult." (Numbers 24:17 NKJV).*

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Those Jewish Wise Men from the East knew about this prophecy, and for generations their descendants had waited, and watched for the prophecy to be fulfilled.

Balaam said: *"I see Him, **BUT NOT NOW**; I behold Him, **BUT NOT NEAR**; **A STAR SHALL COME OUT OF JACOB**..."* The Wise Men explained why they came: *"...**WE HAVE SEEN HIS STAR** in the East, and have come to worship him."*

Here are some other interesting observations about the Wise Men. We see depicted **THREE** Wise Men riding on camels. The Scriptures do not say there were three. It is assumed there were three, because they brought three gifts: Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Very likely, there was a large entourage who made the journey: The Wise Men (however many there were), male and female servants, and probably a Militia for protection.

Three lone Wise Men on camels could probably have slipped into Jerusalem unnoticed, but Matthew 2:3 says: *"When King Herod heard this **HE WAS DISTURBED**, and **ALL JERUSALEM** with him."* (NIV).

Of course, the Scriptures also do not say they rode on **CAMELS**. Now, camels would have been a good choice for crossing large stretches of desert. Yet, maybe they traveled in carts pulled by oxen. They even could have come by foot. Armies in those days often traveled long distances by foot.

Probably, the journey took about **TWO YEARS**. This is based on the questioning by Herod, and his subsequent actions:

*"Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared ... When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were **TWO YEARS** old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi."* (Matthew 2:7, & 2:16 NIV).

Finally, the Wise Men did not visit baby Jesus in the manger:

*"And when they had come **INTO THE HOUSE** (an abode, or a dwelling place; not a stable), they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him..."* (from Matthew 2:11 NKJV).

I will conclude this teaching with a phrase often heard around this time of the year: **WISE MEN STILL SEEK HIM**.

## Signs of the End Times

### HATRED WITHIN FAMILIES, BECAUSE OF CHRIST

*“Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death. And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. But he who endures to the end shall be saved.” (Mark 13:12-13 NKJV).*

I could have included this Sign of the End Times in the teaching on persecution, but I decided to isolate this teaching, because, strangely, and sadly, it involves members of the same family.

During this Christmas season, when families gather together, and bestow love upon one another, it's hard to imagine the fulfillment of the above words from Jesus. Yet, these words already came to pass in the early church, and they will be fulfilled again in these End Times!

In my lifetime, I have seen the beginning of these signs. Parents, who are unwaveringly committed to the truth of God's Word, are all too often watching their children turn away from God, and create hatred between members of the same family. Currently, from my observations, I have not yet seen family members cause one another to be put to death, but it's just a matter of time.

The Apostle Paul warned about such times. From 2 Timothy 3:1-5, notice the words in **bold**, CAPITAL letters:

*“But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, **DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS**, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!” (NKJV).*

So, what are God's People, who live by faith, supposed to do when such perilous times come upon us? Keep loving those family members who have turned against God; keep praying for them, and as much as possible, be at peace with them:

*“Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” (Romans 12:17-18 NIV).*

Please turn the page over ➡

Since the month of March, I have been teaching on Signs of the End Times. Let us **REVIEW**, and see where we are in God's timetable...

- ⇒ Spiritual Deception.
- ⇒ Wars, and Rumors of Wars.
- ⇒ Earthquakes, and Volatile Weather Patterns.
- ⇒ Famines in Various Places.
- ⇒ Pestilences in Various Places.
- ⇒ Fearful Sights, and Great Signs from Heaven.
- ⇒ Rebellion against Authority.
- ⇒ A False Doctrine of Tolerance.
- ⇒ Persecution against Jews and Christians.
- ⇒ Mockers of God.
- ⇒ Revisiting the Days of Noah.
- ⇒ Revisiting the Days of Lot.
- ⇒ The Restoration of Israel.
- ⇒ And, this month's teaching – Hatred toward Believers in Christ from the same family.

All of these signs – maybe with the exception of: Fearful Sights, and Great Signs from Heaven – have either come to pass, or are in the process of coming to pass.

I know of only **TWO SIGNS** that are yet to come...

- 1) The Great Tribulation.
- 2) The Lack of Synchronization in the Universe (which pertains to the previously mentioned: Fearful Sights, and Great Signs from Heaven).

After the New Year, I will teach on both of these Signs of the End Times that are yet to come.

So, how close are we to the Second Coming of Jesus? Of course, God alone knows! Yet, from the list of signs (above **↑**), we can see what may be the beginnings of The Great Tribulation. And, the recent series of Blood Moons could possibly be the beginnings of Fearful Sights, and Great Signs from Heaven!

Until the time of his return – **EVEN SO, COME, LORD JESUS** – we must heed the words of Jesus' teaching from the parables:

*"And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them: **OCCUPY** (keep busy with the work of God's Kingdom) **TILL I COME.**" (Luke 19:13 (KJV).*