

The Wisemen

“They Were Told”



“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.” Matthew 2:2

Who told those people from the far east that there was a Savior being born in Bethlehem? We don't know. There was so much going on behind the scenes that we don't know and probably never will. Is it important. Are there signs today that Christ is coming again. Will there be messengers like the magi to tell us? Will there be a special sign in the sky to guide us?

Have you ever wondered why the wise men had to be involved in the birth of Christ? What purpose did they serve? We have always assumed there were three wise men because the Bible mentions three gifts - gold, incense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11. The Bible does not say there were only three wise men or Magi. There could have been many more. They could have been traveling as

a caravan. Tradition says the three wise men or Magi as they are also called were Gaspar, Melchior, and Balthasar. But since the Bible does not say, we have no way of knowing whether the tradition is accurate. In fact, for so much being told about the Magi, there is very little that we actually know.

We know they were told about Christ who would be born King of the Jews and the Bible tells us that they saw “his star” and followed it so they could worship him. We don't know if they were the only ones who could see “His star” or if it was visible to everyone. Some people say it was just the North Star and this was all a coincidence. Some feel that they were there almost immediately after the birth of Christ and actually went to Bethlehem. Others feel that it could have been at least two years after the birth of Christ.

We know that King Herod was upset because he thought this would be a threat to his power. The time frame has always been a point of discussion. When Herod heard about this “*King of the Jews*” being born he counseled with his chief priests and teacher. Who told Herod? How did they find out?

The Magi knew that the Messiah was to be born in Bethlehem but could not offer a time or other information to comfort Herod. After consulting with them, Herod called the Magi and asked them the exact time that they had seen the star. Scripture tell us that Herod sent them to Bethlehem and told them “*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.*” Matthew 2:8

“Good new from heaven the angels bring.

Glad tidings to the earth they sing;

To us this day a Child is given,

To crown us with the joy of Heaven.”

Martin Luther

The Bible tells us that after they talked with Herod they left and the star appeared to them again and they followed it until it stopped over the place where Christ was. It does not say “where Christ was born.” It just says “*it stopped over the place where the child was.*”

They worshipped Him and presented gifts to Him - gold, frankincense and myrrh. Much has been written about those particular three gifts.

They still were being guided and King Herod was still upset. The Magi were warned in a dream not to go back and tell Herod they had found “*The King of the Jews*”. So they went to their home country by another route.

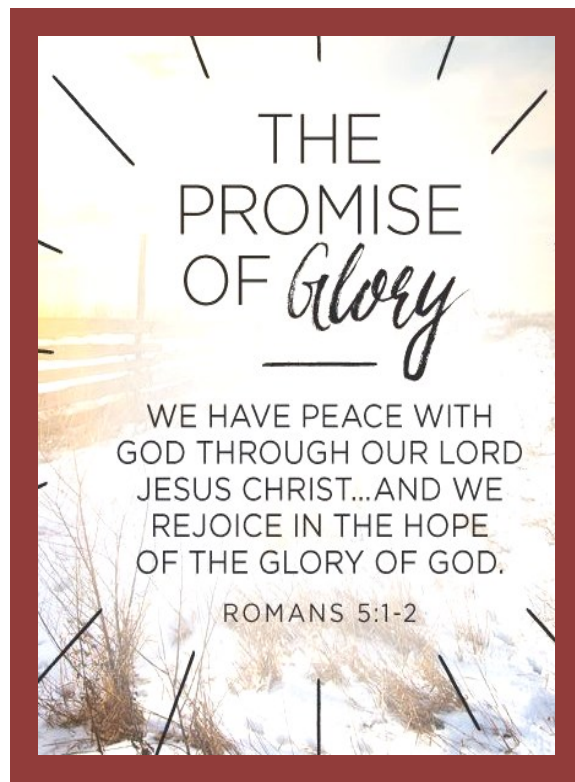
We think the Magi were from “the East” probably Persia, or modern-day Iran. This means the wise men followed “his star” approximately 800 to 900 miles. We do know that they were chosen to know about the birth of Christ. We know they were men who had read and believed God's Word. They sought Jesus and recognized His authority. They humbled themselves and worshipped Jesus. They obeyed God rather than Herod.

They were truly wise men!

What about “His star” that they followed? Scripture indicates the Star appeared only to the Magi in the East. There is no biblical record of anyone else observing it. The Magi saw something in the heavens that alerted them that the Jewish Messiah was to be born and led them to travel to Jerusalem, the Jewish capital. This would be the logical place to start looking for the birth of the King of the Jews.

We don't know why they were chosen. We don't know if they were actually kings or just wise men who had studied the Old Testament and were led by God on this journey. We do know they were chosen and they followed the wisdom they had been given.

When we start out today on a journey we want to know our final destination. In fact, we usually want a reservation so we know where we are going to be sleeping that night. These men were very much men of faith. In a way, we have that same journey today. If we are following Christ we know our final destination will be with Him, but we don't know what Heaven looks like. We have a path to follow, but we don't know all the places that path will take us both physically and spiritually. We don't know how many miles it will be or the milestones we will observe. We don't know the obstacles that may appear along the way. The Magi had one big obstacle, King Herod. But they listened to God and they were led. We have that same promise through the birth of the Christ Child. We also have a star to follow.



Prayer: Heavenly Father, thank You for sending Your Son to earth as a baby so many years ago. Thank You for people who had faith and were not afraid to tell others about the little baby they had followed who became their Savior. Thank You for the faith of the Magi. Help us to have that same faith and follow You until we also see You face to face. Amen

1. Is it important where they were from?
2. What could be the significance of their being from another part of the known land at that time?
3. Were they a different nationality?
4. Is that same star visible to us today?
5. What was their role in the birth of Christ?
6. How does God speak to us today?

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