



THE MAGI • Matthew 2:1-12

Traditional nativity scenes show three Wise Men, accompanied by the Angel and the Shepherds, on the night of Christ's birth. This should be understood as "artistic license," allowing the two separate scenes of the shepherds and the later worship of the Magi to be combined for convenience and illustration.

1. The wise men came months, or possibly even a year later. Matthew 2:11 states that they worshiped Jesus in a house.
2. The real Christmas story is one of intense duality: the great fulfillment of God's Promise, the Messiah in Genesis 3:15 (and throughout the Old Testament), and the enemy's violent attack on children two years old and under in Bethlehem. This event sent Joseph and his family fleeing into Egypt for their lives! (Jeremiah 31:15; Hosea 11:1)

Who were the Magi?

1. The magi were wise men from "the East," most likely Persia, or modern-day Iran, who traveled up to 800 miles to see the foretold Messiah King.
2. It appears the magi knew of the writings of Daniel who had been the chief administrator of the court seers in Persia (Daniel 2:48). The prophecy in Daniel 9:24-27 specifically speaks of the time this Messiah King would come. Because Balaam was from Pethor on the Euphrates River near Persia, they may also have been aware of his prophecy of a star and scepter in Israel. (Numbers 24:17)

3. The Magi finally came to Jerusalem to seek this new King of the Jews. Herod, troubled by the purpose of their visit, brought the Magi to himself and told them about the prophecy of Bethlehem (Micah 5:2) but did not tell them of his wicked plans. When the Magi came to the house, they worshipped Him as King.

- Matthew 2:11 *And after entering the house, they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell down and worshipped Him. Then, after opening their treasure chests, they presented to Him gifts fit for a king, gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*)
- Gold for a King, Frankincense for a High Priest, and Myrrh for the Sacrifice (Isaiah 53:3-10; John 1:29, 3:16-17; Philippians 2:6-8; 1 John 2:2 and more).

As the Magi brought a treasure of gifts and worshipped Jesus, we, too, can bring gifts to God worth more than gold.

1. Praise and doing good are pleasing "gifts" to God! Hebrews 13:15-16 *Through Him, therefore, let us at all times offer up to God a sacrifice of praise, which is the fruit of lips that thankfully acknowledge, confess, and glorify His Name. Do not neglect to do good, to contribute to others as an expression of fellowship, for such sacrifices (gifts) are always pleasing to God. AMP*
2. Praise cannot be a kind of "reward" we give God for His visible blessings. To praise God in times of difficulty requires personal sacrifice. When we bring a sacrifice of praise, we choose to believe that, even though life is not going as we think it should, God is still good and can still be trusted. He is honored in that, and our faith deepens (Job 13:15).
3. Our gift worthy of THE KING is a sacrifice of praise that flows from a heart that has been purified by fire. It rises from a humble spirit that has chosen to honor God in spite of pain and hardship, and reaches out to others. (Psalm 51:16-17)



**Pastors Jack and Jane Lankhorst and the leaders
of Christian Life Center!**