

## Christmas 2008



### “CYNICISM: IT STEALS THE WONDER”

11/30/08

Matthew 2:1-12 “Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, “Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?”

“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they said, “for this is what the prophet wrote: ‘And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.’”

Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.”

1<sup>ST</sup> – WONDER AT THE MIRACULOUS FULFILLMENT OF PROPHECY

2<sup>ND</sup> – WONDER AT THE MULTIPLE ANGELIC ANNOUNCEMENTS

Luke 1:26-27 “In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary.”

3<sup>RD</sup> – WONDER AT THE VIRGIN WHO GAVE BIRTH TO A SON

Luke 1:37 “For nothing is impossible with God.”

4<sup>TH</sup> – WONDER AT THE STAR THAT BROUGHT ASTRONOMERS FROM THE EAST

Numbers 24:17 "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob; a scepter will rise out of Israel."

Matthew 2:9 “it stopped over the place where the Child was.”

2 Corinthians 8:12-13 “If you are really eager to give, it isn’t important how much you are able to give. God wants you to give what you have, not what you don’t have. Of course, I don’t mean you should give so much that you suffer from having too little.”