

Star of Wonder

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[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

So I want you to turn to the most famous Christmas passage in all the Bible. Anybody want to guess what it is? Luke 2. Somebody might say Matthew 2.

We'll go there later. The most famous Christmas passage in all the Bible, Numbers chapter 24.

Numbers chapter 24. If you've got a Bible, turn to Numbers chapter 24.

I'm actually being serious. Turn to Numbers. It's not the most famous Christmas passage in the Bible, but that's where we're going to be this evening as we start a little two-part series that I'm calling The Promised King.

[1 : 34] And what we're going to do this weekend and next weekend is we're going to look at some of the Old Testament prophecies, really some of the Old Testament signs that pointed us to the birth of Christ, the coming of King Jesus.

And one of the things that you're going to learn through this is some of the biblical and historical background of some of the symbols that you see at Christmastime, and yet most people really don't understand where they come from.

So, for instance, tonight, how many of you, you know of the star, right? That's a very, very famous Christmas kind of symbol. But how many of you actually know the history and the background behind the star?

Show of hands, how many of you have a star on your tree? Anybody have a star on your tree?

Okay. How many of you sent out Christmas cards this year that had a star on it? Anybody? How many of you have sung Christmas songs about a star?

You had better all raise your hand because you just did, okay? Like every single song tonight was about the star and the light. Do you have any idea what it means? Now, most people think the star, well, yeah, it was that the thing that guided the wise men to Jesus.

[2 : 47] But that's about as deep as people go. That's about as far as our understanding of the star is. Well, tonight, I want to show you all the biblical information and history behind that star and how it is all about the promised king.

And I know you were driving here tonight and you were saying, I hope we're in Numbers chapter 24. Good news because we are. Let's stand if you're able for the reading of God's word. Numbers chapter 24 and verse 15.

Numbers 24 and verse 15. And he took up his discourse and said, The oracle of Balaam, the son of Beor, the oracle of the man whose eye is opened, the oracle of him who hears the words of God and knows the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty falling down with his eyes uncovered.

I see him, but not now. I behold him, but not near. A star shall come out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel.

It shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down the sons of Seth. Edom shall be dispossessed. Sair also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed.

[4 : 13] Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of the cities.

This is a beautiful Christmas passage. Let's pray together and let's ask God to teach us tonight.

God, thank you for this opportunity to study your word. We're all here.

We want to learn. We want to be taught your word. We want to understand what things mean. But more importantly, we want to worship Jesus. So everything that we say and everything that we learn and everything that you show us from your word tonight, Lord, help it stir our affections for our

promised King, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we pray this in his name. And God's people said, amen. You can be seated. Jordan was 17 years old when she quietly climbed up the window seal of her parents' home and dropped down to the outside world.

As soon as she did, she was immediately terrified. She wasn't terrified because she was trying to run away. She wasn't terrified because she was afraid that she might get hurt in some way.

[5 : 23] She was terrified because at the age of 17, this was the first time she'd ever been outside alone. Her hands were shaking.

She had a cell phone that her parents didn't know that she had. And she somehow found the courage to dial those three numbers. You know those three numbers.

Nine, one, one. And the bravery that she showed that day was not just for her own safety. It was also for her 12 other siblings who were chained up inside her house.

You see, Jordan that day not only freed herself, she freed her siblings from a life of abuse and captivity by the hands of their parents, David and Louise Turpin, who were now in prison for beating, shackling, and starving 12 of their 13 children inside their own home.

Jordan said this, quote, I was always terrified that if I called the cops or tried to escape, I'd get caught. And if I knew if I got caught, I'd die. But at the end, when I saw my younger siblings, I knew that's what I had to do.

[6 : 48] Some of you may remember this story. It's a sad, heartbreaking story about how Jordan and her siblings attended public school until about third grade.

Their parents took them out and began to homeschool them, only they weren't being homeschooled. They were being held in captivity. Never allowed to go outside without one of the parents.

Jordan said, quote, We weren't even allowed to stand up. We were kept awake all night so that we would sleep during the day. We were made to live in filth.

And listen to this. She said, Only given baths every seven months. They ate one meal a day, usually peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, bologna or a frozen burrito.

She said, if we tried to steal food from one of our other siblings, our parents would beat us and chain us up for it. I mean, can you even imagine? Can you imagine living your entire childhood as a slave inside your own home?

[7 : 54] And there are many things, though there are many things about that story that's deeply troubling to us and should be. Like the abuse to children, people that would treat others in such an inhumane way, the cruelty of parents.

But there's another reason why stories like Jordan's grip us deeply, bother us deeply. And that's because it bothers every one of us to see someone held captive.

Doesn't it? It gets us to our core. It troubles us deeply to see someone who is enslaved or imprisoned. And why is that the case?

Because at the core of every one of us is the desire to be free. Everyone wants to be free. That is a powerful, powerful desire.

And you know that. Countries are founded on that desire. Wars are fought for the sake of freedom. Teenagers count down the days for freedom.

[8 : 54] Retirees count down the days for freedom. Amen? I figured I'd get a few. People who are in financial debt scream when they're free. Entire movements are driven by freedom.

And sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual. Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty. We are free at last. Robert Greene said this, quote, What light is to the eyes, what air is to the lungs, liberty is to the soul.

See, everybody's just like Jordan. We want to get out. We want to be free. We no longer want to be slaves. It's why we stand against things like human trafficking.

It's why we seek to help those who are battling addictions. It's why we want to encourage those that are fighting depression. We lend a helping hand to those that are enslaved economically.

And whether or not you've ever thought about it this way or not, it's the very reason we celebrate Christmas. Christmas is a declaration of freedom.

[10 : 05] And it's a declaration of freedom because a king has come, and not just any king, but a king that has come to set the captives like Jordan free.

Are you listening? Lean in. Lean in. Lean in. And that's exactly what the star on the top of your tree represents.

That's exactly what the star on the cover of your Christmas card means. It's a star pointing you to freedom.

Tonight, I'm going to take you back 1,400 years. I promise to return you to the present. But we're going to go back 1,400 years before the birth of Christ, and we're going to see the meaning of this star, this symbol that we see everywhere at Christmastime and understand what's behind it.

That takes us here to our text tonight of Numbers 24 and verse 15. He took up his discourse and said, Say it again.

[11 : 30] A star shall come out of Jacob. A scepter shall rise out of Israel. It shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down the sons of Seth.

Here in Numbers 24, there's a man by the name of Balaam. And he's given a series of oracles. And again, I know you were driving in tonight saying, I hope we study the oracles of Balaam. That's just been something I've really wanted to study at Christmastime for a long time.

The oracles of Balaam. That's what's happening here in Numbers 24. And these are a series of visions that Balaam is given. And in this particular vision, Balaam is given a vision about a future person.

A future event. In fact, that's why in the text it says, I see him, but what? Not now. I behold him, but not near.

So Balaam is seeing something that is off into the future. And then he says something about crushing the heads of Moab. And that's usually where we tune out and say, clearly this doesn't have anything to do with Christmas.

[12 : 37] Christmas has anything to do with Moab. Well, it would be helpful for us to understand a little bit of background that's taking place as to why Balaam receives these oracles in the first place.

Who's for learning some stuff tonight? Anybody? All right. Good, good. The rest of you, sleep tight. Okay. You remember back when Israel was set free from Egypt, the big exodus event.

And Israel is set free and God promises them the land of Canaan. But because they disobey God, God makes them take the long way around.

Do you remember that? You notice this map here. They could have gone the easy way straight into the land of Canaan. But no, they had to disobey. And instead, they take this long way around.

And they wander in the wilderness for 40 years. Now, notice to the top right of this map, you see a place called Moab. Everybody see it? When Israel comes up to Moab and they want to pass through, and this was common in the wilderness wanderings where they wanted to pass through somebody else's land and they had to ask permission.

[13 : 43] They asked permission to pass through the land of Moab. The king of Moab doesn't like Israel and wants Israel destroyed. In fact, what he actually wants is to attack Israel.

But the reason why he doesn't attack Israel is because he knows that two other nations have already tried to attack Israel and that didn't turn out very well for them. They got annihilated because you don't mess with Yahweh.

Yahweh fights for his people. So Moab is in a predicament. He wants to attack Israel, but he knows that didn't work out for others. And so he comes up with a different plan.

The king of Moab, his name is Balak. Balak, the king of Moab, says, I'm going to hire a wise man. I'm going to hire a fortune teller of sort.

I'm going to hire a prophet, so to speak, and I'm going to pay him a lot of money to curse Israel. We won't attack them militarily.

[14 : 44] We'll put a curse on them. And so Balaam, who is the prophet for hire here, decides, of course, I would love to get rich cursing these people.

So he takes the deal. And by the way, guess where Balaam is from? The east. He's from Mesopotamia. And so Balak brings a wise man from the west to the east.

So he goes to the east, and he's going to do this service for the king. But here's what ends up happening is that every time Balaam opens his mouth to curse Israel, do you remember the story? What comes out? Blessings. So it's like he goes to curse, and a blessing comes out. In fact, the real funny part of the story, if you remember this, is that God even sends an angel to appear to Balaam's donkey.

And Balaam's donkey speaks to Balaam. Now, you know the Lord is talking to you when he talks to your donkey, all right? So here's what's happening. Notice this on the screen.

[15:51] You have a king who commissions a wise man from the east to go and curse Israel, but instead of cursing Israel, he blesses Israel.

Now, you might want to just put that in your notebook to come back to here in just a few moments. Back to Numbers chapter 24. Again, these are the oracles, the blessings that God is speaking through Balaam.

Everybody still with me so far? Now, let's take a closer look at one of the blessings that God speaks through this man, Balaam. Verse 17 again. I see him, but not now.

I behold him, but not near. A star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel. It shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Seth.

So Balaam foresees three primary things in this final vision, this final oracle or blessing that God gives. First, he sees a ruler.

[16:54] He sees a ruler. In that, he sees a star. Now, again, that doesn't stick out to us, but listen. In the ancient Near East, a star was always associated with the birth of a king or a to-be king.

So if a prince was born, someone who's going to be king, it was believed that a star would be associated with that king. So here you have Balaam is seeing this star, this future king in this vision. And to make that even more clear, you notice that he says a scepter shall rise. So clearly, this vision is about a promised king. Here's the second thing.

There's a reason for this ruler or king, and that reason is found in the last part of verse 17 and 18. It shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down the sons of Seth.

Edom shall be dispossessed. Sair also, his enemies shall be dispossessed. And so basically, what's happening here in short is that God is saying this ruler is going to come, and here's what this ruler is going to do.

[18:02] He's going to defeat, do you remember Moab? He's going to defeat the enemies of God. God is blessing his people, and he's saying, it's not now, but at some point in the future, I see a star.

I see a scepter. I see this king that's going to come. And here's what this king is going to do. He is going to defeat the very people that stand up against the people of God.

In fact, don't you find it interesting? Are you still with me? Are you having as much fun as I am? That he's going to do what to Moab? He's going to what? Crush the forehead of Moab.

Isn't that interesting language? Here's the point. Notice it on the screen. God is sending a king who will defeat the enemy that wanted his people under a curse.

Is anything starting to ring a bell? Are any of these themes starting to connect with you? This is the oracle of Balaam. And here's the result of this king who's going to come and defeat the enemies of God.

[19:05] Verse 19. Here's the result. And the one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivor of the cities.

In other words, the result when this king defeats the enemies of God is that he will have all dominion. He will have all authority. He will be king of all kings.

This is what was prophesied through the prophet Balaam. So let's review. Let's review. Here's the context of Numbers 24. Everybody with me? A king is trying to destroy God's people.

Specifically, he's trying to put them under a curse, Moab. This king commissions a wise man from the east to go and curse Israel. But instead, he blesses Israel.

He receives a vision about a future king. And the sign of this vision is a star. And the king who's coming will crush the head of God's enemy and receive all authority and dominion.

[20:12] Now, we could just pack up right here and go home, all right? I mean, you already know what this is about. Amen? But let me show you its fulfillment. Take all of that and now turn to one of the most famous Christmas passages in all the Bible.

Matthew chapter 2. Matthew chapter 2 and verse 1. Matthew chapter 2 and verse 1. So we're going to see all the importance of Numbers chapter 24 and all of that biblical and historical background now unfold right before our eyes at the first Christmas.

Matthew 2 verse 1. Now, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea in the days of, say this with me, Herod the king. So we've got a king in Matthew chapter 2.

Behold, wise, say it, wise men from the, where have we heard that before, came to Jerusalem saying, where's the one who's been born king of the Jews?

And why are they even looking for a king? Because we saw, say it, his star. When it rose and have come to worship him. When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him, because when Herod's troubled, everybody else is troubled.

[21 : 30] And assembling all the chief priests and the scribes and the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him in Bethlehem of Judea, for it is written by the prophet, and you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah.

For from you shall come, what? Say it. A ruler who will shepherd my people, Israel. Then Herod summoned the wise men, remember you're supposed to read the black part, okay, secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared.

And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word that I too may come and worship him.

I want to bless him. I want to speak blessing to this king. After listening to the king, they went on their way, and behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it was come to rest over the place where the child was.

When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and blessed him, worshipped him, spoke a blessing to this child.

[22 : 54] Then opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And then this is the part we often leave out, but it's important. Read it with me. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Do you see all that fulfillment? I mean, I tried to kind of highlight it here. I mean, it is dripping with Numbers 24. It's all over the place. Let me just connect the dots for us.

You have a king, Herod, who wants to curse Israel. He wants to harm this newborn king of the Jews, but he's afraid. He's afraid.

He does this secretly. He's afraid of this king that now threatens his rule. Secondly, he commissions wise men from the east to go find him.

And what are they looking for? They're looking for a king. And why or what was it that they saw that pointed them to this king? A star.

[24 : 00] When they find him, what do they do? They bless him. They worship him. Herod wants them to report back. But this is, again, this is the important twist.

Remember, Balak wanted Balaam to give curses, but instead he couldn't. He receives a vision from God and instead has to bless him.

What happens in Matthew 2? Herod wants the wise men to return to him and report back, but God won't let them. He gives them a dream and sends them a different way.

You have the king of Moab just like the king of Herod who wants destruction. You have Balaam, a wise man from the east, just like the wise man.

You have Balaam's oracle about a star, and their response is immediately to bless and worship the king. Faith family, the vision of Balaam doesn't end there.

[25 : 01] It actually even goes further. The fulfillment of that prophecy, the fulfillment of this promised king goes even further. Why? Because remember, it wasn't just that a king was coming.

It wasn't just that a ruler was coming. But what was the reason for this ruler? What was the reason this king was coming? Balaam said it was to crush the head of Moab.

That is to say in a different way, to crush the head of God's enemy. And what did Jesus come to do? Listen to 1 John 3, verse 8.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. Jesus came to defeat the enemies of God.

And Hebrews chapter 2, verse 14 says, And that through death, Jesus might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver all those captives who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.

[26 : 09] I have said this on many occasions, and I will keep reminding you every single Christmas, that that night in Bethlehem was not a silent night. It was not all is calm and all is bright.

It was the birth of a king who came with a mission to find another king, the small g God of this world, and crush his head.

And to take all those that were captive in sin, all those that were enslaved to death, and set them free. And Jesus dies on the cross, taking that sin payment upon himself.

Three days later, rises from the grave to show that he has victory. He has defeated death. He has defeated the enemy. He is the victorious promised king.

And what does he say at the end of the gospel of Matthew? Matthew 28, 18. Jesus said to them, All authority. Remember Balaam's prophecy?

[27 : 13] Remember Numbers 24? All authority in heaven and on earth is now mine. It has been given to me. And by the way, can I just add one more here, Faith Family?

What is Jesus spoken of, or spoken about as, in the book of Revelation? Revelation 22, verse 16. I am the root and the descendant of David.

That is the kingly line. What is Jesus? The bright and morning star. Faith Family. Yeah, you can get excited about that. That's awesome.

Do that. It gives me a time to wipe my nose, all right? Here's what I'm after. This is not all I'm after, but it's one of the things I'm after. Is that this Christmas, when you see the star, when you're walking in your living room and you see that star on the top of your tree or wherever it is on your tree or anywhere in your home or you get that Christmas card in the mail and you open it up and it's got a star on it or you're walking in Walmart or Target and you hear a song about a star, I don't want you to think, yeah, that was the guiding light that took the wise men to Jesus.

I want you to realize that was a sign 1,400 years before the birth of Jesus declaring your victory. You see that star not just as a Christmas decoration.

[28 : 37] You see that star as a symbol of your freedom, a light that guided you to the promised king. It was more than God's version of a firework show or a Christmas decoration or the ancient Near Eastern version of GPS.

It was a sign foretold 1,400 years before about a king that came to defeat sin and death and set his people free.

Faith family, that star is an announcement for those of you searching for hope, that hope has come. That star is a sign for those of you searching for victory, that victory is here.

That star is a sign for those of you that need salvation and every one of us needs salvation, that that salvation is found in the star of Jacob, the king born in Bethlehem, the promised king that has come.

Now that's one of the things I'm after. There's a few more things and then I'm done. How does this vision apply to us? What should our response be to this truth? Because listen, I don't want this just to be a theological version of connect the dots.

[29 : 47] That was really cool. You know, Balaam and the whole Balak story and the whole star, sweet. Like, I'm gonna like show this off at Christmas time. Y'all know what that star means? You're so stupid, I know, right?

No, no, no, I want it to go deeper than that, okay? It's more than just, yes, I want us to know our Bible. I want us to know our biblical history. I'm a nerd like many of you. We ought to see the fulfillment of these things.

But can we take just a moment and talk about our hearts? I mean, our minds hopefully are full of knowledge and information and exciting prophecy. But let's talk about our affection.

Let's talk about what this star means for our heart. The first is this, the star in our worship. The star in our worship. Listen, the magi weren't looking for a sweet little baby that never cries.

They were looking for a king so that they could worship him. And when they found him, you know what they do. They fall before him and they bless him. And they love him.

[30 : 51] And they pour out their devotion to him. Tonight I want to ask you and I want you to answer it to yourself. What is the pace of your heart right now? What is the pace of your heart right now?

Some of you these last several days have just spent all your time getting gifts, planning plans, making preparations and reservations and meal prep. And you've spent zero time on your knees before your king.

Let me tell you what this star does. This star doesn't just fill your mind with biblical knowledge. This star brings you to your knees to worship your king.

The wise men followed that star to a place of worship. Come, let us adore him. And I am asking each and every one of us to take the time, if you have not already, in the busyness of this season, and adore him and love him and worship him as king.

Secondly, the star in our surrender. The star in our surrender. Listen, the whole historical context of this star is that Balak didn't want anything to do with God and his people.

[32 : 11] In fact, he was trying to stand against the people of Israel back in the wanderings. Balaam, you remember, he didn't want to bless Israel. He wanted the money.

He wanted to curse Israel. God just wouldn't let him. Herod wanted to protect his own authority and his own rule. In other words, every character in this story surrounding the star wanted to do their own thing, wanted to protect their own self.

And yet, what did the star in every single case? Listen, did Balak win? No. Did Balaam win? No. Did Herod win? No. Because you can't fight against this king.

He's king. He's king of kings and he's lord of lords, which means this star ought to bring us to a place of surrender. When we follow this star in all of its biblical and historical significance, it not only brings us to a place of worshiping him and adoring him, it brings us to a place of surrendering our way, surrendering our kingdom, a stop fighting against God.

Some of you right now may be in a battle of kingdoms between yours and God's. You want your way. Hey, you're trying to force things to be your way. It might be in your health, your relationships, your finances.

[33 : 34] But what does this star do? It declares to you, not, hey, it was a really cool, you know, miracle. It declares to you, stop fighting against God.

The king has come and he is not only worthy of your worship, he demands your surrender. For there will only be one king in your life and his name must be Jesus.

So if you really understand this star, it'll be more than a connect the dot. It'll be a time of worship and adoration and a time of surrender at the feet of Jesus.

And then finally is the star in our freedom. The star in our freedom. Balaam's vision was about a king that defeats God's enemy. And the New Testament says that is exactly what Jesus did.

He came to set the captives free. And tonight we should rejoice. There's two people I'm talking to. Those of you that are already Christians, you ought to rejoice that you are free.

[34 : 38] Listen, I know there's a lot of stuff in life that's hard, right? Coming back from traveling and fighting disease, don't love that, okay?

There's just a lot of yucky stuff in life. But you know what? There is one thing that supersedes all the struggles in this life, and it's this. Christ has set us free. And whatever it is that we face in this life, it will not compare to the glory that will be revealed to us.

You are children of God. He has set you free from sin and death. And so whatever you're suffering, whatever you're hurting with, whatever trials you're going through, like don't forget to rejoice and celebrate the freedom that is yours in Jesus Christ.

You were once far off, and now you are near. You were once a slave, and now you are a child of God. You were once dead in sin, now you have new life and eternal life.

And on and on and on we could go, right? This is yours in this king. So worship him. And live in the freedom that is yours.

[35 : 55] The second person I'm talking to is the one that's still a slave. You have never looked to Jesus and turned to him by faith and said, I believe.

I turn from my kingdom. You know, I'm like Herod. I'm like Balak. I'm just trying to fight for my own way, fight for my own kingdom. But you know what? Tonight, I give up.

I surrender. Jesus is Lord of my life. I'm done. And Jesus will set you free forever. Sin no longer, death no longer has a hold on you.

So this star, oh man, is that star important. Oh, brother and sister, it's more than a decoration. It's more than a Christmas ornament or something on your Christmas card. It's even more than a little guiding light in Matthew 2.

It is a declaration to the ends of the earth. Come and be free. Come and be free. Because this promised king has come and he has defeated the enemies of God.

[36 : 55] And now he says to you, come, let the Son set you free. And if the Son has set you free, say it, you are free indeed. Martin Luther said this, this is the Christ, God's Son Most High, who hears your sad and bitter cry.

He will himself your Savior be. And from all your sin, we'll set you free. That's Christmas. That's Christmas.

Faith family, stories like Jordan's break our hearts. I mean, I could just hear you respond as we began the message. It's devastating to hear about stories of captivity and enslavement, stories of hopelessness.

But listen, a story of captivity isn't just Jordan's story, that's our story. That's the entire story of the human race. We are slaves, captive and imprisoned to sin and under the curse of sin.

But listen to me, Faith family, unlike Jordan, you can't climb your way to freedom. You can't get out of your own imprisonment. That's why God, on that first Christmas morning, sent a king to defeat the enemy and to set us free.

[38 : 11] And he would crush that serpent's head as he took our sin on the cross and rose from the dead, whereby receiving all authority and all dominion forever and ever and ever.

So tonight, I invite you, like those wise men long ago, would you follow a star? Follow a star.

A star that will lead you to your freedom. Because it's a star that will lead you to your king. And all God's people said, Amen.

Let's pray. Let's pray. Lord, thank you for this. This is just beautiful truth. Thank you for just how your scripture comes alive and passages that we may think are so irrelevant couldn't be more relevant.

Packed full of the truth of the gospel. Thank you, Jesus, that we see you on every page, the gospel from cover to cover. And Lord, we thank you tonight that that promised king has come and his name is Jesus.

[39 : 19] I ask that in these next few moments, as we have a time of remembrance, as we think, not just about a cradle, but about a cross. How on the cross, you defeated the enemy, you destroyed the works of Satan, and you set captives free.

That's the kind of king you are. You're not the kind of king that comes to enslave. You're the kind of king that comes to bring freedom. And I pray these next few moments would just be a time of surrender, a time of adoration, and a time of truly resting in all the freedom that is ours in Christ.

I can't force any heart in this room to worship. But what I can do is just give a few moments to allow that to happen. So God, what we do with these next few moments is on us, but I pray that it would be a beautiful time of remembrance and worship, of following a star to the cradle of a king who has set us free.

So Lord God, guide us in these moments, I pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.