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"What the Wisemen Know"

By
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What	<p>Based on Matthew Chapter 2, the Wiseman discuss what Herod's intentions are in inviting them to the palace and why no one knows where to find the baby born king of the Jews. Their conversation leads to the realization that true transformation is only possible through the establishing of an eternal kingdom.</p> <p>Themes: Christmas, Wiseman, Magi, Jesus, Funny, Mystery, Herod, Christmas Story, Kingdom, Eternal, Star</p>
Who	<p>Gasper Belteshazzar Melchior</p>
When	<p>Biblical times</p>
Costumes	<p>Wiseman costumes, headscarf</p>
Props	<p>Persian Rug, Coffee Table, Wooden Chair, Wooden Bench, Star Chart Map, Daniel 6 in Hebrew, Bowl of Oranges, Brown Play-Doh, Blunt Knife, Tray with Tea Cups or Tray with Flat Bread (preferably silver or a Persian tea set)</p>
Why	<p>Matthew 2: 1-7, Isaiah 9:7</p>
How	<p>Best performed as a lively discourse between close friends. The camel poop can be created using play-doh and placed strategically on the carpet to prevent unnecessary play-doh spread across the stage. A pre-peeled orange can be hidden in a bowl of oranges so that Belteshazzar can easily peel it.</p>
Time	<p>10 minutes</p>

Two men sit on a stage. **Belteshazzar** sits on a wooden bench. **Gasper** sits on a Persian rug next to a coffee table reading Daniel 6 in Hebrew. There is another wooden chair on the other side of the coffee table. On the table is a bowl of oranges. There is a little pile of camel poop in the rug. And a small scroll with something that looks like poetry on the table.

Gasper is a passionate seeker of the truth. **Melchior** is a gentle soul. **Belteshazzar**, the oldest of the three men, he can be cynical and a bit vain but has a great sense of humour.

Belteshazzar places his foot loudly on the table and he begins scraping the dry skin from his cracked heels with a knife. **Gasper** attempts to read the Hebrew Scriptures but is feeling unsettled by Herod's invitation and grossed out by Belteshazzar's grooming. He expresses his frustration in criticism of Belteshazzar behaviour.

Gasper: Belteshazzar, must you?

Belteshazzar: What?

Gasper: It's disgusting.

Belteshazzar: It's necessary.

Gasper: Surely, someone in town can help you attend to that in a less repulsive way!

Belteshazzar: Am I not able? After all, it's satisfying scraping away the dry skin myself.

Gasper: I don't see why you must do it at all!

Belteshazzar: We are going to a *palace*, Gasper. What will the King of Judea think of wise men who don't have the wisdom to present themselves with some semblance of nobility?

Gasper: (*sarcasm*) Yes. That will be the deciding factor in attaining the king's favour – the condition of our feet!

Belteshazzar: You tease, but I could tell you stories.

Gasper attempts to ignore **Belteshazzar** and returns to reading scripture. **Belteshazzar** is always telling stories anyway.

Gasper: When I served in the court of Antiochus the First, he was convinced that you could judge a man's character based on the way he drank his tea. Of course, he believed he was a god. I imagine he was quite disappointed when he died.

Belteshazzar: You would benefit from some grooming.

***Belteshazzar** reaches with his foot and pulls Gasper's headscarf off his head. **Gasper** is annoyed and swats him away. **Melchior** enters with tea on a tray and places it on the table.*

Melchior: *(sarcastically)* Oh, I do enjoy our after dinner discourse.

Gasper: *(realising the pettiness of their behaviour)* I'm sorry, Melchior.

Melchior: Something has unsettled you, Gasper. What is it?

Gasper: King Herod's invitation.

Belteshazzar: No! You are *not* doing this!

Gasper: Doing what?

Belteshazzar: This? *(pause)* Overthinking!

Gasper: *(with sarcasm)* It's just called thinking.

Belteshazzar: We have traveled across desert and dirt for months. I want a warm bath and clean sheets--if only for one night!

Gasper: But these instructions to enter the palace along the western city wall...

Belteshazzar: You know royalty, Gasper. They're eccentric. It's their royal right to make pompous requests.

Melchior: Belteshazzar! You should learn to hold your tongue!

Gasper: But why a covert entry into the palace?

Belteshazzar: Vanity?

Belteshazzar picks up an orange from the table and starts peeling it with the knife he used on his feet. At some point, he offers Gasper and **Melchior** a piece. **Melchior** takes it, **Gasper** does not.

Gasper: Vanity?!

Belteshazzar: What other reason would the king summon us except to understand what we know? It's a failure of his court that they didn't discern the shift in the heavens.

Melchior: That's a good point, Belteshazzar. We've asked, yet, no one knows where to find the child.

Gasper: I don't understand how the Jewish chief priests didn't observe the star arise? It's their prophets who predicted the coming of a king anointed to rule over Israel.

Melchior: Not all the wise are trained as we are, Gasper.

Belteshazzar: Not all have watched the skies as we have.

Gasper: Not all have waited as we've done. This is no ordinary time and no ordinary baby.

Belteshazzar: Many kings make claims of divinity though, Gasper.

Gasper: Yes, but the heavens don't confirm it. Isn't that the reason we left everything to worship the baby ourselves?

Belteshazzar: I understand your passion, Gasper. But kings come and kings go. What makes this king any different? You are expecting too much from this child.

Gasper: Am I? I'm not so sure.

Belteshazzar: Another king, even a good king, only influences while they *live*. They die and someone takes their place with their own version of morality.

Melchior picks up the small scroll with poetry on it.

Gasper: This baby king *could* be the change we've been longing for.

Melchior: Belteshazzar, what is this?

Belteshazzar: Ah, yes! Syrian Desert Romance poetry. I've been sampling poetry from the regions we've travelled through.

Melchior: You are like the puffed cheeks of a camel before it spits up?

Belteshazzar: Delightful, isn't it?

Melchior: That's not how I would describe it. This is romantic?

Gasper: Who you going to romance with that? Desert weasels?

Belteshazzar: When I return to my wife, I will pour out the pearls of my devotion like a camel inflates its soft palette with the breath of its affection.

Melchior: That is truly disgusting.

Gasper: It's clear homesickness is distracting you from what matters right now.

Belteshazzar: We have traveled so far and we are so close, what if we're wrong.

Gasper: What if we're right? We have watched the heavens and this their declaration; a child is born king of the Jews.

Melchior: This baby will bring kingdom transformation. Perhaps even for generations to come?

Belteshazzar: A king whose reign exceeds beyond the perimeters of time - an eternal kingdom? I don't see how that's possible.

Gasper: I don't either but we can hope. What about Herod?

Melchior: How do we know whether his intentions in meeting with us are benevolent?

Belteshazzar: We don't. But we cannot turn down an invitation from the king of Judah.

Gaspar: We have no choice but to go.

Melchior: And to tell him what we know.

Gaspar: Just as the stars have confirmed it, if ever we need to change course, the Most High will make it known to us.

Melchior: Yes. There is a greater purpose at work here than the role we play in this story.

Gaspar: When we meet the babe, Belteshazzar, we will know if our hope is justified.

Belteshazzar: I am sure you are right.

Melchior: Sleep. That's what we need.

Belteshazzar: Yes, I think it is.

Melchior: Just be careful...

Belteshazzar and Gaspar stand up. Belteshazzar begins to move and steps in camel poop.

Melchior: ...of the camel poop.

Melchior and Gaspar are enjoying this moment. Belteshazzar, angry, uses his knife to scrape the poo off his foot. Gaspar moves to avoid it. Melchior stands up and starts to move towards his friends.

Belteshazzar: Disgusting. Oh, go on. Laugh!

Gaspar: Yes. We are.

Melchior: Is that the same knife you used to peel that orange?

Gaspar: He used it on his feet, too.

Melchior: I ate a piece of that orange!

Belteshazzar: So you did.

Gasper: That is truly disgusting!

All laugh with shared camaraderie as they walk off stage.