

We Three Priests from the East

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Once upon a time a man awoke from a dream. He was not an ordinary man, and this was no ordinary dream! The man was a priest of Zoroaster in Ancient Persia, and he knew all about how to understand numbers, how to interpret dreams, when one should travel through a mountain pass, or when to set sail on a voyage. But the thing he knew best of all was all about the stars and where they should be at any given time. He had fallen asleep with his face pressed against his star charts, trying in vain to identify a star that had appeared mysteriously on the horizon earlier that same night. Since he knew everything there was to know about stars, he knew that this was a wild star- a star that was out of place. And strangest of all, it was moving.

But what about his dream? Well, in his dream, someone, he knew not who, called out to him, "Arise, shine, for your light has come!" The words had been so loud and sounded so important that he woke up and without really meaning to he did arise, his head snapped up from it's place lying on the star chart, and he yelled out "Light? What light? Who's there? Who is talking to me?" He yelled out into the darkness, but no answer came. By now he was more awake and he stared out before him, out of a large, wide window, which he used to study the stars.

And there it was again. The star was still rising, a big, beautiful blazing star- not like any of the ones he knew so well- and no- it was not in the right place according to his great knowledge- it was going its own way! It almost looked like a comet- streaking across the sky in a beautiful arc.

"The star!" He cried out- "Maybe that is the light I heard about in my dream- I have read something about that before- but where??" So the priest did what he

always did when he could not find an answer in his own mind- he went to study what others had written. There was something very precious- a scroll of the Holy Scriptures in this place of prayer and study- very rare, very precious, and he began to carefully pour over it, trying to find out what the voice in his dream was talking about.

Hmmmm...light, light "God said let there be light, and there was light"- no that's not it..."The people who lived in darkness have seen a great LIGHT, those who lived in a land of deep darkness-" no that's not it-"

He kept skimming and finally he came to a passage that almost made his heart stop. "HERE IT IS!" He yelled to himself- "Arise, shine, for your light has come!" He was fully awake by now. "OK what else does it say?" Let's see- people are to come from all nations on camels- and what else- oh- young camels- OK- and they shall bring gold, and frankincense (well I think they should bring some Myrrh as well)- but where is this great King we are to bring gifts to??" Then he found a story that interested him very much. In the Book of Numbers, Balaam, a magus (that's the singular) from long ago spoke the words he had heard in a dream:

"I see him- but not now- I behold him- but not near- a star shall rise out of Jacob, and a scepter (that's the thing a king holds) shall rise out of Israel."

The Priest stood straight up so suddenly that he almost knocked the sacred scroll to the ground.

"It is the birth of the great Messiah- the great King that has been prophesized! And this is the star that proclaims his birth! I've got to go and meet him!"

Well, Israel was a long way off- not near, like the magi's dream said- and a big place. But if that star was going to rise- he figured he better follow it. "This star is the sign I need to show my friends that they might come with me and I might not travel alone!" he shouted.

Now he had two priestly friends who just loved to follow the stars too, so he ran to their house and woke them up. Dawn was beginning to break by this time, but you could still see that star bright as day.

"Arise, shine, for your light has come!" He yelled as he shook them."

"AHHHH, what is this? Robbers in my house?" screamed one."

AYEEEEEE! Will I be murdered in my bed?" yelled the other.

"No you old fools, it is only me!" The priest was able to drag them to their window so that they could see the wild star, and then they just stared at each other.

"Don't you see? It is the star of the Messiah at its rising- we must go and worship him and bring him gifts- gift fit for a king!"

He paced the floor for a few seconds, gathering his thoughts.

"Go saddle your best camels (be sure they're young) and hurry up! I've got some precious gold and some very good frankincense, but I'm all out of myrrh- I'll see if I can find some."

"You- go get 10 pounds of dried goat meat, five pounds of dates and ten sheep bladders of water. You! Go get a whole lot of camel food- meet me here in an hour!"

And so they all met again in an hour, their fine young camels loaded down with gifts and provisions. And they traveled away from their native country, following that incredible star, which shone just as brightly in mid-day as it did in the night.