



READ: MATTHEW 2:1-5, 7-14, 25:34-35, 37-38, 40

Every year on January 6, many Christians celebrate Three Kings' Day, also known as Epiphany. By guiding visitors from far away to find and worship the child Jesus, God was showing that his Son was for everyone, not just the Jewish people. That's why the holiday is called Epiphany, which means "to show."

The visiting kings, or wise men, brought expensive gifts to Jesus, which tells us that they recognized that he was the King of kings. They bowed down and worshiped him, showing that they also understood that he was God.

As exciting as the wise men's visit probably was for Mary and Joseph, it had an unintended consequence —when evil King Herod saw wise and rich people come from far away to worship a king who wasn't him, he became terribly jealous. So jealous that he was determined to kill this new king, even though he was a little child.

And so Jesus and his parents were forced to leave their home and live in a different country. They probably had to learn a new language, navigate different customs, and eat different food than they were used to. They had to start over as strangers surrounded by strangers.

We know from our second Scripture reading that Jesus never forgot how that felt. He cares deeply about people who are going through that experience.

Today, let's be wise like the visiting kings and honor our King of kings with a gift. He no longer needs gold, frankincense, and myrrh—he loves to receive gifts given to his children in his name.

What can you do for one of Jesus's brothers or sisters who finds themselves a stranger today? Start with prayer—ask God to meet their needs and to show you how you might help.

Father, thank you for showing the world that Jesus is for people from every country and culture. Thank you for sending your beautiful star to guide the wise men to you. Help us to honor you as our King of kings today and every day. Please show us how we can show your love to your—and our—brothers and sisters who need our help. Amen.

Everyone can do something to help people who have been displaced. You don't have to be a rich and powerful king! Find ideas here:

4 Ways Anyone Can Help Refugees

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him."

King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

"In Bethlehem in Judea," they said. . . .

Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he . . . told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!"

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.

After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother," the angel said. "Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother.

MATTHEW 2:1-5, 7-14

Then the King will say, . . . "I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home." . . . Then these righteous ones will reply, "Lord, when did we ever see you . . . a stranger and show you hospitality?" . . .

And the King will say, "I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!"

MATTHEW 25:34-35, 37-38, 40