

Three Unexpected Gifts



We have known each other for camel 's years. We study sky, ancient prophecies, and life. Now and again we meet up to compare findings and exchange news.

One day we saw this strange star appear in the sky. In all our years of search and study we have never seen anything like it. Its shape is mystical, and its colour has an ethereal iridescence never yet seen in the universe. When we met again, we talked about it and decided on a major research journey.

Traditionally new stars in the sky announce the birth of a new king. We searched the ancient books of the big religions and, after short or long, we came across one Jewish prophet called Micah (5:2). He promised "Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to me the one to be ruler in Israel, ...".

This was so exciting! But each of us reacted differently to this finding. Let everyone tell his own story.

Caspar is my name. It is said to mean Keeper Of The Treasure. How do we keep treasures safe? We hide them. My gift is the incense for a priest in the sanctuary. On the journey i hide it inside a golden horn. I will wear it on my belt and guard it. The smoke rising from the censer

shall keep the new ruler like a treasure. The scent shall be a healing balm for the new mother. It shall also be restoring solace after this new ruler is dead. It shall carry all the prayers of his followers to the place where he is.

Melchior is my name. I carry on this journey golden splendour - that is the meaning of my name. Gold only fit for a king. Of course, when we set out, I didn't have any idea what we would find in the end. When I think of a king I think of a person surrounded by wealth and luxury. We certainly found a lot of that in the places where we were entertained as guests. We mostly travelled by night. We escaped the murderous heat of the day, and saw the star much more clearly. Here there was a weird phenomenon: Normally stars stay still in the sky. Their movement cannot be noticed by looking at them. But this one wandered, and beckoned us to follow. So, obediently, we followed. Then it stopped. In a tiny hamlet in the middle of nowhere. No palace, no castle, nothing remotely resembling the home of a ruler. Just a stable with a donkey, an ox, a man, a woman and an infant in the feed trough.

I am rather taken aback, but I pay my homage nevertheless. I hand over the gold and pray it will relieve poverty – even a little bit is enough for me.

Balthasar is my name. It comes from a very ancient Persian saying: Bel-shar-uzur. This means 'God Protects The King'. I certainly feel very protective of this small boy – and his parents. So, I bring myrrh, an ancient remedy for pain. Some wounds take a long time to heal. Myrrh also covers the odours of a dead body. There's no dead body yet, but I brought some anyway. According to the stories around this king they'll need it in 33 years' time. He will go through a number of terrible agonies and then die. This is apparently necessary that the rest of humanity can live an all-embracing life. May my blessing and protection go with this king and all the world.

Here ends the story of part of our journey.
But it really is only the beginning.