

a script from



COLLECTIVE

"The Magi: Part One"

By
Christy Conant

What	A 4-Part Advent Series. The Magi discover the signs and Scripture that lead them to seek the Eternal King. Themes: Advent, Magi, Wise Men, Seeking Christ, Prophecy, Trust, Obedience
Who	King Nebuchadnezzar (King) Magus 1 Magus 2 Daniel Balthasar - the Hebrew Scripture nerd Gaspar - the historian Melchior - the astrologer
When	Biblical Times
Costumes	Period clothing
Props	Sleeping Couch, 2 Chairs, Table, Fruit bowl, Pile of scrolls
Why	Matthew 2:1-12, Daniel 2, Isaiah 7:14, Daniel 7:13-14, Daniel 9:1-19
How	You should have two distinct acting areas on your stage: one for Nebuchadnezzar's scene and one for the Magi. If you have a small stage, you can put Nebuchadnezzar's scene on the floor SR or SL and the Magi on the stage. If your stage is large enough, Nebuchadnezzar's scene should be USR. Keep the pace of the dialogue, especially between Daniel and King, quick. Daniel should essentially keep talking over King.
Time	15 minutes

Projection reads: **Babylon 603 BC**

Lights up. **King Nebuchadnezzar** is tossing on his bed/couch, clearly having a nightmare. He wakes up with a start.

King: Magi!

Magus 1: *(rushing in)* What is it my king?

Magus 2: *(right behind him)* My Lord, why are you so sweaty?

King : I have had a terrible dream and am deeply troubled. You must tell me what my dream means.

Magus 1: Certainly, my king. Tell us what you dreamed and we'll tell you what it meant.

King: Don't toy with me! My command is firm. If you don't tell me what my dream was and what it means, I'll tear you limb from limb and tear down your houses while I'm at it!

Magus 2: Please, your Majesty. Tell us your dream and we will gladly tell you what it means.

King: Stop stalling! I know what you are doing. You are conspiring to tell me lies. If you tell me what my dream was, I'll know you're not just inventing the meaning. But if you cannot...*(he rises, threateningly)*

Magus 1: Your Majesty, no one on earth can tell the king his dream! And no king, however great and powerful, has ever asked such a thing of his Magi or Astrologers. Your demand is impossible. No one except the gods can tell you your dream, and they do not live here among the People.

King: *(with a furious gesture)* Guards! Execute all my Wise Men, Magi and Astrologers!

Babylonian Magi 1 & 2 react and then all three freeze in their positions. *(If you have lights, lights down on Babylon and up on Balthasar.)* Projection changes to "**600 years later.**" As **Balthasar** starts talking, **Babylonian Magi** exit.

Gaspar: It's getting late. Are you still reading that old scroll you found?

Balthasar: I can't put it down. I've always been interested in Hebrew Scripture, but this one is so fascinating. This man, Daniel, was an exile to our land 500 years ago, but he left behind such fascinating prophecy along with stories of his time in captivity. Look, it even mentions us!

Gaspar: Be serious. We're not that old.

Balthasar: Well, not us exactly, but the magi of the time.

Gaspar: Let me see that.

Balthasar: See, here: "King Nebuchadnezzar talked with the young men and no one impressed him as much as Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. So they entered the royal service. Whenever the king consulted them in any matter requiring wisdom and balanced judgement, he found them ten times more capable than any of the magicians and magi in his entire kingdom."

Gaspar: Well, that's not very flattering.

Balthasar: No! It's not! And this scroll has story after story of how Daniel's God gave him wisdom and strength, saved him from trouble, and called him treasured and greatly beloved. Two different kings of two different empires sent a message to the people of every race, nation, and language throughout the world acknowledging that Daniel's God is a God of great signs and wonders. They both said *His* kingdom will last forever and *His* rule will never end. These are the kings of empires that rule the world admitting that there is One higher than they whose kingdom will outlive their own!

Gaspar: Fascinating! Do you think there's truth to it?

Balthasar: There must be because, look here! *(He points to another section in the scroll)* I haven't even told you about the craziest part yet.

As **Gaspar** reads, the projector goes to black and lights up/unfreeze the Babylon scene. Speed pantomime the story (repeating the stage directions from the top of the script) as **Gaspar & Balthasar** summarize it. Time it so the **Magi** exit and **Daniel** enters just as **Gaspar & Balthasar** get to that part.

Gaspar: *(reading from the scroll)* One night during the second year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar had such disturbing dreams that he couldn't sleep. He called in his magicians, magi, and astrologers – *(looking up)* hey! There we are again! – *(reading again)* and demanded that they tell him what he had dreamed. *(looking up again)* But that's impossible! No one can tell someone what they dreamed!

Balthasar: That's exactly what they said! But the king thought they would just make up an interpretation if he told them the dream, so he refused to tell them and threatened to kill them if they couldn't tell him what his dream was and interpret it.

Gaspar: Tough job!

Balthasar: No kidding! And of course, none of the magi could guess at his dream, so the king ordered them all to be killed. But then...

Gaspar: Let me guess, Daniel's God gave him wisdom and told him what the dream was and what it meant.

Daniel enters.

Balthasar: You are a wise man, Gaspar. Yes! Now listen to the dream... here it is:

Gaspar & Balthasar *lean over the scroll as if reading.*

Daniel: "In your vision, Your Majesty, you saw standing before you a huge, shining statue of a man. It was a frightening sight. The head was made of fine gold.

King: Yes!

Daniel: Its chest and arms were silver,

King: Yes! Yes!

Daniel: Its belly and thighs were bronze,

King: Yes! A bronze belly!

Daniel: Its legs were iron, and its feet were a combination of iron and baked clay.

King: This is it exactly!

Daniel: As you watched, a rock was cut from a mountain, but not by human hands. It struck the feet of iron and clay, smashing them to bits. The whole statue was crushed into small pieces of iron, clay, bronze, silver, and gold. Then the wind blew them away without a trace.

King: Yes! No trace of them anywhere!

Daniel: But the rock that knocked the statue down became a great mountain that covered the whole earth.

King: *(falling at **Daniel's** feet in awe)* It was exactly as you say.

King & Daniel freeze for a moment. *(If you're using lights, bring the lights up in both areas for this section.)*

Gaspar: I can't imagine what it means.

Balthasar: *(So excited, he can barely hold it in)* I'll keep reading! *(he reads)*

Daniel: *(lifting **King** up)* Your majesty, you are the greatest of kings. The God of heaven has given you sovereignty, power, strength, and honor. *(He clasps **King's** head)* You are the head of gold.

Gaspar: Ok, so Babylon is the head.

Daniel: But after your kingdom comes to an end, another kingdom, inferior to yours, will rise to take your place. *(**King** looks worried)*

Balthasar: Of course! Babylon fell to Persia.

Daniel: After that kingdom has fallen, yet a third kingdom, represented by bronze, will rise to rule the world.

Gaspar: Persia was destroyed by Alexander the Great and Greece...

Daniel: Following that kingdom, there will be a fourth one, as strong as iron. That kingdom will smash and crush all previous empires, just as iron smashes and crushes everything it strikes.

Gaspar &

Balthasar: *(in awe, looking from the scroll to each other.)* Rome...

Daniel: The feet and toes you saw were a combination of iron and baked clay, showing that this kingdom will be divided.

Gaspar: *(he grabs his head, mind blown)* Julius Caesar, Pompey the Great, and Marcus Crassus slowly began dividing Rome against itself just 60 years ago!

Daniel: This mixture of iron and clay also shows that these kingdoms will try to strengthen themselves by forming alliances with each other through intermarriage. But they will not hold together, just as iron and clay don't mix.

Balthasar: *(trying to puzzle it out)* Marc Antony and Cleopatra?

Daniel: During the reign of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or conquered. It will crush all these kingdoms into nothingness, and it will stand forever. That is the meaning of the rock cut from the mountain, though not by human hands, that crushed the statue. The great God was showing the king what will happen in the future. The dream is true, and its meaning is certain."

King: *(falling at **Daniel's** feet again)* Truly your God is the greatest of gods and the Lord over kings, for you have been able to reveal this secret.

King & Daniel freeze. *If using lights, lights down on Babylon.*

King & Daniel exit as **Gaspar & Balthasar** continue.

Balthasar: *(stops reading and looks up, incredulous)* Can you believe it?! This has prophesied exactly the last 500 years of history. We are very clearly living in the age of the feet!

Gaspar: I guess we should expect Rome to fall in the near future.

Balthasar: But more importantly, we should be looking for this "rock" because it is the beginning of the eternal kingdom that will spread to cover the whole earth.

Gaspar: Hmm... you're right. Does your scroll say anything else about it?

Balthasar: Not necessarily about the rock... but listen to this... *(he reads again)*
"As my vision continued that night, I saw someone like a son of man coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient One and was led into his presence. He was given authority, honor, and sovereignty over all the nations of the world, so that people of every race and nation and language would obey him. His rule is eternal - it will never end. His kingdom will never be destroyed."

Gaspar: *(puzzling it out)* Ok, so he's clearly the King of the eternal Kingdom... and he's like a son of man, so he must be human - on some level - not an invisible deity... and he comes with the clouds of heaven. Perhaps we should look to the heavens to tell us more.

Melchior runs in, breathless.

Melchior: You guys! You have to come see. Jupiter is at it again. Tonight, it looks like it has merged with Venus. It's the brightest thing you've ever seen in the night sky.

Gaspar and **Balthasar** look at each other

Gaspar: The King has merged with the Mother?

Melchior: *(Impatiently)* Yes, Jupiter and Venus, come see.

Balthasar: Just a minute! This isn't the first strange thing Jupiter has done. Remind me what else has been happening.

Melchior: Earlier this year...

Balthasar: *(interrupting him)* How long ago, exactly?

Melchior: *(calculating in his head)* Nine months. Nine months ago, the King was in conjunction with Regulus...

Gaspar: *(chiming in with more detail)* Regulus - Little King - the King star in the constellation Leo.

Balthasar: The Lion?! But the promised King of the Jews is called the Lion of Judah.

Melchior: I don't know what you're talking about, but do you want to hear about Jupiter or not?

Balthasar

& Gaspar: Yes!

Balthasar: Sorry, go ahead.

Melchior: Nine months ago, the King was in conjunction with Regulus, as it is every 12 years or so. But then, as it passed Regulus and traveled on, a strange thing happened. Jupiter stopped in its path and traveled *back* to cross Regulus again in the other direction, then stopped and continued forward, crossing Regulus one final time.

Gaspar: *(picks up two figs from the bowl and reenacts the scene)* So the King of the planets circled around the King from the Lion... *(as the Jupiter fig completes the circle around the Regulus fig)* and crowns him.

Melchior: Yes. It was especially remarkable because as they first met, a new moon was born behind them, so the sky was quite dark.

Gaspar: *(thoughtfully)* A new moon was born... funny, Virgo the Virgin is behind Leo. You make it sound as though the Virgin was giving birth to the new moon.

Balthasar: *(snaps out of a reverie of thought)* The Virgin gives birth?! But... hold on... I know I have it here somewhere. *(he rummages through a pile of scrolls. Gaspar & Melchior look at each other, baffled)* Here it is! *(he unrolls the scroll and reads)* "All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel - which means 'God is with us.'"

Melchior: Ok, what is going on here? I think this stuff with Jupiter is amazing, but you guys are clearly talking about something else that I don't know about.

Balthasar: I've been reading from the Jewish prophet Daniel, and it's clear that an Eternal King is going to be born to the Jews. I think it will happen soon!

Melchior: Why the Jews?

Balthasar: Because Daniel's God is their God and he is clearly the only True God. He performs miraculous signs, gives wisdom and power, and knows what will happen 500 years before it happens. Also... he calls Daniel his treasure and greatly beloved. I want to serve a God like that. We look at the stars and signs and omens to try to divine the future and seek wisdom, but I want *truth* and I know I've found it. I've got to find this king and serve him. An eternal king is the only king worth serving.

Melchior: Why now?

Gaspar: The prophecy in Daniel clearly outlined history up to this moment then said God would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed or conquered.

Melchior: (*scoffs*) An eternal kingdom that comes out of Jerusalem? That's a new one. They've been conquered by how many empires now?
(*reconsidering*) But, even if this were true, we are not Jews. Why would this God - or this King - accept us?

Gaspar: Yes, and from the stories you read in Daniel, it sounded like the magi weren't exactly the good guys.

Balthasar: The Hebrew Scriptures are full of promises that God's chosen people will bring *blessings* to the nations.

Gaspar: And you just read in Daniel that people from every race and nation and language will obey this son of man. It doesn't sound exclusive to the Jews.

Balthasar: Daniel also says that this God is a merciful God. See, here it says, "The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against him." When Daniel prays, he says, "We make this plea, *not because we deserve help, but because of your mercy.*" Our kings and our gods are not like that.

Gaspar: Well, it sounds like there's a Good King and an Eternal Kingdom to find. Should we start in Jerusalem, the home of the temple of this God?

Balthasar: Yes! Let's go to Jerusalem and find the newborn King!

Melchior: Jerusalem?! That journey would take months!

Balthasar: It's worth it. The Eternal King is worthy of our worship, even if we must go to great lengths to find him.

Melchior: *(considers a moment)* Then we'd better start packing. But first... you *must* come outside and appreciate the brilliance of the King merged with the Mother.

Lights down. End scene.

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