**STAR OF THE EAST**

Matthew 2:1-2, 7-11

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**INTRODUCTION**

The subject of our sermon today is represented by the star at the top of nearly every Christmas tree. The star has inspired an organization related to the Masons called the Order of the Eastern Star. The star is seldom mentioned in Christmas sermons, and very rarely the focal point as it will be today. I want us to consider the unique role and the unusual nature of this star of the east. Of course, the star cannot be separated from the story of the Magi, sometimes called the Wise Men or the Three Kings.

1. **THE STAR AND ITS UNIQUE ROLE**
2. The **Magi** saw the star in the east: “We three kings of Orient are.”
3. They take a trip to see the **reason** for the star’s appearance: the birth of a king.
4. They lost sight of the star when they neared city lights: **Jerusalem**.
5. In Jerusalem, they ask King Herod where the King of the Jews had been born.
6. Herod’s advisors identify the birthplace from Micah 7:2.
7. Herod asks the men when the star first appeared.
8. They identify the star as first appearing nearly 2 years earlier (see v. 16).
9. They continue their journey toward the birthplace of the King: **Bethlehem**.
10. Leaving Jerusalem, they see the star once again and **rejoice** as it goes before them: to the very spot where Jesus lay in a manger in a cave.

*The Magi follow the star to Bethlehem. It seems to me that the star is misnamed. To call it the star of the east seems to mislead us to think that the star was in the east, but it actually was a star in the west for them. Of course, as we consider the unusual nature of this star, it may change our opinion of the star even further.*

1. **THE STAR AND ITS UNUSUAL NATURE**
2. Notice that the star **suddenly** appeared: an unusual beginning.
3. The star **disappeared** near a city: not so unusual because of city lights.
4. The star **reappeared** as they went out of the city: no longer hidden by lights.
5. The star led them to the **specific** spot where the baby lay.
6. The star seems to have been visible **only** to the wise men.

*This star was like no other star before or since. It seems to have been visible only to a select group and to have moved in front of them so that they would come to the exact location of the newborn King. Maybe the star first appeared in the east, but it caused the wise men to go to the west as they followed its movement before them. Truly, this star was unique, like no other star!*

**CONCLUSION**

The Magi were convinced that a king that had his own star had to be a very special king. Thus, they made this long journey—probably one lasting about two years—to honor this king. When the star led them to a lowly manger in a cave, they did not question why a king would be born in such humble surroundings. Rather, they bowed down and worshipped Him and offered gifts worthy of a king: gold, incense, and myrrh. Today, will you make the journey of a lifetime to give precious gifts to Jesus? Will you honor Him by giving Him your life? Will you follow His star all the way to Heaven? If you are not already on this journey, I encourage you to begin today. Bow down and worship Christ the King!

*“Star of the East, O Bethlehem’s star Guiding us on to Heaven afar!*

*Sorrow and grief and lulled by thy light, Thou hope of each mortal, in death’s lonely night!*

*Fearless and tranquil, we look up to Thee! Knowing thou beam’st thro’ eternity!*

*Help us to follow where Thou still dost guide, Pilgrims of earth so wide.”*