

THE WISE MEN AND A FOOLISH KING



The Wise Men and the Unwise King

3 men because there were 3 gifts

Christmas carol:

"We three kings of Orient are
Bearing gifts we traverse afar
Field and fountain, moor and mountain
following yonder star"

Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar

The Magi

Magi, magician, magistrate

From Mesopotamia, Babylon, Medo-Persia

Priestly caste of Medes

According to Herdotus: specialized in reading
the dreams of people

The Magi

Daniel

Interpreter of dreams

Chief of the Magi

Probably influenced them in telling them about
the coming Messiah

Intricate prophecies

Prepared them to receive a future king of Israel

The Magi

Semitic people

Related to Shem

Monotheistic

"I see Him, but not now; I behold Him, but not near; A Star shall come out of Jacob; a Scepter shall rise out of Israel, and batter the brow of Moab, and destroy all the sons of tumult"
(Numbers 24:17).

The Magi

Semitic people

Related to Shem

Monotheistic

“A star will arise in Judah and a king will come from Israel”

What we know about King Herod

Not Jewish

Jews hated him, but he tried to incur their favor

Idumean (Edomite)

Son of Antipar, who did a favor for Julius
Caesar and given rule of Judea

What we know about King Herod

King of the Jews

Herod loved the title

Willing to kill anyone who threatened his
position

Killed Hasmonean wife: Miriamne

Killed two sons

Killed his brother in law

What we know about King Herod

"Safer to be Herod's pig than to be his son."

From deathbed ordered the prominent citizens arrested and killed when he died, to ensure weeping upon his death

What we know about King Herod

What the magi said was considered law of the
Medes and Persians

Laid down the law

Identified kings

Approved authority

The long journey to identify the King of the
Jews caused Herod to panic

II. Bethlehem

Where Jacob buried Rachel

Where Ruth met and married Boaz

City of David

Bethlehem – house of bread

Breadbasket of Israel

Where wheat was grown

Appropriate that the Bread of Life was born
there

III. Priests

Asked a biblical question and gave an immediate response: “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: But you Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you shall come a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.”

III. Priests

They did nothing

5 mile walk to Bethlehem

Magi made an arduous trip; spent money and
energy

Knowing God's Word is not enough

III. Priests

"But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves" (James 1:22).

"Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18)

"Too many have been inoculated with a mild case of Christianity, so as to be immune to the real thing"

Application: Are you hungry for Him? Not just knowledge about him, but Him personally.

IV. Star

“Theories”

Jupiter

Alignment of planets

Meteorite

Inner vision (not real)

IV. Star

Likely the Glory of God

"The glory of the Lord shone around them"

(Luke 2:9)

Pillar of fire in the desert

Shekinah

Stopped over where the Child was

In a house

IV. Star

Jesus probably 6 months old

Circumcised

Mary's purification over

V. Worship

Gentiles were the first to worship the King of the Jews

Prophetic that the gospel would go into all the world

Didn't worship Mary and Jesus; but Jesus alone
Gifts

Customary to give gifts to a superior
King of the Jews

V. Worship

Three Gifts Given to Jesus

Gold

Metal of kings

Customary to appear before monarchs with a
gift of God

Possibly funded the flight to Egypt

Gold pointing to his majesty ... for He is King.

V. Worship

Three Gifts Given to Jesus

Frankincense

Gum obtained from the resin of certain trees

Used by the priest with the meal offering

Signifies Jesus as the Great High Priest

Gives off a sweet aroma when crushed: "But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities" (Isaiah 53:5 NAS)

V. Worship
Three Gifts Given to Jesus

Frankincense

Frankincense pointing to his deity ... for he is
God.

V. Worship

Three Gifts Given to Jesus

Myrrh

Sap like substance

Used as spice, perfume, and embalming fluid

"And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about a hundred pounds"

John 19:39

V. Worship

Three Gifts Given to Jesus

Myrrh

Jesus' humanity

Jesus would die for the sins of the world

Myrrh pointing to his humanity ... for he is
destined to suffer
and die.

THREE PRACTICAL LESSONS

1. If the Wise Men can find Jesus,
then so can you.
2. If God can use a star to reach these pagan
astrologers, then he can use anything to reach
anybody
3. If the Wise Men offered Jesus gifts fit for a
king, then so should we.