

## Visions and Revelations

### Message 7: The Wise Men and the Star (Part 2)

*Note: This is a lightly edited transcript meant to aid saints in personal and small group fellowship and pursuing.*

Now we come to the continuation of the previous message on the wise men and the star. I had the feeling we needed to spend a little more time on the star. Most people who read the Bible think there is just a star shining--No. Those wise men, they saw a new star. The star was never there before, but now they see a bright star come into being when the night is just about over and the day is just about to begin. So, it's called the morning star. But when they saw the star, I think the wise men's first discussion was "We have never seen this star before. Where did it come from?" Then their understanding is "it must have come from God. God has done something very special." Then where is God? To them it was very clear: if you want to know God--to really have God--then you must go to the Jews, because their religion is the only religion that has God Himself. God was among them. God worked among them. God manifested himself among them. God made all the arrangements for a godly life among them. That's a religion filled with substance.

Now, the star came to the wise men, but what does it mean? It means there's a new beginning for that religion. So they consider: "this must be a sign of a king born among the Jews. He was born to be a king of the Jews." This is a glorious thing. This is why they pursued it for all that time. The outline here says "the wise men's lifelong search peaked with the appearance of that star." It's a simple statement. They studied astronomy. They studied things on the earth. They studied philosophy. They had a lot of knowledge on many things, especially on philosophy and on the study of life. Now they had the realization: "Hey, a new star has come. Look at that star. We have never seen it before. Why is there a star there?!" Why is there a star? Because that is exactly what John testified: the Word became flesh (John 1:14). When the Word became flesh, that flesh is a star. That particular star manifested, so they realized, "Now we have found the real meaning of all our searches! It is related to that star." So, they began a long journey.

Here I'll just read to you from the outline: Firstly, this appearing led them to the land of Judah because they knew that only Judaism had the true God. If this star, which was not in existence before, has now appeared, then this new existence is from God. Then, God must be related to the Jews because only they have the real God. And so now when they saw this they said, "We look for the meaning of life. We consider, 'What is the reason for our existence?' We consider, 'Why is there an earth and all the things on the earth?' Also we consider, 'Why and what is the universe?'" Something particular happened: a new star appeared in the heavens. This new star means the age is different; God's operation is different. This star is related to the meaning of life,

related to the meaning of human existence, related to the meaning of the existence of all things on the globe, even related to the meaning of the universe because this new star came into being. With this, the wise men had the understanding, "Let's find him. Let's find him, because now we realize a new age has come." This understanding came when, all of the sudden, out of nowhere, a new star appeared in the heavens. So this appearing caused the wise men to realize a new star was coming under the one born to be king. This must be a new king; a new ruling. This appearance of the star produced their pursuing--a long and treacherous path--to find Jesus. We like to pay a price.

Let me say a word to you: We know too much to the point that we don't even know what it means to pay a price. To us, everything is provided. Some brothers have to buy the land. Some brothers have to build the hall. Some brothers have to pursue. Some brothers have to become rich. Some brothers have to labor. So we have a church life, but for what? So you can have a Lord's day morning meeting. Isn't that a shame? Isn't that a shame? Do you realize God's desire is not for people to know, to be happy, to say "we have a good time," or to say "Oh we have a good message"-- No. God desires people to say, "I see something, so I endeavor. I pursue, I pay a price, I labor hard, and I'd like to break the pattern of my daily life. I'd like to break the American culture of my life. I want to live unto God, to gain the best of Christ."

A marvelous life began by those wise men's pursuing. Then, eventually, the star was before them. I like that. We shared that last time already. A heavenly vision is so remote, but I see something. What I see controls my life. It affects my life. So according to the vision, I labor. According to the vision, I pursue. According to the vision, I pay a price. According to the vision, I say, "Let's go on!" Do you know what has happened? The vision becomes more and more real to us. Formerly it's a vision. Now, it becomes a substance. Formerly, it's a vision, *I see*. Now, it becomes something that *walks with me*.

Now, eventually you see the star went before them. It's marvelous. You have to realize, it is not a star many miles high above them--that will only give you directions, but will never "go before you." If a star can go before you, then it must be very close to you and not very high. It is at a height such that you understand exactly where the star is going. You understand exactly where it is leading. So, the star went before them, which indicates that this vision became more and more of a reality to the pursuers (the wise men). I like this, brothers. Last time I shared--do you mind if I share it again? You do have a vision. If you don't have a vision, then how could you be in the church life? Let me ask you, does the vision become more and more remote? Or does the vision become closer and closer? If it becomes more and more distant, more and more remote, that means you see something, but you failed it. You didn't pay a price for the vision you see. But, by the Lord's mercy, many Christians can tell you: because they are faithful to the vision they see, the vision becomes closer. The vision becomes more clear. The vision becomes more realistic. The vision becomes more applicable. The vision becomes part of their life. The vision, the

Christian, their living and their pursuing become one. This is exactly what's mentioned here. The star went before them. Why? Because they pursued it.

This appearing also caused the wise men to produce the most appropriate offerings. Eventually the star led them to Jesus and the wise men offered the most appropriate offerings. You can't believe it--it should be from a Jew right? The Jews were waiting for the messiah. It should be from a priest, right? It should be from the scribes. It should be from Pharisees. It should be from those who are always in the Bible, always memorizing verses, always taking this as a part of their living. Yet, now the Lord says, No. No. I would like to use these Gentiles. Because they're faithful to the vision, because they journeyed for the vision, because they ended up seeing Jesus, I'd like to give them revelations. You know what Jesus deserves? What's worthy for Jesus? Gold. Myrrh. Frankincense. Marvelous. He is God, yet He must die with an all-inclusive death to terminate all the negative things. Then, He is in resurrection to germinate all the positive things. This star was a God-man. God became man. That's why a star is there. Eventually, in resurrection, this star will become the morning star, which the Lord Jesus declared, and conclude all things and bring us to eternity. Marvelous.

Now, we come to the next point. This is one star, but Paul says, "Oh brothers, dear brothers, do you know, you are also a star?" Paul was very clear and bold to declare: the sun has its glory, the moon has its glory, the stars have their glories (1 Cor 15:41). Then he quickly said, "Hey, wait a minute, in the church life in Cleveland every brother is a star. Every brother has glory. But this one's glory is different from the glory of the others." That glory is based on: do you love the Lord more? Do you have Christ more? Do you enjoy Christ more? Do you enjoy Christ as your life? As your supply? As your strength? As your wisdom? As your empowerment? As your goal of life? As your daily living? If you do, then glory comes up. This star and that star, this glory and that glory are different, but the Lord desires you, dear brother, you, dear sister, to be a star that is saturated with Christ--saturated with the life of Christ. You should have so much enjoyment, you have so much pursuing, you have so much time spent before the Lord, to the point, brother, you know what's happened? You are a glorious star. A star bears glory in the church life. Eventually the church can be a good testimony of the Lord.

More than that, you know, stars are men in Genesis one. Then, with Abraham, stars are related to life, to transmitting of life, and to continuation of life. More than that, Jesus was the star which shows you, God became man; there is a God-man. Then the Lord says, "Oh, brothers, you all receive Jesus Christ, so you are God-men. When you are one of the God-men, please, you must have glory." Brother, we cannot have a church life, meeting life, today as free as we desire. We would like to come together, but the Lord says "Stop." I think the Lord may have some meaning in it. To tell you, you are so very much meeting-oriented. You make the meeting, and you think that's everything. No. I don't want you to be a meeting-goer; I want you to be a man who bears glory. If, through this, we are not meeting together, but everyone says, because of this, I want to

love the Lord more; I want to pursue more; I want to be with my companions through whatever means more; I want to enjoy and partake of the riches of the church life more through whatever means, then eventually, the Lord will gain more glory than with us all coming together to listen to a message. I don't despise us coming together. Christians *must* come together. But the Lord, with a special government, told us, "Don't focus on the meetings." Learn this lesson: even when the meetings are consumed, I still want to be a good star, shining the glory of the Lord in the church life.

This will cause the next one. The Lord Jesus testified, "I walk in the midst of the churches and in my hand, there are seven stars. I hold seven stars." You know brother, there is not just one star of glory. You should become one of the seven stars upheld by the Lord. The Lord holds the seven stars in His hand. This is very, very marvelous. Consider this, brother. In the church life, we have stars. We have stars with glory. But the Lord will say, "I want to have something even more. I want to hold seven stars." These seven stars are the messengers. These seven stars are the messengers of the Lord. Let me read to you: "When Jesus lovers who became stars begin to live for the church, they become the seven stars in the hands of the Lord."

These seven stars, who are they? They are the messengers. Do you know what messengers mean? Usually when we think about what "messenger" means, we think they come from God to tell us what we ought to do. God would tell you, don't be afraid, the virus is not going to get you. We consider that the coming of a messenger. No. A real messenger is a mediator. I bring God to man. I bring man to God. When I operate in the church life, the saints will have more of God. Because the messenger brings Christ to man. Brings God to man. Brings the divine element, the divine person to the saints in the church life.

Can you say: I'm a messenger in the local church? More than that, I bring the saints to the Lord. I know their needs. I bring them to Christ to let Christ meet their needs. I know how to pray for them. I know how to encourage them. I know how to share Christ with them. I know how to bring Christ to them and bring them to Christ.

And more than that, these messengers are the church life operators. Did you realize, every healthy church life needs a group of operators who initiate. They consider. They begin to consider the need of the church, the situation of the church, the situation of the saints, and how the Spirit is operating and leading. They are operators. Because of them, the church life can have vitality. Who are we? We are routine church-goers. If you arrange the Lord's Day morning. I will come on Lord's Day morning. If you arrange a prayer meeting and you set a time; I'll make it. You are not operators. You are not a star, held by the Lord in his right hand, with his exalting. With his strength to make sure you can do it and bless the church.

Do you know what the Church in Cleveland needs? Operators. With the gatherings, we need operators. With young people, we need operators. With college, we need operators. With the gospel, we need operators. With pursuing the truth, we need operators. With even children, we need operators. We need operators for all aspects, all ages, and all needs. If the church life has rich, good, mature, faithful operators as the stars held by the hand of the Lord, the church life is very blessed. You walk into the church life, you walk right into the blessing. Actually, let me ask you, doesn't the Lord desire to be with all the churches? Shouldn't all the churches be very rich with the presence of the Lord? Shouldn't all the churches be very rich with the operation of Christ? But why? With many local churches, when you are with them, you have a real feeling: Poor. Limited. Dry. Almost in famine. What's the reason? They are short of operators. The Lord says, I'm holding the seven stars. These stars are the messengers. These stars also are the operators. If a sister says, "I have a need," the Lord can say, "Don't worry. There are operators." If a junior higher says, "I'm just in junior high," then the Lord says, "Don't worry, I have operators." If a brother really loves the Lord shouts, "I want to grow!" then the Lord will say, "Don't worry, the operators will help you to grow." If a brother says, "I'm so bored. I'm so dead," then the Lord will say, "Don't worry, there's an operator to bring you out of your boredom, to bring you out of your death." How can I say the Church in Cleveland is blessed? It's based on this: Do you have a lot of operators? Paul is an operator. But more than that, you need many brothers who are operators. When these brothers operate in the church life, the whole church life can become strong. These seven stars are messengers. These seven stars are operators. These seven stars are the overcomers.

What do I mean by overcomers? Everybody makes meetings, but I have a plus. Everybody loves the Lord, but I have a plus. Everybody reads the Bible, but I have a plus. Everybody preaches the gospel, but I have a plus. Everybody tries to be diligently shepherding the saints, but I have a plus. That's the overcomer. The overcomer is not to overcome the saints' operations. "I'm so able. I can give all the messages!" You are not an overcomer. You are the killers of the church. Because you want to preach a message, that's it. Your preaching kills the church! What is an example of an overcomer? "You want to preach the gospel? I'll preach the gospel with you. You want to pursue the truth? I'll pursue the truth with you. You need love? I'll render you love. With the brothers, I'll render you love to raise you up." You know, brothers, with overcomers as patterns, all the church can come to an overcoming state. The church life will be so healthy.

Next point. "The church life's nourishment, they are the life-dispensers." You know, many times in the church life, either you are dead, or boring, or you are very senior. You have so many endless stories. Thirty years ago what, twenty years ago what. And you can always give a message. When you give this message, after you say the first word, the saints know the next word already. Because you have given this message many times already. You know brother? The Lord says, "No." Who are the stars? The stars are life dispensers. If you are with me, you have life. If you read the Bible with me, you have life. If you pray with me, you have life. If you eat

dinner with me, you have life. If you go preach the gospel. I accompany you to go preach the gospel. There is a dispensing of life.

Who are the overcomers here? They are the messengers, they are the operators, they are the overcomers, they are the nourishing ones. They are with nourishment, dispensing life. They are more than shepherds. They are the head sheep. They walk ahead of all the sheep. All the sheep follow them to know the right place to have the proper rest. You know, it is not easy. Some brothers are so desperate, so the whole church gets too busy. No rest. In some churches, because the leading one, the star, is so restful and peaceful, the whole church sleeps. They didn't get a proper field, but a field for them to die in.

We need brothers to say, "We are the shepherds." When I look at the Church in Cleveland, I see how the saints in Cleveland need good shepherds. These good shepherds are not saying, "Let me arrange this, let me do that." Rather they say, "I like to be with you. I like to be with you, whether just one person or a group." Or overall, "Let's follow the Lord. Let the Lord lead through me. To bring the whole flock to the proper ground. I enjoy the proper feasting, I enjoy the proper nourishment, and also I enjoy the proper rest." And more than that, they are the ones able to have all the saints shine out. They are the guide for the saints to eventually desire to simply say, "I'm a star, shining and glowing." Brother, I want you to be a star that is shining and glowing. I don't even care about the message I give. I don't even care how good this message is. Rather, when I look at every saint, I have to say, "He should be shining, he should be glowing. I'd like to pay attention, pay a price, be with him, labor with him, pursue with him, so eventually he can be raised up to be a star like me to bless the church life." Hey, let me ask you brothers, how many brothers even have this thought? "My existence is not so I can have a good time. My existence is so the brothers with me can grow up and develop and be useful, and eventually all of them can become blessings to the testimony of the Lord." Do you see the secrets of society in the Bible?

And more than that, eventually at the end there are two things. One is the Lord's declaration, "I am the morning star." Another is Peter's declaration. "Hey," he said, "Brothers, pay attention to the prophets, pay attention to the teachings, pay attention to the truth, pay attention to Christ in the truth, pay attention to Christ in the prophets, pay attention to the Lord, pay attention to gain the Lord." You know what is going to happen? When you are daily pursuing Christ, pursuing the Bible, pursuing the truth, pursuing the riches, there is a star called the morning star. The morning star will rise up within you. To what extent will this star match who Christ is? Christ declared, "I am the morning star. I'm the alpha, I'm the omega, I'm the beginning and the end. I'm the morning star. Night is calm, when I come out, there will be no more night. Day is coming! When I come," eventually at the end the Lord says, "You know, after six thousand years, I'm the real morning star. Everything of the old creation disappeared, everything of darkness and night disappeared. Day is coming, eternity is coming." I feel this is marvelous. For this, I even pray Lord Jesus, "Come! Come!" But the Lord Jesus would ask the question, "I'm the morning star, where's your star?" You then say, "What do you mean by that, my star?" He said, "Didn't Peter tell you to be careful about the truth, be careful about life, be careful about Christ in the truth,

and to grow properly? I am accomplishing everything, yet you should also make an effort, to endeavor so there is a life growing in you.”

There are two manifestations. Jesus said, “I am the morning star. Now everything that is old is gone. Day is coming. Eternity is coming.” Then we say, “Praise the Lord. This matches exactly what is in me.” That’s why Peter says, “Here’s the dawning of the day. Night is over. ‘Til the day dawns and the morning star appears in you.” What a marvelous morning star! Christ in the heavenlies and the stars in us. Christ declares, “Everything is new, eternity is coming!” and with it, “Hallelujah!” the substance with me is also manifested. This is why you have to understand, at the end of the Bible, the Holy Spirit, that’s Christ, and the bride, that’s us, we say it together, “Come!” Why can we say “come” together? Because Christ says, “I’ve done everything, all of what I can operate, I’ve operated.” So eventually now eternity comes to us. “Yeah, I have a full enjoyment of Christ with the maturity of Christ. I match what Christ demands.” So the Spirit says, “Come.” I also say, “Come.” We are morning stars. In us, we have this morning star manifested. When this morning star is manifested, then also Christ declares, “I’m the morning star.” So the Spirit and the bride, Christ and the church declare together, “Come.” Don’t you like this “come”? Don’t you like it? If you do, tell the Lord, “I want to be a star. I want to be a star with glory. I want to be a star held in your hands and operating in the church life. I want to be the star that really pursues Christ.” So eventually this star within us comes out and brings in the day, brings in eternity, even matches eternity. May Lord have mercy. I hope someone can have this view, “Oh Lord, forgive me for being a star with no light, with no glory. Make me a star with glory, held in your hand, with my pursuing causing me to even have a star growing in me. Make me bear your testimony to match your declaration.” What a glorious life the Lord has given to us. May we have mercy. May we tell the Lord, “Lord, I want to be such a star held by you. I want to have a star growing in me, testifying of you to match you in eternity.” I stop here, Lord be with us, amen.