

# The Three Wise Men

*Matthew 2:1*

- 1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying,*
- 2 “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”*

We are going to concentrate on two aspects:

**Who are the Magi?**

**What is the Star?**

*1... Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea*

*Beth* [ house ] *lehem* [ bread –house of bread referring to the fact that Jesus is the bread out of heaven for our Salvation ]

*Bethlehem of Judea* [ to distinguish it from another

Bethlehem in the north in the tribe of Zebulun—Joshua 19:15; It was prophesied that the Messiah was to be born here: ]

Gospel of John 7:42

42 *“Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?”*

### **Where in Scripture?**

Micah 5:2

2 *“But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One [JC] will go forth [out of heaven to earth] for Me [GOD THE FATHER] to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.”*

GOD THE FATHER decreed in Eternity Past that Jesus would come from the tribe of Judah—kingly tribe and specifically from Bethlehem.

So Israel knew that the Messiah would come from the family of David and that He would be born in Bethlehem.

It is so interesting all the things God does in History to bring about His prophecies. We studied all that God did to get Daniel out of Judah and into Babylon. And God did a great deal to set it up where Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

Joseph and Mary lived in Nazareth in Galilee and God used the arrogance of Herod in collecting of taxes to demand that everyone return to the city of their family, so both Joseph and Mary went from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

Matthew 2:1

*<sup>1</sup> Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, [ It is no accident that Herod is king, God will use his arrogance to bring about His plan ] magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,*



**Ok, who are these Magi? Why are they in Jerusalem?**

The Greek ***magos***.

In Acts 13, (*the only other context in the New Testament*) this word is used and in Acts it has a bad connotation. We will not spend a great deal of time on all the arguments.

The Scripture clearly says that they were from *the east*.

Every great nation in ancient history had it's 'men of many sciences'. Egypt, Assyria, Babylon and the Medo-Persian empire. And Persia is east of Judah!

Therefore we have the translation in the KJ *wise men*.

From Cicero we learn that these men were reckoned a sort of wise men, and doctors among the Persians. Cicero further observes that no man could be a king of the Persians before he understood the discipline and knowledge and wisdom of the Magi. They were ardent students of astrology—the stars and planets, religion, math, medicine etc.

So these are the learned men from the east—Persia.  
and *they arrived in Jerusalem*.



Why Jerusalem and why now?

So we have three locations in this one verse:

*Bethlehem, Judea and Jerusalem:*

*Bethlehem* [ house of bread—JC bread of life from heaven; ]

*Judea* [ Praise Jehovah ]

*Jerusalem* [ dwelling place of peace; foundation of peace If there is any place on earth that has **not known peace**, this is it! But this is the place where peace will be established by Jesus Christ after the Second Advent. ]

He came to bring peace on the earth; but not political peace; not peace between nations or even peace between people; even people of the same family---*division between mother and daughter.*

Matthew 2:2

2 *“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”*

With all the anti-Semitism the Jews have experienced... here are some wise men who have come to worship their King!

## Questions:

**Who** are these wise men?

**What** is this star they are talking about?

**Where** is He to be born?

**How** do they know about the Jews?

**How** do they know about the birth of the King of the Jews?

**Why** would they, wise men from Persia come to worship the King of the Jews in Judah?

As to **Who** are these wise men we have seen that they are the educated class in Persia.

Now we are going to address ***How did the wise men know the Jewish Messiah had been born?***

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How did the wise men know about the birth of the Messiah?

Did they have information that Israel did not have?

The answer to the second question is definitely not.

In fact in our study of Matthew 24-25 we just read recently:  
Matthew 23:37

*37 “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling.*

*38 “Behold, your house is being left to you desolate!*

*39 “For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’ ”*

And the passage of the same time period: Luke 19:44

*44 and they [ Rome in AD 70 ] will level you to the ground and your children within you, and*

*they will not leave in you one stone upon another, [ especially temple ]*

[ This is cry of verse 40--]

*40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"*

[ a figure that these stone are no longer a temple, but simply rubbish left on the ground ]

**Why will these things happen to Jerusalem?**

*40 because you did not recognize the time of your visitation."*

Correctly understanding this causal phrase is the key to understanding how the wise men knew about the birth of the Messiah.

**The Wise Men From The East  
Are A Witness Against The Jews Of Jerusalem!**

If wise men from the far east knew about His birth, surely Jewish wise men in Jerusalem should have known

How did the wise men from the east know about the birth of the Messiah?

And the Jews should have known for the same reason as the wise men from the east.



They both should have known because the timing of the Messiah was recorded in **Book of Daniel**.

These were the wise men in the cabinet of Nebuchadnezzar. And in the court of the Medo-Persian empire were these wise men.

These men were well learned and studied the writings of Daniel and they also studied the gospel pamphlet written by Nebuchadnezzar in Daniel 4.

And these wise men in the Persian court studied this pamphlet because they were students of astrology and math and religion.

Therefore they would be most interested in what Nebuchadnezzar had to say.

Daniel 4:34

*34 "But at the end of that period, I, Nebuchadnezzar, raised my eyes toward heaven and my reason returned to me, and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever; For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom endures from generation to generation.*

35 *“All the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, But He does according to His will in the host of heaven And among the inhabitants of earth; And no one can ward off His hand Or say to Him, ‘What have You done?’*

36 *“At that time my reason returned to me. And my majesty and splendor were restored to me for the glory of my kingdom, and my counselors and my nobles began seeking me out; so I was reestablished in my sovereignty, and surpassing greatness was added to me.*

37 *“Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise, exalt and honor the King of heaven, for all His works are true and His ways just, and He is able to humble those who walk in pride.”*

*Now, you combine that with the exact timing of the birth of the Messiah actually written down by Daniel.*

*That is correct, Daniel actually wrote down the timing of the coming of the Messiah.*

*Daniel prophesied the timing of the first Christmas*

Matthew 2:3-16

- 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.*
- 4 Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.*
- 5 They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:*

*6 'AND YOU, BETHLEHEM, LAND OF JUDAH,  
ARE BY NO MEANS LEAST AMONG  
THE LEADERS OF JUDAH;*

*FOR OUT OF YOU SHALL COME  
FORTH A RULER  
WHO WILL SHEPHERD MY PEOPLE  
ISRAEL.’”*

- 7 Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared.*
- 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.”*
- 9 After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was.*
- 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.*

- 11 *After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*
- 12 *And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.*

### **The Flight to Egypt**

- 13 *Now when they had gone, behold, an angel of the Lord \*appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the Child and His mother and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is going to search for the Child to destroy Him."*
- 14 *So Joseph got up and took the Child and His mother while it was still night, and left for Egypt.*

15 *He remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: "OUT OF EGYPT I CALLED MY SON."*

### **Herod Slaughters Babies**

16 *Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi.*

*... Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved...* Acts 16:31

# ***Wise Men Still Seek Him***