



**TAKEAWAY:** Jesus is worthy to be King of Kings.

**SCRIPTURE:** Matthew 2:11, 2:2-3, Isaiah 9:6-7, Isaiah 53:2-4

## INTRO

One of my favorite things about Christmas is giving gifts. Gift giving is fun because there is nothing more rewarding than seeing someone's face light up when receiving a good gift. Gifts reveal a person's generosity, but they also reveal whether you know a person or not. That's why I love giving gifts; it's my opportunity to prove that I truly know the people I love.

It would be embarrassing to receive a shirt that was too small or a video game for a console you don't have. Knowing a person is important for giving good gifts. [\[Share a story about a gift you got that was way off or that was custom made for you.\]](#)

Gift giving makes a peculiar appearance in the Advent story, likely two or three years after Jesus was born. Mary, the mother of Jesus, heard a commotion outside her house. When she opened the door, she saw the unimaginable. Outside of her house was a group of people that looked like out-of-towners. They were dressed differently, spoke differently, and all of them looked way more important than anyone in Bethlehem.

Then some men walked up to her and introduced themselves as the Magi; also known as the "Wisemen." They had traveled for some three years from a faraway land to see her toddler, Jesus, and they came with gifts.

*Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11 ESV*

## TENSION

If you've ever shopped for a toddler, then you know these are not the gifts that parents put on their Target registry. On the surface, some of these gifts looked decent and others looked morbid. Anyone can use gold, so that gift gets an A+ rating, but frankincense and myrrh? Frankincense was used in the temples to burn as a forgiveness offering and myrrh was used to treat dead bodies. If I tried to give these gifts at a baby shower, I might be asked to leave.

So, what's up with these gifts? Why is the story so hyper-focused on these things? These gifts are significant because they described the person who Jesus would become. These gifts were an outline for Jesus' life and the effect it will have on the world.

Let's focus on the first gift: gold. When the Magi gave the gift of gold, it tells us that they acknowledged Jesus as a king. An offering of gold would be given to royalty to show that you see them as powerful and influential. He is more than a king; He is the King of Kings. He is the absolute authority on Earth. His dominion is more powerful than anyone else's. His kingdom will rule over every other kingdom. When they thought of Jesus, they thought of Him as a king.

What were you thinking when I said that? Do you feel tense when I say the words "authority" or "dominion"? If you attach those words to any person's name, you can feel a hint of fear and anxiety because it's never fun thinking of a person with power over you. It's easy to think of Jesus as your personal Savior; it's harder to think of Him as the Lord of your life.

Why is that? It's because all of us have personal experience with people who abused their power. We see this in the past, in the present, and it is guaranteed to continue in the future. We see this abuse of power a couple of weeks earlier in the story of the Magi when they visited the King of Jerusalem looking for Jesus.

*"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. Matthew 2:2-3 ESV*

When the Magi announced their intent to worship this newborn king, it threw an entire capital city into panic. King Herod felt like his power was threatened. He had taken advantage of the people of Israel and had been using human lives to feed his agenda.

He is the definition of "power-abuse." So, he concocted a plan to figure out where Jesus was living so that he could murder the newborn king. We see this when the Magi left Jesus' house and God warned them not to reveal where Jesus was.



1. Which do you like more? Giving gifts or receiving gifts?
2. If you could only have one thing off your Christmas list, what would it be?
3. Where do we see the consequences of sin in the world?
4. Read Isaiah 53:5-6; Where do you see Jesus in this passage?
5. What does the sacrifice of Jesus mean for you? What does it mean for your friends?
6. What does Jesus require from us to follow him?

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