

## Gifts of the Magi – Dec. 29, 2021

**Matthew 2** – Magi travel to Jerusalem.

“After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”

- Magi go - assume where Jesus was born. Saw star... went. Not Follow
- Greek word “magi” - indicates they were astrologers
- From East... doesn’t say where. Don’t know how many.
- Kings? Nothing in Matthew implies they are kings.
  - o Tradition – “**Balthasar**” – said to be a king of **Arabia**;  
“**Melchior**” - a king of **Persia**; & “**Caspar**” - a king of **India**
- **Psalm 72:11** – “All kings will bow before him, and all nations will serve him.”
- **Isaiah 60** – “Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord rises upon you. See, darkness covers the earth and thick darkness is over the peoples, but the Lord rises upon you and his glory appears over you. **3** Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn. . . .”
- “the wealth on the seas will be brought to you, to you the riches of the nations will come. **6** Herds of camels will cover your land, young camels of Midian and Ephah. And all from Sheba will come, bearing gold and incense and proclaiming the praise of the Lord.”
  - o Prophecies support “kings” and camels.

**Matt. 2:3-5** – “When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. **4** When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. **5** “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: **6** ““But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.””

- Priests know the prophecy from **Micah 5**
- Jerusalem is just 4-5 mi from Bethlehem.

**Matt. 2:7-8** - "Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. 8 He sent them to Bethlehem and said, 'Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.'"

- Jerusalem & Bethlehem. Both wrong - now.
- **Prov. 3:5** – "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;"

**Matt. 2:9-12** – "9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. 11 On coming to the **house**, they saw the **child** with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. 12 And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route."

- Child Jesus, not baby. Mary is there, no mention of Joseph.
- House, not a manger. 3 gifts – but unknown how many Magi.

### **Symbolism of the gifts:**

- 1 – Gold – given to kings. Royalty.
- 2 – Frankincense – used in worship. Deity.
- 3 – Myrrh – used for embalming. Humanity.

### **3 things about the Magi – 3 questions for us:**

**1 – devoted. Time / travel.** 911 mi. - Arabia to Jerusalem.

- **Then Bethlehem to Nazareth** – 90 mi. 5 days. 18 mi per day.
- Approx. 50 days – 2 mo – to travel to Jerusalem.

**How devoted are we?**

**2 – Generous.**

**Gifts.** Baby Jesus didn't need those gifts. But this was generous worship.

**Heart of the giver is what is important.** Give from love, not rules.

Remember Cain & Abel. Gen. 4. Cain's gift wasn't accepted.

Abel gave "the best portions" from his flock.

More like Cain? Give what you don't want... no value. Left over.

**Give to God, and give to others.** Give value, give time, give talent.

Jesus said: “whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” – **Matt. 25:40**

### **3 – Worshipped Jesus.**

Worship from love is what Jesus wants.

“These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

– **Matt. 15:8**

Do we recognize how much we are loved and valued? Can we love God back?

Song of the week: “**We Three Kings**”- This Hope.