

# What gift will you bring?

## Witness His Majesty

12/22/24

### Day 1

As a child you probably remember being consumed by what you were getting for Christmas.

I don't know about you. but before the internet we did our "wish list" via the toys 'r' us catalog

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AS a child it all about what you are getting....

but as you grow older you get joy in other ways.

For me it started when we had kids. the joy came in seeing them get excited about Christmas,

I really could care less what I was getting, my focus was on what I could give.

I believe the same is true for our Christian walk.

At first your time is spent asking God for what you want, hope hopefully as you mature.

More of your time is spent doing what He wants.

As Child we think of what we want for Christmas. But have you ever thought what Jesus might want? After all it is His birthday!

John 3:16 NASB95

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

That is where Christmas began.

God Loved the world, so He gave what was most valuable to Him

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## Day 2:

The wise men were the first to reciprocate God's giving nature.

Matthew 2:1–12 NASB95

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, "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." When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: '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.' " Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. 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." 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. 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. And having been warned *by God* in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.

Wise Men?

Also translated, Magi, Kings, Astrologers, astronomers.

### Day 3

The magi were a priestly line, a priestly tribe of people from among the Medes, this very ancient and large people. They were very skilled in astronomy and astrology. This was a very great preoccupation with them. Their interest in astronomy and astrology was only part of their involvement. They were sort of occultists in a way. They had some sort of divination processes. They were involved in certain kinds of things that we would assume, perhaps, were like a sorcery and that's why the word magi was corrupted through history into the word magic, magician, which is a synonym for sorcerer.

But the magi originally were basically a pagan, priestly tribe of people from the Medes and the Persians. They became interested in astronomy and astrology and the study of the stars. And in those days they didn't make much of a separation between the superstition and the science. The science is astronomy, the superstition is astrology, and they were pretty well blended at the time. Now, what's interesting about this is that during the time of the Babylonian Empire these magi were dwelling in the area of Babylon. They were there during the Babylonian time and the Medo-Persian Empire as well.

While they were there during the Babylonian Empire, they were very heavily influenced by the Jews. You remember that one of the things that Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon did was take Judah into captivity. That's what Jeremiah was saying. "You are going to be taken into captivity." Jeremiah pronounced this fact and they were carried off into the Babylon captivity.

Well, here in Babylon were these magi, and they were very high-ranking officials. By that time they had ascended to a high place in the Babylonian Empire because of their amazing intuition, wisdom, knowledge, astrology, occultic ability, whatever you want to call it, they had risen to a place of prominence. And so, immediately, they came into contact with all these Jewish people that had been brought to captivity. They also came into contact with one very specific Jew by the name of Daniel, who was elevated in the Babylonian Empire. And, consequently, they were very familiar or made familiar in the dispersion of the Jews in Babylon with Jewish prophesy regarding the Messiah. They were made aware of what was really on the Jewish prophetic plan for this One who was to come. And they started plying their wares in search of the prophesized Messiah.

Micah 5:2 NASB95

"But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity."

## Day 4:

### The Gifts

These valuable items were standard gifts to honor a king or deity in the ancient world: gold as a precious metal, frankincense as perfume or incense, and myrrh as anointing oil.

The Book of Isaiah, when describing Jerusalem's glorious restoration, tells of nations and kings who will come and "bring gold and frankincense and shall proclaim the praise of the Lord"

Isaiah 60:6 NASB95

"A multitude of camels will cover you, The young camels of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba will come; They will bring gold and frankincense, And will bear good news of the praises of the LORD.

In addition to the honor and status implied by the value of the gifts of the magi, scholars think that these three were chosen for their special spiritual symbolism about Jesus himself

gold representing his kingship,

frankincense a symbol of his priestly role

and myrrh a prefiguring of his death and embalming

an interpretation made popular in the well-known Christmas carol "We Three Kings."

Incidentally we don't know how many Kings there were just that there were 3 types of gifts

They also had a practical value in that they were....valuable

I believe these gifts is what funded their escape to Egypt and the time they spent there hiding from Herod

Day 5:

What Gift are you bringing?

What do you think Jesus would want from you?

Jesus is Lord.....of What?

This season take some time to think about what you could give Jesus.

What is on His wish list?