

# Northern Messenger

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'The "Messenger" is far superior to anything I know of for the Sunday School.'—W. Ruddy, Toronto, Ont.



## Seeking the King.

A Tale of the Wise Men.

(Grace M. Everett, in the 'Zion's Herald'.)

It is evening. The last rays of the sun rest upon the hilltops as though they would bestow a parting benediction, and then vanish. At that moment the heavy door of an ancient temple opens, and twelve men, clad in priestly vestments, come forth. In solemn silence and with stately tread they move up the road to where a huge rock stands alone on a slight eminence. There they stop, and each takes his station upon or about the rock, fixing his eyes intently upon the heavens.

These are no ordinary men. They are the purest and best of which their country can boast. They spend their time in prayer and meditation. If it were not so, they never would have been chosen to keep this sacred vigil. They are learned men also. They are versed in all the sacred writings of their people, and they can read the heavens as an open book. In a word, they are magi, the wise men of the East.

But even these are not all equal in attainments or character. Mark you that man who

stands on the very crest of the rock. He is old. His hair is as white as the driven snow, and his beard falls to his girdle. He is more in earnest than the others. They watch the heavens; he searches them. His keen eyes never move from the starry depths above them. And as he looks his lips move in prayer.

'Oh, that He would come!' he murmurs. 'Oh, that I might behold Him! Oh, that His star might appear this night!'

As the hours pass, his feelings grow more intense. 'The altar fires burn low,' he cries, 'and the worshippers wax faint. They groan beneath oppression. They say, "We have offered our sacrifices and poured out our oblations. But what does it profit us? God does not hear our prayers, neither does He regard our sufferings." Oh, that He would come! Oh, that His star would appear this night!' Thus he prays.

At length the hour of midnight comes, and is gone. Then suddenly there is a cry:

'The star! The star!'

Instantly all eyes turn to the east. There they behold, hanging just above the horizon, a star of such brilliancy that it outshone all the host of heaven.

'It is His star!' exclaims the old man. 'He hath come, and I must find Him!'

'But where wilt thou seek Him?' asks the one next to him.

'I have heard,' replies the old man, 'that there is a people who dwell toward the setting sun in a province called Judea. It is said that they have long expected a Prince. It may be that He will be born among them. I will travel thither and inquire by the way.'

'But Judea is afar off,' protests the other. 'Thou art old; thou canst not wander so far from home.'

The Sage lifts his head, his chest heaves, and his eyes flash. 'For many years,' he cries, 'my father's father stood upon this rock, and kept this vigil; and after him, my father watched; and now for threescore years

