

# Wise Men Worship Jesus

Matthew 2:1-12

Outline	Observations
<p><sup>1</sup> Now after Jesus was born  in Bethlehem of Judea  in the days of Herod the king,  behold,  wise men  from the East came  to Jerusalem  <sup>2</sup> saying,  "Where is  He who has been born  King of the Jews?  For we have seen  His star  in the East and  have come  to worship Him."</p> <p><sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard <i>this</i>,  he was troubled, and  all Jerusalem  with him.</p> <p><sup>4</sup> And when he had gathered  all the  chief priests and  scribes  of the people together,  he inquired  of them  where the Christ was to be born.</p> <p><sup>5</sup> So they said to him,  "In Bethlehem of Judea,  for thus it is written  by the prophet:  <sup>6</sup> <i>'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.'</i>"</p> <p><sup>7</sup> Then Herod,  when he had secretly called  the wise men,  determined from them  what time  the star appeared.</p> <p><sup>8</sup> And he sent them  to Bethlehem and  said,  "Go and  search carefully  for the young Child,  and when you have found Him,</p>	<p><b>About the Timing of this Visit</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly it was "after Jesus was born" (v.1). This seems to imply that it was not immediately after.</li> <li>There is no mention of the shepherds, a manger, or swaddling cloths.</li> <li>Joseph apparently was not present for this (v.11), but he was present when the shepherds visited (Luke 2:16).</li> <li>Herod calls Jesus a young child (<i>paidion</i>, v.8), seemingly based upon the timing when the star first appeared (v.7). He was not called a "babe" as He was called when the shepherds were informed (<i>brephos</i>, Luke 2:12, 16). Jesus was apparently a "toddler" of up to 2 years of age. [Herod ordered the murder of all male children 2 years old and younger, so he likely "aimed high" in age to make sure this new King was slain. Jesus was probably well under 2 years old, but old enough to have Herod aim at 2 years old as an upper limit than say, 2 months. A good guess would be that Jesus was around 1-1/2 years old by this time.]</li> <li>The star apparently appeared a significant length of time, possibly appearing when Jesus was born (v.2 "who WAS born..."). These wise men would have needed to travel "from the east," however long it took (including preparations, travel, etc.). Some guess that they might have traveled a very great distance, requiring a significant amount of time to make the journey.</li> </ul> <p><b>About the Wise Men</b></p> <p><b>What We Know for Sure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They were "wise men," not kings</li> <li>They came from the East</li> <li>They came to Jerusalem</li> <li>They came to see the one born King of the Jews</li> <li>They were notified and led by "His star"</li> <li>They did not know exactly where to look (apart from the star). They had to ask around. The star reappeared and guided them to the exact location.</li> <li>They came to worship Him</li> <li>They fell down before Jesus, and worshipped Him (the term for worship is used in the New Testament only in the formal sense as worshipping someone as God or a god)</li> <li>They gave Jesus expensive gifts (as worship)</li> <li>God warned them not to return to Herod (God was involved in their travel in great detail!).</li> <li>They obeyed God's warning.</li> </ul> <p><b>What We Do NOT Know for Sure:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We do not know how many wise men there were. (Some guess that important wise men would not have travelled without help – servants, cooks, guards, those to help with supplies. It may have been a small "army" of people. Some guess even 500. The fact that they caught Herod's keen attention <u>might</u> be</li> </ul>

<p style="text-align: center;">bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also."</p> <p><sup>9</sup> When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was.</p> <p><sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced {3 pass pl} with exceedingly great joy.</p> <p><sup>11</sup> And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.</p> <p><sup>12</sup> Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.</p>	<p>an indicator that they were large in number.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We do not know specifically where they came from.</li> <li>• We do not know how far they travelled.</li> </ul> <p><b>What Might Be True</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word for wise men (magi) hints that they might be from Persia (Babylon). They may have been influenced by Daniel (as was King Cyrus years before). This could explain why they knew in detail about the King of the Jews (because of prophecy they would have heard from Daniel's writings or other OT prophecy).</li> <li>• Daniel might have been called a magi.</li> </ul> <p><b>About the Star</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The word means "star." It least was star-like in some way (light?).</li> <li>• The "star" did not behave like a normal star: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ It apparently was a new phenomenon, as it appeared when the King of the Jews was born.</li> <li>○ It appeared in the East (v.2,9,10), and seemingly only in the East up to its reappearing (v.9)</li> <li>○ It apparently appeared and then went away, and did not reappear until after the wise men spoke to Herod. (v.9) (The wise men <i>somehow</i> knew that it was specifically about the King of the Jews, which told them to head to Israel, and specifically Jerusalem, the capitol of Israel.)</li> <li>○ It reappeared (v.9).</li> <li>○ Unlike a star, it "moved before them" (v.9)</li> <li>○ Unlike a star, it somehow pin-pointed the exact place where Jesus was.</li> <li>○ It caused exuberant rejoicing when the wise men saw it. (v. 10 lit. "they were made joyful – a joy great exceedingly")</li> <li>○ There is no indication that the star ever reappeared after this.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• It is referred to as a star, not as astrological grouping.</li> <li>• Some see a connection to Num 24:17.</li> <li>• Some have guessed that this could have been (or represented) the glory of God that had departed the temple to the East (Ezek 10:4,18-10; 11:22-23)</li> </ul> <p><b>Their Worship of Jesus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "born King of the Jews" not "born to become..."</li> <li>• They worshiped Jesus alone, not Jesus &amp; Mary.</li> <li>• Herod understood that the wise men came to acknowledge the arrival of "the Christ." (v. 4). The answer given proves his understanding (Mic 5:2), which indicates a divine origin [read verse].</li> <li>• The key point of this event was Who Jesus was (the King of the Jews, with the concept that He was God in the flesh). The focus was never on the act of giving or the gifts themselves. They only were forms of worship.</li> <li>• They came to worship Jesus. They did not focus on each other.</li> <li>• They gave gifts to Jesus (v.11), not to each other.</li> <li>• The gifts given were often associated with royalty. The phrasing "used 7x in the NT and always in a religious sense of offerings to God." JFB</li> </ul>
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