

honest advent attention + room

MATTHEW 2:2. LUKE 2:6-7

The wise men confirm the church's conviction articulated at Vatican I that we should believe God's existence is in principle open to rational demonstration. In 1 Cor. 14.22 Paul says that even those who speak in tongues may be a sign for unbelievers, that is, to those who do not know the prophecies made to Israel. That wise men from the East will find their way to Jesus by the sign of a star should, therefore, not be surprising. But it is also the case that this "natural knowledge" requires narration through the stories that have been given us in scripture. -Hauerwas, Matthew, 39

MATTHEW 2:12

NEXT STEPS/LAST WORD

MATTHEW 2:1-12 (Common English Bible)

Coming of the magi

^{2:1} After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi came from the east to Jerusalem. ² They asked, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We've seen his star in the east, and we've come to honor him."

³ When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. ⁴ He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵ They said, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for this is what the prophet wrote:

⁶ You, Bethlehem, land of Judah,
by no means are you least among the rulers of Judah,
because from you will come one who governs,
who will shepherd my people Israel."

⁷ Then Herod secretly called for the magi and found out from them the time when the star had first appeared. ⁸ He sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you've found him, report to me so that I too may go and honor him." ⁹ When they heard the king, they went; and look, the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stood over the place where the child was. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were filled with joy. ¹¹ They entered the house and saw the child with Mary his mother. Falling to their knees, they honored him. Then they opened their treasure chests and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. ¹² Because they were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they went back to their own country by another route.



The Magi, James He Qi

OPENING THE SCENE

The Magi are representatives of the Gentile world that recognize who Jesus is and properly worship him (BW3, 57).

What is perhaps most interesting about this story is that the magi could only get so far based on the signs in the heavens, or general revelation. Thereafter they had to ask for directions, and guidance is given based on special revelation, a prophecy from the Hebrew Bible.

-B. Witherington III, Matthew, 63

BIG IDEAS:

- Following the way of Jesus may mean family rejection...no room
- It may mean leaving the easy parts of religion behind.
- It may mean going on a journey to a place you've never been before.
- It means paying attention - general revelation and special revelation

...They [The Magi] were paying attention. To what was around them, yes - the world, the sky, the stars. But they were also paying attention to how those exterior patterns were pointing to the interior patterns inside their hearts and souls. It may not be necessary to figure out the origins of the Magi, because the truth of their journey is what is truly transformational for us - that God places patterns inside us that will be revealed in the patterns of the exterior world. -S.Erickson, Honest Advent

Each of the characters in this account also reveal something about responding to Jesus and the Spirit's draw in the creation.

- The Magi
- Herod
- Jerusalem People
- Religious Leadership/Elite
- Jesus
- Us

MATTHEW 2:1-2

MATTHEW 2:3

MATTHEW 2:4-8

One is tempted to note that line between taking Jesus for granted and wanting him out of the way may remain very thin today as well. And we must not forget that the sin of taking Jesus for granted is the sin not of pagans who know little about him, but of religious folk and Bible teachers. **-Craig Keener, Matthew, 67**

MATTHEW 2:9-11

"Herod's role in the narrative should not be overlooked, for without Herod the wise men might not have found the one they sought. The enemies of the Kingdom [of God in Christ] often serve the movement begun in Jesus" **(Hauerwas, Matthew, 40).**