

## The Magi

Matthew 2:11 (New American Standard Bible)

*“And after they came into the house, they saw the Child with His mother Mary; and they fell down and **worshiped Him**. Then they **opened their treasures** and presented to Him gifts of **gold, frankincense, and myrrh**.”*

### Introduction

Merry Christmas to you all! I am so happy to see you tonight. May the Lord bless and keep you and your family healthy and strong this Christmas and beyond! Amen.

On the altar here, we have a nativity set. I am sure you know what it is all about. Imagine a nativity set in your mind. Look at it. Take a closer look one more time. Check out all the figures. Tell me what you see: some of you may see the Bethlehem star. Others may see angels, shepherds, stable, animals, hay, swaddling clothes, Mary, Joseph, manger, baby Jesus, even magi, and their gifts. Do you see anything else? Did we miss anything? No? Good.

Tonight, we are going to think about one of those characters, the magi in particular, and what they did for the Son of God so that we too may benchmark them in our celebration of Christmas.

### Content

The Scripture says that certain men called ‘magi’ came from the East of Jerusalem to pay their homage to the newborn King in Israel. They traveled afar in search of the newborn king. They finally arrived in Jerusalem, consulted a biblical prophecy, and went to Bethlehem where baby Jesus and His earthly parents were staying. They entered the house, saw the Child, and worshiped Him. Then, they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts. Afterward, they went back to their homeland.

Let me unpack a little more of what they did for the newborn King.

First, they *searched* for Jesus. When they first noticed a special star in the sky—an extraordinary star that they have never seen before, they didn’t just stay home, did they? Rather, they wanted to check it out by themselves with their own eyes. So, they started a long journey westbound. Scholars believe that they must traveled between 400 and 800 miles. Very likely on camels. 20 miles a day. So, it would’ve taken them about 3 weeks to two months. Possibly longer if they had traveled by night following the star.

When in Jerusalem, the same star miraculously reappeared and led them to the place where baby Jesus was staying. Their search was paid off. They became one of the few blessed people in history who witnessed the newborn King with their eyes.

Even today, many are seeking Jesus. But only those who pursue Christ with persistence and a pure heart will have the joy of finding what they are looking for--Jesus the Savior and Lord. E.g. King Herod the son wanted to see Jesus but he never discovered who Jesus was to him (Luke 23:8). Why? Because he was never serious. He only sought Jesus with wrong motive (only interested in miracles never in salvation). He never actively pursued the true Messiah, either. Therefore, folks, I urge you to start your journey tonight in search of the Messiah. Don't stop until you find Him. God will guide you to Jesus the Messiah. Your reward will be great--the eternal joy of finding your Savior.

Next, they *worshiped* Jesus. As soon as the magi entered the house and saw the Child and His mother Mary, they fell down on their face (that is, prostrated) and worshiped Him. Why worship? Why not just greetings, bowing heads, showing respect and adoration? But they worshiped the Child. By the way, we don't worship anyone or anything, but we worship only those who are worthy to be worshiped, right? In the eyes of the magi, the newborn Child was worthy to be worshiped, so they worshiped Him.

Did you know that the Bible says that all creatures will bow down at the name of Jesus and worship Him as the Lord of lords and the King of kings (Philippians 2:9-11)? Listen yourself. <sup>9</sup> *For this reason also God highly exalted Him, and **bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,*** <sup>10</sup> *so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,* <sup>11</sup> *and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

So, this Christmas, let us worship Christ--the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is not just a cute little baby lying in a manger to adore, nor just a good moral teacher, but the Lord at whose name every knee will bow.

Speaking of worship, what the magi did is very poignant. Look at today's text: the magi saw the Child and His mother, but they worshiped only the Child not the mother. Sure, we show our reverence and respect to the mother of Jesus, but never ever worship Mary as God.

Finally, the magi *presented* Jesus *with their hearts*. Please note here that before they presented their gifts, they opened their treasures first. And, before they opened their treasures, they opened their hearts. Heart first. Treasures next. Gifts following.

You heard that expression before: where your treasure is, there's your heart. That's Jesus' saying in Matthew 6:21: *for where your **treasure** is, there your heart will be also.* Treasure and Heart. Heart and Treasure. They go together. But heart always comes first, wouldn't you agree? For instance, our offerings to Christ would mean nothing when our

hearts are not there first. You may agree with me when I say, “One dollar of offering to God from heart means more than a million dollars with no love of God in heart.”

A quick review on the three gifts given to Christ and I will be through: Gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

One commentator says: *Since gold, frankincense and myrrh were highly prized by kings and emperors, these magi gave Jesus three very expensive gifts. The gift of gold was a king’s gift and Christ is our King. Frankincense was a worthy gift for Christ since He was the anointed One who deserves our worship. Myrrh was a prophetic gift because Jesus would die for the sins of the world.* (<https://www.neverthirsty.org/bible-qa/qa-archives/question/what-did-gold-frankincense-and-myrrh-represent/>)

## **Conclusion**

Every Christmas, we look at the nativity set with much joy and adoration. We see all characters in it including the Child and His mother Mary. Let’s not miss the point, though. Some people, seeing that baby Jesus is cute and adorable, come back next year with the same attitude. Others love the angels and even proclaim “peace on earth” (actual quote: *on earth peace among people with whom He is pleased---*Luke 2:14) totally forgetting about the fact that the angel’s announcement was about Christ’s birth. Bottomline: Unless you don’t recognize the Son of God and worship Him in Christmas, you miss the point.

After all, Christmas is Christ’s Birthday Celebration, isn’t it? What good is it, if we celebrate Christmas without Christ? It is like us joining the birthday party, having fun together, eating cake with others, and even singing Happy Birthday song, and yet have no clue whose birthday we are celebrating. Remember Christ is the King. He is the Savior. See Him in the manger. Fall down and worship Him. Give Him your heart. Tonight.

Amen.