

Why the star



<https://gppopc.org/2012/01/25/epiphany/>

Matthew 2:1-12

In the passage, the Magi were from the east and followed the star until they got to Jerusalem. Some scholars believe they came from Persia or Babylon given that information. Those countries weren't Godly and relied on alternative knowledge such as astrology. However, the Magi saw it and believed that it was the announcement of the King's birth. When younger, they would have been exposed to the writings of the Jewish prophet Daniel, who had been the chief of the court seers in Persia, such as [Daniel 9:24–27](#), a prophecy that gives a timeline for the birth of the Messiah. Also, they may have been aware of the words of the pagan prophet Balaam (who was from the town of Pethor on the Euphrates River near Persia) in [Numbers 24:17](#). Balaam's prophecy specifically mentions "a star" and "a scepter" rising out of Jacob.

The asked King Herod where was the King of the Jews and Herod asked the Pharisees who quoted Micah 5:2:

"As for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, seemingly insignificant among the clans of Judah— from you a king will emerge who will rule over Israel on my behalf, one whose origins are in the distant past."

It is alleged that the star disappeared after they got there since we see it appear to them over where Jesus was in Bethlehem once they left Herod.

Contrary to what is commonly believed, the magi *did not arrive at the manger* on the night of Christ's birth; rather, they found the young Jesus and his parents living in a house ([Matthew 2:11](#)). This could have been nearly two years after Christ's birth, since Herod—afraid that his own position as king was threatened—tried to have Jesus eliminated by killing all male children under the age of two ([Matthew 2:16](#)).

However, this **wasn't a star at all**. First, the fact that the star of Bethlehem seemed to appear only to the magi indicates that this was no ordinary star. Also, celestial bodies normally move from east to west due to the earth's rotation, yet the star of Bethlehem led the magi from Jerusalem *south* to Bethlehem. Not only that, but it led them directly to the place where Joseph and Mary were staying, *stopping* overhead. There is no natural stellar phenomenon that can do that.

So what was it? The majority believe it was either an *angel* or a *form of the Shekinah Glory*. Prior to this, the most notable appearance of the Shekinah was the pillar of cloud that led the Israelites by day and the pillar of fire that led them by night ([Exodus 13:21](#)). This makes sense because not only how it moved, but also because only the Magi were able to see it.

It guided them there and they were able to give Jesus the 3 gifts of Gold, frankincense and myrrh.



<https://buildingontheword.org/three-gifts-three-kings/>

- **Gold (His Royalty):** As a precious metal traditionally presented to kings, gold recognized Jesus as a royal figure and the **King of Kings**.

- **Frankincense (His Divinity):** This aromatic resin was used by *priests* in temple worship and blended into incense for offering sacrifices. It acknowledged Jesus's **divine nature** and His role as the ultimate High Priest.
- **Myrrh (His Humanity & Sacrifice):** This bitter perfume was used as an embalming ointment for burials. It foreshadowed Jesus's **suffering, mortality, and death** on the cross for humanity.

God always uses something we know to get our attention. He knew the 3 wise men would recognize a star shining brighter than the others since they used the stars for navigation if they ever got lost. The Magi were actually 3 kings (from Arabia\Ethiopia, Persia and India), thus showing us the magnitude of Christ's earthly coronation as a King of Kings. It showed that Christ's birth had universal significance, reaching beyond the borders of Israel. We must let Him be our guide in order to stay on the right path.

References:

- The Star of Bethlehem - <https://answersingenesis.org/christmas/the-star-of-bethlehem/?srsId=AfmBOoqu1IKhdZ6GGtV0NniGfLVkc6VGHpjS64ve6fPsTOcqlLelblWY>
- Star of Bethlehem - <https://www.gotquestions.org/star-of-Bethlehem.html>