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I Want...I want to REALLY BELIEVE

I want to really believe Matthew 2:1-12

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time **some wise men** from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the **newborn king of the Jews**? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." King Herod was **deeply disturbed** when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?" "In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote: 'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.'" Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!" After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. **When they saw the star, they were filled with joy!** They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they **bowed down and worshiped** him. Then **they opened their treasure chests and gave** him gifts of **gold, frankincense, and myrrh**. When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

Myrrh symbolized Jesus would bear our **Suffering. Jesus = Suffering Servant**

Note:

Isaiah 53:6

All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own.

- **Sheep are Defenseless - Sheep are Unreasonable - Sheep Follow**

Note:

Isaiah 53:6-7

All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own.

Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all. He was oppressed and treated harshly, yet he never said a word. He was led like a lamb to the slaughter...

Isaiah 53:3-5

He was despised and rejected—a man of sorrows, acquainted with deepest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way. He was despised, and we did not care. Yet it was our weaknesses he carried; it was our sorrows that weighed him down. And we thought his troubles were a punishment from God, a punishment for his own sins! But he was pierced for our rebellion, crushed for our sins. He was beaten so we could be whole. He was whipped so we could be healed.

Note:

Isaiah 53:8-9,11

Unjustly condemned, he was led away. No one cared that he died without descendants, that his life was cut short in midstream. But he was struck down for the rebellion of my people. He had done no wrong and had never deceived anyone. But he was buried like a criminal; he was put in a rich man's grave... (Joseph Arimathea) When he sees all that is accomplished by his anguish, he will be satisfied. And because of his experience, my righteous servant **will make it possible** for many to be counted righteous, for **he will bear all their sins**.

Note:

Hebrews 12:1-4

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honor beside God's throne. Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won't become weary and give up. After all, you have not yet given your lives in your struggle against sin.

Luke 9:22-23

*And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must **deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me**."

Note:

Talk About It:

1. What's the longest distance you've ever traveled for the holidays? Do you like big holiday trips?
2. What does it mean to REALLY BELIEVE in Jesus? What are some things you notice about people who REALLY BELIEVE?
3. What are some practical ways you can take up your cross and follow Christ this week?
4. Who can you share the love of Jesus with this week?
5. Who will you invite to Church or to Christmas Eve services with you?



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