



**Epiphany: A Quest to Find the King
(Matthew 2:1-12)**

Auld Lange Syne

- “Auld lang syne” is the title and key phrase of a 1788 Scottish poem by Robert “Rabbie” Burns, typically sung on New Year’s Eve around the world. The phrase “auld lang syne,” which literally translates to “old long since,” basically means “days gone by” in the Scots language. Or, as *Merriam-Webster* explains, the “auld lang syne” meaning is “the good old times.”
- **First verse:**
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
and auld lang syne?
- **Chorus:**
For auld lang syne, my jo (dear),
for auld lang syne,
we’ll tak’ a cup o’ kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.
- **Second verse:**
And surely ye’ll be your pint-stoup!
and surely I’ll be mine!
And we’ll tak’ a cup o’ kindness yet,
for auld lang syne.

Auld Lange Syne

- As Scots immigrated around the world, they took the song with them. Eventually, North American English speakers translated Burns's dialect into the common lyrics we know today, made famous in part by Guy Lombardo and his band, the Royal Canadians. The group performed the song on New Year's Eve from 1929 until about 1977. It's this version that plays every year after the ball drops in Times Square.
- The original five-verse version of the poem essentially gets people singing "let's drink to days gone by," an appropriate toast for the new year.
- Ostensibly a drinking song used to remember the good old times, the tune has a bittersweet, even melancholic feel to it, of there always being something missing, even in the best of times.
- Despite the successes and triumphs of the year, there is an awareness of the losses and missed opportunities as well.
- There is always an ache for something unnamed but not unfelt. An ache because a hole remains in one's heart. (Hedonism will not fill it.)

Matthew 2:1-2

Seeking the King

- Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, **wise men [*magi*] from the east** came to Jerusalem,
- 2 saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his **star** when it rose [*in the east*] and have come to worship him."



Definition and Examples of “Epiphany”

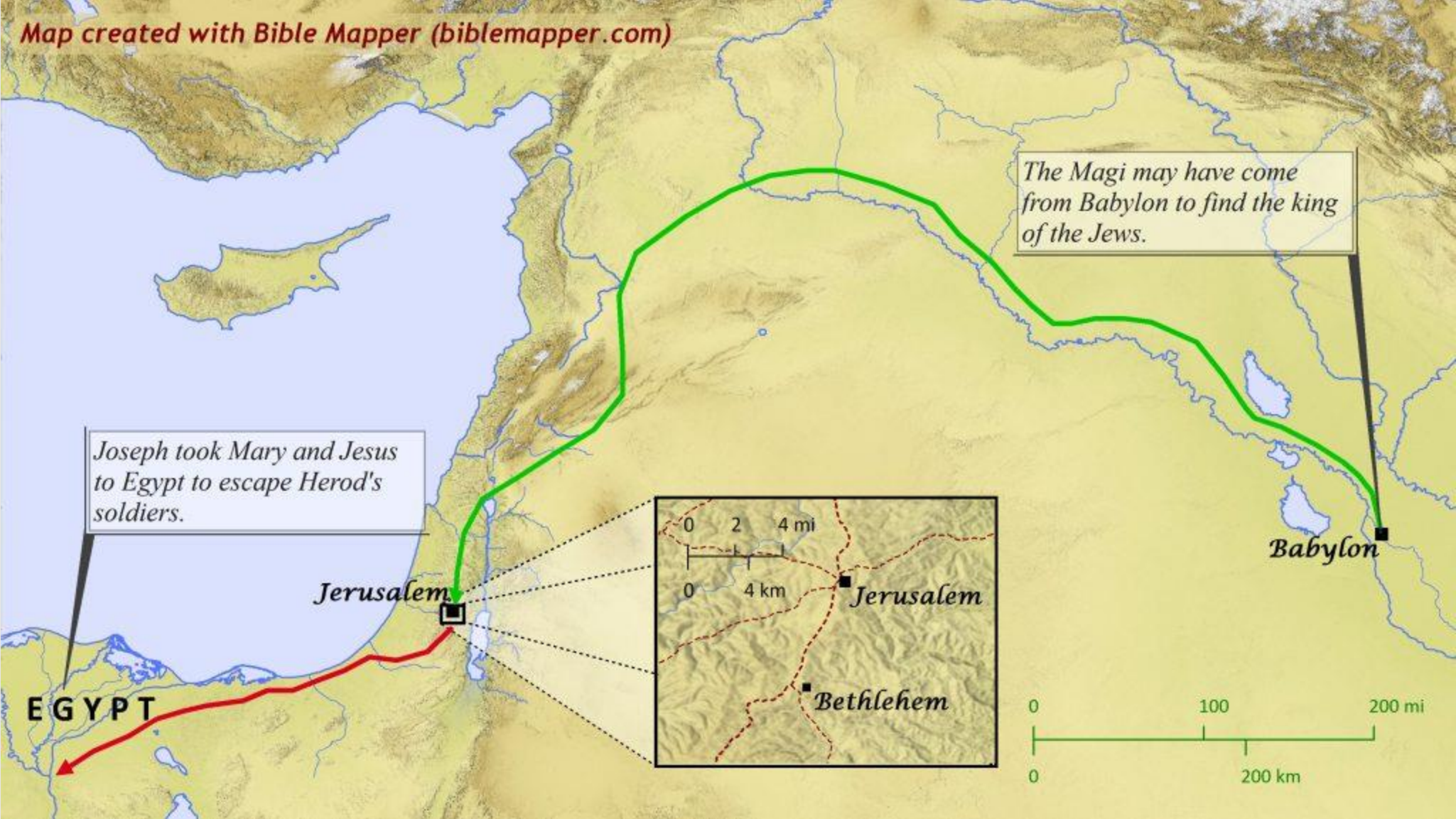
- “Epiphany”(Greek “Epiphaneia”): “revealing” or “shining out”
- A revealing to the gentiles that Jesus is the Messiah (Matthew 2:1-12)

- Other “epiphanies” in the Bible:
 - God speaks in a burning bush to Moses about Egypt (Exodus 3)
 - God’s servant will be high and lifted up and exalted (Isaiah 52:13)
 - The heavens open at the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16-17)

The Magi

- Wise men (astrologers) or Kings from the East: Persia, Babylon, Arabia
- Used the science of the time to determine location of the Messiah
- Their arrival was foretold by the prophet (Isaiah 60:1,3,5-6):
 - 1 “Arise, shine, for your light has come,
and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.
 - 3 And nations shall come to your light,
and kings to the brightness of your rising.
 - 5 the wealth of the nations shall come to you.
 - 6 They shall bring gold and frankincense”

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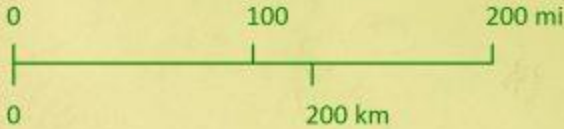
Joseph took Mary and Jesus to Egypt to escape Herod's soldiers.

The Magi may have come from Babylon to find the king of the Jews.

EGYPT

Jerusalem

Babylon





Matthew 2:3-6

A Fulfillment of Prophecy

- ³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;
- ⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

- ⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:
- ⁶ "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Micah's Prophecy about Bethlehem (700s B.C.)

- ² But you, **O Bethlehem Ephrathah**,
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,
from you shall come forth for me
one who is to be ruler in Israel,
whose coming forth is from of old,
from ancient days. . . .
- ⁴ And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,
in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God.
And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great
to the ends of the earth.
- ⁵ **And he shall be their peace.** (Micah 5:2,4-5a)

Matthew 2:7-10

Continuing the Journey

- ⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared.
- ⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him."
- ⁹ After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.
- ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

The Star Re-Appears



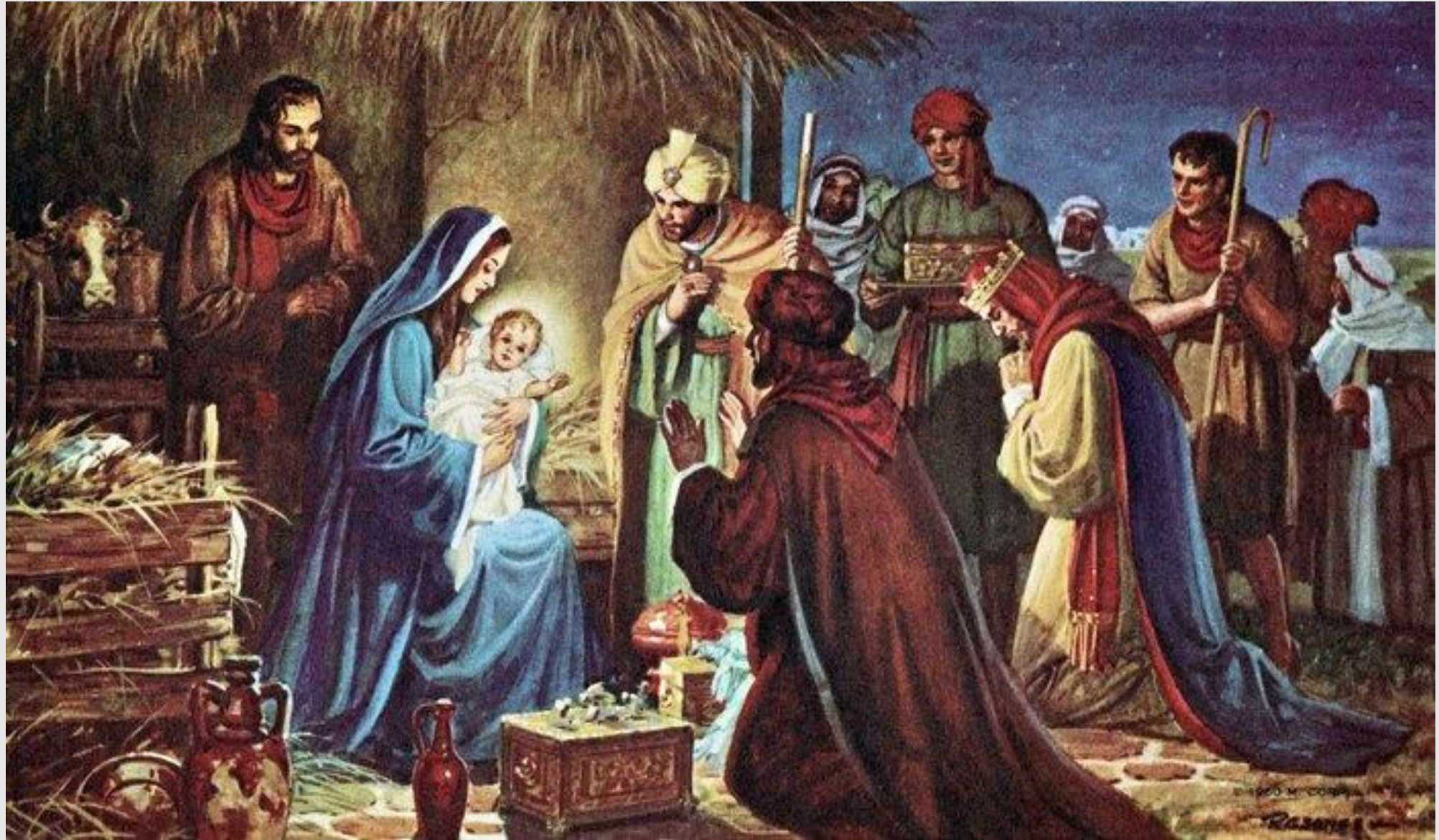
Assurance for Those Who Seek the Lord

- “You will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13)

Matthew 2:11

Worship the Lord

- 11 And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.



Matthew 2:12

God is Sovereign

- 12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

The Universal Appeal of Jesus

The Shepherds	The Wise Men [Magi]
Low “cultural capital”	High “cultural capital”
Revelation: sought the Savior when an angel appeared	Reason: sought the King through calculation of a star
Rejoiced	Rejoiced and worshipped
Returned to their work	Returned to their country

Who fills the hole in our souls? Jesus the King!



The Takeaway: Plans for 2024

- Make your plans (and calculations and goals) for your family, yourself, your church, and your work
- **But most of all, get close to Jesus:**
 - Pray
 - Read and Study the Bible
 - Praise and Worship

“be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:18b-20)

Let Us Pray

