

Visions and Revelations

Message 6: The Wise Men and the Star (Part 1)

Dear brothers and sisters I am very thankful to the Lord for the gathering like this. This is the sixth message for the church life in the Church in Cleveland or wherever you are. Please remember this message is not just a message for you to hear, to receive some life, to get some life supply, to give you some truth to enjoy, a good time--no. This message is really for the church life. For the Church in Cleveland that every week we should have a short message about 30 to 40 minutes. In this message we have profound truth, we have clear utterance, we have nourishing of life. We enjoy something of Christ. But remember: it is not just a message for us to listen, then as a process we go through it and then we wait for next week, no. This is a fellowship for the whole church where you are watching it. If either with brothers together or by yourself in another time, remember this is a church gathering together. Listen to the message and then in teams we fellowship. More than that, then in the coming week for six days everyday some brothers will prepare the supplement for you to get into it. For you to study. So eventually what we are going to share in this series, it maybe 15 messages for 4 months. Then after that, I hope everything is clear. We can come together again--when the church will be able to come together again, then we will stop this series. I think at that time this series should be finished. But whatever brother, this is part of the church life when you listen to this please remember there are hundreds of saints listening to this message with you together in a church gathering even though we do not see one another. So this is not a message for you to pursue to get extra knowledge, for you to be a little bit richer. This is a sharing for the church life in the Church in Cleveland or the church where you are in. This is marvelous, so brother let's continue now we have covered so far 5 messages. Basically stress on this is the change. A change of dispensation. Remember we said a change of dispensation from law to life. From God outward to God inward. From outward services to a real life flowing inside with many other Christian brothers, we are coming out of the Old Testament we are coming into the New Testament. Let me ask you: what is the biggest difference between Old and New testament? You may say it is very different. Old Testament is outside, New Testament is inside. It is true. Old Testament gives law. New Testament of Christ. It is true. Old Testament is on behaviors New Testament is of life. It is also true. And there's another thing we should be very clear. Old Testament God has a chosen people, this chosen people are Israelites. God cares for Israelites, God was with Israelites. God stand with them and rebuked them and encouraged them, uplift them and tried to help them to be the testimony of God, but eventually remember the Lord Jesus came to the fig tree and tried to find something. Fig tree means the Old Testament Israelites Jewish religion. The Lord came to the fig tree and tried to find something to eat and there's nothing, so the Lord declared: "You will have no more fruit and that tree withered." What does that mean? That means God says I tried. I have tried 1500 years with Moses, such a great servant. With law I told you who I am. With the tabernacle, with the festival, with the offerings, with the priesthood, with all these things. But he focused on

one race. This actually is not very much God's desire. Seemingly God want to gain one group of people, Israelites, hoping through them, through these Israelites, God can gain something that magnifies himself. God seemingly failed. So when God says I'm going to move from the Old Testament to the New Testament, from law to grace, from commandments to life. I tell you the biggest change with all these is that I am no longer for the Jews alone. I am going to be for all the races, all the nations and all the people, all educated, uneducated, high or low, different colors make no difference. I am for everybody on this earth this is a big change, it's way beyond the understanding of the Jews, but if you consider carefully when the Lord resurrected. After in his resurrection, he went to his disciples. He should have said, grace be to you, don't be sad, depressed, grieved. Remember look at me I'm resurrected. I'm with you now. You have me all the time, no. The Lord quickly says no. It's not you, it's not for you, it's not your need, it's my need. Not what you want, what I want, you disciples, you feel so sorrowful because i died. But don't you remember, don't you see I'm resurrected. In my resurrection let me tell you, go ye therefore, go out! Don't stay just in Jerusalem! Don't stay just with Jews! Go ye therefore and disciple all the nations. Go ye therefore disciple all the nations! You know brother, this very much tells us in resurrection, Christ begin to show what is really in his heart. My heart is not for one race, not for one group of people. My heart is for the whole earth. And more than that when Jerusalem came together after in the resurrection of Christ, Christ was with them appearing and disappearing for 40 days. Then at the end, the Lord declared to them, "The Spirit will be upon you. You shall have strength. You shall have power. Then our question is: "have power so what can I do power?" So I can overcome my sickness. The virus not going to get me because of that power. Power so I can be a healer, power so I can do miraculous things. I can raise people from the dead? No. He said have power! What kind of power that from Jerusalem to all the land of Judea to Samaria and all the way to the uttermost part of the earth. What is God's heart? Now you see the big change. The big change from Jewish religion to a living God, operating mightily with the desire that he can be the Savior not for one race, not for one class, not for one age, not for one gender, not for one particular situation. I should be the Savior for the whole globe. Everyone on this earth needs to hear the gospel, needs salvation. If you have somewhat this in view you should be impressed. Lord, I am very thankful you show us five visions. First Joseph, then Zechariah, then Mary, then shepherd, finally the wise men. Did you realize in every vision, God says something to tell them: No, it's not Jew, it is the whole earth. Even though people will interpret it as there for me, as the Jew says for instance: He told Joseph you shall name him Jesus. He shall save his people out of sins. Let me ask you. To Joseph his people, the Jews. Today we understand his people means all the believers, the whole earth. Everyone is his people. He likes to save the whole earth and more than that. Talk to Zechariah. He is such a marvelous priest. Go through some marvelous appearance. End of his testimony is that he shall give light to those who sit in darkness and shadow of death. Let me ask you? Is this just Jews? Of course not. We Gentiles were not only 2000 years ago. Gentiles were even 2000 years later. We still can say we were those sitting in darkness and the shadow of death. The light came, the morning light, daylight shine to those who are in darkness. That means what? God is not a God of Jews alone,

God is God for the whole earth. Then Mary is very simple, Mary is a simple pure, lovely honorable, to be honored young sister, she said what? To her she said wow, those who are needy, that he will fill their hunger with great things. Great things means what? Spiritual things and physical things, now it's not Jew, this whole earth. Did you see that? To Joseph, whole earth. To Zechariah, whole earth. To Mary, whole earth. So eventually, God has a declaration, through the shepherds. To the shepherds, God's declaration is this: on earth, peace be with those, peace be with those with whom He is pleased. Who is this man? Who are these men? Brother, you know clearly, you will not be just Jews. Us all. Did you see, in these 5 large visions, brings in the change from, of dispensation. When the dispensation change, what mainly expressed is that God's desire is fully shown at that time. This is why in the fifth one you have the wise men. These are Gentiles. Okay, Joseph, Zechariah, Mary, shepherds – they all are Jews. But the one last shown are Gentiles. Gentiles, it's very interesting. Gentiles. You know brother, who are they? There is a very hard to have a word to portray this man. The Greek word could mean: the one who studies astronomy. These are those who see things. And also, what? Also, English version most translate to "wise men". Chinese translation is "highly educated, fully equipped". When they look up, they see the things in the sky. When they live on this earth, they see the things on this earth.

I just speak to you [*Speaking in Chinese*].

Those are men very well equipped with the riches of human life, with the riches of human knowledge, with the riches of profound knowledge related to what, related to the existence of the universe and related to the existence of man. Because they understand this much, they – I'm happy, they are also pursuers. They are not a professor. I'm a professor in a university, I teach certain class, I can use the same book and teach them after 30 years. They are not. These are the profound person, so rich in knowledge, so rich in understanding that they become men of wisdom. As the men of wisdom, they pursue what is real in life. They are willing to pay a price to gain what is the top. You know what's happened? You know what's happened? When they were studying the skies, they found out a star used to be not there appeared. That star was shining! That star, he said, "Oh, that star!" In what? From East, it's in the West side. In the other side, there is a big star shining. This star was never there. But for some reason, they studied it. When they watch the stars, they found out it's about time in the morning, before day came, a star appeared, which was never there before. He said, "Oh that star! That star must be somewhat, must be something related to God."

Did you realize, Gentile understand incarnation. Maybe much more than many of the Jews. Just by seeing that star, they see what John testified and the Word became flesh. You know, when that star appeared, that star appeared when Lord Jesus became a man. When Lord Jesus became a man, that star shone, appeared. With appearing of that star, they realize, whoa something great happened in the universe! Listen, there is a new star, never was there! Now, showed up. They understand. Just like the Bible says, what star mean. Star means a man.

Remember in creation, God created, God repaired the sun. The light bearers, the day – the sun, evening – the moon. Then the verse added, and He created the stars. Or He made the stars. You know, brother, which means what? Christ – the sun. Church – the moon. Christ is ever shining; church is reflecting the light of Christ at night. How do these become reality? Reality comes from many stars. Stars are man.

And more than that, when God promised Abraham, you shall have descendant, then he look at the stars. Your descendant will be like the stars. So eventually, you'll be very surprised that, that star come, that particular star. Was not there before. They studied stars, they understand stars, they know so much, they are rich in this knowledge. But they say, "Wow, something happened!" Something happened from, if they look at the sky, from the West part, on the West something happened. That star was never there before. There is a star that is shining. There is a star glowing. There is a star coming to being when the night is about gone, day is about come, the star come. He said, something great happened. These are the wise men. These are not astronomers. Oh, we study stars. This side and that side. No, no, they say this star means something to the universe. In the universe on this earth, something great happened! God must have, be related to this. We want to find out. So, with their knowledge, they understand. There is one religion on this globe know God, have God, and God is with them. In all the religion talk about God. Buddhist talk about God, but no god. All the religion, whatever you are, but only one religion, that's the Jews. The Jewish religion. 2000 year ago they have God. They have God's speaking, they have God's walking among them, they have God's doing among them. And those wise men know this. So, understand, now God is coming, doing something. A man must be born to be the King of the Jews. Of the Jews. So, let's go see the King. Now you see, this shows the specialties of those wise men.

Number 1 – they're deep in philosophy and full of wisdom. They are very wise. Number 2 – they are searching intensely for the purpose of human existence. These are not teachers. I'm sorry to say that, these are not even message givers. These are real seekers. Seeking after reality of human existence. Seeking after reality of the universe existence. So more than that, they are profound pursuing of the meaning of universe. Not just see, I pay a price, I like to pay a price to get the reality that's why, they are really wise men. So, when they know that, know that, know that at that time the whole earth only one religion with God, the Judaism. So, they are willing to pay all the price in order to gain the truth. Now I see star, I like to pay a price. Let's go.

I tell you, if you're that educated, if you are that well-educated, profound person, you must not be very young. You must spend many years in knowledge, in pursuing knowledge, in pursuing the riches, even I say, philosophy of human existence. Now, at their age, maybe older, they, some of them will say, let's go. I think the group could be bigger, but in this big group few of them, we don't know how many, right? But few of them will say, "Let's go. Let's find out the star, let's see the star, let's do something with the star." This is why they begin their long journey from East. We don't know which country is that, where is that, but journey all the way to Jerusalem. They know that the star is from, from where they are, they look at it, it's in the West.

So, they go all the way to where it should be. They go to Jerusalem because they know, only religion has God is with Jewish religion. So, they realize, God is there. And the star is related to God's work, related to what God is doing, so He is there. Therefore, their feeling is, let's go. So, they went there.

And it's interesting, after so much suffering, they got it. And their question is very pure. I don't care politics. I don't even care about religion. I care about the facts. Let me ask you, the one who was born to be the King of the Jews, where is He? We saw a star, we come all the way, may be close to 2 years walk. Now, tell me, where is He? Wow, you know what's happened? The Bible is interesting, all the Jews are bothered. Are they waiting for Messiah? I don't know why they are bothered. And off course, Herod is the one bothered the most. What are you talking about? One is going to be born King of the Jews, that means I will be overthrown. I'm the ruler. So, he find the religion, he get the priests, he get the scribes, and asks them, hey who should be the King of Jew? Where should the King of Jew be born? Listen to these terrible preachers. Terrible bible studies, scholars. Listen to scribes, he says, "Oh, where? Oh, oh, yeah, it's very clear, it's in Bethlehem. Let me tell you the verse. Bethlehem you are not the smallest among the cities. There will be a king born in your place."

What is your feeling?

I am happy I am on this age, with my poor disposition. If I was in that age, I would grab the scribes and shake them real hard. Wake up you stupid! You know all this, but where are you actually? I know the truth, I know the Bible, I studied it, I have a lot of time on the truth, I read this book, that book, I pursued a lot, but eventually where are you? What really counts? Where are you. Listen to them, will that make you really sad? "I know... in Bethlehem." Then you know, the interesting thing, "hey wise man, you go. You find him, I will go to worship him." This is from Herod. Then the scribes would say, "you go, you find him, we will reconsider what we should do," because we are scribes, we are priests, we have our place in religion. If real Christ comes, what should we do when we are in religion?

But eventually, surprising, do you realize, so marvelous, the star coming down. Was high star appear to them, I don't know how many times, or maybe every morning they can see the star, but it's far away, remote, lead them to Jerusalem, because they know only Jewish religion has God. All of the others are superstitious religions. Now when they find that place, they say ok, we are going to Bethlehem. When they are on the way to Bethlehem, the star descended to a place, can walk ahead of them.

Let me ask you, if the star is so high in the heavenlies, how can they lead you to Bethlehem? It has to be lower and lower. But what does that mean? Doesn't despise the vision that you see. The vision you see if you are faithful in that, more and more the vision will become intimate. The vision will become close, the vision will become near you. The vision can lead you, the vision can become your reality of your footsteps. Take you step by step because of that vision. Faithful to a vision is not a small thing. Most people see a vision, have a vision, and for some reason, "oh

I saw something, hallelujah, Christ and the Church” and then end right over there, no. They see a vision, they pay a price for the vision so the high vision, heavenly vision, more and more closer to them. To a point, they can see the star walk, move, right in front of them, and they can walk by following them until what, until the star stay in that house.

I like this part brother. I see so many brothers have visions, I feel... I see so few brothers want to pay a price to have the reality of the vision. That is why they always can declare a vision, but heavenly, far away. But some brothers they can declare the vision nearby. They can declare a vision by saying I know it, I see it, I'm with it, I enjoyed it, it is with me, it leads me, carry me, takes me, my life is mingled with the vision I have. What a marvelous thing is this.

Then they see the child. So, they offer 3 things. The gold, which is God himself. So they are declaring, declaring, “little child...” you know the Bible didn't call him a baby, called him a little child, means he is about coming out of baby age, he may be about 2 years ago. He saw the little child, he says, “you are the gold.” Who are you? You are God-man. Who are you? You are God. Gold means God himself. You are just God himself. More than that let me tell you, your whole life will be so expensive. You have to pay a big price, you have to experience a lot of things to accomplish what the gold desires. So I offer you also myrrh, offer you also frankincense. Frankincense and myrrh, myrrh means his death, frankincense means his resurrection.

If you come to the outline, it is very simple, here says here, they offered gold. Jesus is son of God, he is... son of God, Jesus son of God... he is the first God man, the first man of God. Marvelous right? He says, here I see a boy, but you know who is this boy? This boy is God! God himself! He is the first God man. Outwardly, he is a man, just a boy. But in reality, in him there is God. He is gold. Then he says, “this boy is going to grow.” He will have a life much more difficulty, yet much more glorious than anybody can expect. He is going to go through the experience of being a myrrh. He is myrrh. He is frankincense. These are spices, these spices have to go through a lot of process, not just they are beautiful, or they grow a certain way. No, they have to go through a lot of process, eventually they can become a kind of spice give you odor, fragrance, for you to enjoy. So he says, “boy, little boy, I see you, I worship you.” Why? Because you are gold. You are God man. You are man, but with gold life, golden life, a golden constitution. More than that, let me say, let me testify, you will have a hard life. Your life is a life of myrrh.

Eventually, today we understand, eventually, Jesus died on the cross. But more than that, he is also frankincense. You will not just have a hard life, you will have a glorious outpouring, spreading, fragrance to all human race. Whosoever believe in me, shall be saved. What a myrrh, what a frankincense! But, do you realize who is the first one declare it? The Gentiles. The Gentiles. The gentile wise men. They saw something and they pursued. Jew don't. But eventually, what happen? Eventually they left, went back through another route.

Herod says “What? He went away? So who is that boy?”

“We don’t know.”

“Let’s kill them all.”

But before he want to kill them all, Joseph inspired, led, by the angel’s speaking went down to Egypt, went down to Egypt with his family. You know brother, this is a principal. All the boys were killed. I don’t understand where are the priests. I don’t understand where are the scribes. Just like today, I see so many Christians were spoiled just by going to Lord’s day morning meetings, seeking friends, and have a Christian society, have a Christian social life. They didn’t realize they were damaged, they were hurt. They are not brought to the love of Christ, having the person of Christ as their enjoyment, as their substance, as their reality, as the meaning of their existence. On the contrary, they are just like the scribes. We know what’s going to happen. So many Christians, “That day, everything will be fine.” Brother be careful, that day everything will be fine, but not according to what you think.

You have to realize brother, he went down. Lord Jesus went down to Egypt, persecuted by the politics and religion, and that become a pattern. Remember how Jesus was crucified? Religion and politics. Remember when the church was raised up, who killed James, John’s brother? Religion and politics. Remember eventually, the gospel was preached out by the faithfulness of the apostles, but who eventually persecuted them? Again, politics joined religion. Brother, be very careful. Because of that, remember, eventually Paul says, I will go to Gentiles. He was so persecuted, the principal of going to Egypt come back again. Egypt was Gentile. Lord Jesus said, Joseph said, “If Herod wants to kill us all, let’s go to Gentile.” Now Paul said, “If you Jews will not receive me, and persecute me, let me go to Gentiles.”

Brother, be very careful. We love the Lord, but we are live on this world. Every time when religion becomes overly... exalted, they can be qualified, they can be qualified to talk with politics, and politics have to honor religion and religion attach, affiliate, themselves to politics. That’s where the church, the Christians going to pay the big price, going to suffer a lot.

We need the Lord’s mercy. Brother, this short story tell you, God says, no I am not just for the Jews, I am for the whole earth. You know who is the first one honor me as God? Gentiles. Who is first one tells everybody I am going to die? Gentiles. Who is the first one to tell me there is resurrection? Gentiles. Who is the first one to see the Word became flesh, as that star? Gentiles. What does this mean? This means God declaring to us all, “I am not for Chinese, I am not for Americans, I am not for white, I am not for black, I am for all, the whole globe is for my salvation! I am waiting to save everyone. Whosoever believe in Jesus. Whosoever call on the name of the Lord shall be saved! Hallelujah.” Today we say “Lord we are thankful.” We hope we are part of the wise man. We are not equipped as them, but at least, we want to pay a price as they paid, until your testimony become real. May Lord be merciful and be with us. We are thankful to him. Amen. I stop here.