

Luke 2:21-38, Matthew 2:1-23

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[0:00] You're going to be in two different passages again this morning. We're just continuing this four-week theme, this Christmas series, our interruption of our going through the Gospel of Matthew.

We've been looking at when God interrupts history, when God interrupts history. And we've seen the reality starting in the first week of the interruption of history starts with an announcement of heaven.

And that announcement of heaven we saw was in Zacharias was in the temple burning incense and the angel Gabriel was there. Then the same angel Gabriel went to Nazareth and spoke to a young virgin by the name of Mary.

And then the angels also, the angel visited Joseph as he was considering what to do with Mary.

And then we saw the angels speak to the shepherds in the field of the announcement of heaven in the span of about 15 months.

In the span of about 15 months. And we date that from when Elizabeth got pregnant to when Christ was born. In the span of about 15 months. Heaven could not be silent. Which is astounding when we understand that for over 400 years there had not been a word from God.

[1:06] Over 400 years prior to that, heaven had been silent. No new word. No nothing from God. No prophet had arisen. At least no biblical prophet. No true, you know, forth teller proclaiming exactly what God was saying.

And yet after 400 years God just started the same, staying the same thing over and over again. He picked up right where he left off. And there's the announcement of heaven. And then last week we looked at the adjustment of man.

Because when God makes an announcement man has to adjust. So we looked at the adjustment of heaven. I mean the adjustment of man. Zacharias had to adjust and his wife had to. And Mary had to adjust. Joseph had to adjust.

The shepherds had to adjust. When God says something man has to respond to that. Things don't look the same as they did before God said something. And so we looked at how man adjusted to what God said.

And that is so important to understand. Because while so many people say, I wish I could just hear a word from God. I wish I could just hear a word from God. There are very few people who say, I want God to tell me something that's going to change what I do.

[2:08] There are very few of us that say that. I so want God to tell me something that's going to change how I act, behave, and live. And that's an adjustment, right? And that's what we find.

That when God says something and God speaks to his people, it changes them. It changes who they are. It changes what they do. It changes how they live. This morning we're going to widen our horizon just a little bit.

Okay? So our text this morning will be Luke chapter 2 verses 21 through 38. And then Matthew chapter 2 verses 1 through 23. That's our two texts. We'll start in Luke. We're trying to keep these things in chronological order.

Luke chapter 2 verses 21 through 38. I said chronological order. And I promise you when I get done reading this, some of you are going to think I'm wrong. Okay? And it's going to kind of ruffle some of you a little bit.

But that's okay. Because we want to adjust to what God's word says. Not make God's word adjust to us. Okay? So we're going to meet Christ eight days after his birth.

[3:06] And we're going to meet him 41 days after his birth. And then we'll meet him when he's a child. Okay? So that should tell you where we're going to meet him. We're in Luke chapter 2 verses 21 through 38.

And Matthew chapter 2 verses 1 through 23. So if you're physically able and desire to do so, I'm going to ask if you'll join with me as we stand together. And we get in the word of God starting in the second chapter of Luke.

If you remember where we left off in the 20th verse of the second chapter of Luke, it says, That was the birth of Christ.

That was the time of his birth. Starting in verse 21 of the same chapter. And when eight days had passed, before his circumcision, his name was then called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

And when the days for their purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord. And as it is written in the law of the Lord, every firstborn male that opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.

[4 : 16] And to offer a sacrifice according to what was said in the law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons. And there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon. And this man was righteous and devout, looking for the consolation of Israel.

And the Holy Spirit was upon him. And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came in the spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought in the child Jesus to carry out for him the custom of the law, then he took him into his arms and blessed God and said, Now, Lord, you are releasing your bondservant to depart in peace.

According to your word, for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel. And his father and mother were amazed at the things which were being said about him. And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother, Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel and for a sign to be opposed.

[5 : 24] And a sword will pierce even your own soul to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed. And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher.

She was advanced in years. Notice that, men? Never are women old. She was advanced in years and had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage and then as a widow to the age of 84.

She never left the temple, serving night and day with fastings and prayers. At that very moment, she came up and began giving thanks to God and continued to speak of him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

Now go to the passage in Matthew. Matthew chapter 2, starting in verse 1. Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem saying, Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?

For we saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Gathering together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

[6 : 42] And they said to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what has been written by the prophet. And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah. For out of you shall come forth a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.

When Herod secretly, or then Herod secretly called the Magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search carefully for the child.

And when you have found him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship him. After hearing the king, they went their way, and the star which they had seen in the east went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the child was.

And when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And after coming into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell to the ground and worshipped him. Then opening their treasures, they presented to him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the Magi left for their own country by another way.

[7 : 47] Let's pray. We'll just stop right there. Lord, I thank you so much for this day. I thank you for the grand opportunity we have of gathering as your people to hear your word.

We pray, Lord, as you have written it and we have read it, Lord, that now that it would speak to our hearts and minds. May it be the very tool used to draw us closer to you.

May we come to a correct understanding of it, and may you get all the glory and the honor from it. And we ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

We could have continued reading the remainder of the chapter, but we will stop right there for our time's sake. And we will reference it later as we get into it. We have been looking at when God interrupts history, that the days of man were going as normal and predictable, and all of a sudden the most earth-shaking, history-changing event to ever take place happens.

And it happens in a dramatic way as we read it in Scripture. We know that God sends His angels to make an announcement, that those angels make an announcement, but we've also seen the reality that that announcement was given to just a few.

[9 : 08] And that that announcement that was given to just a few was something that was not publicly declared. It was something that was privately shared. The most public of those announcements was given to shepherds.

If you remember the irony of it, the most public announcement were given to people who could not testify in public. It was given to shepherds as they gathered in the field. And the only other people that were there were more shepherds.

And here they listened to this announcement, and each of them has had a personal encounter, somewhat private encounter, with God telling them to do something. And each of them had made an adjustment.

Their lives looked totally different. Everything was radical. Now we know that this small number of lives that looked totally different in a city that was so crowded as Bethlehem was, that there was no room for them in the end.

That every place was full because of the census which had been declared. That while God was doing something big, it was still not very well known. That while there had been an announcement made, and for the first time in centuries, God had said something, yet not many people heard it.

[10 : 14] And while the first time in centuries, the anticipation and the hope of Isaiah and all the other prophets in Scripture, as a matter of fact, it was the hope of the proto-evangelium shared in Genesis chapter 3 verse 15.

Ever since the Garden of Eden, what man was hoping for and longing for has just come. The seed of a woman who would crush the head of Satan has just been born. You remember that, right?

Genesis 3 verse 15, that the serpent would bruise his heel, but he would crush his head. And you also remember that in Genesis 3 verse 15, it's kind of ironic because it says that it is the seed of a woman that will crush the head of the serpent.

And that makes no sense at all, biologically speaking, because we know biologically speaking that children are the seed of man. And though it makes no sense biologically speaking, it makes every bit of sense scripturally speaking.

And everything which had been hoped for, anticipated, and everything had been based upon has just happened. And not many people know about it. But that's all about to change because when God interrupts history, now we see the awakening of the world.

[11 : 19] See, we're gonna open up our view just a little bit longer, a little bit wider, because when God does something among a few, he makes it known to the multitude. When God awakens the small, he awakens the small in order that he may arise the all, right?

He wants everyone to know about it. God doesn't deal in silences. God may speak to you in private, but what does he say? What I declare to you in private, you declare in public, right?

What I whisper to you in the closet, you shout from the rooftops. What I tell you in silence, individually, you go tell it on the streets publicly because God's in the business of awakening a slumbering world.

So what we see happening here is the awakening of the world. Just because you wake it up doesn't mean it responds the way it should. And we see that.

But all of a sudden, the interruption has become known. History will never be the same because his story has interrupted his story and now his story is going to change all of history.

[12 : 27] The story of God and what he's been doing for man and what he's about to do is going to change the rest of mankind. And he awakens them that they may know and he awakens them that we may know.

Do you know that in America, according to the latest statistics, that there's a new baby born every eight seconds? Every eight seconds. Well, that's nothing when you consider the world population. Now, I know that it's impossible, but the exact numbers, for those who have to have exact numbers, there are 4.3 children born every second around the world.

Four children every second. Just because someone's born doesn't mean the world knows about it, right? Doesn't mean everybody's aware of it. But this child, at this place, at this time, deserved the attention of all the world.

And God's going to awaken the world. And he's going to let them know what has just happened. And he does it in the most strategic of places in the strategic of times. Don't separate the rest of Scripture from what we have in the Christmas story.

[13:36] One of the greatest atrocities we could ever do is to take a portion of Scripture out of context. Oh, you say, Yeah, that's right. We've got to understand the book and we've got to understand the author and the audience. That's right. But it's also part of a bigger book, right?

We have what we call 66 books in the Bible, but it's really just one book. It's just one grand story. And we find elsewhere written in the New Testament that in the fullness of time, Jesus Christ was born.

In the fullness of time. That means at the right time, he came to dwell among us. And it wasn't just at the right time, it was also at the right place.

And at the right place, he came in such a way that the world could be awakened to what has just transpired. And we see this as it has happened with the awakening of the world.

The first thing we see is the initiative taken. The initiative taken. Now we know that Mary and Joseph are faithful. They're faithful to what God has commanded them to do.

[14:33] We understand that on the eighth day, prior to his circumcision, they named him Jesus, according to what the angel had told them. They were obedient in their practice and they were obedient in their word. And then when the days of her purification were over, you've got to go to the book of Leviticus and see how many days of purification were assigned for the birth of a male child.

33, but this is after eight days. So you add one to that, that gets us to 41, right? So now we're at 41 days after. They go to the temple and they present to them what is offered according to the law and they give the lowliest of it, right?

Those who did not have much money were able to give this. That is what's declared in the book of Leviticus. And they're bringing it into the temple and they're being faithful and they're doing what God has called them to do. They make the journey from Bethlehem to Jerusalem.

It's not a far journey, it's just a small journey. But yet it's an important journey because see, God is taking the initiative because you see, God gave a timetable in Leviticus which would dictate what happened when Jesus was born.

He gave a timetable in Leviticus and he allowed a temple to be built in Jerusalem so that so many years later, after 41 days after giving birth, there could be this humble family who could walk into that temple in that place at that time for what's about to transpire.

[15:47] Because see, God knows what he's doing. When God sets the number of days and he tells you when to name him, when to go to the temple and God knew what he was doing, all of this fits according to his purposes and his plans.

And what is Jerusalem? Jerusalem is the seat of the political realm. Jerusalem is the seat of the social realm. Jerusalem is the seat of the religious realm. It is the place of all places, right?

This is his first visit to Jerusalem. We know what transpires his last visit to Jerusalem, but this is his first visit to Jerusalem. And we understand.

Now, wait a minute. You should have stopped me right there and said this is not his first visit to Jerusalem. You know why you should have stopped me right there? It's because there was an angel of the Lord who spoke to a man named Abraham who had a son on the altar and he was about to slay that son on the altar and he said, don't do it.

And he named that place something. He named that place Jehovah Jireh because in the mount of the Lord, it shall be provided because the angel of the Lord said, don't do it. And you, because you know your Bibles and I'm so thankful you know your Bibles.

[16:54] You know that where Abraham was at is the same place that David had to buy because when the angel of the Lord with his sword drawn after David's sin of counting the people and wanting to know how big his kingdom was and he fell into the discipline of Lord and the angel of the Lord with his sword drawn was standing up on a hilltop and there was a man who had a wine press

up there and David went and bought that hill and he built an altar and when David bought that hill, he passed it on to his son Solomon and when Solomon inherited that hill, he built a temple on it.

See, that's Temple Mount. See, it's the same place and it's just over and over and over again. This isn't the first time Jesus has been there. This is just the first time he's been there in flesh.

And here all of a sudden, they bring him into the temple and then we're introduced to another individual. Here's Simeon. Simeon is a righteous and devout man. He's a righteous and devout man looking for the consolation of Israel.

Now that just doesn't mean he's looking that Israel would get right because the consolation of Israel was dependent upon a person. So he's looking for the Messiah. He's looking for a deliverer. He's looking for a savior.

And what does it say? And the Holy Spirit was upon him. And the Holy Spirit was upon him. I mean, that should all of a sudden pique your interest because the Holy Spirit hasn't been given yet to believers.

[18:17] Why do we know that? Because he is not given until Jesus is glorified and ascended. And after his ascension, then the gift of the Holy Spirit is given. So Simeon is a possessor of the Holy Spirit in the same line and lineage that we find the Old Testament saints that he would not dwell within him, but he would rest upon him.

Big difference, by the way, because see, now we have the Holy Spirit kind of overshadowing him, kind of cloaking him and robing him. Stay with me. It's getting better in just a minute, I promise.

As believers, we are not cloaked with the Spirit because you can take a cloak off. We are filled with the Spirit and you can't take your insides out. See, that's the big difference right there. In Christ, we are filled with the Spirit.

That's why in the Old Testament, we find people who are cloaked with the Spirit and then they do something and they took the cloak off and the Spirit ain't there anymore because they were just cloaked with it and they changed clothes.

That is, they changed habits and they changed actions and they did things, but they weren't filled with it. In Christ, God has chosen to make his tabernacle within us, not just among us.

[19:25] John 15 and following. Yeah, John 15 and following. And all of a sudden, we are filled with the Holy Spirit and you don't change your insides. But here's Simeon, by the way, and he's cloaked with the Holy Spirit.

And all of a sudden, we're looking at initiative. I know I'm getting a little talkative and a little fast. I just want us to get through there. Let me slow down a little bit here so you don't miss it. And it says, and he was told by the Spirit he would not die until he saw the hope of Israel.

Now that's important. He knew. Now look at what it says. Look at what it says in verse 27. And he came in the Spirit into the temple.

And he came in the Spirit into the temple. And when the parents brought the child Jesus to carry out for him the custom of the law, then he took him into his arms. Do you see this?

Here is the initiative. God is going to awaken the world. And the way he awakens the world, he takes the initiative in Simeon's life. And he leads Simeon by the Holy Spirit into the temple at the exact moment that they are bringing in this child.

[20:32] I don't know how many people were in Jerusalem at that time. I don't know how many babies were walking through the temple to go have the custom offered for them. I don't know how many people but I know it was crowded.

And I know there's one man named Simeon who is being led to a certain people and all of a sudden he walks up to him and here he is, the one in which he was told he would not die because he says, now, O Lord, your servant can depart in peace because what you have promised me I have literally beheld.

I have been holding him in the temple. He is here. I see him. Now I am free to depart in peace. He has been led by the Spirit to encounter the hope of Israel.

Now we'll pick that up in just a moment because all of a sudden Simeon's here and he's making a big scene. Well, about the time Simeon's here and making a big scene here comes this little lady shuffling by. She's an advanced lady.

She's probably not walking real fast. She's about 84 years old and her name is Anna. Anna is a prophetess and Anna comes up, it says, at that very moment. At that very moment, Anna, who's been hanging out in the temple for all these years, Anna, who has not left the temple after all these

years, just so happens at that moment to come by and she knows who that is because see, someone took the initiative to lead her and now when we go over to the Gospel of Matthew, I know I'm not completing the story but I'll complete it before we're done, right?

[21 : 57] And when we go over to the Gospel of Matthew, there's some magi who have come from the east. Now we need to pay attention to this because this matters. When God put man out of the garden, those that were with me on Sunday nights and Wednesday nights, you know, we've been making our way through the Old Testament ever since God called me here as pastor.

And we started in the book of Genesis and it seems like it's so long ago. We were in Genesis 3 where the fall of man and God put them out of the garden and God put them out of the garden. Which direction did he put them?

He put them out towards the east, right? He put them out towards the east which is they went east and then when Cain sinned and he slew his brother Abel, Cain went towards the east and one thing we find in Scripture is that every time man goes east, he moves further and further away from God. So in order to come to the presence of God you have to come from the east. You have to come from away from his presence into his presence. And now here of a sudden we have this consistent theme even though geographically speaking it's also accurate.

The Magi are coming from the east and they're following a star. Now this is astounding. This is amazing because they're following it but they're not going on their own initiative.

[23 : 10] they're going because something is leading them. Something is bringing them that direction. You don't make a journey of this magnitude because you think it's a good idea. We'll get into the logistics of it in just a moment.

The only thing I want you to see between Simeon, Anna, and the Magi is that nobody made this trip because they decided it was a good idea.

Each and every one of them were drawn. An initiative, not just an initiative, a divine initiative was taken to draw them to encounter the Christ.

God drew them. Simeon was led by the Spirit. Anna was in the temple. And the Magi followed the star. Each and every one of them were divinely drawn to the being present with the Savior.

You know, when Jesus stands up later and says, no man comes to me lest he be drawn by the Father, he wasn't lying. Man doesn't come because they think it's a good idea.

[24 : 18] Man comes because an initiative has been taken. Do you know why you know Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior if you so do? Do you know why you're saved, why you're redeemed, forgiven, and counted worthy of all of heaven?

You say, well yeah, because I prayed a prayer. No, that's not, why? Do you know why you're saved? I mean, to the grassroots foundation of why. I don't want to know what you did.

I want to know if you want to know why. Do you know how you ever got there? It's because there's a God in heaven who took the initiative to draw you to the Savior so that just like Simeon, you can say, I have seen the Savior.

Just like Anna, you say, I know the hope of Israel. And just like the Magi, you can say, there he is. See, an initiative was taken there. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us and drew us.

See, there's always an initiative taken. You didn't come because it was a good idea, because the journey was too far. Your sin had cast a chasm so wide that no man could walk across it.

[25 : 15] Your sin was further than the Magi traveled across the desert from the east. Your sin was greater and grander than anyone could ever go across. Though we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly.

See, what happened is the thing that we could not overcome, our sin nature, he overcame. And then he drew us to himself. My friend, don't ever lose sight of the fact of the reality that only people that come to Christ are those who have been drawn to Christ.

And don't ever get over the fact that he drew you. You didn't choose him, he chose you. And the reason I tell you not to get over that is because if you think you chose him, someday you may find something better than him.

But when you realize that you were not worthy of being chosen, yet he chose you and he chose to draw you, you'll never get over that. Because now all of a sudden I have myself in the right position of my salvation.

He took the initiative and he looked at me and all of my filthiness and ugliness and all of my unworthiness and he says, I love you, son. And he brought me to himself. And my friend, I can't get

over it.

[26 : 16] I don't want to get over it. I don't care what you say about it. I'm not getting over it because I didn't choose him. He chose me. And that's the gospel. What we find in scripture is that even when God's beginning to awaken the world, God takes the initiative.

He didn't have to. Friend, listen. He didn't have to. Do you know that God could have sent an angel on the threshold of heaven and told him to blow a trumpet so loud that all of the world would have heard it?

Well, of course he can. Paul says he's going to do it in the end days. In 1 Corinthians 15, there's going to be a trumpet blown at all. Well, no. If he can do it then, he could have done it back then, right?

Of course he can. God could have cast something across the sky that everyone would have known about it. He created it. He can do whatever he wants to with it. But he didn't. He took the initiative, number two, with individuals.

With individuals. He drew these people to this place. God took the initiative. And when he took the initiative, he didn't take the initiative in such a way that he just wanted to go public all at once.

[27 : 28] God was going public. And I like what Tony Evans says, and we might as well because everybody else is, so we might as well go public too, right? So God was going to go public with what had just transpired and what had just happened.

And the way he determined to go public was to take the initiative. That is, this is the business of God, not the business of man. And when he takes that initiative, he does it with individuals. That should astound us.

The angels were sent in private. The individuals were sent in public. Did you notice that? That every announcement and every message that the angels declared, they declared it privately. Simeon was standing in the temple in a public place making his proclamation.

Anna, the prophetess, was in the temple in a public place making her proclamation. The Magi went to Jerusalem and met with King Herod, a public place, when they made their proclamation.

See, God worked in the lives of these individuals. Now, the question we have to ask ourselves, how do we become those type of individuals? Is God just randomly selecting people?

[28 : 32] Is God just randomly picking and choosing as if drawing straws to see who he will use?

Well, while God takes the initiative, one thing I have found in Scripture, when we look at Scripture, it is all attributed to God, but God has a way of choosing people in a right position.

That is, he has a way of choosing people that have positioned themselves to be available to him. Simeon, who was looking for the consolation of Israel and was a righteous and devout man who was in the Holy Spirit.

Simeon was looking for the hope and consolation. We see that Anna here is in the temple, never leaving the temple, but is continuously in fastings and prayers.

She has put herself in the right position. Now, we're talking about those who are already accepted, so we want to understand that. We see the reality here that Christ takes the initiative with individuals, and we, as believers and followers of Jesus Christ, so want to be those individuals.

We want to be used by God. At least that should be our wants and our desires. I want to be used by God. As believers, understanding that he has redeemed us and saved us and taken the initiative of our salvation.

[29 : 41] Now it is becoming upon us to position ourselves in such a way that we may be used by him. These were ready. Now, the Magi. Now, this is where we kind of ruffle feathers a little bit, but we want to have a right biblical interpretation.

The Magi weren't at the manger. They came to a house. Okay? I know when we do nativity scenes, there's wise men there and we'll portray it as such. They came to a house.

We understand. It's not that it's wrong. It's just, it'd be so hard to have this whole birth of Christ representation of having a manger scene and then transitioning to a house and having, you know, baby Jesus and Mary and Joseph running back and forth between the two, so it's not wrong.

But we see here this full scope. We don't know how long after his birth they came, but we do know they came. And we also know how they came. It's because God took the initiative to draw them.

Well, how were they positioned? They were following a star from the east, right?

So they followed this star. I wish I could remember the gentleman's name. I can't. This gentleman had a doctorate in astrophysics and wrote a great discourse for his doctorate in ministry as to what

that star possibly was.

[30 : 46] He made a great proposition that it was more than likely the Shekinah glory of God. I know some people say that it was Haley's Comet. Some people could say that it was the lining up of things of this nature. And again, I will agree with a lot of individuals that we seem to belittle and think that people of the past knew very little of the things that we know.

And so they would have been duped into thinking this is something major. They knew the star is much better than most of us. Okay? It was their job and their occupation to study the heavenlies. So it would have been some phenomenal star that would have drawn them.

That individual's proposition is probably the most likely is that here's the Shekinah glory, much like the fire which led the nation of Israel, Shekinah glory, going as a star and leading them because the word star really just has that illuminating quality and they led them.

How would they even know that though, right? So this is where we get to this positioning. The Magi are from the east. We don't know exactly where they're from but we can assume they're from the east. And if you go east far enough from Jerusalem, you run into this place called Babylon.

There's Babylon's over there, right? There's a great desert and there's Babylon. Babylon's kind of important in scripture. There's this thing called the Babylonian captivity that happened in scripture when the nation of Israel had so sinned that God brought this king called Nebuchadnezzar to come in and take them and Jerusalem fell in 536 BC, I believe it was.

[32 : 05] 536 BC, Jerusalem fell and he took with him the wisest of the men. Remember the accounts? There are like three deportations of people from Jerusalem that go into Babylon.

The first one of those is the wisest and the youngest and the fittest of individuals. You know the story, Daniel. Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Remember them? So you get there and you have this book of Daniel. The book of Daniel is important by the way because it records for us that they're there and they end up being there and then Daniel is an interpreter of dreams.

God uses him to interpret dreams. Do you remember exactly what happens after Daniel interprets King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams? Daniel is made chief of the Magi.

Oh, yeah. See, he's made chief of the Magi because that's where the Magi were at was in Babylon. They were the future fortune tellers.

He's made the chief of the Magi. Remember when the golden necklace is put on in the purple robe and all this other stuff? And he serves as chief of the Magi in that capacity. Hey, friend, listen to me.

[33 : 13] God's always got his man. Always. And when Daniel was made chief of the Magi, one of the things that the chief of the Magi did customarily, we can't say emphatically that Daniel did this because we don't have it recorded for us in Scripture, but we do know it's custom for their chiefs.

They would deposit in the library of the Magi because keep in mind, these are pretty intelligent people, books that they considered important. Now, what books do you think that Daniel would consider important?

Well, there's five of them called the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Bible that were already done, and he would have had scrolls of those recorded. Now, do you know that in Numbers 24, 17, there's an individual that is called to curse the nation of Israel in Numbers 24, and he gives three blessings instead of three cursings.

You remember that, right? But you know that there's just this weird phrase in Numbers 24, 17 that just doesn't seem to fit even the blessing, and it's this pronouncement in Numbers 24, 17.

I see him, but not yet. A star shall arise out of Judah, and the scepter shall never depart from his hand, and they're going to also wipe out all the Ethiopians and Moabites, and they're going to kill all these people, too.

[34 : 31] It's like, it seems out of place, right? Because it doesn't seem to fit the rest of the blessing that they will be victorious when they go into the promised land. He just stops and says, wait a minute, I see something else. There's a star that shall arise out of Judah, and the scepter that is the rule shall never depart from his hand.

Now, if those, we say if because we can't say emphatically, we do know that Daniel is the chief of the Magi, and if Daniel chose to deposit some books in the library, he would have deposited the only books that he saw worthy the first five books of the Bible, and we know that Numbers is in the first five books of the Bible, and we do know that history tells us it was very becoming for Magi to study the books of the chiefs that went before them.

So, these Magi would have read Numbers 24, 17, and all of a sudden when a star shows up, they would have said, you know what, that's worth following. I remember there was something written about that one time.

Why did they go to Jerusalem? Because that's the seed of Judah. They didn't know the whole story, but they knew some of the story. See, they were in a position as well. God chose the right individuals.

He took the initiative with the right individuals. Number three, and finally, the initiative was taken among individuals, number three, for an intentional purpose.

[35 : 50] For an intentional purpose. Simeon doesn't just go to the temple being led by the Spirit so that he could see the child and die in peace.

Simeon goes to the temple so that he can make a public proclamation of who this is. See, the first two public proclamations, public proclamations about this child are made with Simeon and Anna. And the initiative was taken to draw them at the right time so that these individuals who had so positioned themselves could make a public announcement to all who would listen.

You see, Simeon sees this and says, for my eyes have seen your salvation which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples. A lot of revelation to the Gentiles and the glory of your people Israel.

And the people were amazed. Anna sees this and it says, and at that very moment she came up and began giving thanks to God. Look at this. and continued to speak of him to all those who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem.

[36 : 58] See, they were being very public about their proclamations. There was a purpose. There was an intentional reasoning behind it. The magi came. They went to Herod.

If you want to awaken a world, you kick the king. Right? So they go to Herod and Herod calls in the religious leaders and the scribes. Now they knew all of the story but somehow or another they never saw the star.

When they leave the place of Herod the star goes before them and as some say that star moves and stops. I ain't never seen another star do it but that one does it. Right? That star went before them and stopped.

You know, not too long ago I have to stop right here for just a minute. My daughter and I we like to look to the heavens. Look up at the stars. It's just something I like to do. Not too long ago I was standing outside and I saw what I thought was a star moving.

It messed with my mind. You say, you done seen a UFO? Well, I did but then I identified it so it would be an IFO later, okay? Because then I got to noticing there was about eight stars in a line moving.

[37 : 59] And I said, we're fixing to get attacked because these things were just in a straight line. And then I did what every good person would do. I said, hey, Kylie, look that up on your phone and see what happens. Why are there these stars in a straight line going across our sky because stars don't move?

You know that. I mean, they move but you don't, we see fallen stars but we don't see stars going somewhere and these stars were going somewhere. At least I thought they were stars. Well, they had just launched a bunch of satellites and those satellites were beginning to orbit.

This is when Elon Musk decided to launch his series of satellites. So we saw them go over our house. Pretty cool, pretty phenomenal. But if you didn't know what you was looking at, you thought you were looking at a UFO. It was an identified flying object.

We knew what it was. Pretty cool. But I knew it wasn't a star because it was going in a straight line and it was going up, not down. I've seen falling stars but this was kind of going around in an arch. The star of the Magi saw was a moving star and it decided to stop somewhere over a house.

But God brought them there for a purpose because then they opened up their treasures and they presented gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Do you know God was getting ready to move this little family? God was getting ready to move Joseph and Mary and baby Jesus.

[39 : 08] You know why he was getting ready to move them? You say, yeah, because Herod was going to kill them. God was getting ready to move them because the prophecy says out of Egypt I called my son. You say, I thought that was talking about the Exodus.

That's only part of the story because out of Egypt he called his son. The nation of Israel is not his son. Jesus is the son.

These wise men brought the finances that would ensure the travel would be possible. Now, we know the rest of it that when they don't go back Herod gets mad and Herod issues the killing of the children and there's a voice heard in Ram a weeping that will not be stopped.

That Rachel was weeping. Again, another prophetic word but where does Joseph go? He's warned in a dream and they go to Egypt for out of Egypt I have called my son. See, all I'm trying to tell you is that when God chose to awaken the world, listen to me, this is my final statement.

When God chooses to awaken a sleeping world, He always takes the initiative with certain individuals for an intentional purpose.

[40 : 17] He has something He wants them to do. When God wants to wake the world up, He alone will take the initiative but He always does it in an individual and He's calling that individual for an intentional purpose.

God doesn't just kick you for no reason. When Peter was asleep in the jail and it was time to go out, when the angel nudged his side, he didn't just say, I just wanted to see if you'd wake up.

He said, no, wake up, we gotta go. Right? God doesn't just wake the world up. He doesn't wake the individual up for no reason. He's always got a purpose. So when we say, God, I wanna hear a word from you, we go back to what we've been saying over and over again.

God, I want a word from you that will wake me up so that I'll know what you want me to do. There's a purpose behind it. And that is how God awakens the world.

It's amazing, isn't it? He always uses it in individuals for an intentional purpose. Let's pray. Lord, I thank you. I thank you for your word.

[41 : 25] I thank you for the hope and the promises found in your word. Lord, we pray that you would use it now to awaken our hearts and minds to the fullness of all you're calling us to do. Well, may we be people positioned and available for you.

And may you get the ultimate glory and honor. We ask it all in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[43 : 34] Thank you.

Thank you.