



TRUTH & RIGHT

the bulletin of the Wellsburg church of Christ

WELLSBURG
CHURCH OF CHRIST



www.wellsburgchurchofchrist.com

Volume 16 Issue 51

December 19, 2021

THE THREE WISE MEN

This time of year, people propagate several errors concerning the birth of Christ, and one of these errors surrounds the wise men who visited Jesus (Matt. 2:1-21). People have conjectured as to their names, how many, what happened, etc. In this article, let us learn the truth about these amazing people and appreciate their connection to Christ. **A Description Of The Wise Men**

In Matthew 2:1, we are introduced to the wise men. They came to see the newly-born Jesus. From the Matthew text and Luke 2:21-39, it is estimated that these men came to see Jesus perhaps 40 or more days since He was born. Notice, they found Joseph, Mary, and Jesus in a house in Bethlehem rather than in a stable, where the shepherds found them (Matt. 2:11). The wise men were just that, "wise" men! They were men who came from lands near the Euphrates River (Persia, etc.) and were

commonly referred to as "magi" or the title "rabmag" (Jer. 29:13). Interestingly, Daniel would have been considered a "rabmag" in Babylon (Dan. 5:11). A few things worthy of note include the fact that the wise men who visited Jesus would have been *Gentiles*! At the time of Jesus' birth, it seems few Jews were interested, but the Gentiles were very interested! They had traveled many miles and then inquired diligently to find out where the "King of the Jews" was (Matt. 2:2)! A second thing to remember is that these men traveled and found Jesus intending to *worship Him* (Matt. 2:2)! It is one thing for a contingency from one country to visit the sovereign in another country and present gifts, but here we have wise men visiting not merely to show respect, but to *worship* this One who had been born in such humble circumstances! These wise men were just that – *wise* men! They

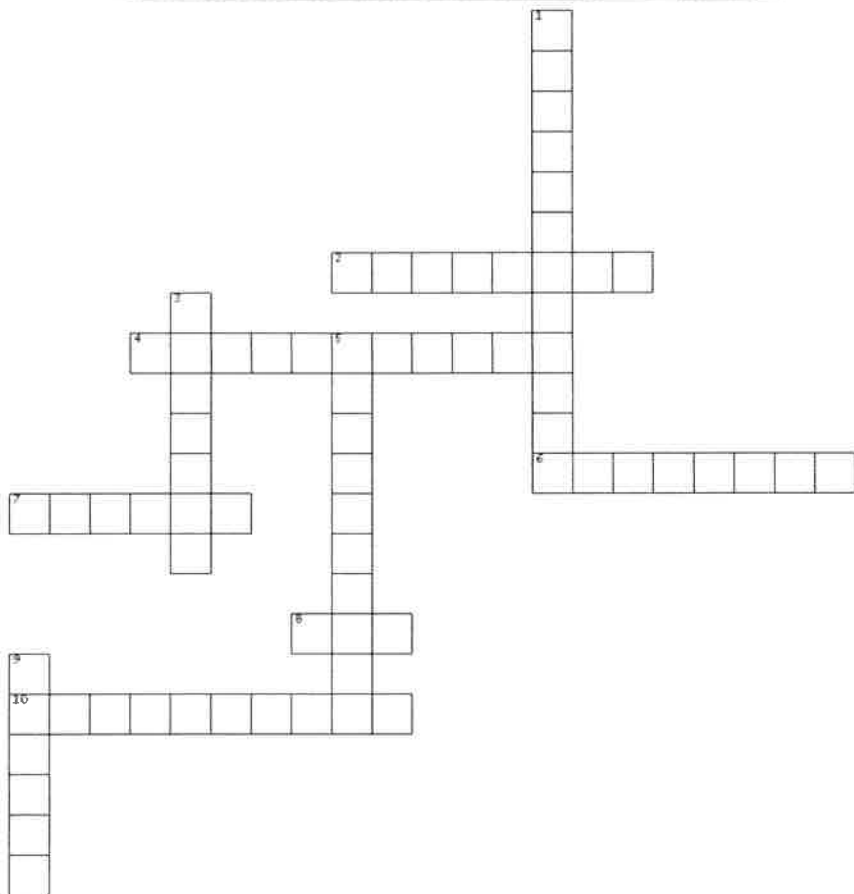
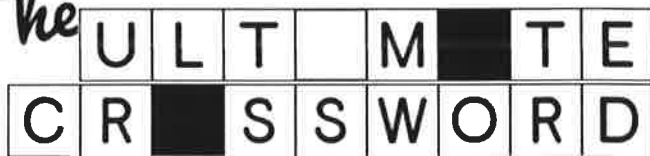
had evidently done some study, or it had been revealed to them, and they knew that Christ had been born. They knew that the "star" they had seen was "His" and that it would lead them to the Lord! Notice friends that these Gentiles had the same information that the Jews had, yet who was visiting Jesus then? The Jews had years and years of prophecies to study and apply. Yet, where were they? To me, this fact is telling! That is not my opinion. Read Matthew 2:5-6 and see that the Jews quoted Micah's prophecy. Yet, not one of those people left with the wise men to go worship Christ! The wise men were wise because they *acted* upon the information that would lead them to the Lord! (That kind of sounds like Matthew 7:24-27, huh?) These wise men were wise because they were *observant*. They saw the star "*in the east*" (KJV) or literally, "*when it rose*" (Matt. 2:2). This means they had been watching for it, and when it appeared, they were ready to go and find the King. **The Wise Men Completed Their Work.** When we read Matthew 2:3-10, we see that these men completed the work they started. Sometimes, people give up after meeting certain obstacles. In this case, the wise men went to the wrong place! However, they did not give up but asked questions of others. They completed their work and were rewarded for it

(Like Lk. 19:4). **The Wise Men's Gifts** We read about the gifts the magi or wise men offered Jesus in Matthew 2:11. From this verse, some have suggested that only three men visited Jesus. However, this is not something that can be proven. All we know from this text is that a plurality of men traveled to worship Christ. Personally, I believe the significance is in the gifts themselves rather than how many. This night, the wise men brought to Jesus gold, frankincense, and myrrh. What meaning do these gifts have? Gold is precious to us as it was to the people in the first century. It is a precious metal that holds value. It is often a gift one would give a king. Frankincense held a connection to the priestly work. It is said that ancient people (not just Jews) burned frankincense, believing it to carry their prayers to Heaven. Myrrh was perhaps the most mysterious of the gifts. Myrrh has been used by the Arabs, Chinese, Africans, and others as a wound healer and for its anti-inflammatory properties. Myrrh was used as a painkiller as well (Mk. 15:32). However, it was most widely known for its use as an embalming agent among the Egyptians. Even Nicodemus used it on the dead body of Jesus (Jn. 19:39). So, think, here are wise men who gave Jesus the gift most widely associated with death! I wonder what they knew? These might

seem strange gifts to give a baby, and yet, perhaps they are not strange gifts to give *this* baby! Gold for a king, frankincense for a priest, and myrrh for a Savior! **Let Us Be Wise Men** How can we do this? Read Proverbs 13:20 and take Solomon's advice! Specifically, we can be wise by listening to God's word and persevering daily. The wise men had a journey of many miles as they walked by faith toward their goal of seeing Jesus. In like manner, our life is a journey as we keep our eyes, not on any star, but the "*Star of Jacob*" (Num. 24:17), the "*bright and morning star*" (Rev. 22:16)! Even though most people don't know who Christ is, nor where He is, we have directions (Bible) that will lead us to Heaven where Christ is (Jn. 14:1-6)! How are you doing on the journey? Have you started yet? Be wise! What is your attitude toward Christ? Many are glad to think of a baby in the manger, but will we remember He is God who deserves worship? – Jarrod Jacobs **"The Compassion of Christ"** When we think about power, we often think in terms of political power, financial power, or physical power. This is because power is thought of as a form of strength among men, not the softer qualities of meekness, humility, or compassion. Jesus was the most powerful human being in history. He practiced His power in harmony with and in

response to His meekness. He experienced the same things we do (Heb. 4:15). Jesus knows how we feel. As we read through the gospel records, we can see the deep compassion Jesus had as He encountered different individuals. For example, in the parable of the good Samaritan (Lk. 10:25-37), Christ felt compassion for the sick people and healed them (Matt. 14:14). Jesus also experienced hunger, thirst, and homelessness during His time on earth. The result of Jesus' compassion for the needy is shown in the two miraculous feedings when the multitudes were hungry and fed them with small amounts of food (Matt. 15:32; Jn. 6; etc.). This was a part of His own experience as well, for Jesus had experienced hunger (Matt. 4:2). Therefore, Jesus' compassion for the hungry, poor, and needy was a vital part of His earthly ministry. The final act of compassion that Jesus had for humanity was displayed at Calvary when Christ died as a sacrifice for the whole world. This was done through His acts of compassion and miracles done to prove who He was. Through these miracles, we may believe that Jesus is indeed the Son of God, as Peter confessed (Matt. 16:18), and that through repentance and being baptized, we can be saved (Mk.16:16). Let us all strive for the same level of compassion for one another as Christ did for us. – JD Espinoza

The



ACROSS

2. The "day of the LORD" would be "_____ instead of light." (Amos 5:20)
4. To Tyre, Amos said they did not remember the covenant of _____. (Amos 1:9)
6. Amos said he was a grower of _____ figs. (Amos 7:14)
7. Amos said the LORD spoke as a lion that had _____. (Amos 3:8)
8. Amos said Judah rejected the _____ of the LORD. (Amos 2:4)
10. Amos said God would punish Israel for all their _____. (Amos 3:2)

DOWN

1. Amos was among the _____ from Tekoa. (Amos 1:1)
3. Amos told Amaziah "I am not a _____". (Amos 7:14)
5. Amos prophesied two years before the _____. (Amos 1:1)
9. Amos said Ammon _____ open the pregnant women of Gilead. (Amos 1:13)