

1/19-25#1 The Up-to-date, Instant, and Living Vision of the Heavenly Christ as the Living Star: I. After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star at its rising and have come to worship Him" (Matt. 2:2); this was the fulfillment of Numbers 24:17, which says, "There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob"; this Star refers to Christ: Num. 24:17 ...There shall come forth a Star out of Jacob, and a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and He shall crush the corners of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth. **A** The magi did not say, "We saw a star," or "We saw the star", but "We saw His star"; the Star is the heavenly Christ. **B** The star spoken of in Matthew 2:2 was shown to these learned men; it did not appear to any of the people of Israel; whereas the Jews had the Scriptures concerning Christ and knew where He would be born, the magi saw the star of Christ. **C** The Jews had the knowledge in letters concerning where Christ was to be born, but these learned men from the east received a living vision of Him; eventually, the star led them to the place where Christ was. Micah 5:2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, so little to be among the thousands of Judah, from you there will come forth to Me He who is to be Ruler in Israel; and His goings forth are from ancient times, from the days of eternity. **D** Christ is the real Sun, but strictly speaking, He does not appear as the sun during the age of night; rather, He shines as a star; a star shines at night, but it indicates that day is coming. **E** 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. II. 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: A

The star appeared far away from the temple in the Holy Land, from the Jewish religious center, from the priests, the scribes, the Pharisees, and from all the religious ones; instead, there was a star showing something of Christ in a heathen land. **B** Merely to hold the Bible in our hand and read Micah 5:2, saying that Christ will be born in Bethlehem, does not work; we may have the Bible, but we may miss the heavenly star. **C** The star is the living revelation, the living vision, not the old and dead doctrinal knowledge of the Scriptures, not the dead knowledge of Micah 5:2;

what we need today is not merely Bible knowledge but the heavenly vision, the up-to-date, instant vision, the living vision, the vision that human concepts can never teach. **D** Even if we have the knowledge of the Scriptures, we still need the instant, up-to-date, living star to lead us to the very street and the very house where Jesus is. **E** After receiving the living vision, the magi were misled by their human concept and went to Jerusalem, the capital of the Jewish nation, where its king was presumed to be; their being misled caused many young boys to be killed. **F** When they arrived in Jerusalem and inquired concerning where the King of the Jews was to be born, the Scripture says that "when Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him": **1** When they heard this news, they should have rejoiced; instead, they were troubled; this is for no other reason than that they were not genuinely seeking the Savior. **2** If one who believes in the Lord is not affected by the Lord as love in his inward emotions, he is not worthy to be called a Christian. **3** A Christian who expects the Lord to come or who expects to be raptured should take this as a warning. **G** After the magi were corrected by the Scriptures, they went to Bethlehem, and the star appeared to them again and led them to the place where Christ was, "and when they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy": **1** When the magi were corrected by the Scriptures and restored to the right track, the star appeared to them again; living vision always accompanies the Scriptures. **2** The priests were those who taught people the law, and the scribes were those who knew the Scriptures; both the priests and the scribes had knowledge concerning the birth of Christ, but unlike the mage from the east, they did not see the vision, nor did they have the heart to seek after Christ. **3** Regardless of how "scriptural" we are, if we lose the presence of the Lord, we are absolutely wrong; the New Testament way to find and follow the Lord is to continually stay in His hidden presence. **4** It is easy to accumulate scriptural knowledge, but if we would have living guidance, we must live in an intimate relationship with the Lord; we must be one with Him. **5** The magi saw Christ, and they worshipped Him; then they were warned by God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, so they departed into their own country "by another way"; once we have seen Christ, we never take the same way, the way of religion apart from

Christ, but we will always take another way. **III. Christ's faithful followers are shining and living stars, those who follow Christ as the shining and living star to be His duplication.** **Dan.12:3** And those who have insight will shine like the shining of the heavenly expanse, and those who turn many to righteousness, like the stars, forever and ever. **A** The living stars follow the heavenly, living, up-to-date, and instant vision of Christ as the centrality and universality of God's economy. **B** The living stars are those who bless God's people; the more we praise the Lord for God's people and speak well of them in faith, the more we put ourselves under God's blessing. **C** The living stars give heed to the prophetic word of the Scriptures "as to a lamp shining in a dark place" so that Christ as the morning star rises in their hearts day by day; if we give heed to the word in the Bible, we will have His rising in our hearts to shine in the darkness of apostasy where we are today, before His actual appearing as the morning star: **1** In the principle of the morning star, a Christian should rise up early because the early morning is the best time to meet the Lord (to fellowship with God, to praise and sing, to pray-read the Bible with the ministry, and to pray to the Lord). **2** The Lord will secretly give Himself as the morning star to those who love Him and who watch and wait for Him so that they may taste the freshness of His presence at His coming back after a long absence. **D** The living stars enjoy and are filled with the sevenfold intensified Spirit to make them intensely living and intensely shining for God's building. **E** The living stars are the messengers of the churches, those who enjoy and experience the pneumatic Christ as the Messenger of God and as the fresh message from God so that they can dispense the fresh and present Christ into the people of God for the testimony of Jesus. **F** The living stars have "great resolutions in heart" and "great searchings of heart"; they are lovers of God who are like the "stars...from their courses" to fight together with God against His enemy so that they may be "like the sun / When it rises in its might" and be those who "shine forth like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." **G** The living stars are those who fear Jehovah and hear the voice of His servant, trusting in Jehovah so that they may have light while walking in darkness: **1** Those who make light for themselves and walk in their self-made light instead of in God's light will suffer torment. **2** This should be a warning to us so that we may walk in the light given by God, not in the light we

make for ourselves; "Come and let us walk in the light of Jehovah." **H** The living stars are typified by the stars that were established on the fourth day of God's restoration with His further creation, in which they rule by their shining; where there is shining, there is ruling for the growth of life: **1** The shining forth of the Lord Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration was the coming of the kingdom in power; this shining forth is actually the ruling presence of the Triune God. **2** The kingdom of God as the ruling of God, the reigning of God, with all its blessings and enjoyment is the shining of the Lord Jesus and the spreading of the Lord Jesus by shining over us. **3** The kingdom is the shining of the reality of the Lord Jesus; whenever He is shining over us and we are under that shining, we are in the kingdom under God's ruling and reigning within us for our growth of life. **I** On the negative side, there are some who are "wandering stars": **1** The metaphor of wandering stars indicates that the erratic teachers, the apostates, were not solidly fixed in the unchanging truths of the heavenly revelation but were wandering about among God's starlike people. **2** The erratic apostates are wandering stars today, but they will eventually be imprisoned in the gloom of darkness, which has been kept for them for eternity. **3** Anyone who does not teach that the local churches are not the goal of God's economy but the procedure to reach the goal of the reality of the Body of Christ does not match the need of the ministry of God in the present age; anyone who keeps us from the blending of the churches for the reality of the Body of Christ 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. **4** Today the living Star and the living stars are not far from us—they are in and with the local churches as the practical expressions of the Body of Christ; among all the local churches there are some living stars; we simply need to contact them and keep company with them; they will lead us to the place where Jesus is. **J** May the Lord be merciful to us that we may always be kept in the right way to meet the Lord, to worship Him, and to offer our love to Him; may the Lord make us all like the magi, following the living star to find and make new discoveries of Christ in order to become His duplication as the living stars.