

Chapter 1 : The Wise Men children's version

The History behind the Three Kings/Wise Men/Magi in the Christmas Story. After Jesus was born, Wise Men came to look for Him, probably from an area which is now in either Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia or the Yemen.

Accueil The Story of the Three Kings This is a story about what happened to the three Kings, called Magi , before they went to Bethlehem and after they went to Bethlehem. There was a prophet called Balaam who prophesied saying, "A star shall spring out of Jacob and a man shall rise upon Israel and shall be Lord of all folk. In the land of India where the three Kings lived, was a very high hill called Vaus. On this hill twelve of the greatest astronomers, were asked to watch the stars day and night to see if any unusual light or star showed up in the sky, which they had never seen before. Then one day something very unusual happened. On the same night and the same hour that Our Lord was born, a new star shone in the sky and it was as bright as the sun. It came and stood still over the Hill of Vaus and would not move. When the sun was most hot and most high, there was no difference between the brightness of the star and the brightness of the sun. A voice came from the star saying: Go then and seek Him and do Him worship. When the twelve astronomers saw the miraculous star, with the Baby King bearing the sign of the cross, they joyfully ran to tell the wisemen of the land all that they had seen and heard. Now at that time there were three good kings who ruled in India and when the astronomers told them about the miraculous star, they were truly glad. And though each of the kings lived far from each other, they all saw the star at the same hour and the same time. Then each of the three kings decided to go on a journey to see the Baby King which they had seen in the star, and do as the voice from the star had told them to do. Each of the three kings prepared great and rich gifts for their journey. They loaded horses, camels and mules with treasures and took with them a great crowd of people. And they also took along tents and bedding and much food for the journey there, and the journey home. As each of the three kings left their kingdom the star went before them to guide them; even though they all came from different directions! They rode over many lands and passed through many kingdoms, cities and towns. And even though they came to some dangerous places, neither one of the kings had a difficult time; they were able to carry on with their journey in peace and quiet. After twelve days when the three Kings were almost at Jerusalem, God worked a very great miracle so that the three Kings could meet with each other before going to Bethlehem. Melchior with his host of people and animals came first to the outskirts of Jerusalem, near the hill of Calvary. Beside this hill three roads came together to form one road, which led to Jerusalem. God caused a dark cloud to descend upon the world. Melchior and his host could no longer see the star; so they waited. Along came Balthazar and he could no longer see the star, so he and his host waited. After a time, God lifted the cloud and Melchior and Balthazar started making their way to the main road leading to Jerusalem. Casper and his host were also making their way to Jerusalem and where the three roads join with the main road to Jerusalem, the three kings met each other. Then God worked another miracle; even though the three Kings spoke different languages, they could all understand each other and they told each other that they were following the star to see the Baby King. They followed the star to Jerusalem and after meeting Herod they followed the star to Bethlehem. As they got closer to the stable where Jesus was, the star shone brighter! And when they arrived in Bethlehem the star lit up the place where Jesus, Mary and Joseph were staying. Balthazar, the King of Saba, offered frankincense to the Baby Jesus because He was God, and Caspar, the King of Tharsis, offered the Baby Jesus myrrh, because He became man and would die in order to save people from their sins. When the three Kings left the Holy Family, they stayed that day in Bethlehem and told the people of that city and the people of the surrounding country about the Child Jesus and how the star had guided them from the East to Bethlehem. At night when the three Kings were sleeping, an Angel came and warned them that they should not return to Herod, as Herod wanted to kill the Baby Jesus , so they went home by another way. As the three Kings travelled through different towns and cities on their way home, they preached to the people about the Baby Jesus, the Star, and all they had seen and heard and done. Even though it had only taken thirteen days for the three Kings to travel to Bethlehem, it took them two years to return home! When they reached their kingdoms, they preached to their people and told them all that they had heard and seen and done on the way.

And they made in all their temples a star, in the same form and likeness as it had appeared to them. Because of this, many pagans left their errors and their false idols and worshiped the Child Jesus. The three Kings also built a beautiful chapel on the Hill of Vaus, in India, and promised each other that they would meet there every year. This chapel was also visited by many people from different lands. Thomas the Apostle into India to preach there, the Word of God. Thomas preached the Word of God in the temples of India, and performed many miracles by the sign of the cross, he found in every temple a star which had been painted and formed in the likeness of the star that had appeared to the three Kings on the night when Christ was born. The three Kings had prayed that they would not die until they had been baptised. So when they heard that a disciple of Christ had come to their lands and was preaching to the people about the works of the Lord, they set out to meet him. Even though they were very old, they dressed themselves in fine garments and went to see St. Thomas. They also took with them other lords and princes and a great crowd of people. When Thomas saw the three Kings, he received them with great joy and told them all about the life of Christ and what He had taught to his disciples. Then the Kings told St. Thomas how they had gone to Bethlehem to see the Baby Jesus. Thomas was very touched by their story and baptised the three Kings and all the people who had come with them. Suddenly the three Kings were filled with the Holy Ghost and began to preach the word of God to all the people. Then the three Kings went with St. Thomas to the Hill of Vaus, and there St. Thomas blessed the chapel which the three Kings had built. Thomas and the three Kings preached to the people in that chapel about the Christian faith and the star that had appeared to the three Kings. And later, around the chapel of Vaus, the three Kings built the Catholic city of Suwella. Thomas had preached and converted the people of that area to the Christian faith, he then ordained the three Kings as priests and consecrated them as Bishops. And they ordained other priests and consecrated more Bishops to serve God. Thomas went on to preach in other cities and towns of India and in time he was martyred. Two years before the three Kings died, they called together all the Kings and Princes and Bishops of their lands and chose from among them a man who would be the spiritual leader of the people; and who would take the place of St. Thomas. The three Kings lived together like monks in Suwella, for the next two years. Then before the end of the second year, a little while before Christmas, a wonderful star appeared above the city of Suwella. By this star they knew that they would die soon. So they built a large tomb in the church there, where they could be buried. They all said Mass on Christmas day. Eight days after Christmas, Melchior; who was years old, said Mass and then died. Three days later, Balthazar; who was years old, said Mass and then died. And six days later, Casper; who was years old, said Mass and also died. The three Kings bodies remained incorrupt for many years, and the star appeared over Suwella until the bodies of the Kings were moved away. A long time after the death of the three Kings, the Catholic faith was practised in the city of Suwella and in all the kingdoms of the East. But as the years passed, the people of India fell again into their pagan religion. Helen took the bodies of the three Kings to Constantinople, where her son was the Emperor. After the death of St. Helen the bodies of the three Kings were taken to Milan Italy. Some time later, Archbishop Rainald took the bodies of the three Kings to a church in Cologne, Germany, where they still are today!

Chapter 2 : All About the Wise Men -- The History of The Christmas Story -- whychristmas?com

*The Story of the Three Wise Kings [Tomie dePaola] on calendrierdelascience.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Three wise men of the East, having seen a new star symbolizing the birth of a great king, follow the star to Bethlehem where they present gifts to the newborn Jesus.*

Subscribe to the CompellingTruth. What is the story of the three wise men magi? The biblical account of the wise men or magi is found in Matthew 2: Verse 1 says they were "men" meaning male and more than one and came from east of Jerusalem. The exact number of wise men and where they specifically came from are unknown. The number three has often been noted due to the fact that they gave three named gifts to Jesus of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The account the wise men gave to King Herod notes they saw a star from the east v. King Herod consulted the Jewish religious leaders who told him Messiah was prophesied to be born in Bethlehem vv. Herod asked the wise men about the time the star appeared and commanded the wise men to report the location of the one born king of the Jews once He had been found. The wise men then traveled to Bethlehem and found Jesus and His family. They offered their gifts, items worth great value during their time. The wise men also bowed in worship v. This was clearly sometime after the birth of Jesus, as the family was now staying in a house, though they had not yet left Bethlehem. After worshipping Jesus, the wise men were warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod v. They departed using another road to their "country," indicating they were not Jewish and lived in another nation. When the wise men did not return, Herod became angry and had all male children two years old and younger in Bethlehem put to death, but not before Joseph had been warned in a dream to flee with his family to Egypt. Jesus and His family escaped, partly due to the assistance of the wise men not returning to Herod. Further, these wise men left gifts that were likely able to pay for family expenses during the time they lived in Egypt. Many applications can be made from these wise men for our lives today. First, they worshiped Jesus. Third, they gave their best gifts to Jesus. Fourth, they cared greatly for Jesus and those in His family. These men are unknown by name yet have left an incredible mark in the history of the Bible through their remarkable actions to young Jesus and His family.

It tells the story of the Three Wise Kings who visited Jesus as a young child. They followed the star, visited Herod, found and showed reverence to the young king, then followed the warning in a dream to return to their countries another way.

The account is short and straightforward; but it does include a reference to an Old Testament prophecy which will be important in the interpretation. But it is a story that is tightly connected to its context; it not only builds on the information revealed in the previous passage about the birth, but it also lays the foundation for the crisis to follow. At the outset it will be helpful to explain the historical sequence of the narratives. But we know that Herod died in the spring of 4 B. Herod probably set the age of two years old in order to be sure he killed the one who was to be king, thinking that the wise men had been traveling for some time. So the sequence would be: Jesus was born somewhere late 5 B. For chronological details like this, see Harold W. We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. As soon as you have found him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him. Then they opened their treasures and presented Him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. Observations on the Text The story falls into several parts: If you are looking at the sentences in these sections, the structure is pretty simple. The first two clauses tell us this was after Jesus was born and during the time of Herod. The rest of the section is the direct quotation. As noted in the last lesson, this quotation is the most important interpretive part of the first section: We have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him. In the second section vv. The third section is simply the scheme of Herod vv. But note again it simply says that Herod called them [the Magi] to find out the time the star appeared, and then sent them to Bethlehem. But what is added to his action is the direct quotation that they should inform him where the child was. The final section vv. In this section the individual acts will have to be explained. The Subject Matter of the Story It is clear enough to see that the story traces the quest of these Magi to find the one who was born king of the Jews. What this all means will depend on understanding who the Magi were, but an initial guess would lead you to the idea that they are important people from the east who are acknowledging that Jesus is the promised king. The narrative then underscores the truth that Matthew is presenting, that Jesus is the promised Messiah, and that this truth was a real threat to the reigning king because he was evil but a source of joy to the nations. But there is more here than a visit to a child who would be king someday. These Magi worshiped him. That was the intent of their coming. And so the narrative also reminds us that this child Jesus was far more than a future king. Only if He is divine could He be worshiped. He is not specifically mentioned, but the presence is obvious. The prophecy had recorded exactly where Messiah should be born, and the dream warned them to return home a different way. The supernatural element moving in the lives of the Magi is the true cause of their actions. We should say at the outset that the tradition that these men were three kings, and that their names have been preserved for us, has no foundation in biblical history at all. You will probably find that these were a priestly caste of very wise men from Mesopotamia, somewhere in the east, perhaps Persia or Babylonia--we are not told. They were famous for their learning, and for their wisdom. Anything out of the ordinary was taken by them to be some kind of an omen. Now they had seen a star that could not be identified. How then did they know to come to Jerusalem? The straight answer is that we do not know, but can only speculate. These types of wise men were diligent to discover what signs and omens meant. And if they had recourse to the holy books of Israel, which they very well could have had in the east since Babylon remained a center of Jewish studies, they might have come across the prophecy of Balaam, an early prophet from the east who had predicted that a star would march forth in Israel Num. It may be that they saw the phenomenon, searched their collections of books, talked to various scribes of the different religions, and learned that Israel was the place. If they had inquired about it further, they might have discovered that this one who was to be born would be special, worthy of worship. Then, when they came to Israel, where would they have gone looking for a king but to the palace? Of course it is also possible that the Lord simply revealed these things to them when they saw the star, and then confirmed the revelation when the star appeared over the house where Jesus was. Now then, what about Herod? This is Herod the Great, who ruled from 37 B. Any study of Herod will immediately show that the man was a ruthless and paranoid tyrant. He would easily kill his own sons, or

one of his wives, or the high priest, if he thought any of these were in any way conspiring against him. And so the thought of a king being born was an immediate threat. Especially if it was the promised Messiah, the king of the Jews. Herod, you see, was not Jewish. He was Idumaean--an Edomite, a descendant of Esau and not Jacob. He had tried to ingratiate himself to the Jews by marrying into the Hasmonean family the line of Jewish kings [the Maccabeans] that had reigned for a hundred years, and by building the temple in Jerusalem. But he could not be trusted; and he himself trusted no one. So if you learn a little more about this character you will appreciate more why he and his court were thrown into a panic. There could also be a little history behind the disturbance as well, for the wise men may have come from a land that was antagonistic to Rome, and so their visit raised a lot of questions. A short word about the house may also be helpful, primarily because of traditional pictures and scenes of the wise men, the shepherds, and the animals all gathered around the manger. Most people realize that such a grouping just puts all these elements of Christmas together. But if you have time to trace through some of the material, there is some clarification. People often lived in caves, and expanded their building out in front of the cave. Inside the cave-home the few animals they possessed would be kept way in the back in the cave, or down in a lower level of the cave, to keep them from wandering off; and the people would live and sleep in the room or rooms at the front. When Joseph and Mary came to the town it was all very crowded because all the relatives were there to be taxed. And when they came to the lodging, perhaps the home of a close relative, the sleeping places for guests as well as family were all taken. There was no room--except in the back where the animals were. While this seems to us a shame, in some ways it would have been better for Mary--it was at least private and warm. After Jesus was born, there was probably more room in the house proper since the people who came to be taxed would have left. So the Magi could come to the house and find Mary and the child in the living quarters. But the critical word to define in this story is the word worship. They came to worship Jesus. And after they received confirmation from the Bible and from the Star, they knew this was of God, and so they came and worshiped him. The word for worship in the text does not help us much in knowing what they thought, what they said, or what they did. But a general study of acts of worship would lead us to conclude that they bowed down and worshiped him because they believed he was divinely sent or even divine. Perhaps they considered him another divine monarch. We do not know. But the passage emphasizes that they received the sign from heaven, heard the word from Scripture, were led to the exact place by the star, and naturally bowed and worshiped him. Worship includes submission, adoration, and homage. The evidence of their worship came in the gifts they gave, gifts fit for a divine king. By recording this event Matthew certainly has in mind that the natural response to Jesus is not simply homage as to a king, but worship to the Lord of heaven and earth. The picture of Messiah will continue to grow with each successive narrative. You might also want to consider why gold, and incense, and myrrh were brought to Jesus by the Magi. Biblical commentaries often see symbolic meanings in the specific gifts; they say that gold was a gift for a king but in the Old Testament gold was also the proper setting for the sanctuary where God dwelt among His people, the incense was for deity as the sacrifices in the Old Testament were sprinkled with it, and the myrrh was a preparation His suffering. Matthew makes no such points out of the gifts, and so we should be cautious about reading something into the text that has little support elsewhere in the Bible. It is easy to get carried away with symbolic interpretations--but you must learn not to do this unless there is some pretty good support for it. There is a lot of symbolism in the Bible, and so if the items were well known symbols like oil, or the dove you can do something with it; or, if the text itself makes something of it, that too is the basis for doing it. But there is little that is convincing for the symbolic interpretation of these elements--they are used in too many ways in the Bible. So we probably should simply say that these were costly gifts, and so they were certainly appropriate for a king. They speak of the homage of the Magi. And, they would have been welcomed by Joseph and Mary who were very poor. The Old Testament Citation The scribes and teachers of the law knew exactly where Messiah was to be born, for they knew the Scripture very well. The scribes probably had most if not all of it memorized. The prophet Micah foretold that from the little town of Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, there would come the ruler who would be the Shepherd of Israel. If you go back and read a bit of the context of Micah 5: But the prophecy quickly advances to tell how God would later deliver Israel from the oppressing nations. He would one day bring from this least-expected place

of Bethlehem a ruler. Here we learn something of the way prophecy is written: In fact, there may be centuries between the fulfillment of one verse and the next.

Chapter 4 : The Three Wise Kings By Tomie Depaola Story Of

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The ways deep, the weather sharp, the days short, the sun farthest off, in solstitio brumali, the very dead of winter. And we can see it all: Yet, that is not entirely what the Gospel says. St Matthew tells of them in just 12 verses, beginning: For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. We suppose they were three because they brought gold, frankincense and myrrh. From the earliest times these gifts were accorded mystic significance: Of course, our imagination is filled by the images that artists have provided. Their names are picked out in bright tesserae above them: Those names are not in the Bible either. In a funny way, these three wise men, the Magi, are older than Christmas. They come at Epiphany, which we celebrate or ignore on January 6. This day was in the earliest Christian times the great feast of the coming of Jesus. At the Epiphany three events were marked: Christmas, as the actual birthday of Jesus, only began to be celebrated as a separate feast on December 25 three centuries or so later by Latin-speaking Christians in north Africa. It was a different world in north Africa then. There was no Arabic, nor were there mosques Mohammed was not born for another couple of centuries, and small cities were run by men in togas, writing rather good Latin and debating heatedly just how much God the Father was the same as God the Son. No turkey on Christmas Day, but no snow either. Yet old Bishop Andrewes spoke of the wise men coming in solstitio brumali, which he expected King James who prided himself on his learning to recognise as the winter solstice, when the days are shortest. A lot of nonsense is talked today about Christmas "really" being the Roman festival of misrule, Saturnalia, or the feast of Natalis Soli Invicti, the birth of the invincible sun. But people then were quite capable of distinguishing one from another. Christians cheerfully adopted artistic representations of Jesus as Apollo, for example, because he was a bit like the fictional sun-god. The Christians had a prophecy to prove the point, taken from the book of Malachi in the Bible: Equally so, then, is the metaphor of Jesus as the Sun. If customs had developed slightly differently, we might be celebrating Christmas at the summer solstice in June, when the sun is brightest. Of course, midsummer is precisely the time that Australians do open their Christmas presents. No one had planned for them in the fourth century, because, although educated people knew that the earth was spherical, they thought no one lived in the antipodes, because the burning latitudes at the equator would be too hot to get past. I mention these details as an indication that people hundreds of years ago had thought about such questions quite as much as we do today, sometimes more. It is just that they assembled their thoughts in a different pattern from us, and we can easily mistake their drift. One checks the Gospels carefully, and indeed no ox nor ass appears. But the medieval painters did not just invent them. They were familiar with the verse in Isaiah: Whether a wandering magus 20 centuries ago was called Gaspar or not matters to no one much but him. It matters a very great deal whether a child born one summer or winter day in those years was really the prophesied Emmanuel. Dr Williams declares that he was, and that this is the good news of Christmas.

Chapter 5 : Biblical Magi - Wikipedia

Three Gifts From Three Kings The gifts of the wise men symbolize Christ's identity and mission: gold for a king, incense for God, and myrrh used to anoint the dead. Ironically, the Gospel of John states that Nicodemus brought a mixture of 75 pounds of aloe and myrrh to anoint Jesus' body after the crucifixion.

We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. One theory is that they might have been Kings of the Yemen, as during this time the Kings of Yemen were Jews. Three is only a guess because they brought with them three gifts: They were definitely men of learning. They were certainly men of great learning. This was the title given to priests in a sect of the ancient persian religions such as Zoroastrianism. The magi would have followed the patterns of the stars religiously. They had seen an unusual new star in the sky, and knew that it told of the birth of a special king. No one really knows what the new star in the sky was, and there are many theories including comets, supernovas, a conjunctions of planets or something supernatural! Find out more about the star in the Star of Bethlehem page in the Christmas Customs section. Legends are told about them and they have been given names. This is how they are often described: Gaspar or Caspar , who has brown hair and a brown beard or no beard! He is the King of Sheba. Gaspar represents the Frankincense brought to Jesus. Melchior, who has long white hair and a white beard and wears a gold cloak. He is the King of Arabia. Melchior represents the Gold brought to Jesus. Balthazar, who has black skin and a black beard or no beard! He is the King of Tarse and Egypt. Balthazar represents the gift of Myrrh that was brought to Jesus. Herod asked the Wise Men to find Jesus and tell him where he was, not so he could go and worship him as he said, but so he could kill him! He thought that Jesus sounded like a new King that could come and take his power away. When the Wise Men found Jesus and Mary, they would have been living in a normal house in Bethlehem, because by this time Jesus would have been aged between one and two. Then they gave their gifts to him. The gifts seem quite strange to give to a baby, but Christians believe that they had the following meanings: The gifts are also all things that come from east of Israel in Arabia. When the wise men were about to go to tell Herod where Jesus was, they were warned in a dream not to, so Herod could not carry out his horrible plan.

Chapter 6 : Three Wise Kings? Were They Really Kings and Were There Only Three?

The well-known three wise men or three wise kings or the Magi of the Christmas story are only mentioned in one of the gospels, that of Matthew. They seem to play an integral role in the story, however, so many theories and little known "facts" about these important personages have developed in the subsequent centuries.

Circa One candidate for the origin of the name Caspar appears in the Acts of Thomas as Gondophares 21 c. This Gondophares declared independence from the Arsacids to become the first Indo-Parthian king, and he was allegedly visited by Thomas the Apostle. According to Ernst Herzfeld, his name is perpetuated in the name of the Afghan city Kandahar, which he is said to have founded under the name Gundopharron. The Parthian Empire, centered in Persia, occupied virtually all of the land east of Judea and Syria except for the deserts of Arabia to the southeast. Though the empire was tolerant of other religions, its dominant religion was Zoroastrianism, with its priestly magos class. The Magi Journeying c. Toghrul became identified with the legendary Central Asian Christian king, Prester John, whose Mongol descendants were sought as allies against the Muslims by contemporary European monarchs and popes. And know that the power of Christ has been, and is, so great, that the people of that land are Christians; and the whole land of Chata [Khitai, or Kara-Khitai] believes those Three Kings. I have myself been in their churches and have seen pictures of Jesus Christ and the Three Kings, one offering gold, the second frankincense, and the third myrrh. They were indicative of great respect, and typically used when venerating a king. While prostration is now rarely practised in the West it is still relatively common in the Eastern Churches, especially during Lent. Kneeling has remained an important element of Christian worship to this day. Traditional identities and symbolism[edit] Apart from their names, the three Magi developed distinct characteristics in Christian tradition, so that between them they represented the three ages of adult man, three geographical and cultural areas, and sometimes other things. In the normal Western account, reflected in art by the 14th century for example in the Arena Chapel by Giotto in Caspar is old, normally with a white beard, and gives the gold; he is "King of Tarsus, land of merchants" on the Mediterranean coast of modern Turkey, and is first in line to kneel to Christ. Melchior is middle-aged, giving frankincense from his native Arabia, and Balthazar is a young man, very often and increasingly black-skinned, with myrrh from Saba modern south Yemen. Their ages were often given as 60, 40 and 20 respectively, and their geographical origins were rather variable, with Balthazar increasingly coming from Ethiopia or other parts of Africa, and being represented accordingly. Gifts[edit] Three gifts are explicitly identified in Matthew: Many different theories of the meaning and symbolism of the gifts have been brought forward. While gold is fairly obviously explained, frankincense, and particularly myrrh, are much more obscure. See the previous section for who gave which. One of the earliest known depictions from a third-century sarcophagus Vatican Museums. The clothing of the Magi here is typical of Parthian nobles. The theories generally break down into two groups: All three gifts are ordinary offerings and gifts given to a king. Myrrh being commonly used as an anointing oil, frankincense as a perfume, and gold as a valuable. The three gifts had a spiritual meaning: This dates back to Origen in Contra Celsum: The last verse includes a summary of the interpretation: Myrrh was used as an embalming ointment and as a penitential incense in funerals and cremations until the 15th century. The "holy oil" traditionally used by the Eastern Orthodox Church for performing the sacraments of chrismation and unction is traditionally scented with myrrh, and receiving either of these sacraments is commonly referred to as "receiving the myrrh". The picture of the Magi on the 7th century Franks Casket shows the third visitor he who brings myrrh with a valknut over his back, a pagan symbol referring to Death. It was these three gifts, it is thought, which were the chief cause for the number of the Magi becoming fixed eventually at three. Another tale has it being entrusted to and then misappropriated by Judas. There was a 15th-century golden case purportedly containing the Gift of the Magi housed in the Monastery of St. Paul of Mount Athos. After the Athens earthquake of September 9, they were temporarily displayed in Athens in order to strengthen faith and raise money for earthquake victims. The relics were displayed in Ukraine and Belarus in Christmas of , and thus left Greece for the first time since the 15th century. Two separate traditions have surfaced claiming that they were so moved by their encounter

with Jesus that they either became Christians on their own or were quick to convert fully upon later encountering an Apostle of Jesus. The traditions claim that they were so strong in their beliefs that they willingly embraced martyrdom. Chronicon of Dexter[edit] One tradition gained popularity in Spain during the 17th century; it was found in a work called the Chronicon of Dexter. The tradition appears in the form of a simple martyrology reading, "In Arabia Felix, in the city of Sessania of the Adrumeti, the martyrdom of the holy kings, the three Magi, Gaspar, Balthassar, and Melchior who adored Christ. Later, this was all brought into question when historians and the Catholic hierarchy in Rome declared the work a pious forgery. It is certain that when Frederick I, Holy Roman Emperor Barbarossa imposed his authority on Milan , the relics there were transferred to Cologne Cathedral , housed in the Shrine of the Three Kings , and are venerated there today. Marco Polo claimed that he was shown the three tombs of the Magi at Saveh south of Tehran in the s: In Persia is the city of Saba, from which the Three Magi set out and in this city they are buried, in three very large and beautiful monuments, side by side. And above them there is a square building, beautifully kept. The bodies are still entire, with hair and beard remaining. Paul William Roberts provides some modern-day corroboration of this possibility in his book Journey of the Magi. Reputedly they were first discovered by Saint Helena on her famous pilgrimage to Palestine and the Holy Lands. The Milanese celebrate their part in the tradition by holding a medieval costume parade every 6 January. In accounting for the presence in Cologne of their mummified relics, he begins with the journey of Helena , mother of Constantine I to Jerusalem, where she recovered the True Cross and other relics: Religious significance[edit] The visit of the Magi is commemorated in most Western Christian churches by the observance of Epiphany , 6 January, which also serves as the feast of the three as saints. The Eastern Orthodox celebrate the visit of the Magi on 25 December. However, the Persian Muslim encyclopaedist al-Tabari , writing in the 9th century, gives the familiar symbolism of the gifts of the Magi. Al-Tabari gave his source for the information to be the later 7th century Perso-Yemenite writer Wahb ibn Munabbih. Letters with gift requests are left in the letterbox on the left-hand side. Western Christianity celebrates the Magi on the day of Epiphany , January 6, the day immediately following the twelve days of Christmas , particularly in the Spanish-speaking parts of the world. According to the tradition, the Magi come from the Orient on their camels to visit the houses of all the children, much like Sinterklaas and Santa Claus with his reindeer elsewhere, they visit everyone in one night. In some areas, children prepare a drink for each of the Magi. It is also traditional to prepare food and drink for the camels, because this is the only night of the year when they eat. In Spain, Argentina, Mexico, Paraguay and Uruguay, there is a long tradition for having the children receive presents by the three "Reyes Magos" on the night of January 5 Epiphany Eve or morning of January 6. Almost every Spanish city or town organises cabalgatas in the evening, in which the kings and their servants parade and throw sweets to the children and parents in attendance. The cavalcade of the three kings in Alcoy claims to be the oldest in the world, having started in In the Philippines, beliefs concerning the Three Kings Filipino: Another dying custom is children leaving shoes out on Epiphany Eve, so that they may receive sweets and money from the Three Kings. With the arrival of American culture in the early 20th century, the Three Kings as gift-givers have been largely replaced in urban areas by Santa Claus , and they only survive in the greeting "Happy Three Kings! Christmas starts in December and ends in January after Epiphany, although in Puerto Rico there are eight more days of celebration las octavitas. Campaign for a real black Balthazar in Spain[edit] In a campaign started in Spain over the fact that Balthazar is commonly played by a white person in blackface. Sternsinger â€” Christmas carolers in Sanok , Poland. Also in Catholic parts of the German-speaking world, these markings are made by the "Sternsinger" literally, " star singers " â€” a group of children dressed up as the magi. An adult chaperones the group but stays in the background of the performance. Each year, German and Austrian dioceses pick one charity towards which all Sternsinger donations nationwide will be contributed. The one who gets the figurine is "crowned" with a crown made of cardboard or paper , but whoever gets the bean has to pay the value of the cake to the person who originally bought it. Whoever gets a figurine is supposed to organize and be the host of the family celebration for the Candelaria feast on February 2. In France and Belgium, a cake containing a small figure of the baby Jesus, known as the "broad bean", is shared within the family. Whoever gets the bean is crowned king for the remainder of the holiday and wears a cardboard crown purchased with the cake. A

similar practice is common in many areas of Switzerland, but the figurine is a miniature king. The practice is known as *tirer les Rois* Drawing the Kings. A queen is sometimes also chosen. In New Orleans , Louisiana , parts of southern Texas , and surrounding regions, a similar ring-shaped cake known as a " King Cake " traditionally becomes available in bakeries from Epiphany to Mardi Gras. The baby Jesus figurine is inserted into the cake from underneath, and the person who gets the slice with the figurine is expected to buy or bake the next King Cake. There is wide variation among the types of pastry that may be called a King Cake, but most are a baked cinnamon-flavoured twisted dough with thin frosting and additional sugar on top in the traditional Mardi Gras colours of gold, green and purple. To prevent accidental injury or choking, the baby Jesus figurine is frequently not inserted into the cake at the bakery, but included in the packaging for optional use by the buyer to insert it themselves. Mardi Gras-style beads and doubloons may be included as well.

Chapter 7 : The Three Wise Men - Adoration of the Magi

The Story of The Three Wise Kings By: Tomie DePaola Three wise men of the East, having seen a new star symbolizing the birth of a great king, follow the star to Bethlehem where they present gifts.

His name was King Herod. Remember his name, because we will talk about him later. Soon after Jesus was born, wise men were traveling on their camels. One night they noticed a very strange star in the sky. They knew that this star meant that the King of the Jews, the One who would save the world had been born. When the mean King What was his name again? Herod heard this he got very worried. He called a meeting with all the other important people in the area and asked them where this special baby had been born. The people replied, "In Bethlehem. Then King Herod called the wise men to a secret meeting and found out from them exactly where they saw the star. He then told them, "Go and find this child. As soon as you find him, tell me, so that I can go and worship him. They followed the star until it hung right over the very place where Jesus was. When they finally had arrived they were very excited and happy. They opened the gifts they had brought Jesus. The gifts were gold, frankincense, and myrrh. These were very expensive gifts; these were gifts that you would give to a King, not to a baby. Mary thanked them for bringing the gifts for Jesus, and the wise men went to find a place to sleep for the night. As the wise men slept, they each had the same dream. They were not to go back and tell King Herod where they found Jesus. So the wise men went home another way so that Herod would not know where they had come from. They also decided that they would not tell King Herod anything about what they had seen. When the wise men had left, an angel appeared to Joseph in a dream. Stay there until I come to you again, because Herod is going to search for Jesus to kill him. They left in the middle of the night for Egypt, so no one would see them. They were safe in Egypt, and after King Herod died an angel appeared to Joseph and told him he could go to a place called Nazareth. And that is where Jesus grew up.

Chapter 8 : Three Kings' Day Celebration: History And Traditions Behind 'El Día De Los Reyes' | HuffPos

The Three Wise Kings, Catalan Atlas, , fol. V: "This province is called Tarshish, from which came the Three Wise Kings, and they came to Bethlehem in Judaea with their gifts and worshipped Jesus Christ, and they are entombed in the city of Cologne two days journey from Bruges."

The answer to this question is more important than you ever knew! Why did wise men bring gifts to Jesus Christ as a young child? What can we learn from these gifts? Discover the answers in this short video by Foundation Institute instructor Dave Myers. What is the reason for imparting gifts to a small child? Who did these men believe they were honoring? Confused customs First of all, the Bible does not tell us the exact number of wise men, and they were not present for His birth in a manger as is so often depicted in nativity scenes every December. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: Other articles on this website demonstrate this fact in much more depth. Be sure to read some of these eye-opening assessments of commonly held traditions. The question we are exploring in this article is why wise men brought gifts to a child who was too young to appreciate them in the first place. What motivated these men to feel it was appropriate to present anything? Who did they think Jesus was, and why did they come all that way? The answer reveals an often overlooked reality about the Son of God. Gifts fit for a king Matthew 2: They did not ask where they could find the Savior of mankind. They were following the common custom of presenting gifts to royalty or one destined to be a ruling monarch. And He did that, of course. However, there is another often-overlooked role Christ will fulfill, one that is repeatedly emphasized in the Gospels—that of Christ being a ruling king. Notice the statement to Mary when she was told she would conceive a child: Mary was told her Son would be a king and would sit on a throne. Looking for the Messiah The Jews had long been anticipating the arrival of the Messiah. He would be a descendant of David who would reestablish the Davidic throne and usher in the prophesied period of restored greatness in a new kingdom Isaiah 9: The Son of God Few today consider that when a first-century Jew heard the term son of God, it prompted thoughts of earthly rulership and divine appointment rather than a position in the Godhead. Biblically, son of God could signify any exclusive relationship with God the angels are called sons of God in Job 1: Yet the term had an amplified application for the Messiah, the offspring of David. These sons of God actually acted as agents for God ruling on His throne. Fulfilling this role would eventually be a glorious messianic function. This is why Nathaniel stated in John 1: You are the King of Israel! He ruled as a vassal under the Roman authorities, but he was a king nevertheless. When the wise men came seeking Jesus, what did they say? For the paranoid King Herod, this was very troubling indeed! Jesus was continually examined as to whether or not He claimed to be a king. Tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God! The high priest then told Pilate that Jesus claimed to be a king Luke But He also came as the King of that Kingdom—the King of Kings and Lord of Lords who will reign during the coming millennial age on this earth. Christ will rule the nations from Jerusalem on the restored throne of David Luke 1: The Old Testament prophecies of the coming King are the reason the wise men were looking for a promised sovereign and why they brought gifts to the Child they knew would one day be King. To learn more about this magnificent Kingdom of God and how God is preparing individuals to rule with Christ at that time, be sure to read the revealing articles on these subjects on this website. You, too, can discover what it takes to live and reign with Christ the King.

Chapter 9 : The Story of the Three Kings

The Three Kings Day (Díacutetea De Los Reyes Magos) celebrates the Nativity story of the Three Kings, also referred to as The Three Wise Men --Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar -- who brought gifts to.

Three wise kings greet Jesus. What is the truth about them? What does it tell us? First, it says that the Magi came from the east and went to Jerusalem and had an audience with King Herod. But it does not specify exactly which countries east of Israel they came from. At that meeting with Herod they stated that they had seen a star in the sky that foretold the birth of the King of the Jews, and they wanted to see this new king. They later told Herod when they first saw the star. Herod told them to find the new king and to let him know where he was to be found. The Magi then went to an unnamed location where they found Jesus and Mary Joseph is not mentioned as being present. They then presented Jesus with three gifts: Then, warned by a dream, they did not report back to Herod but returned to their native lands by another route. But many later stories and legends have attempted to fill in the blanks of their story. How the Story of the Three Wise Kings Developed First off, it is not commonly agreed that there were only three wise kings. True, only three gifts were mentioned as being presented. But the gospel story does not state that the number of gifts equaled the number of Magi. More than one Magi could have presented Jesus with gold, for example. In many Syriac churches, in fact, the number of Wise Men is twelve. The wise men brought gold, frankincense and myrrh as gifts for baby Jesus. Another important question is: Most Western Christian faiths came to eventually believe there were three Magi and even named them. What Happened to the Magi? And what became of the three wise kings after they returned to their native land s? The bible does not tell us, but several stories are featured in later documents. And there is another interesting glimpse of the later lives of the three wise kings. Although he does not state the cause of their deaths, Marco Polo reported that he saw their three tombs in the Persian city of Saba while on his famous travels. The Magi story became very popular in all forms of art throughout the centuries. A whale bone Anglo-Saxon box from the early 8th century depicts a carved scene including the Magi. And, of course, the three Magi are integral figures in nativity scenes throughout the world. They also perform gift-giving rites similar to those of Santa Claus in parts of the world, especially Spanish-speaking countries. Not much is known about the Magi from the original source material of the Book of Matthew. However, their stories have been fleshed-out over the past two thousand years to reflect many aspects of modern beliefs and Christian thought.