

gave him all the information he required. He then desired them to go to Bethlehem and seek for the young child, and when they had found him to return and let him know, that he too might go and worship him. Even to young children such as you are I should think the short-sighted folly and self-deception of Herod must be apparent; he believed that the all-seeing and all-powerful God who had so far guided the wise men on their way would continue to direct them on their journey, so that they would by His assistance accomplish the object of it—and yet he persuaded himself that his own wicked designs would be concealed from them, and that they would come back to Jerusalem and shew him where to find his victim.

When they had answered the questions put to them by the King and heard his treacherous intentions, we are not told whether they distrusted him or not, but only that they departed from Jerusalem, “and lo the star which they saw in the East went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was.” The appearance of this star is the first miracle connected with our Saviour after his birth. It was not properly called a star, but was what we still see very frequently, and call them shooting or falling stars—they are damp exhalations or vapours that rise from the ground, and when they get to a certain height in the air they take fire and generally disappear in a moment; but this meteor, which was called a star from its resemblance to one, continued to burn steadily in the way before the wise men, until it brought them to the place where they found the newborn King.

To most other people our Saviour at this time seemed