

## The Magi prepare to travel

- The star!
- It rises.
- Like Alexander's star.
- Only greater.
- Greater than the world-conqueror?
- Greater. See how it shines in the dark about it! They say Alexander's star stood out: this star stands alone.
- So a king is to come ... of empires, worlds ...
- Where?
- Where the star shows.
- Through desert and mountains – perhaps to the lands by the sea?
- To the great cities Tyre and Sidon?
- A great king born in a great city.
- No. This king will be like his star – shining alone. No city, wealth or earthly power to add to his lustre.
- A greatness entirely in himself.
- He could be born in a village or town.
- He could be born as the poorest are born, as humble as his star is great.
- What do writings say?
- There is a land by the sea whose people have writings about a world-deliverer, a new king.
- The people of the tribes of Israel.
- An ancient people?
- Old enough for tragedy, redemption, disaster and hope ...
- They await a king?

- 'A king like a bright star ...' their writings tell us.
- But their lands are poor, oppressed and dark.
- They will see a great light.
- A small nation, if a nation at all.
- 'Bethlehem Ephrathah, the least of the clans of Judah, out of you will be born ... one to rule ... his origin goes back to the distant past ...'
- A great king from the smallest clan of a small nation?
- Their writings say so.
- There's more: 'Kings will pay him tribute ...'
- 'Camels in throngs will cover you ... bringing gold and incense ...'
- We shall go, then.
- With gold, a gift for kings.
- The purest gold, seven times through the fire.
- And incense for one who comes from on high – a god-king.
- We shall bring the whitest frankincense.
- Let us go with gold and frankincense ...
- Wait. Look at the skies. The star so beautiful, so alone ...
- So lonely – a sign to be rejected.
- Let us, then, bring myrrh for the king born to suffer.
- And die?
- Their scriptures speak of one to take the sins of the people upon himself.
- Can a king from heaven die and yet still be divine?
- Can we honour what death will bring to an end?
- Their scripture speaks of a glory beyond dying, and of a love as strong as death.
- Let us go, then, to pay him tribute.