

Matthew 2:1-12

Table: Matthew 2:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12, AV1611 versus NIV/NKJV footnotes

Verse	AV1611	NIV/NKJV footnotes
1	<i>Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,</i>	<i>After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem</i>
2	<i>Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.</i>	<i>and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."</i>
3	<i>When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.</i>	<i>When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.</i>
4	<i>And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.</i>	<i>When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.</i>
5	<i>And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,</i>	<i>"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:</i>
6	<i>And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.</i>	<i>"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."</i>
7	<i>Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.</i>	<i>Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.</i>
8	<i>And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.</i>	<i>He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."</i>
9	<i>When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.</i>	<i>After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.</i>
10	<i>When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.</i>	<i>When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.</i>
11	<i>And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.</i>	<i>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.</i>

12	<i>And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.</i>	<i>And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.</i>
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Note that many of the notes that follow this table are from Dr Ruckman's commentary, *The Book Of Matthew*, Bible Baptist Bookstore, 1970, Chapters 2, pp 24-35 and the *Ruckman Reference Bible*, Bible Baptist Bookstore, 2009, pp 1237-1238.

Notes on Matthew 2:1-12

1. Matthew 2:1. The expression "***when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea***" denotes that Jesus was already born, not the exact day of His birth. It would be like saying "*When our house was built, we landscaped the garden*" i.e. when the construction was finished but not on the exact date that construction was finished.

The coming of the "***wise men from the east***" is consistent with the east-west movements of God throughout scripture and history, according to Numbers 2:3, with the mention of the tribe of Judah, from which the Lord sprang, Luke 1:78, Hebrews 7:14 and Psalm 19:4-6.

"And on the east side toward the rising of the sun shall they of the standard of the camp of Judah pitch throughout their armies: and Nahshon the son of Amminadab shall be captain of the children of Judah."

Numbers 2:3 is the first mention of the word "***captain***" with respect to the nation of Israel and relates to the Lord Jesus Christ as "***the captain of their salvation***" Hebrews 2:10. Note that Psalm 19:4-6 is literal. See *Geocentricity* by Dr Gerardus Bouw.

"...In them hath he set a tabernacle for the sun, Which is as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, and rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it: and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof."

Compare Micah 5:2, John 1:14, 3:29, Hebrews 6:20, 12:1, 2.

The sun typifies the Lord Jesus Christ according to Malachi 4:2.

"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."

The Lord's east-west movements include:

- 1.1. God's calling to Abraham to go west, Genesis 12:6.
- 1.2. Jacob's return westwards, Genesis 32-35.
- 1.3. The entry of the nation of Israel into the then land of Canaan, Numbers 19-25.
- 1.4. The return of the Jews from captivity, Ezra-Nehemiah.
- 1.5. The entry into the Tabernacle, Numbers 3:38.
- 1.6. The entry of the Lord Jesus Christ into Jerusalem, Ezekiel 44:1, 2.

The spread of the Gospel, according to Acts 1:8, essentially goes east to west in church history, from the land of Israel to the British isles "***and unto the uttermost part of the earth,***" the Devil being forced to follow with papal persecutions of true believers. See *The Monarch of the Books* by Dr Peter S. Ruckman pp 6-7 and this writer's work '*O Biblios*' – *The Book* pp 14-15.

Note that God drives Adam and Eve out west to east, Genesis 3:24 and when Cain left God's presence, he went west to east, Genesis 4:16.

It should be noted that the design of European abbeys, cathedrals, minsters, including York Minster and Westminster Abbey is such that entry is west to east¹, the *opposite* of God's direction for blessing.

Note also Ezekiel 8:16, with respect to eastwards worship that is idolatrous worship undertaken by men who had turned their backs on God.

“And he brought me into the inner court of the LORD’S house, and, behold, at the door of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east.”

Ezekiel 8:16 is the only time in scripture when worship is said to be *“toward the east.”* Worshipers in European abbeys, cathedrals, minsters, including York Minster and Westminster Abbey have always *“worshipped...toward the east.”*

The wise men would, like Balaam, have been *“from Aram, out of the mountains of the east”* Numbers 23:7. Numbers 22:5, Deuteronomy 23:4 indicate that Balaam lived by the Euphrates River in Mesopotamia, so that, given the extent of Aram, the wise men could have come from near Haran, the area of Abraham* *“A Syrian ready to perish”* Deuteronomy 26:5 and from as far down the river as Babylon. See the *Oxford Bible Atlas*. *After he had departed from *“Ur of the Chaldees”* Genesis 11:31.

They may therefore have been aware of the promises of God to *“Abram the Hebrew”* Genesis 12:1-6, 14:13. See remarks under point 2.

The notion that the wise men were called Gaspar, Balthazar and Melchior is a non-scriptural, Catholic fable.

2. Matthew 2:2. The first question in the New Testament is from wise men asking where they can find the Lord Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament, *“God only wise”* Romans 16:27 is seeking for man and He asks *“Where art thou?”* Genesis 3:9. In the New Testament, *“wise men”* are seeking for God* and so the question is *“Where is he?”*

*Note that once the Lord Jesus is revealed, according to Mark 1:37 *“All men seek for thee.”*

God promises in response in Jeremiah 29:13 *“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”*

The wise men did so.

Note that for their approach to the Lord Jesus Christ, *“the wise men”* showed great wisdom:

They sought *the right Person*, the *“King of the Jews”* not a Gentile ruler, because God promises in Psalm 2:6-7 *“Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”*

“Wise men from the east” would also rightly reason that God’s King and God’s Son would have to be heir to the wisest of men up until that time, who was himself a king of the Jews, as 1 Kings 4:29 shows. *“Solomon’s wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country.”*

They had *the right perception*, with respect to *“his star in the east.”* They would know of Balaam’s prophecy in Numbers 24:17, both respect to *“his star”* and His Kingship. See point 1 above.

“I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,”

The *“Star out of Jacob”* is referred to as *“him”* and the Lord Jesus Christ calls Himself *“the bright and morning star”* in Revelation 22:16. Peter describes Him as *“the day star”* in 2 Peter 1:19. The Lord also calls Himself *“his angel”* in Revelation 1:1 and *“stars”* stand for *“angels”* in Revelation 1:20, 9:1, 12:4, 9.

“*His star*” is therefore an *appearance* of “*the angel of the Lord*” as in Matthew 1:20 “*the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream...*” Paul identifies “*the angel of the Lord*” as the Lord Jesus Christ in Acts 27:23.

“*For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve,*”

Compare Philippians 3:12.

“*Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus.*”

They went *the right way*, from east to west. See comments under point 1.

They followed *the right guide*, “*his star.*”

They reached *the right place* “*where the young child was*” Matthew 2:9. “*The right road always leads out at the right place*” – Dr Bob Jones Sr, *Chapel Sayings*.

They came with *the right purpose* “*to worship him.*”

They had *the right heart attitude*, “*they rejoiced with exceeding joy*” Matthew 2:10.

They found *the Right Person Whom they sought*, “*the young child*” Matthew 2:11.

They gave *the right response* “*and fell down, and worshipped him: and...opened their treasures*” Matthew 2:11, the best that they could give. Note that *they gave no worship to Mary*.

Such men *alone* are *unconditionally* called “*wise men*” in the New Testament and identified as such, Matthew 2:1, 7, 16, as distinct from “*wise men after the flesh*” 1 Corinthians 1:26. Note how Paul qualifies the expression in 1 Corinthians 10:15, speaking “*as to wise men*” although the context is still with respect to communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 17. The only other “*wise men*” in the New Testament are those in Matthew 23:34 who are unidentified but who clearly preach “*his decease which he should accomplish at Jerusalem*” Luke 9:31, to judge by their fate.

As Paul states in 1 Corinthians 2:2, “*For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*”

That is the criterion for being one of the “*wise men*” in the New Testament.

How does the above describe your approach to the Lord Jesus Christ?

How does it affect your “*treasures,*” of time, money, strengths, abilities, relationships, opportunities, possessions etc., remembering that according to 1 Chronicles 29:14 “*for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee.*”

Note that the Lord “*is born King of the Jews*” and He died “*King of the Jews.*” He was born to die.

“*And they crucified him...And set up over his head his accusation written, THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS*” Matthew 27:35-37.

“*And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city: and it was written in Hebrew, and Greek, and Latin*” John 19:19-20.

The Lord’s birth and death fulfilled Romans 5:19.

“*For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.*”

Daniel 12:3 is an interesting comment on Matthew 2:2 and Romans 5:19.

“And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.”

3. Matthew 2:3. The expression ***“he that is born King of the Jews”*** no doubt troubled Herod ***“and all Jerusalem with him.”*** He and others would have realised that the first fulfilment of Isaiah 9:6-7 was upon them.

“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.”

Herod did not want that scripture to be fulfilled on his watch and he eventually took steps to try to prevent it, Matthew 2:16, 17, 18. Typically for the enemies of God, Herod no doubt tried to ignore or disdain the scripture that he knew about and then tried to forestall its fulfillment. Compare with the actions of Saul with respect to David, 1 Samuel 13:13, 14, 15:22, 23, 18:8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 21, 19:9, 10, 15.

Herod forgot Isaiah 14:27, 46:9-10.

“For the LORD of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?”

“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.”

It is reassuring that although Herod ***“was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him”*** by the First Advent, the Lord Jesus Christ promises the opposite for those who believe in Him.

“Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me” John 14:1.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” John 14:27.

4. Matthew 2:4. Herod knew about ***“Christ”*** and expected the Jewish leaders to know about Him as well, which they did. See remarks above about Isaiah 9:6-7 and note Daniel 9:25-26, with the ominous reference to ***“troublous times”*** that may therefore also have troubled Herod ***“and all Jerusalem with him.”*** Note how worried ***“the chief priests and the Pharisees”*** were in John 11:47, 48.

“Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.”

Herod therefore sought to know both the time and place with respect to the Lord’s birth. See Matthew 2:7, 8, 2:16. Herod’s massacre of the innocents, Jeremiah 31:15 was provoked by his wrath when ***“he saw that he was mocked of the wise men”*** but it may be that in any event Herod was devising how he ***“might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him”*** Matthew 26:4 just as ***“the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people”*** Matthew 26:3, 4 did later.

5. Matthew 2:5, 6. “*All the chief priests and scribes of the people*” answered Herod with Micah 5:2.

“But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”

Note that “*all the chief priests and scribes of the people*” changed “*though thou be little among the thousands of Judah*” to “*art not the least among the princes of Juda:*” Hypocritically they try to pretend that “*Bethlehem of Judaea*” is “*as one of the royal cities*” Joshua 10:2, when it isn’t. Artificially seeking to create a good impression on “*the powers that be*” Romans 13:1 is not new.

One reason for use of the term “*a Governor*” could be as an attempt to ally their promised Messiah to Rome, because Rome’s Pontius Pilate would also be “*governor of Judaea*” Luke 3:1. The Devil has long sought to associate “*the Messiah*” with “*that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth*” Revelation 17:18.

Note John 19:15 where “*the thoughts and intents of the heart*” Hebrews 4:12 of the Jewish leaders is made manifest.

“But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar.”

Note that Micah 5:2 is one of 48 Old Testament prophecies that the Lord fulfilled at the First Advent. Dr Peter Stoner in his book *Science Speaks* has calculated that the probability of all these 48 prophecies being fulfilled by chance is one chance in 10 multiplied 157 times i.e. 10x10x10...x10, totalling 157 10’s multiplied together. An estimated further 500 prophecies remain to be fulfilled at the Second Advent. See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 1233-1234.

The Lord fulfilled over 30 Old Testament prophecies during the events of His crucifixion, as Jack Chick shows.

See *Creator Or Liar*, www.chick.com/reading/tracts/0005/0005_01.asp.

 Jesus, the Creator, fulfilled over 30 prophecies when He allowed Himself to be murdered by man. (John 18-21)			
PROPHECY	FULFILLMENT	PROPHECY	FULFILLMENT
Genesis 3:15	John 19:18	Psalms 69:21	Matthew 27:34
Exodus 12:46	John 19:36	Psalms 109:25	Matthew 27:39
Psalms 2:2	Mark 15:1	Isaiah 50:6	Matthew 26:67
Psalms 22:1	Matthew 27:46	Isaiah 53:3	John 1:11
Psalms 22:6	Matthew 27:39-44	Isaiah 53:5,6,10	Romans 5:6,8
Psalms 22:7-8	Matthew 27:39-44	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 27:13-14
Psalms 22:16	John 19:18	Isaiah 53:7	Matthew 26:62-63
Psalms 22:17	Matthew 27:36	Isaiah 53:8	Mark 15:1-25
Psalms 22:18	Matthew 27:35	Isaiah 53:9	Matthew 27:57-60
Psalms 31:5	Luke 23:46	Isaiah 53:12	Mark 15:27-28
Psalms 34:20	John 19:32-33 & 36	Daniel 9:26	Matthew 26:24
Psalms 35:11	Mark 14:56	Amos 8:9	Matthew 27:45
Psalms 38:11	Luke 23:49	Zechariah 11:13	Matthew 27:9
Psalms 41:9	John 13:18	Zechariah 12:10	John 19:34
Psalms 69:19	Matthew 27:28-29	Zechariah 13:7	Mark 14:27,50

Note in passing that references on the Second Advent greatly outnumber those on the First Advent. See the *Ruckman Reference Bible* pp 1234, 1571, 1576. The Old Testament contains 500 verses on the Second Advent and the New Testament contains 100. Verses on the Second Advent considerably outnumber those on founding the church, church offices and ordinances, Christian salvation, the virgin birth, the blood atonement and the ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ combined. Basic to Christian salvation is justification by faith but the explicit expression “*justified by faith*” occurs only 3 times in scripture, Romans 3:28, 5:1, Galatians 3:24. Even the key word “*redemption*” with respect to Christian salvation occurs only 20 times in scripture, of

which only 11 are in the New Testament, Luke 2:38, 21:38, Romans 3:24, 8:23, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:7, 14, 4:30, Colossians 1:14, Hebrews 9:12, 15.

The Second Advent is main theme of the scriptures. The essential significance of the Second Advent for the Christian is with respect to the rapture of the church and “*the judgment seat of Christ*” Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10, Job 26:1-4.

6. Matthew 2:7, 8. Herod consulted the wise men in private. He was not about to even hint at his ulterior motives to “*all the chief priests and scribes of the people.*” See remarks under point 4. Psalm 55:21 describes Herod’s demeanour.

“The words of his mouth were smoother than butter, but war was in his heart: his words were softer than oil, yet were they drawn swords.”

Herod, will, however, one day “*worship him in spirit and in truth*” John 4:24.

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” Philippians 2:9-11.

“And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever” Revelation 5:13.

The exhortation of the sighted man in John 9:31 is best obeyed *now*. Pray it for the boys and other due recipients.

“Be a worshipper of God” that “*doeth his will.*”

7. Matthew 2:9, 10. See comments under points 1, 2 with respect to the wise men’s eastward progression, their heart attitude to “*the star*” that got them to the right place and the nature of “*the star*” itself.

Dr Ruckman’s commentary on Matthew 2:9, 10 is such that it cannot be improved upon, his emphases.

*“The text in Matthew would indicate that if the Star is not a star as the sun (somewhere in the galaxies and constellations), that it is the Angel of the Lord, **standing over the spot** where the Messiah [see comments under point 4] is, exactly as He once stood over Jerusalem before, to indicate the place of burnt offering and sacrifice (1 Chronicles 21:15, 16). It is instructive to notice that the “**Star out of Jacob,**” prophesied by Balaam, is said to be a “**him**” (notice Numbers 24:17 [and] the “**he**” [Numbers 24:19]). Let us not forget the comments on chapter 1, verse 20, an angel is not merely a **messenger**, but he is an **appearance**. This star turned some* to righteousness instead of to Hollywood.”*

*See point 2 and Daniel 12:3 above.

The expression “*the young child*” shows that the events of Matthew 2:1-12 occurred up to two years, Matthew 2:16, after those of Matthew 1:18-25, Luke 2:1-39. See remarks under point 8.

8. Matthew 2:11. See point 2 above with respect to the spontaneous worship of *“the young child”* by *“the wise men”* Matthew 2:7. In that respect they were truly wise.

The first part of the verse again confirms that the events of Matthew 2:1-12 happened up to two years, Matthew 2:16, after the events of Jesus’s birth. Joseph, though still living, appears not to have been present.

“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother.”

Observe that *“the young child”* is mentioned before His mother through Matthew 2. See Matthew 2:11, 13, 14, 20, 21. Moreover, only *“the young child”* is worshipped, *not Mary*.

The gifts, particularly the gold, had great practical value. The family was poor, as Luke 2:24 shows, with respect to Jesus’s circumcision.

“And to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord, A pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons.”

See Leviticus 12:8.

“And if she be not able to bring a lamb, then she shall bring two turtles, or two young pigeons; the one for the burnt offering, and the other for a sin offering: and the priest shall make an atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

However, with the sudden emergency that was about to arise, Matthew 2:13-15, the availability of the gifts, especially the gold, meant that the family could acquire the funds to flee to Egypt.

“But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” Philippians 4:19.

Joseph and Mary of course *had “the lamb of God” with them*, John 1:29 but He would not be *“made manifest to Israel”* John 1:31 as such until many years later.

The gifts are significant. They show that *three* wise men were present, not simply because they brought three gifts but because Proverbs 18:16 states *“A man’s gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men.”*

See also *Bible Numerics* by Dr Peter S. Ruckman pp 6-10 and carm.org/what-biblical-numerology with respect to the importance of the number three. Note that although the wise men of the Orient i.e. they *“came...from the east”* Matthew 2:1, in number three they typified all mankind as descended from three major racial groups, Oriental, Shem, African, Ham, Caucasian, Japheth, as Genesis 9:18-19. That is another reason why three wise men must be present according to scripture.

“And the sons of Noah, that went forth of the ark, were Shem, and Ham, and Japheth: and Ham is the father of Canaan. These are the three sons of Noah: and of them was the whole earth overspread.”

John 1:9 states that *“That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world”* with respect to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Mark 1:37 states that *“And when they had found him, they said unto him, All men seek for thee.”*

Every man has enough light to know that he should seek Jesus Christ.

However, some go backwards when they find Him and even ‘go to ground;’ not to worship Him Matthew 2:11 but ultimately to reject Him and betray Him to Caesar, Matthew 21:42, Mark 12:10, Luke 20:17, John 19:15, Acts 4:11.

John 18:4-6 states that *“Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus”*

saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground.

The Lord Jesus Christ explains why in Luke 22:53 and John reinforces the Lord's explanation in John 3:19.

"When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness."

"And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Some, like Herod, see Matthew 2:16 and the Jews, John 7:1, seek the Lord for the wrong reasons.

Matthew 2:19-20 states that **"But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life."**

John 7:1 states that **"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."** See also Luke 22:2, John 5:18.

"Wise men" like the three **"from the east,"** see Matthew 2:1, 2 and comments and the disciples Mark 1:37 seek the Lord for the right reasons and are rewarded in that they find Him.

Jeremiah 29:13 states therefore **"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."**

Referring back to Proverbs 18:16, no man could be greater than **"the young child"** Whom **"the wise men"** worshipped.

Note that Matthew 2:11 is the first time that the word **"house"** is mentioned in the New Testament. It was a place of giving to and worshipping of **"Jesus Christ, the Son of God"** Mark 1:1 by **"they that be wise"** Daniel 12:3.

Every house should be the same.

J. A. Kensit writes in *Our Protestant Throne and Constitution* p 13 that after the 16th century English Protestant Reformation, **"Green the historian rightly enough says: "The nation became the people of a Book – and that Book the Bible." The homes of England literally became Bethels, for the editions of the Scriptures were multiplied and found their way to the establishment of family religion. The very phraseology of the Scriptures became part of the National character."**

True worship of **"Jesus Christ, the Son of God"** is inseparable from true belief in **"all scripture"** that **"is given by inspiration of God"** 2 Timothy 3:16 that was finalised in 1611 together with its subsequent editions Psalm 12:6, 7 as **"the scripture of truth"** Daniel 10:21* according to **"the witness of God"** 1 John 5:9 over the last 400 years.

*Daniel 10:21 is the first mention of the word **"scripture"** in scripture and the only occurrence of the word **"scripture"** in the Old Testament. It is directly associated with **"truth."** The word **"scripture"** occurs 32 times in the scripture in total and the plural term **"scriptures"** occurs 21 times. The word **"scriptures"** is found 10 times in the Gospels, where it is always associated with the Lord Jesus Christ, Who uses the word **"scriptures"** for the first time in scripture in Matthew 21:42.

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?"

Note that, according to context, the words **"scripture"** and **"scriptures"** are *never* references to any original manuscript when used in scripture.

The significance of the gifts that wise men gave to *“the young child”* is as follows.

Gold is for a king, 1 Kings 10:18. See also 1 Timothy 6:15 with respect to the Lord Jesus Christ as *“the King of kings, and Lord of lords.”*

Frankincense is for a priest, Exodus 30:34-38. See Luke 1:9, 10 with respect to *“the priest’s office...to burn incense.”* See Hebrews 4:14 with respect to our *“great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God”* and His ministry of intercession according to Hebrews 7:25 *“Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”* See also Hebrews 2:17, 3:1, 4:15, 5:5, 10, 6:20, 7:26, 8:1, 9:11, 25, 10:21.

Myrrh is for a prophet. It was used for the Lord’s burial according to John 19:39.

“And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight.”

The Lord was a prophet and He associated His approaching death with His prophetic ministry.

“And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee” Matthew 21:11.

“...the third day I shall be perfected. Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem” Luke 13:32-33.

A prophetic ministry in scripture was one that often ended in death, as the Lord Jesus Christ Himself declared.

“Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:...O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” Matthew 23:34, 37.

See Dr Ruckman’s comprehensive study on myrrh in his commentary *The Book of the Song of Solomon* pp 54ff with respect to its five-fold application, five being the number of death in scripture, d-e-a-t-h. See *Bible Numerics* pp 14-17.

The gifts therefore signify the three offices of the Lord Jesus Christ, prophet, priest and king. These offices are past, present and future, see scriptures and remarks above.

They are also typified in 1 Kings 1:32 by Nathan, Zadok and David, who are mentioned in reverse order. Note again the occurrence of the number three and see comments with respect to Zechariah 14:9 below.

“And king David said, Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada. And they came before the king.”

Note that the gifts have been given in reverse order with respect to how the Lord fulfils His offices. God is mainly interested in His Son becoming King over the whole earth at the Second Advent.

“And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one” Zechariah 14:9. See also www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/w/e/t/we3kings.htm.



*We three kings of Orient are;
 Bearing gifts we traverse afar,
 Field and fountain, moor and mountain,
 Following yonder star.*

Refrain

*O star of wonder, star of light,
 Star with royal beauty bright,
 Westward leading, still proceeding,
 Guide us to thy perfect light.*

*Born a king on Bethlehem's plain
 Gold I bring to crown Him again,
 King forever, ceasing never,
 Over us all to reign.*

Refrain

*Frankincense to offer have I;
 Incense owns a deity nigh;
 Prayer and praising, voices raising,
 Worshipping God on high.*

Refrain

*Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
 Breathes a life of gathering gloom;
 Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
 Sealed in the stone cold tomb.*

Refrain

*Glorious now behold Him arise;
 King and God and sacrifice;
 Alleluia, Alleluia,
 Sounds through the earth and skies.*

Refrain

9. Matthew 2:12. Note that the Old Testament method by which God warns men in dreams is still in operation. See Genesis 20:3, 28:12, Matthew 1:20.

God's warning to the wise men shows that He is the Master of warfare. Note this extract from *Rogers' Rangers Rules or Plan of Discipline*, drawn up by Major Robert Rogers, commander of Rogers' Rangers, 1757, from Rule 5, www.military-info.com/freebies/roger.htm, this writer's emphases.

"...in your return take a different route from that in which you went out, that you may the better discover any party in your rear, and have an opportunity, if their strength be superior to your, to alter your course, or disperse, as circumstances may require."

"The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name" Exodus 15:3.

10. The NIV is deficient in:

10.1. Matthew 2:1, 7. The NIV substitutes the transliteration "Magi" for "**wise men**" which is obscure, breaks numerous cross references and conceals important devotional aspects. See point 2.

10.2. Matthew 2:6. The NIV substitutes "ruler" for "**Governor**" that obscures the devious attitude of "**all the chief priests and scribes of the people**" in seeking to align themselves with the Romans according to John 19:15 "**We have no king but Caesar.**" See point 5. The NIV also substitutes "shepherd" for "**rule**" and therefore detracts from the emphasis on "**the young child**" as king, which is the focus of Matthew's Gospel, even if summarised by John i.e. "**Behold your king!**" John 19:14. See remarks under point 8.

10.3. Matthew 2:10. The NIV by inspection weakens the "**exceeding great joy**" of the wise men to simply being "overjoyed." Their joy at seeing the Lord, Matthew 2:11, would certainly match that of those in 1 Peter 1:8 who are yet to see the Lord.

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:"

10.4. Matthew 2:11. The NIV weakens the devotion of the wise men to the Lord by the substitution of "bowed" for "**fell,**" especially in the light of the joy they experienced in Matthew 2:10. The joy of the wise men was like that of the elders in Revelation 4:10-11.

"The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."

Whether expressed on earth or in heaven, that intensity of joyful worship should be in-violate but the NIV detracts from it.

References

¹ en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Architecture_of_cathedrals_and_great_churches