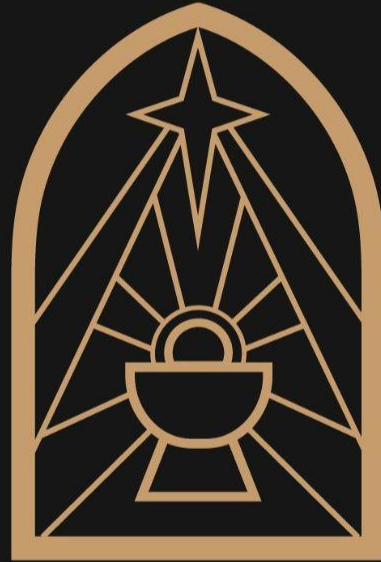


SYMBOLS OF CHRISTMAS



AN ADVENT SERIES



SYMBOL # 4: The Gifts of the Magi

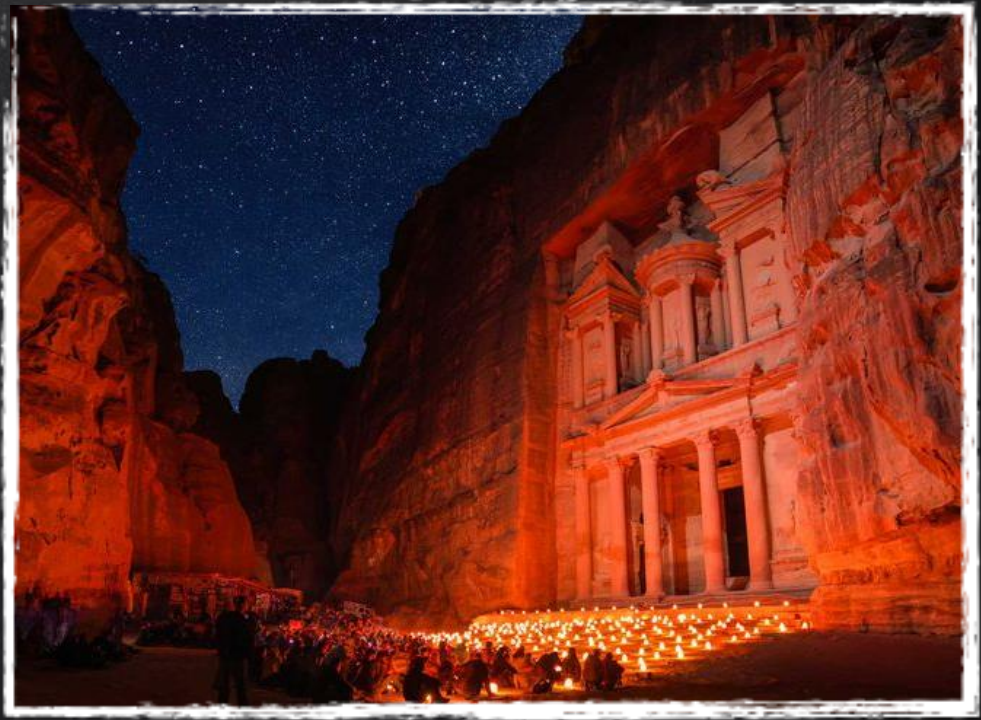
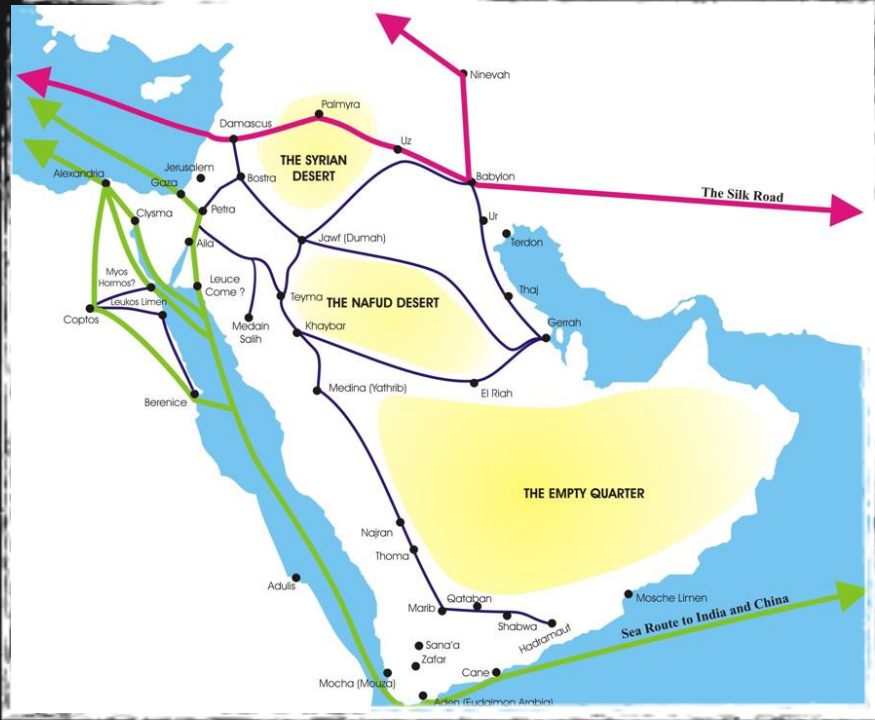
Matthew 2:1-2

1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men 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 and have come to worship him."

- *Experts in the occult*
- *Students of history*
- *Keen observers of the natural world*
- *Royal advisors*



The Magi



The ancient kingdom of Nabatea



The Bethlehem Star

“I see him, but not now. I behold him, but not near. A star shall come out of Jacob and a scepter shall rise out of Israel. It shall crush the forehead of Moab and break down all the sons of Sheth.

Edom shall be dispossessed. Seir also, his enemies, shall be dispossessed. Israel is doing valiantly. And one from Jacob shall exercise dominion and destroy the survivors of cities!”

- Balaam, son of Beor (Num. 24:17-19)

*“Now therefore, O kings, be wise. Be warned,
O rulers of the earth. Serve the LORD with
fear and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son,
lest he be angry, and you perish in the way,
for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all
who take refuge in him.” (Psalm 2:10-12)*

Matthew 2:3-6

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.'"

Matthew 2:7-8

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."

Matthew 2:9-10

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.

“Arise, shine, for your light has come and the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples, but the LORD will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising.” (Isaiah 60:1-3)

“Lift up your eyes all around, and see. They all gather together. They come to you. Your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip.

Then you shall see and be radiant. Your heart shall thrill and exult because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah. All those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the LORD.” (Isaiah

60:4-6)

The Magi reveal to us that the
Christmas story is a royal story.
Through this birth in Bethlehem
the earth receives her king!

Matthew 2:11-12

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



Gold, Frankincense, & Myrrh

“So Joseph of Arimathea came and took away his body. Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.”

(John 19:38-40)

The Magi's response to the Christmas gospel is to joyfully pay homage. They come to open their treasures and acknowledge the Christ child's rightful claim, control, and command over their wealth (GOLD), their worship (FRANKINCENSE), and their future destiny (MYRRH).

“The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.”

(Matthew 12:42)

The Magi acknowledge
Christ as Lord over all
aspects of their lives.
How are you doing the
same?

One greater than
Solomon is here. What
gift might you be
withholding from your
Lord?

