

The King Makers

Matthew 2:1-12

According to the ancient historian Herodotus, the Magi were a tribe of people within the larger people called the Medes and were from the east. They were the tribe from within their people that served in the pagan priestly line. The Levites were the tribe that the priests came from in Israel.

The Magi or wise men were known for their knowledge and specialization in astronomy, astrology, natural science, magic, divination, occult practices and sorcery. As a result, the Magi gained great political power and influence.

Their influence was present with kings and governing bodies. The Magi had become so powerful and influential that no one in their territory could ever become king unless they had the approval from the Magi. They were king makers and anyone wanting to be king not only had to be given approval and declaration from the Magi to be king, but also would have to master the scientific and religious disciplines of the Magi.

At the time of Christ in the eastern empire the Megistanes was a ruling body which was composed of Magi who had the choice for the selection of a king. In short, the Magi in their land were king makers.

Magi in the Old Testament

- **Daniel 2:1-3** Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar ^[a]had dreams; and his spirit was troubled and his sleep ^[b]left him. ²Then the king ^[c]gave orders to call in the ^[d]magicians, the conjurers, the sorcerers and the ^[e]Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came in and stood before the king. ³The king said to them, "I ^[f]had a dream and my spirit ^[g]is anxious to ^[h]understand the dream."
- **Daniel 2:24** Therefore, Daniel went in to Arioch, whom the king had appointed to destroy the wise men of Babylon; he went and spoke to him as follows: "Do not destroy the wise men of Babylon! Take me ^[ad]into the king's presence, and I will declare the interpretation to the king."
- **Daniel 2:48** Then the king ^[av]promoted Daniel and gave him many great gifts, and he made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief ^[az]prefect over all the wise men of Babylon.
- **Esther 1:13** Then the king said to the wise men who understood the times—for it was the custom of the king so to *speak* before all who knew law and justice.

How did the Magi who came seeking Jesus know about Him? It highly likely they heard the promise of the Messiah King from Daniel who God had sovereignly appointed over them in Daniel chapter 2. They were king makers and had come to worship the true King, King Jesus! The Magi were Gentiles which speaks to the mystery of the gospel and the inclusion of the Gentiles into God's redemptive plan.

The gifts they brought

- **Gold**-Gold represents His kingship. Jesus is the King of Kings (**Revelation 19:16**)
- **Frankincense**- Frankincense was used in the OT as a fragrance/perfume in the tabernacle for worship (**Exodus 30:34-38**) and was placed on the unleavened bread in the tabernacle (**Leviticus 24:1-8**). This speaks to His unleavened body being broken on the cross as His sacrificial death was a fragrant aroma to God (**Ephesians 5:2**). This indicates His deity and testifies to His death.
- **Myrrh**-Myrrh was used as an anointing oil (**Exodus 30:22-25**) and was used in for embalming in burial (**John 19:39-40**). This speaks to His death.

The Magi were king makers in their land. Jesus did not need their approval, but rather they came to worship the King of Kings. The gifts that they brought speak to His kingship, His death, and His burial. However, following His resurrection He ascended to sit beside the Ancient of Days which He is currently reigning as King over all!