

O Holy Night (Part2)

12-20-9

“The Christmas Message!”

I. **INTRO:**

- A. **City Council meeting:** TY to the 50 that were able to show.
 1. Our City voted as they should have, to **not** approve our Master Dev Plan.
 2. **Clarify 1 thing:** When 1 City Council member said “**we should have done our due diligence before purchasing the property**”. We did, & his timeline was off.
 - a) Another said, “**we might have done some things wrong, you might have done things wrong.**”
 3. The RCA says they will assess our property for purchase...we’ll see. (appraisal)
- B. **Announce Zach’s engagement:**
- C. **Last week:** The Gospel Message; The *Christmas* Message; The Heart of God.

II. **THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE!**

- A. **The Original French Version!**
- B. **The ardent light of our Faith,** (ardent=passionate/to burn; *the burning light...*)
 Guides us all to the cradle of the infant, [us]
 As in ancient times a brilliant star
 Conducted the Magi there from the orient. [wisemen]
The King of kings was born in a humble manger;
 O mighty ones of today, proud of your grandeur,
 It is **to your pride** that God preaches. [His humility vs. our pride]
Bow your heads before the Redeemer!¹ [response]
- C. Let’s read about the wise men in Mt.2:1-12: **They Came - They Saw - They Worshiped!**
- D. **They Came!**
- E. Led by the light of faith serenely beaming,
 With glowing hearts by His cradle we stand.
 1. **The Light of faith:** When darkness (in our hearts/life) is turned to light.
 2. **With glowing hearts:** Glow is defined as a steady light w/o flame.
 3. **By His cradle we stand:** Shepherds & Us.
 4. **Application:** Is this where you stand?

¹ English Translation of Minuits, chrétiens/Cantique de Noël: N.b. the English version of 'O Holy Night' is not a direct translation of the French

F. They Saw!

G. O'er the world a star is sweetly gleaming,
Now come the wisemen from out of the Orient land.

1. If the wisemen traveled from Babylon or Persia, they've come about 400 miles
2. And, there is many things that can **distract** along the way.
 - a) Yet the **were**'t distracted by **Herod**, **nor** the **Star**, **nor** by **Mary & Joseph**.
3. **They weren't distracted by Herod!**
 - a) His reputation preceded him. He was 4'4" [A short man who wanted to be tall!]
 - b) He became a builder: [Built: Palaces, Fortresses, Entire Cities, Masada, Aqueducts, & esp. known for the Remodeling of the Temple!]
 - c) He was Cruel & Vicious! [1 night killed his wife, then his 3 sons later that eve] Next day felt bad, so built a tower (still stands today), dedicated it to them.
 - d) Caesar Augustus said, "It is safer to be **Herod's pig** than his son!"
 - e) In his 70's, realizing **none** would *mourn his death*, he arrested 100 leaders in Jer. & ordered that when he died, they would instantly be killed also, thinking, "*If the city won't mourn for me, let them mourn for those who die w/me!*" (Joseph. antiq.xvii 6.5)
4. So, They weren't distracted by **Herod**.
5. **They weren't distracted by the Star itself!**
 - a) It would be pretty easy to get distracted by what is your passion!
 - b) These guys were all about **stars!**
 - c) We are **intrigued** and somewhat **mystified** by the appearance of the Magi.
 - (1) "Wise Men" or "Kings" we sometimes call them (bible never calls them kings).
 - (a) Or, maybe it does? Read **Is.60:1-3**
 - (b) They were *astrologers*.
 - (c) Didn't seem to know prophecy (**Mt.2:6**; Micah 5:2)
 - (2) We often ask, "Who were they really?" "Where did they come from?" "Were there actually 3 of them?" and if so, "What were their names?"
 - (a) Long tradition has made them 3: **Caspar** is old & semitic; **Melchior** is middle-aged and European; **Balthasar** is young & African.
 - i) Sounds like the *Politically Correct Nativity*.
 - (b) Probably traveled in a group of 30-50.
 - (c) Probably the number of 3 wise men, because of the **3 gifts** brought.
 - d) When we get down to it, these questions are not significant to our understanding of the Christian faith.

- (1) What is important for us about the Wise Men is **their response to Jesus**.
- (2) *As we reflect on the Magi, we discover how we should respond to God in our own life.*

6. So, They weren't distracted by **the Star** itself.

7. **They weren't distracted by Mary & Joseph!**

a) Vs.11 - The gifts were presented to **Jesus** (Him). Not to Mary the mother of Jesus. Not to Joseph. Not to the Holy Family.

- (1) To **Jesus**, is to whom we *come*;
- (2) To **Jesus**, is to whom we *fall down & worship*;
- (3) To **Jesus**, is to whom we *present our gifts*;
- (4) To **Jesus**, is to whom we *open our treasures*;
- (5) To **Jesus**, is to whom we *present our gifts*; (all from vs.11)

8. They weren't distracted by **Mary & Joseph**.

H. Notice that the Wise Men simply "*came*."

1. **Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.**²
2. The wise men **Came - They Saw - They Worshiped!**

I. The King of kings lay thus lowly manger;

In all our trials born to be our friends.

He knows our need, our weakness is no stranger,

1. King of Kings humility: because of our pride (see French translation)

a) The King of kings was born in a humble manger;
O mighty ones of today, proud of your grandeur,
It is to your pride that God preaches.

2. He's born to be our **Friend**, in the midst of our **trials**:
3. He knows our **need**, He knows our **weaknesses**:
4. **So, what should be our response?** Worship/bend!

J. They Worshiped!

K. Behold your King! Before him lowly bend!

1. Behold your King! - pilate will say later.
2. Before Him lowly bend: our humility.

² Mt.11:28

- L. On a visit to the **Beethoven museum** in Bonn, a young American student became fascinated by the piano on which Beethoven had composed some of his greatest works. She asked the **museum guard** if she could play a few bars on it; she accompanied the request with a lavish tip, and the guard agreed. The girl went to the piano and tinkled out the opening of the *Moonlight Sonata*. As she was leaving she said to the guard, “I suppose all the great pianist who come here want to play on that piano.” The guard shook his head. “Padarewski [*the famed Polish pianist*] was here a few years ago and he said he wasn’t worthy to touch it.”
1. We are **not worthy** in our own righteousness to touch/come to Jesus.
 2. **Yet He is worthy!** - He invites you this morning to come place your hands, upon His hands, as He plays the **piano**, the **music**, **each note** of your life!