It was the best feast we’d ever had—the night we dined in King Herod’s palace. There were dates and figs and soft, creamy cheeses, and the finest cuts of meat. There were dancers and musicians performing for our delight. We were wise men with treasures of our own, but never had we seen anything like Herod’s palace!

And he promised us that we could partake of it whenever we wanted, as long as we would show him the way to the prophesied King of the Jews whom we were seeking.

And why wouldn’t we show him?

Later, all the way through those winding little streets we spoke of the great fortunes Herod might give us. Maybe he would make us his own trusted advisers! That shining star in the sky held so much promise.
A STORYBOOK OF SAINTS

But when we finally arrived at the place where the star shone the brightest, all our plans stopped short. Beneath it was only a little house, sleeping quietly. Too little for a king. Certainly, too little for a king.

But prophets don’t lie.

So we walked up to the little house, timidly, quietly, so as not to disturb the strange calm we felt there.

A young woman came out. Was she a servant?

She smiled gently and lifted up the bundle in her arms. Suddenly, from it shone forth light brighter than the star that shone down upon it. And the most wonderful thing in the world lay in the bundle: more beautiful than the gold we carried, more sacred than the frankincense, and more sweet-smelling than the myrrh.

Then the Babe smiled at us!

We fell upon our knees.

Shortly after we left that precious Holy Family, an angel came in the night and told us not to return to Herod.

But we already knew that.

So we set off for our separate homes.

We knew that when Herod found out, he would be angry.

We weren’t sure what he would do to us, but we didn’t care anymore. Not about palaces or treasure. Not about soldiers coming after us. We didn’t care anymore.

Because we’d just seen the Kingdom of Heaven ... and nothing on earth was better than that.
Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar

Birthplaces Unknown
Born in the First Century B.C.
Died in the First Century A.D.

The Magi were wise men who studied the stars and the Scriptures—both of which led them to the prophesied King, the Baby Jesus. They gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, and they did not return to Herod, fearing he might harm Jesus. Some say they were martyred for this act of disobedience. But their faith and wonder live on and inspire the nations.