

## **The Three Wise Ones:**

**Monologues for Epiphany** based on Matthew 2:1-12

[**then** *chimes*]

### **PREACHER/NARRATOR**

The time was right. They had checked and re-checked their maps. They had watched the sky. They had studied the ancient stories. They had hoped and dreamed and prayed. The signs were all there: a shining star in the East signaled the birth of a leader and king who would bring people back to God. And so these wise ones set out on a journey to find this new king. Walk with them, won't you...?

[*chimes*]

### **MELCHIOR**

The journey to Palestine from the east was long and hard, I can tell you that. The desert was hot and dusty during the day and bitterly cold at night. We stayed close together to discourage bandits and scare off wild animals. At times our camels were stubborn and no amount of pulling made them giddy-up. Our maps were useless. But that star...that wondrous star shone on, pointing the way, guiding our feet. Months went by and still we traveled. And we wondered...would we ever find this king?

At last, we found ourselves at the city gate of Jerusalem. We decided we had better ask for directions, so we made our way to the palace of King Herod. We thought for sure that one great King would know about the birth of a new one.

But Herod didn't know what we were talking about. He tried to act like he was as excited as we were about finding the Child...but he seemed more afraid than glad. We moved on as the star led us...to little Bethlehem.

Who would have expected that the king the Jewish people had been

waiting generations for, would be born in a barn? As we followed that star I thought there would be a mansion or castle or palace at the end of the road. I never expected to see the little king living in such humble circumstances.

## **GASPAR**

I could have accepted the simple house, but his parents, the mother and father...My! I mean, the star we followed was a royal star and I expected royalty. The came into the house where the star stopped, and there was a *servant* girl and a *carpenter*! Just poor, ordinary folk. No jewels, no riches, no nothing. Just common, ordinary peasants. And the child – he was no prince sitting on a throne, but a laughing toddler playing beside his mother as she worked in the garden. They seemed to be bathed in a most strange and wonderful light, a light that was brighter than the sun and stars – a light we couldn't see with our eyes, but only with our hearts.

Each of us knelt down and gave gifts to the Christ-child: gold, the sign of rulers for a king; myrrh, the sign and ointment of those who die but who live forever.

And I gave frankincense. It has a beautiful scent. Incense shows that the Christ-child is going to be a spiritual leader, for frankincense is something priests use.

Yes, the gifts we brought were magnificent, fit for a king. But to me the most precious gift there, was that special child.

I put little Jesus on my knee– caressed his soft cheek, ruffled his curly hair, gazed into his dark, dark eyes – eyes filled with a light brighter than any star in the heavens. Gold, jewels, perfumes: they are beautiful, but they don't hold a candle to the Christ-child given to us from God.

The experience of seeing the little king, watching his delight in playing with his mother, feeling his baby-smile fall on me -- has changed me forever. Looking at that little guy, I know I have seen the very Truth of God.

## **BALTHAZAR**

The mother and father offered us a simple dinner and generous hospitality, and we shared stories with them until we couldn't keep our eyes open. We fell into a deep sleep, a sleep full of dreams, angel whispers, and warnings. The next day, we set out for the long journey back home. But we didn't go by way of Herod's palace; we took another road, just to be on the safe side.

I will go back now to my homeland where I will continue to be a wandering philosopher and teacher. Except now, as I wander through the villages, I will teach something different than before. I'm going to teach what I've learned from following the star, what I've learned from finding the Christ-child, the One who is going to change the whole course of human history.

I think I have learned to look for truth in a new place. As I grew up I read the ancient manuscripts, I talked to the wise men. I listened to the heavens. I studied the stars. I thought the truth came from study. And then in this dream God asked me to *do* something instead of study. He asked me to go off on this long and dangerous journey. And the journey has changed me. And, I think God has taught me through this journey that I can only find the meaning of life by taking a great risk, by being willing to give up my old life and *doing* something.

God took a journey to earth and *did* the truth. In the baby, God wasn't just searching for the truth; in Jesus God was -- and is -- *doing* the truth. And in a way, so am I -- I am on a journey, learning to *do* the truth.

## **MELCHIOR**

In the past, when people came to the University in Alexandria, Egypt, I would teach them about the stars -- that the stars guided not only the ships of the Mediterranean Sea, but their destinies, too. The stars guided nations and armies, and the lives of individuals, I told them. But now I have found a new star. That star is no longer in the

heavens but is here on earth. That star is the baby born to be King, Jesus of Nazareth. He will become a great teacher and person of deep knowledge about God. His love, His compassion, His teachings will be my new guide. His way of knowing God will become my star. And so when people come to the University looking for ways to guide their lives, I will no longer tell them about the heavens, but about the man Jesus of Nazareth, who is heaven on earth.

## **GASPAR**

I own a great palace in Persia. I have an abundance of money, which I inherited from my parents, who died when I was very young. I was taught by the leading scholars. I have a job that pays well and gives me power and prestige. (I'm the court astrologer and physician for the King of Persia). But somehow this journey has taught me the truth about success and money. They are rather empty, really. In spite of what the world says, those things don't bring lasting happiness.

## **BALTHAZAR**

That's what draws us together. I think all of us are people searching for the truth, and we have found that the truth is in this Jesus. Christ is the answer that we have been looking for, the key to all knowledge, to all truth.

May the Truth of the new King abide in us – in this new year and forever more.

[*chimes*]

(All exit separate ways)