

**Matthew 2:1-12.** <sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem <sup>2</sup> 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.”

<sup>3</sup> When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: <sup>6</sup> “‘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.’”

<sup>7</sup> Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> 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.”

<sup>9</sup> 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. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

<sup>11</sup> 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**. <sup>12</sup> And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

## Who were these Magi?

- ❑ The word ‘**magi**’ came from the Greek word *megos* or *magos* which means ‘**wise**’.
- ❑ They were not only priests but were high-ranking government officials from the Parthian Empire.
- ❑ They were the advisors of the king that appoint the king’s successor.
- ❑ They were experts in the fields of **astrology** (study of the movement and positions of the sun, moon, planets and

stars in the belief that they affect the character and lives of people) and **oneiromancy** (interpretation of dreams in order to foretell the future).

## Where did they get this wisdom from?

They would have never travelled to Jerusalem had they not been impacted and influenced by Daniel, the prophet.

Daniel 1:17-21

*<sup>17</sup> As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. <sup>18</sup> Now at the end of the days, when the king had said that they should be brought in, the chief of the eunuchs brought them in before Nebuchadnezzar. <sup>19</sup> Then the king interviewed them, and among them all none was found like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; therefore, they served before the king. <sup>20</sup> And in all matters of wisdom and understanding about which the king examined them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and astrologers who were in all his realm. <sup>21</sup> Thus Daniel continued until the first year of King Cyrus.*

*Daniel 2:48. The king appointed Daniel to a high position and he made Daniel ruler over the whole province of Babylon and made him the overall chief of all the wise men.*

*Matthew 2:11. ...they came into the house and saw the child with Mary his mother and they fell down to worship him and opening their treasures they presented to him gifts of **gold** and **frankincense** and **myrrh**.*

They could have gifted Jesus with **spikenard** which was one of the most expensive perfumes that existed at that time instead of **frankincense**.

They could have gifted Jesus with **diamond** which was the most expensive gemstone instead of **myrrh**.

Friends, these were not random gifts, but each had a prophetic significance at that time and has important meaning for us today.

## Why did the Magi bring **GOLD**, **FRANKINCENSE** and **MYRRH** as gifts to Jesus?

- In ancient times, **GOLD** was one of the most precious gifts that was given to the king and kings would wear a golden crown upon their head to identify themselves as king. The Magi identified Jesus as 'the King of the Jews' and honoured His divine kingship, acknowledging that this little boy Jesus will one day be declared as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Revelation 14:14. *Then I saw white cloud and seated on the cloud with someone like the son of man he had a gold crown on his head in a sharp sickle in his hand.*

- **FRANKINCENSE** was a gift given to a priest. Priests use it whenever they offered the grain offering when they burned incense in the temple. It was what gave the grain offering a sweet-smelling aroma.

Leviticus 2:1-2. *When you present grain as an offering to the Lord the offering must consist of choice flour you are to pour olive oil on it sprinkle it with frankincense... and burn this on the altar. It is a special gift, a pleasing aroma to the Lord.*

- **MYRRH** means '**bitter**'. It is a gum resin extracted from a thorny tree and it was also an ointment for burial. Myrrh foreshadows His death and would be used to

prepare His body for burial. The Magi recognised Jesus as the One who was born to die for the sins of the world.

John 19:38-40. <sup>38</sup>*After this, Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly, for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; and Pilate gave him permission. So he came and took the body of Jesus.* <sup>39</sup>*And Nicodemus, who at first came to Jesus by night, also came, bringing a mixture of **myrrh** and aloes, about a hundred pounds.* <sup>40</sup>*Then they took the body of Jesus and bound it in strips of linen with the spices, as the custom of the Jews is to bury.*

### What is God telling us?

- **Jesus is the only appointed and anointed Son of God whom God has sent that would fulfil God's redemptive plan here on Earth.**

Acts 4:12. *Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved.*

- **Jesus is our King and the soon coming King.**

Revelation 17:14. *These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him are the called and chosen and faithful.*

Revelation 19:16. *And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."*

- **Jesus is the great High Priest.**

Hebrews 6:20. *He has become our eternal High priest.*

1 Timothy 2:5. *"For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."*

Hebrews 4:14-16. <sup>14</sup> *Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.* <sup>15</sup> *For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.* <sup>16</sup> *Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

□ **Jesus is God's perfect sacrifice who died for our sins.**

1 John 2:2. *He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.*

Ephesians 1:7. *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins.*

Hebrews 9:12. *He entered once for all into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats and calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.*

The story of the *Three Wise Men* and their gifts are a reminder of the true meaning of Christmas.

It is a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ and to reflect on the significance of His life and teachings.

The gifts of the Magi serve as a reminder of the importance of having a generous spirit which is the true spirit that celebrates the coming of Christ.

**God has given us a gift and that gift is His One and Only Son, Jesus!**

John 3:16. *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.*

**Have you received the Gift?**