

Matthew 2:1-12 **Visit of the Wise Men**

¹ 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, ² 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." ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ 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. ⁵ So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

⁶ '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.' "

⁷ Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search diligently for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also." ⁹ 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. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy. ¹¹ 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. ¹² Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. NKJV

Facts Revealed:

Time and occasion at Birth of Jesus

- ✚ The time was when Augustus was Caesar of Rome, when he sent Quirinius to take control over Syria and the land of Israel was under his dominion. This is described in the works of Josephus, book of Antiquities of the Jews, end of book 17 and first of book 18. Thus it was a historical time that can be verified. [Luke 2:1-2]
- ✚ It was also during the time when Herod was king of Judea. [Matthew 2:1]
 - ✧ Herod was the son of Antipater and Cypros an Idumean appointed to the post by Caesar, first introduced in the works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 7.
 - ✧ He was offered the title of king of the Jews by Cassius and Murcus according to the works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 14, chapter 11.
 - ✧ Herod defeated Antigonus and took the kingdom for himself according to the decree of the Senate in Rome, according to the works of Josephus, Antiquities of the Jews, book 14, chapter 16.

Wise Men from the East

- ✚ Wise Men from the East (Magi) would be the name given by the Babylonians (Chaldaeans), Medes, Persians, and others, to the wise men, teachers, priests, physicians, astrologers, seers, interpreters of dreams, augurs, soothsayers, sorcerers etc. (according to Thayer's Greek Lexicon).
 - ✧ In the Old Testament they were found in Egypt, Babylon, Persia, and Edom.
 - ✧ Balaam who was hired by Balak to curse the children of Israel was a sorcerer from Midian. [Numbers 22:1 through 24:25]
 - ✧ Balaam made the prophecy that originated the search by the Wise Men of the East. [Numbers 24:17-19]

- ✧ Balaam was killed with the kings of Midian when God commanded it to be so done. [\[Numbers 31:1-10\]](#)
- ✧ These Wise Men were obviously astrologers who were looking for signs in the heavens in correlation with prophecies they had available.
 - ✧ When they saw the star from their home in the East, they realized it was the one predicted by Balaam, and responded accordingly. [\[Matthew 2:1-2\]](#)
 - ✧ It appears to suggest that when they neared Jerusalem the star was not visible so they expected the King of the Jews to be born in a palace, went first to Herod the king.
- ✧ Herod also knew about the prophecy but not all the facts, so he inquired of the Chief Priests, and the Scribes, where the Christ (Anointed One, Messiah) was to be born. [\[Matthew 2:3-5\]](#)
 - ✧ They said it would be in Bethlehem of Judea, and quoted the prophet. [\[Micah 5:2, Matthew 2:5-6\]](#)
- ✧ Herod then asked the Wise Men the exact time the star appeared, feigning interest himself.
- ✧ When the Wise Men left king Herod, the star reappeared, proving that it was God's intent to notify Herod in order for prophecy to be fulfilled.
- ✧ The Star went before them until it came and stopped over the house where the young Child was. The Wise Men rejoiced when they saw the star.
 - ✧ This was a very special star that could move at the pace of men on the earth and stand still to pinpoint a specific house. This star behaved just like the pillar of cloud and fire that led the Children of Israel in the wilderness from Egypt to the Promised land. [\[Exodus 13:21-22\]](#)
 - ✧ The Wise Men had no doubt of what it meant, and entered the house to offer their gifts.
 - ✧ Mary and Joseph had been in Bethlehem at least 41 days according to the law of purification, seven days for customary impurity, the eighth day circumcision, and the remaining thirty three days for purification for a male child. [\[Leviticus 12:1-8\]](#)
 - ✧ The Child was circumcised on the eighth day, and after the time of purification, He had been presented in the Temple where Simeon and Anna acknowledged Who He is. [\[Luke 2:21-39\]](#)
 - ✧ They had moved out of the stable and into a house where the Wise Men found Him.
- ✧ God instructed the Wise Men in a dream that they should not return to Herod, so they returned home another way. [\[Matthew 2:12\]](#)