

Remember, *this was possibly a year after His birth!* Some of the following quotes, which are *true and interesting* statements, are from the movie: **The Nativity Story!**

- a. A general statement upon seeing the child: “The greatest of kings born in the most humble of places; God made into flesh!” Jesus is **the Greatest of the great**, but also **the Humblest of the humble!**
- b. The bearer of gold said: “**Gold, for the King of kings!**” ^{NIV} **Revelation 17:14** “They [the forces of evil] will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings...” He is also worthy of OUR gold and honor and worship!
- c. The bearer of incense: “**Frankincense, for the Priest of all priests!**” ^{NIV} **Hebrews 10:11** “Day after day every priest stands and performs his religious duties; again and again he offers the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins.” ¹² **But when this priest [Jesus] had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins [Himself], he sat down at the right hand of God.”**
- d. The bearer of myrrh: “**The gift of myrrh, to honor the Sacrifice!**” To prepare Jesus’ body for burial, “...Nicodemus brought a mixture of **myrrh** and aloe, about seventy-five pounds.” (John 19:39 NIV)

Conclusion: Now, as we proceed through the season of Epiphany, watch for various ways in which God is assuring us that Jesus is *God in the flesh, our promised Savior!* And all God’s people said: *Amen!*

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“WHY Gold, Incense, and Myrrh?”

Based on Matthew 2:1-12



The Eve of the Epiphany of our Lord – 2011
Wednesday, January 5 → 11:00 & 7:00

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, you’ve heard of the song: The Twelve Days of Christmas – *a Partridge in the pear tree and so on* – but WHEN are those “Twelve Days”? The first day is Christmas Day, *December 25*, and the last day is today – *the last day of the season of Christmas and the eve of the Epiphany of our Lord!*

1. **The WORD Epiphany and the SEASON of Epiphany:**
 - a. What does the word Epiphany mean? From our worship area church year banner, we say that Epiphany means “Showing Forth.” A key word we hear in many Epiphany hymns is the word “manifest,” which ✦ we sung at least 12 times in our opening hymn and ✦ means “to make clear or evident; show plainly; reveal.”¹
 - b. What is the season of Epiphany about? It’s about those words I just mentioned *in connection with Jesus*. In other words, *during Epiphany*, God is → showing forth, → manifesting, → making clear or

¹ Webster’s New World Dictionary, Third College Edition (New York: Simon & Schuster, Inc., 1988), 822.

evident, → showing plainly, → revealing to us *who Jesus really is!* In our worship folder block each week, *during the season of Epiphany*, we have this explanation about the season: **“Beginning with Jesus’ visit from the Magi, continuing with His Baptism, Miracles, and Teachings, and concluding with His Transfiguration, God showed forth the reality that Jesus is His only Son and our only Savior!”**

Think about this: Jesus LOOKED like an ordinary baby, **BUT HE IS GOD, OUR SAVIOR!** Therefore, during the season of Epiphany, *God, through His Word*, helps us to know who Jesus is *so that we can be certain that THROUGH HIM we have God’s precious gifts of forgiveness, spiritual life, and heaven!*

Even before our Savior was born, God began to show forth who He really is PRIVATELY – *to Mary, Joseph, Zechariah, Elizabeth, and the shepherds outside of Bethlehem*, but Epiphany focuses on God PUBLICLY showing forth who Jesus really is! A hint to when that began is on our Altar Parament: *What is depicted?*

2. **The Visit of the Magi:**

- a. When did the Magi visit Jesus? Matthew gave us a general answer: ^{NIV} **Matthew 2:1** *After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod...* In other words, *AFTER Jesus’ birth and BEFORE Herod’s death*; so **✦ when was Jesus born and ✦ when did Herod die?** Since it was Herod who ordered the killing of the babies in Bethlehem in an attempt to kill the Newborn King, *Jesus had to be born before Herod died*. Since Herod died in 4 B.C.,

Jesus was probably born in 5 B.C. Again, when did the Magi visit Jesus? Sometime after Jesus was 40 days old! *How do we know?* When Jesus was 40 days old, His parents offered a sacrifice in Jerusalem; those who could afford it were to offer a lamb, but his parents offered *the poor-man’s sacrifice* – **“a pair of doves or two young pigeons”** (Luke 2:24); therefore, we can conclude that they had not yet received the gift of gold.

- b. How did the Magi find Jesus? Somehow – through the Bible and seeing **“his star in the east”** – they knew the King of the Jews had been born, so they came to the *logical place* of His birth: *Jerusalem!* Then, from the **“chief priests and teachers of the law,”** they learned of the more precise location: **“In Bethlehem in Judea,”** a small town about 6 miles south of Jerusalem. Then, *as they traveled toward Bethlehem*, the Bible says: **“...the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.”** Then, *after a long and probably difficult trip*, the Bible records the reaction of the Magi: **“...they were overjoyed.”** Now, their purpose could be fulfilled: They came to *worship the Newborn King*; they did so by: → setting aside their own sinful desires, → making the long journey, → bowing down before Him, → receiving Him as their Savior and King, and → presenting their *precious and significant gifts!*

3. **The Three Gifts from the Magi:** Take note, the Bible says: **“On coming to the house [not the stable or the cave]...they bowed down and worshiped him.”**