

Guidelines for the Exercise of the Lord's day Propheying Message Twenty-Two : Christ as the Star out of Jacob

I. Overview:

Numbers 24:17 says, "There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob"; this Star refers to Christ. When Christ came the first time, He appeared openly as a star, but when He comes the second time, He will be the morning star to His overcomers, who watch for His coming; to all others Christ will later appear as the sun. Matthew 2:1-12 reveals that to find Christ is a living matter; it is not a matter of mere doctrinal knowledge of the Bible. Christ's faithful followers are shining and living stars to be His duplication. The living stars are those who bless God's people, give heed to the prophetic word of the Scriptures, enjoy and are filled with the sevenfold intensified Spirit, are the messengers of the churches, have "great resolutions in heart" and "great searchings of heart", and are those who fear Jehovah and hear the voice of His servant.

II. Truth and Enlightenment:

Day 1 —

A. Explain the appearance of the star being far away from all religions but to some pagans.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem; the strange thing, however, is this: far away from the so-called Holy Land, far away from the genuine religion, far away from the temple, and all the religious people, was a star showing something of Christ in a heathen land. It did not appear to the Jews, but to the Gentiles, the heathen. He went far away to a heathen land to reveal this matter to some pagans, not through the Scriptures but through a heavenly star.

B. Expound how we could see this star.

We all need to see this star! It is not a matter of holding the Bible but a matter of seeing the star. What is the star? The star is the living revelation, the living vision, not the dead knowledge of the Scriptures in the letter, not the dead knowledge. What we need today is not merely Bible knowledge but the heavenly vision, the instant vision, the living vision.

Day 2 —

A. Explain what the magi did and what revelation we get.

They saw the heavenly star and they followed it. They received the vision, but they soon turned to their human concept and exercised their natural understanding. Therefore, they reasoned that they should go to Jerusalem and inquire of those who would have knowledge of such matters. Their going, as we know, caused much trouble. They need not have gone to Jerusalem. They were thoroughly wrong and caused many young and innocent lives to be taken.

B. Why did the magi arrive in Jerusalem Herod and whole city being troubled?

When the magi arrived in Jerusalem, Herod was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Herod, yes, but why Jerusalem? Were those in Jerusalem not for Christ? Why was all Jerusalem troubled at the birth of the One for whom they were waiting? This is religion. I am afraid that many who are seemingly for the Lord's return will be troubled by His coming.

Day 3 —

A. Explain that not only is Christ Himself the star, but also His followers, the shining ones in the churches, are stars.

In Acts and the Epistles the leading ones were called elders, but in the last book of the Bible they are the stars. All the leading ones of the local churches should be shining stars. In the beginning of the New Testament there was mention of only one star in the heavens, but at the end of the New Testament there are seven stars in seven local churches. In every local church there is a star; in every local church there is something shining, leading people to the right way.

B. Expound how we become one of the stars.

How can we become a star? There are two ways: first, by the Bible, and second, by the Spirit. Second Peter 1:19 gives us the first secret. We have the prophetic word, the Bible. Since we have the prophetic word, we need to give heed to it, we need to pay full attention to it, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in our hearts. The word used for star here can be translated into English as "phosphorous." This star is something as phosphorous, bringing light in the darkness.

Day 4 —

A. Expound how the early morning is the very time, the most time precious time.

The best time to meet the Lord, to contact Him, and to fellowship with Him is early in the morning. Manna is gathered before the sun rises. Anyone who wants to eat God's food should rise up early. If we want to receive spiritual nourishment and spiritual edification, and if we want to have spiritual fellowship and spiritual supply, we need to rise up early. The early morning is the very time when God dispenses His spiritual food and holy fellowship to His children. All those who know God rise up early.

B. Explain Revelation 2:28, Christ will give the morning star to the overcomers.

The morning star appears in the darkest hour, after midnight and prior to the dawn. This indicates that Christ will appear as the bright morning star in the darkest time, prior to the close of this age. No star is as bright as the morning star. At the darkest time, within the overcomers there is a star shining. The overcomers will have and enjoy the particular light, Christ as the morning star.

Day 5 —

A. State what the difference between the light on the first day and the lights on the fourth day is.

Although light came in on the first day, it was not that solid, not that strong. On the fourth day, not only the lights came, but also the light bearers, the sun, the moon, and the stars. These are lights which are stronger, more solid, and more available. This is the first requirement for the growth of life. In typology, the sun typifies Christ, the moon is the church, and the stars are all the overcoming saints.

B. Explain what the difference of the source between the lights on the first day and the fourth day.

On the first day, we had the light from the Spirit and from the Word. As we go on, we need the lights of the fourth day. On the fourth day, the lights come from Christ, from the church, and from the shining saints. The light on the first day is for the generating of life; the lights on the fourth day are for the growth of life. The lights on the fourth day mainly come from Christ directly, also from the church and the shining saints.

Day 6 —

A. Describe that Jude 13 speaks of the heretics are the wandering stars.

Jude 13 speaks of the heretics as "wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shames; wandering stars..." These apostates are false shepherds, empty clouds, dead trees, and wandering stars. The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that the erratic teachers, the apostates, are not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation, but are wandering about among God's star-like people. Their destiny will be the gloom of darkness, which has been kept for them for eternity.

B. How do we follow the shining stars as we must be sober in these last days?

We need to follow the shining stars, those with a definite standing and a certain course. These are the stable stars, the steadfast ones. The proper standing is the local church, and the right course is to go on in the Spirit in the local church. We need to take the proper standing and keep ourselves in the right course. If you intend to go to a certain place, you need to get out your map, get on the right road and in the right lane, and as you drive you will reach your destination.

III. Conclusion:

Numbers 24:17 says, "There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob," but this star did not appear to any of the people of Jacob. The star out of Jacob appeared to the pagans through the gentile prophet, Balaam speaking about Christ as the Star. We all need to see this star and it is not a matter of holding the Bible but a matter of seeing the star; this star is the living revelation, not the dead knowledge but the heavenly vision, the instant vision, the living vision, the vision that human concepts cannot teach. And at the same time we need to be aware of today's confusion as the frustrations, the distractions of the wandering ones. Anyone who keeps us from the genuine local church and from meeting on the ground of oneness with the Lord's people is a wandering star. The true stars are those who turn many to righteousness, those who do not lead people astray, but turn them to the right way. Today the way for you and me and for everyone else to find Christ is to see the living star. May the Lord be merciful to us so that we may always be kept in the right way to serve the Lord, to worship Him, and to offer our love to Him. May the Lord make us all like those who follow the star to find Christ. Today the living star and the living stars are in the local churches. Let us follow them, and let us each be one of them.