



Make My Heart A Manger

Matthew 2:1-12

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All Scriptures are printed verbatim with translations noted. • Pastor Joe's email is Joe@SouthReno.com.

The Magi

- The term “Magi” is a Persian word that referred to a special class of priests in the Persian Empire.
- We know from other sources that the Magi had existed for hundreds of years before the time of Christ.
- They had their own religion (they are usually thought to have been followers of Zoroastrianism), their own priesthood, and their own writings. The book of Daniel makes it clear that they existed in his day and it even seems that Daniel was appointed head over the cast of the Magi in the time of King Darius.
- The magi were so powerful in the time of Christ that nobody could ascend to the throne in that part of the world unless appointed by the Magi.
- Josephus refers to these Persians as “the kingmakers of the East.”
- Esther (OT) states that they appointed all the judges in the land.
- They had vast knowledge of astronomy, astrology, natural history, architecture, agriculture, religion, and medicine—true scholars.
- The tradition tells us there were three Magi. Biblical historians estimate their number between dozens and hundreds. Most scholars believe they would have been accompanied by 1000 men on horseback.
- They gave very expensive gifts to the Christ child—gifts typically given to a king. They were the finest things that they had.
- It was 1,000 miles from Persia to Israel.
- Only Matthew tells of the Magi.

Their Gifts

Matthew 2:9–12, TLB -⁹ After this interview (with Herod) the astrologers started out again. And look! The star appeared to them again, standing over Bethlehem. ¹⁰ Their joy knew no bounds! ¹¹ Entering the house where the baby and Mary, his mother, were, they threw themselves down before him, worshiping. Then they opened their presents and gave him gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² But when they returned to their own land, they didn't go through Jerusalem to report to Herod, for God had warned them in a dream to go home another way.

1. Worship

A gift for a **God**.

“A drop of worship is an unsuitable acknowledgment for an ocean of mercy.”

- Rev. William Secker.

2. Gold

A gift for a **King**. (Legally, only a Roman King could own gold.)

3. Frankincense

A gift for a **Priest**. (It was the only incense permitted at the altar of the temple.)

4. Myrrh

A gift for a **Savior**. (Commonly, an embalming perfume.)

Discovering Christmas Truths

A. Wise men still seek Him—as God, King, Priest, and Savior)

B. Wise men still make their hearts a manger for Christ.

*“These Magi considered Christ's birth in their studies and then, upon finding the Christ-child, made their hearts a manger for Christ to be born in. They presented Him with gifts... that confirmed they were wise indeed—they comprehended who Christ was.” - Flavius Josephus, [*Against Apion*' (97 A.D), Ch. 2, ¶112, line 4.]*