

# CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS

## PRECEPT

### MATTHEW 2:1-12

<sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him." <sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup> "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: <sup>6</sup> "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel." <sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." <sup>9</sup> After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. <sup>11</sup> On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

## PROMISE

Christmas is not always a joyous celebration for some of us. There are those who are far from family or those who are lonely because they have suffered the loss of loved ones or their jobs. If we are celebrating this season without knowing what it really is about, we would not be able to enjoy it fully. It will just be another ordinary holiday that people dread observing.

Matthew 2:1-9 reports the visit of the wise men to Bethlehem when Christ was born. The visit of the Magi to worship Jesus alarms Herod, who resolves to kill all male children in Bethlehem and environs two years and younger. Verse 3 tells us that "*King Herod was deeply disturbed by their question, and all of Jerusalem was filled with rumours.*" He was the first person that was troubled in Christmas history; he became insecure and paranoid. Contrary to Herod's response, the Magi were completely overjoyed to have found Jesus. Verse 9-11 says, "*After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.*" <sup>10</sup> *When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.* <sup>11</sup> *On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.*" The Magi understood clearly that Jesus came as the King of Israel (The Messiah, The Saviour), the Priest of God (the atonement for our sins), and the Messenger (the image of the invisible God). Knowing that Christmas is all about the birth of our Saviour, how will you respond to this truth? Who will you emulate as you celebrate the Christmas season, Herod or the Magi? As the Magi gave gifts to Christ to symbolize the deity and royalty of Christ (gold) and the sweet aroma of worship and service to the King (frankincense & myrrh), what precious thing can you offer to Christ this Christmas? Can it be your time, talents, and treasure? In this season, let us reflect how we can make our lives a sweet aroma of worship to God. Jesus gave up His life so we can have life in Him; this is what Christmas is all about. He left the comforts of heaven to appear in the flesh on this dark and dreary world due to His love for us. The perfect Gift was sent to us due to God's perfect love.

## PRACTICE

**1. Worship God.** Are you willing to place your faith in God like the Magi? What can we learn from their example in seeking Christ?

**2. Application.** Just like the kings who rejoiced exceedingly at the birth of Christ and gave Him precious gifts, what can you offer to Christ during this Christmas season?

## PRAYER

### I. Missionaries

- Pray for protection for all missionaries all over the world as they share the Gospel to all nations.

### II. Volunteers

- Praise God for all our volunteers who selflessly commit their time to serve God and the church.

### III. Life Link Ministry

- Pray that this ministry will joyfully usher our brethren to our worship services.

### IV. Life Kids Ministry

- Pray that our volunteers will continue to lovingly teach and guide our children.

### V. Life Worship

- Pray that this ministry will always honour and worship God in spirit and in truth both publicly and privately.

### VI. Life Sports

- Pray for this ministry to be an effective avenue for us to bring people to Christ and show His love.

### VII. Worship Services

- Pray that we can invite more people to encounter Christ and know His love.