

Epiphany 2014

The Heaven Declare the Glory of God

If you have ever gazed upon the stars on a cold, clear night, you have a sense of the wonder and grandeur of God's creation. The night sky is filled with millions of stars we can see, and billions of stars we cannot see—all of them proclaiming the glory of God.

But there is always one star more radiant than any other, one star that captures our imagination, one star that praises God more than any other. And so it was that particular night when those wise men from the East, the Magi, gazed into the heavens.

They had been looking and searching for one particular star their whole life long, and when they finally found it they knew something extraordinary was about to happen, something that would change their lives forever. And so, not knowing where they were going, not knowing what they would find, the wise men followed that star that proclaimed God's glory.

Imagine the ridicule and mockery they endured: "You are doing what? You are following a star and you do not know where you are going? How foolish you are! Have you lost your mind?" But even though they did not fully understand what they were doing and where they were going, the wise men followed that star for weeks, for months, perhaps for years until it finally brought them to Jerusalem.

When they arrived at Jerusalem they understood they were looking for a new born king, someone who would shepherd all of God's people, Jew and Gentile alike. And so they were confident they would find this new born king in the royal palace of the great king, Herod. But Herod knew nothing of the newborn king. Herod feared anyone who might threaten his power.

Not finding the one for whom they were searching in Herod's palace, the wise men followed the star to the tiny village of Bethlehem where the great King David had been born

centuries before. And in that village of no account their journey ended. There they found a child with his mother, a child like any other child, a mother like any other mother.

Anyone else would have been disappointed. Anyone else would have complained: “Is this the end of our journey? Is this why we travelled so far, so long, to see a child like any other child, a mother like any other mother?” But these three men were truly wise, and they understood the extraordinary way in which God was present in this mother and this child. These men were truly wise because they understood that this child was the fulfillment of God’s promises. And so they bowed in profound adoration before the child and his mother, offering gifts of gold because this child was a king, gifts frankincense because this child was divine, and gifts myrrh to anoint the body of this child who would give his body in death for the life of the world.

On any clear, winter night you will see millions of stars in the sky each one of them shining brightly. But if you look carefully you will find one star brighter and more radiant than any other—a star that proclaims God’s glory more than any other. This is what the wise men saw and what wise women and men have seen ever since in the Christ child: a child like any other, and yet different, because this child is the glory of God. This child is God’s Word made flesh. This child is the savior of the world.

Look into the sky these clear winter nights. Gaze at the stars, and think of these wise men who followed that star until it settled over the Christ child. And then, give thanks for extraordinary way in which God acts in your ordinary lives every day: through a star, through a mother, through a child.