

Epiphany

This Christian feast usually takes place in churches on the 6th January. Epiphany comes from a Greek word meaning 'appearance'. It is a celebration of the baby Jesus being seen, or appearing, to the visitors who had travelled to see him.

The Visitors

Some men were looking at the stars and one night, they saw a new star. The men were very clever and understood the religious writings that had been written many years before. The writings said that one day there would be a great star and it would mean that a new king had been born. The new king would be the king to save all people. Packing up their things, they followed it. They are known as the Three Wise Men.

The Journey

The journey would have been very long and tiring. The men probably travelled on camels. The star led them to the town of Bethlehem in Israel.

The star came to rest over the place where the Baby Jesus was. It is thought that Jesus was in the stable but the Wise Men arrived so much later after Jesus was born. They found him living in a house in Bethlehem with his mother and father.

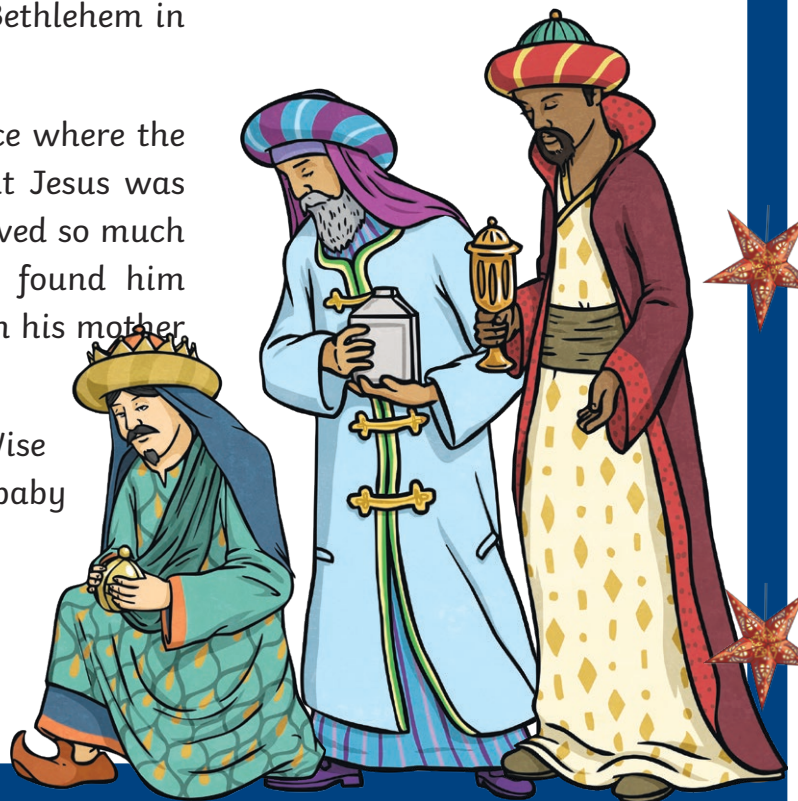
As Jesus was the son of God, the Wise Men took special gifts for the new baby to celebrate his birth.

Did You Know...?

The Wise Men lived in the East so they may have been from Persia which is now called Iran.

The Bible doesn't say how many Wise Men there were but because there were three gifts, people think that there must have been three men.

The Wise Men are often called the Three Kings.



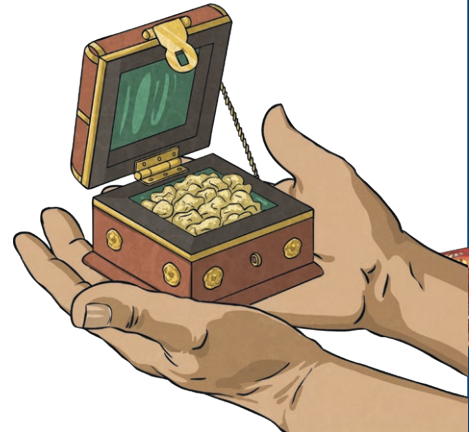
Gold

A precious metal and a sign of wealth. The Wise Men gave it as a sign of their love for Jesus as the King of kings.



Frankincense

Gum from an African tree which could be burnt as incense. By giving it to Jesus, it showed the Wise Men had faith in him.



Myrrh

This was taken from the sap of another African tree. These trees grow in the shallow, rocky soils of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. By giving Jesus myrrh, the Wise Men were showing that they were happy to obey the new king.



Did You Know...?

In Spain, some children fill their shoes with straw and leave them outside for the animals belonging to the Wise Men. In Spanish speaking countries, Epiphany is known as 'Día de los Reyes' or 'Three Kings Day'.

Questions

1. Where does the word 'Epiphany' come from?

2. What are the Three Kings also known as? Tick one.

- ☐ the Wise Men
- ☐ the Three Kind Men
- ☐ the Three Musketeers
- ☐ the Wise Kings

3. Where are the Wise Men believed to be from?

4. What did the religious writings suggest to the Wise Men?

5. What town did the star lead the Wise Men to?

6. What is Epiphany known as in Spanish speaking countries? Tick one.

- ☐ New King Day
- ☐ Three Kings Day
- ☐ The Day of the Star
- ☐ The Day of Three Kings

7. Once the Wise Men had arrived in Bethlehem, they found the baby Jesus in a stable. True or false? Explain your answer.

8. List the three gifts and say which you think is the most important and why.

Answers

1. Where does the word 'Epiphany' come from?

Epiphany comes from a Greek word meaning 'appearance'.

2. What are the Three Kings also known as? Tick one.

☒ **the Wise Men**

☐ the Three Kind Men

☐ the Three Musketeers

☐ the Wise Kings

3. Where are the Wise Men believed to be from?

The Wise Men are believed to be from Persia, which is now called Iran.

4. What did the religious writings suggest to the Wise Men?

The religious writings suggested to the Wise Men that a great star would signal the arrival of a new king, and that a king to save all people had been born.

5. What town did the star lead the Wise Men to?

The star led the Wise Men to the town of Bethlehem.

6. What is Epiphany known as in Spanish speaking countries? Tick one.

☐ New King Day

☒ **Three Kings Day**

☐ The Day of the Star

☐ The Day of Three Kings

7. Once the Wise Men had arrived in Bethlehem, they found the baby Jesus in a stable. True or false? Explain your answer.

Pupils' own responses, such as: False. It is often thought that the Wise Men found Jesus in the stable but the Wise Men arrived so much later after Jesus was born. They found him living in a house in Bethlehem with his mother and father.

8. List the three gifts and say which you think is the most important and why.

The three gifts were gold, frankincense and myrrh.

The second part of the question will have various answers.

Epiphany

Epiphany comes from the Greek word 'epiphaneia', meaning appearance. The Feast of Epiphany is a Christian celebration which usually takes place in churches on the 6th January, marking the end of the 12 days of Christmas. It is a celebration of the baby Jesus being seen, or appearing, to the visitors who had travelled to see him.

The Visitors

Some men were studying the stars and constellations with their telescopes. One night, they saw a star which looked new and interesting. The men were very clever and understood the religious writings and books that had been written many years before. The writings predicted that one day there would be a great star and the star would mean that a new king, the king to save all people, had been born. The men were incredibly excited to see it. Packing up their belongings, they followed the star to wherever it led them. They are known as the Wise Men.

The Wise Men lived in the East so they were possibly from Persia which is now called Iran.

The Bible never mentions how many Wise Men there were but because there were three gifts, people assume that there must have been three men.

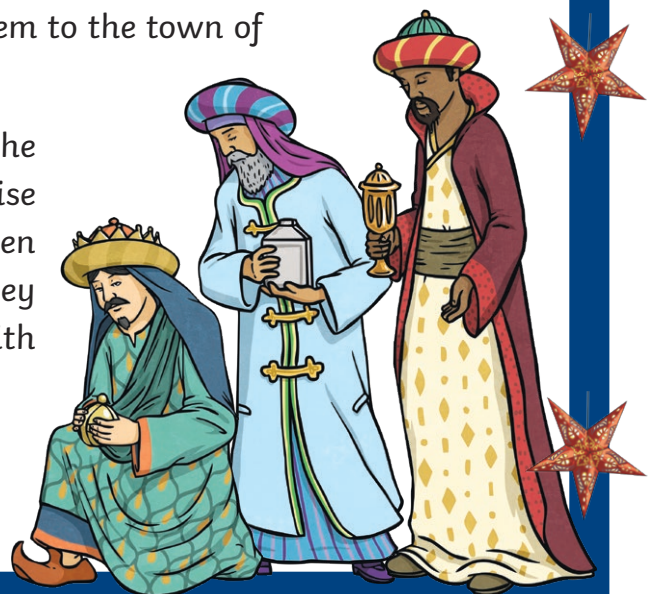
The Wise Men are often called the Three Kings.

The Journey

The journey would have been extremely long and difficult. It is likely that the men travelled on camels, across deserts and over mountains in extreme weather. The star led them to the town of Bethlehem in Israel.

The star came to rest over the place where the Baby Jesus was. It is often thought the Wise Men found Jesus in the stable but the Wise Men arrived so much later after Jesus was born. They found him living in a house in Bethlehem with his mother and father.

Because Jesus was believed to be the son of God, the Wise Men took special gifts for the new baby to celebrate his birth.



Gold

A precious metal and a sign of wealth. The Wise Men gave it as a sign of their love for Jesus as the King of kings.



Frankincense

A strong-smelling gum from an African tree which could be burnt as incense. It was often used during religious ceremonies. By giving it to Jesus, it showed the Wise Men had faith in him.



Myrrh

From the sap of another African tree. These trees grow in the shallow, rocky soils of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. By giving Jesus myrrh, the Wise Men were showing that they were willing to obey the new king.



Epiphany Traditions Around the World

In Belgium, some children dress up as the Wise Men and visit different houses singing songs. In return, they may be given money, sweets or chocolate.

In Spanish speaking countries, Epiphany is known as '**Día de los Reyes**' or '**Three Kings Day**'. Having filled them with straw, some children leave their shoes outside for the camels belonging to the Wise Men.

In Mexico, a special cake called a '**Rosca de Reyes**' is eaten. A figure of the baby Jesus is hidden inside and whoever is served the piece containing it will be '**godparent**' of Jesus for the coming year.

When Elizabeth I was on the throne, it was common for plays to be performed around this time in England. In London, the Drury Lane Theatre has an annual tradition of cutting the '**Twelfth Cake**' and serving it to the cast and crew.

Questions

1. Where does the word 'Epiphany' come from?

2. When is Epiphany celebrated? Tick one.

- ☐ 7th January
- ☐ 12th January
- ☐ 6th January
- ☐ 8th January

3. Which of these statements is true? Tick one.

- ☐ The star led the Wise Men to a stable.
- ☐ The Bible says there were Three Wise Men.
- ☐ They brought frankincense as a sign of their love for Jesus.
- ☐ In Belgium, some children dress up as the Wise Men and visit different houses.

4. Why did the Wise Men follow the star?

5. What is Frankincense and where does it come from?

6. Which three gifts were given to the baby Jesus and why are they each significant?

7. We know that the journey for the Wise Men must have been incredibly difficult. Why do you think they didn't give up and turn around?

8. Where is the 'Twelfth Cake' cut?

9. Which of these Epiphany celebrations would be the most preferable to you? Why?

Answers

1. Where does the word 'Epiphany' come from?

The word Epiphany comes from the Greek word 'epiphaneia' meaning appearance.

2. When is Epiphany celebrated? Tick one.

- ☐ 7th January
☐ 12th January
☒ **6th January**
☐ 8th January

3. Which of these statements is true? Tick one.

- ☐ The star led the Wise Men to a stable.
☐ The Bible says there were Three Wise Men.
☐ They brought frankincense as a sign of their love for Jesus.
☒ **In Belgium, some children dress up as the Wise Men and visit different houses.**

4. Why did the Wise Men follow the star?

The Wise Men followed the star as they were very wise and had read about a great star in religious writings and books. The writings predicted that a great star would appear and that would mean a new king, the king to save all people, had been born.

5. What is Frankincense and where does it come from?

Frankincense is a strong-smelling gum from an African tree which could be burnt as incense.

6. Which three gifts were given to the baby Jesus and why are they each significant?

Gold, frankincense and myrrh were given to the baby Jesus. They took gold as a sign of their love for Jesus as their king. They brought frankincense as a symbol of their faith and myrrh was to show their obedience to the new king.

7. We know that the journey for the Wise Men must have been incredibly difficult. Why do you think they didn't give up and turn around?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I believe that the Wise Men kept going on their journey, even though it was difficult, because they believed in the religious writings they had seen and wanted to meet this new, important king.

8. Where is the 'Twelfth Cake' cut?

The 'Twelfth Cake' is cut at the Drury Lane theatre, London.

9. Which of these Epiphany celebrations would be the most preferable to you? Why?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would prefer to celebrate Epiphany like the children in Belgium because I love singing songs.

Epiphany

The earliest mention of Epiphany as a Christian feast was by Ammianus Marcellinus. He was a Roman soldier in AD 361.

Epiphany comes from the Greek word 'epiphaneia', meaning appearance. It is a Christian celebration which usually takes place in churches on the 6th January, marking the end of the 12 days of Christmas. In the East, Epiphany celebrates Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. It is also a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. In the West, Epiphany is a celebration of the baby Jesus being seen, or appearing, to the visitors who had travelled to see him.

The Visitors

Some men were studying the stars and constellations with their telescopes. One night, they saw a star which they were very intrigued by. The men were intelligent and understood the religious writings and books that had been written many years before. The writings predicted that one day there would be a great star and the star would mean that a new king, the king to save all people, had been born. The men were incredibly excited, packed up their belongings and followed the star to wherever it led them. They are known as the Three Wise Men.

The Wise Men are often called Magi, which was a word given to describe priests and clever men. They lived in the East so were possibly from Persia which is now called Iran.

The Bible never mentions how many Wise Men there were but, because there were three gifts, people assume that there must have been three men.

The Wise Men are often referred to as the Three Kings.

The Journey

The journey would have been extremely long and arduous. It is approximately 1,000 miles from Persia to their destination. It's likely that the men travelled on camels, across deserts and over mountains in very extreme weather. The star led them to the town of Bethlehem in Israel.

The star came to rest over the place where the Baby Jesus was. It is often thought that the Wise Men found Jesus in the stable but the Wise Men arrived so much later after Jesus was born. They found him living in a house in Bethlehem with his mother and father.

In Matthew 2:11, the Wise Men offered Jesus, as the son of God, gifts of frankincense, gold and myrrh.

Gold

A precious metal and a sign of wealth. The Wise Men gave it as a sign of their love for Jesus as the King of kings.

Frankincense

A strong-smelling, white gum from an African tree which could be burnt as incense to give off a relaxing aroma. It was often used during religious ceremonies. By giving this to Jesus, it showed the Wise Men had faith in him.

Myrrh

This is taken from the sap of a thorny, African tree. It was used as an antiseptic for soothing sores and relieving pain. These trees grow in the shallow, rocky soils of Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. By giving Jesus myrrh, the Wise Men were showing that they wanted to obey the new king.

Epiphany Traditions Around the World

In Austria, you may see a special sign written above the front door of many homes. It is a reminder that the Wise Men visited Jesus and is also meant to protect the house in the year to come. The sign is the year split in half, with the initials of the names of the Wise Men, e.g. 20*C*M*B*20. This tradition also takes place in some parts of Germany.

In Belgium, some children dress up as the Wise Men and visit different houses singing songs. In return they may be given money, sweets or chocolate.

In Spanish speaking countries, Epiphany is known as '**Dia de los Reyes**' or '**Three Kings Day**'. Having filled them with straw, some children leave their shoes outside for the animals belonging to the Wise Men. In some parts of Spain, a Roscón is traditionally eaten. This ring-shaped treat is usually filled with cream or chocolate and decorated with a paper crown. Similarly, in France, you might eat a '**Galette des Rois**'.

In Mexico, a special cake called a '**Rosca de Reyes**' is eaten. A figure of the baby Jesus is hidden inside and whoever is served the piece containing it will become '**godparent**' of Jesus for the coming year.

When Elizabeth I was on the throne, it was common for plays to be performed around this time in England. Today, the Drury Lane Theatre in London has an annual tradition of cutting the '**Twelfth Cake**' and serving it to the cast and crew.

Questions

1. Where does the word '**Epiphany**' come from?

2. Which of these statements are true? Tick **two**.

- ☐ The first mention of Epiphany was in AD 312.
- ☐ Epiphany takes place on 6th January.
- ☐ Epiphany marks the beginning of the 12 days of Christmas.
- ☐ Epiphany was first mentioned by a Roman Soldier called Ammianus Marcellinus.

3. Why is it assumed that there were Three Wise Men?

4. Why is Epiphany celebrated all around the world?

5. Explain in detail how Epiphany differs in the East and West.

6. Explain the significance of the three gifts given to Jesus by the Wise Men.

7. Where is '**Rosca de Reyes**' eaten? Tick one.

- ☐ Belgium
- ☐ Drury Lane Theatre, London
- ☐ Mexico
- ☐ Spain

8. Explain the meaning of 20*C*M*B*20.

9. In your own words, explain why you think the Three Wise Men made the long and dangerous journey.

10. Which of these Epiphany celebrations would be the most preferable to you? Why?

Answers

1. Where does the word 'Epiphany' come from?

The word Epiphany comes from the Greek word 'epiphaneia' meaning appearance.

2. Which of these statements are true? Tick **two**.

☐ The first mention of Epiphany was in AD 312.

☒ **Epiphany takes place on 6th January.**

☐ Epiphany marks the beginning of the 12 days of Christmas.

☒ **Epiphany was first mentioned by a Roman Soldier called Ammianus Marcellinus.**

3. Why is it assumed that there were Three Wise Men?

As there were three gifts, people assume that there must have been three men.

4. Why is Epiphany celebrated all around the world?

Epiphany is celebrated all around the world as there are Christians living in countries all around the world.

5. Explain in detail how Epiphany differs in the East and West.

In the East, Epiphany celebrates Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. It is also a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. In the West, Epiphany is a celebration of the baby Jesus being seen, or appearing, to the visitors who had travelled to see him.

6. Explain the significance of the three gifts given to Jesus by the Wise Men.

The Wise Men brought gold as a sign of their love for Jesus as their king. They brought frankincense as a symbol of their faith and myrrh was to show their obedience to the new king.

7. Where is 'Rosca de Reyes' eaten? Tick one.

☐ Belgium

☐ Drury Lane Theatre, London

☒ **Mexico**

☐ Spain

8. Explain the meaning of 20*C*M*B*20.

In Austria, special signs are written above the front door of many homes. It is a reminder that the Wise Men visited Jesus and is also meant to protect the house in the year to come. The sign is the year split in half, with the initials of the names of the Wise Men, e.g. 20*C*M*B*20.

9. In your own words, explain why you think the Three Wise Men made the long and dangerous journey.

Pupils' own responses, such as: I believe that the Wise Men made the long and dangerous journey because they believed in the religious writings they had seen and were determined to meet this new, important king.

10. Which of these Epiphany celebrations would be the most preferable to you? Why?

Pupils' own responses, such as: I would prefer to celebrate Epiphany like the children in Belgium because I love singing songs.