

## **Ozzie: The Little Man Behind the Curtain**

Matthew 1:18-2:12  
December 24, 2017  
Peter Hiett

### **Special Music**

"Somewhere Over the Rainbow"

### **Message**

[*Wizard of Oz* movie clip #1:]

The face of the Wizard of Oz, surrounded by smoke and fire: *Come forward! I am Oz, the Great and Powerful!*

[Peter enters the dark stage. Candles are lit around him.]

"I am the Great and Powerful Oz! Behold my power and be filled with wonder!"  
[Peter waves a light around in the darkness.]

-or-

"Behold my power and be filled with fear!"  
[Peter does a fire trick.]

I can tell that you are completely astounded.

[*Wizard of Oz* movie clip #2:]

Oz' face, surrounded by even more smoke and fire: *The Great and Powerful Oz knows why you have come!*

You have come because it is Christmas Eve! [Peter claps on the lights. He is dressed as a wizard, using a Middle Eastern accent.] "Clap on!" And that is why I have come and did come many years ago. I am a wizard. I am knowing that you normally say "wise man" or "king." I'm really not a king, but I am a king maker. Your Bible says that I am a *magi*. It is where you get your word magician. We magi were astronomers, astrologers, and kind of like psychic weathermen.

Long ago, I came from the east, from a region called "Orient R," it's right past "Orient Q" just before "Orient S." Now you are calling this region Iraq, Iran, and maybe India. If that would be surprising you—a wizard from Persian on Christmas Eve, remember that the first sign of God's covenant was a rainbow—a rainbow over all the earth. I came from Orient R, but now I come from over that rainbow.

My complete name is Balthaser Ozwaldo Jones. But you may call me Ozzy.

Now, I know what you are thinking: What does a magi-wizard from Orient R do with his time? For a dollar, I will show you. May I borrow a dollar? Now, I will astound you! I levitate your dollar. I will fill it with secret sauce. “Abracadabra. Abracadabra. Abracadabra. Abracadabra. ABRACADABRA, Kalamazoo, Michigan.” [Ozzy turns the dollar in his hands and begins to release it.] “Abracadabra. Barak Obama.” [The dollar “magically” floats in the air. Ozzy shakes his hands (as if power to levitate the dollar were coming from his hands. He looks at the dollar and wonder and then turns toward the crowd and says, “You are *astounded!*!”]

And *now* . . . [Ozzy takes the dollar in his hands.] I will make your dollar disappear. [Ozzy wads the dollar up quickly and shoves it into his sash. He accidentally drops it, grabs it and puts it away and chuckling says, “You did not see that.”] That was a very good deal for me but not such a good deal for you. I call it the “art of the deal.” That is what I would be doing most of the time.

Most of the time, I would be “doing a deal.” People would be coming to me for wisdom, and I would say, “Hello, my good man. Is that your camel?” He would say, “Yes,” and—Caboom! I would blow it to smithereens [with a wand]. “Hello, is that your goat?” Caboom! I would blow it to smithereens and then I would say, “Now that you are filled with shock and awe, let’s do a deal.” It was a very effective business plan.

Mostly we would use smoke and mirrors, and make up big words like “latent bio-chemical psychosis compounded by halitosis.” Smoke, mirrors, big words, and pain in the neck demons. That is how we would control people and enchant those people to us. I would be doing deals with demons in order to be doing deals with people. But the more I was doing deals with demons, the more demons were doing deals with me. And the more I was controlled by demons, and the more I was trapped in lies—that I pretended to be myself and so I was a stranger in my own life. I was not at home in me. And so, my friends, I appeared to be great and powerful, but I was very small, and weak, and scared, and very, very lonely.

[*Wizard of Oz* movie clip #3]

[Dorothy and her friends stand shaking as Oz continues.]

Oz: *Do not arouse the wrath of the Great and Powerful Oz! I said come back tomorrow!*

Dorothy: *If you were really great and powerful, you’d keep your promises.*

Oz: *Do you presume to criticize the Great Oz? You ungrateful creatures! Think yourselves lucky that I’m giving you audience tomorrow instead of 20 years from now.*

[Toto pulls back a curtain on the side to reveal a man speaking into a microphone and working levers.]

Oz: *The Great Oz has spoken! Pay no attention to that man behind the curtain! The Great Oz has spoken!*

[Dorothy goes to the man behind the curtain.]

Dorothy: *Who are you?*

Oz, speaking into the microphone: *I am the Great and Powerful...Wizard of Oz.*

Presently, I will not be showing you any more home videos. But do you see? I wanted people to like me. But the me, that I was wanting them to like was a lie. So I kept saying, “Pay no attention to the little man behind the curtain,” but I was the little man behind the curtain: small, weak, scared, and very, very lonely.

Maybe you would be feeling this way now. You have built a very impressive curtain constructed of degrees, awards, pretend powers, and fake laughter. It helps you to do a deal...but behind the curtain you are small, weak, scared, and very, very lonely. Your pastor (a dear, sweet man, God bless him)—he was telling me that he feels this way much of the time, like a stupid wise man or a lonely wizard. You see, I am not the only wizard in this place. Your society is full of them.

Well, in 3 B.C. I was lonely, I was scared, and I was angry. Presently, if I am to be honest with you, I hated God. We called Him the Great Silent One. Even stupid wise men know: pain-in-the-neck demons did not make the world; the Great Silent One did. But He was silent, and I hated Him. I was jealous of His greatness and His power. I wanted to be knowing Him, but I was not wanting to be meeting Him. I wanted to be knowing Him but I did not want Him to be knowing me. [Raising a wand, Ozzy impersonates his fear of what meeting the Great Silent One might be like.] “Ozzy, is that your camel?” Caboom! “Ozzy, is that your goat?” Caboom! “Ozzy, is that your heart . . . behind that curtain?”

For many years, we had been knowing that the Great One existed behind an immense curtain in a stone temple in the west, in the land of Judah the lion. And we knew that if a man like me looked behind that curtain, he would most certainly be destroyed. And so, you might now be asking, “Ozzy, why did you go? Bearing gifts you travelled afar, field and forest, veil and mountain, following yonder star.” That’s easy. I went for the very same reason that many of you came to church tonight: to schmooze. I would be schmoozing the Great Silent One. I wanted to do a deal with Him before He looked behind my curtain and blew me to smithereens. I attempted to schmooze the Great One.

When the star appeared, I calculated, “Now is my opportunity.” People argue about this, but you can be knowing that in September of 3 B.C., the Star of the Great King (that you now call the planet Jupiter) aligned with Regulus, the Little King Star, three times...all in the constellation of Leo the lion.

[Image of constellations in the night sky]

Then at dawn, behind Leo the Lion rose Virgo the virgin, clothed in the sun, with a new moon at her feet (just like in Revelation 12).

[Image of constellations in the daytime sky]

Clearly, a king would be born in Judah (Judah the lion), born of a virgin (Vergo). He would be the Faithful One, like the moon: faithful to reflect the light on a dark and dreary world.

And now, I should be telling you that the Great One spoke to us through stars, but now He speaks to you in a far more excellent way. So do not ever be ruled by stars. It is forbidden. Be ruled by only the Great One.

Nine months after Jupiter crowned Regulus, Jupiter (the Great King) came into conjunction with Venus, the bright and morning star. It was the brightest star anyone alive had ever seen. It set in the west and clearly forebode two things:

1. It was a very good time to be picking up chicks. (This was good news for me.)
2. The King of the Jews—the Faithful Witness—was now born in the west, and we must go schmooze Him.

My fellow wizards Melchio, Gaspar, and I would attempt to enchant the Great One to ourselves. But now I hope you see the inherent difficulty in that proposition. How do you do a deal with someone that great? What do you get for someone who owns everything? If He owns everything, and you give Him anything, it must be His own stolen something that you give Him. And that, my friends, is bad schmoozing.

But, alas, we were stupid wise men. We brought gold, frankincense, and myrrh, with which we planned to construct a very impressive curtain of wealth, wisdom, and power, behind which we planned to be protected, and with which we planned to schmooze the Great One.

On our way across the desert, we were making up a song for schmoozing. Gaspar sang, “Gold I bring to crown Him again, king forever, ceasing never, over us all to reign.” Then Melchio: “Frankincense to offer have I, incense owns a deity nigh, prayer and praising all men raising, worship Him God on high.” And me: “Myrrh is mine, it’s bitter perfume, breathes a life of gathering gloom, sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying, sealed in a stone cold tomb.” They kept saying to me, “What are you, being nuts? Ozzy, those are not words for schmoozing. Why are you singing that?” I said, “I don’t know. But it rhymes. Perhaps our song would be needing one more verse.”

When we arrived in Jerusalem, we made quite a commotion. We had each brought about 200 servants, and most of those were soldiers. You see? The Jews were still perturbed about a little incident that they referred to as the Babylonian Captivity. Well, when news that king-makers from the east had arrived in town asking about a new king of the Jews, the old King of the Jews—Herod became very interested in us.

He was a very small and lonely man behind a very large curtain. He would be driving a very large pick-up truck if he were here today. He ruled all of Judah but did not rule one heart. When he died, he left orders to have hundreds of people massacred so that tears would be shed upon his passing. And that, my friends, is the problem with great power and big curtains. With these things you cannot capture a heart or win a single tear.

Herod had already massacred three of his sons in fear. But being stupid wise men, we asked him upon arrival, “Where is the one born king of the Jews? In his bedroom, perhaps? Perhaps the royal nursery? Or even the Holy Place in the Temple?” King Herod did not know, so he consulted his Bible wizards. His wizards informed him, “The Messiah is to be born in Bethlehem.”

Bethlehem is five miles to the south of Jerusalem. And, behold, the star moved and stopped. Actually, on the 25<sup>th</sup> of December in 2 B.C., due to what you now call planetary retrograde motion, the King Star stopped directly over Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem. Well, whether or not that was, in fact, what I saw, presently I am knowing that the Great One arranged all things—including planetary retrograde motion—for this moment.

But what a strange moment! You see, Bethlehem is a trailer park, and I was expecting a palace. I kept saying, “Go, star, keep going, star,” but, alas, it wouldn’t go. We were directed to a poor, little shack. Inside a lamp was lit. The shack had a curtain for a door. I knew that we were close to something because of the incessant chattering in my head. A rather disturbing side effect of my chosen profession was the constant chattering of pain-in-the-neck demons. Sometimes it was like a bad committee meeting convening in my head. That night they were all screaming, “Turn back! Turn back, Ozzy! Don’t keep going! If you look behind that curtain, the Great and Powerful Oz will die!”

I was frozen in terror when Melchior said, “We came all this way. We should at least leave a note: ‘Happy Birthday, King of the Jews’.” Just then, from inside, a young woman drew back the curtain. I could tell that she was a little taken aback at the sight of 603 Medo-Persians, many in full battle gear. But when we mumbled, “We seek the King of the Jews,” she smiled and yelled, “Joseph, bring the baby to meet some nice wizard men from far away!”

Just then, a young man holding a baby boy about seven months old came into view. The very moment I laid my eyes on the boy, every chattering voice fell silent and every demon fled like darkness before the dawn. And I knew I was in the presence of the Great Silent One. But now, He was not silent. He was babbling. His word was, “*Abba, abba.*” The word of the Great Silent One was “*abba*”.

The young man looked up and cried, “Mary, Mary! He said *abba*! Jesus said *abba daddy*! Did you hear it?” It was entirely extraordinary, wrapped in completely ordinary. Presently, I am knowing it was Immanuel: God with us, God incarnate. It means, “God in meat.” (I saw a photo recently of Lady Gaga in a meat dress...in-carnate. It was like that but much, much better.)

The young lady said, “Joe, let the nice wizard hold Jesus.” And all at once, I was holding the King of kings in my arms. And all my terror turned to holy terror and then turned to joy. I was knowing that He came from over the rainbow. He came from the other side of the covenant. He is not just a *sign* of the covenant; He *is* the covenant. He is Great One wrapped in a curtain of flesh. And that is when I saw the great truth, which exposed the ancient lie, which keeps us all in bondage. We think our God is just the most powerful wizard—that He is great because He can blow every other god to smithereens. But our God is *not* just the most powerful wizard. He is the Anti-Wizard.

I was a wizard, a frightened, little man behind a big curtain of lies and stolen power.

He is all-power and all-truth behind a little curtain of weak, baby lesh.

Because He *wants* to be there.

I was terror and pride always taking.

He is fearless Love, always giving. He is fearless, free, unlimited, unending Love.

The young lady said, “He would like it for you to kiss Him.” So I kissed Him. He giggled and smiled at me. The Great One smiled at me . . . not the Great and Powerful Oz but *me*: the little man behind the curtain. He liked *me*. I had always said, “Pay no attention to the little man behind the curtain,” but all He cared about was the little man behind the curtain. He was not impressed with the Great and Powerful Oz. Actually, I think He hated the Great and Powerful Oz, for the Great and Powerful Oz was a lie—a lie, which separated Him from the little man behind the curtain. He *liked* me—the little man behind the curtain.

That night, the Great and Powerful Oz did die (just like the demons said).

But I am not the Great and Powerful Oz. [Ozzy takes off his hat and places it in the manger.]

The Great and Power Oz died, and I, Ozwaldo, was set free.

Wizards hide behind big curtains to capture people with fear. The Great One hid behind a baby curtain to capture me with kisses and set me free. I came to enchant the Great One with power, and the Great One enchanted me with Himself. I could not stop weeping, and laughing, and kissing Him. Gaspar said, “Ozwaldo, let me have a turn to hold the King of Kings.” I handed the King of Kings to Gaspar and fell to my face weeping, “Abba, Father.” The Word of the Great One was now in me and on my tongue.

I worshipped the Great One, and I was so very, very not lonely. God is Love, and I had been terrified of Love. Why? Because love destroys every curtain. It was completely astounding! The thing I feared most was the thing I most desperately desired: love. God is love. The Great Silent One is love.

As I worshipped, I remembered the gifts for schmoozing, and then I couldn’t stop laughing, for there was nothing left to schmooze. Everything was free. How silly of me to try to do a deal with the Great One. Presently, He was a baby. He didn’t want gold, frankincense, and myrrh. He wanted hugs and kisses, and maybe a popular toy that all the kids are into these days; I don’t know. Our gifts of schmoozing were ridiculous. Still, I knew that we had to give them.

There is a legend that some tell that is not true and yet it is very true. In the legend, an angel meets us at the entrance to that shack. At the curtain, the angel says, “All who enter must bring a gift.” Gaspar says, “I have brought gold.” The angel says, “Your gift must be of yourself and precious to you.” Gaspar says, “So it is.” But as he kneels to offer his gift, he looks in his hands. There lays not gold but a hammer. The angel whispers, “What you hold in your hand is the hammer of your greed used to pound wealth from those who labor for you, that you may live in mansions as they live in hovels.” Gaspar bows and turns to go, for his greatness and power is, in fact, shame. But the angel blocks his way. “You have not offered your gift.” Gaspar exclaims, “I cannot give this to the boy king!” “But that is why you came,” the angel says. “You must leave it here, or it will destroy you.”

Melchior brought frankincense won in battle at the side of kings. But it turned into his own spear— long and soaked in blood. “The enemy has cast a spell!” he cried. “That is more true than you know,” replied the angel. “I cannot give this to the child; the spear could pierce his flesh!” cried Melchior. The angel said, “You must.”

The angel then turned to me and said, “Is this myrrh precious to your soul?” My silver flask turned to a clay jar filled with vinegar. I heard, “It is what you drink, bitterness and lies. You

clothe yourself with gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but your curtain of glory is greed, violence, and lies. It is hammer, spear, and vinegar. Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar Oswaldo you must give these things to Him.”

Do you see? That night, we did. I gave to Jesus my Great and Powerful Oz. And then I gave Jesus what He most desired: I gave Him the little man behind the curtain. And then we wise men went home a different way.

Jesus is the way.

What will you give to Him this Christmas?  
What will you give the One who has everything?  
How about the one thing He may not have, that He wants more than anything?  
That is the little man, the little woman behind the curtain.

Many years later, on a Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 33 A.D., the sky grew black and the earth shook—even in Persia. That night rose the blood red moon, the moon in full eclipse—the faithful witness shrouded in blood, and I understood.

[Image of a blood moon]

I understood that the Faithful One was destroying every curtain, every dividing wall of hostility.

With an old hammer, they nailed Him to a tree in a garden.  
They pierced His side with an old spear—long and soaked with blood.  
To drink, they gave Him vinegar mixed with myrrh—from an old clay pot—my myrrh and my vinegar. He drank my sin and wrapped Himself in my curtain of shame. The Great One was doing a deal—a deal that has been done since the foundation of the earth. Deal means covenant—an eternal covenant.

He wrapped Himself in my shame. And then He died in order to destroy every curtain of shame. As He died, the curtain—in the old, stone temple, separating mankind from the Great One, and the Great One from mankind—ripped from top to bottom. Scripture says that curtain is Jesus’ flesh. Your pastor, dear sweet man has been telling you that Jesus is the Open Door. His broken flesh reveals the heart of the Great One. And His broken flesh forms the eternal covenant. That covenant is our way home to the other side of the curtain, to the other side of the rainbow to the land that you have always dreamed of.

And now listen to me: *you* are the land that He has always dreamed of. You understand? Heaven is on the other side of the rainbow. And the other side of the rainbow is in your heart.

Now, I, Oswaldo, am at home with the Great One in my own heart. I click my heals together and say, “There’s no place like home. There’s no place like home. There’s no place like home.” And then the Great Silent One, He speaks, “Merry Christmas, Balthasar Oswaldo Jones!” He likes you. He came to die for you and rise within you on the other side of your curtain. April 5<sup>th</sup>, 33AD, I finished my song. “Glorious now behold Him arise, King and God and sacrifice, alleluia, alleluia, sounds through earth and skies.”

And now I must go and get your pastor and that music man, and you will sing my song. Clap off.  
[The lights go off.]

[Music: "We Three Kings"]

[Peter returns to the stage in regular clothes.]

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*Communion is served*

*Several worship songs and Christmas songs are sung*

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### **Benediction**

By way of benediction, I believe the Lord would say to you, "Merry Christmas!" In Jesus' name, believe the Gospel. Amen.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*