

Episode: Christmas Series No. 2

Narrator: A Magi

Primary Scriptures: Luke 1-2

Story Summary: The Magi look for a savior

Location: Babylon

Time: Circa 5 BC

Suggested Memory Scriptures: Luke 2:1

The Southern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by Babylon in 597 BC, and the Babylonians immediately began deporting everyone (except the poor people) from Jerusalem to Babylon. Among the deportees was Daniel, a young nobleman.

Through his God-given wisdom and visions, Daniel became the chief of Babylon's wise men and astrologers. For his entire adult life, Daniel served the kings of Babylon and Persia while remaining true to God. His interpretations of visions were always accurate, and many modern Christians believe many of his own visions are prophecies which have not yet been fulfilled.

It seems likely that Daniel would have had a lasting influence on the wise men of Babylon, and may have left them a prophecy regarding a king of the Jews and a special astrological event. Whether their knowledge came from Daniel or not, Magi traveled from the East to King Herod in Jerusalem with only one aim: to find and worship the king of the Jews heralded by a special star.

The Bible is not precise about the time of year when the Magi saw the star, when they started traveling, or when they arrived. However, based on King Herod's later response of killing all of the baby boys in Bethlehem under the age of two, it is often assumed that the Magi arrived within two years after the birth of Jesus, and may have even arrived immediately after his birth.

The Bible does not say how many Magi came to worship Jesus, nor how many camels they brought. However, the Bible does specify that they brought three special gifts for Jesus, so many have assumed there were three Magi who came.

The three gifts of the Magi were gold, frankincense, and myrrh. It has often been observed that gold was gift fit for a king, as they were coming to worship a king. Frankincense was a valuable gift often used in the worship of deities and gods, while myrrh was a resin extracted from special thorn trees that was, among other things, used in burials. All three gifts acted as prophetic symbols about Jesus, the Son of God, who would be king of the Jews, worthy of worship, and who would die for the sins of all mankind.