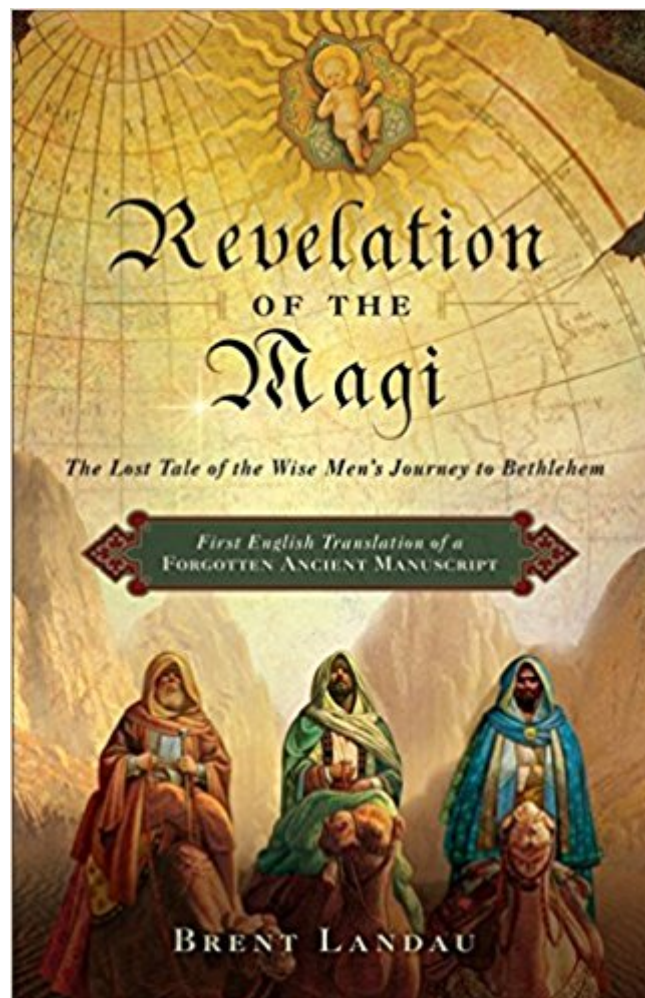




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Revelation Of The Magi: The Lost Tale Of The Wise Men's Journey To Bethlehem



Synopsis

“Astonishing, delightful, and theologically sophisticated.” • Marvin Meyer, Griset Professor of Religious Studies, Chapman University
Theologian Brent Landau presents the ancient account of Melchior, Caspar, and Balthazar, the three “wise men” who journeyed to Bethlehem to greet the birth of Jesus. The Revelation of the Magi offers the first-ever English translation of an ancient Syriac manuscript written in the second to third century after the birth of Christ and safeguarded for generations in the Vatican Library. Following in the footsteps of Elaine Pagels and her exploration of the Gnostic Gospels, including the controversial Gospel of Judas, Landau delivers an invaluable source of information to a world interested in learning more about the Nativity and the life of Jesus of Nazareth.

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Customer Reviews

The tale of the Magi, or the Three Wise Men, is one of the most famous stories associated with the birth of Jesus. But as Landau points out, only one brief passage in the New Testament’s Gospel of Matthew is actually about the Magi. Even there the details are frustratingly vague: the wise men have no names, nor are their countries of origin indicated. But one source does exist, a lengthy narrative called Revelation of the Magi, which tells the story from the perspective of the wise men themselves. This slim volume is purported to be the first-ever English translation of the elusive tale. Landau, a scholar of ancient biblical languages, discovered the document while doing research at the Vatican Library. Ignored or neglected by contemporary scholars and written in Syriac, a

language spoken by ancient Christians in the Middle East and Asia, Revelation of the Magi should be of interest to not only biblical scholars but also students of the Christian story who want to know more about these elusive fellows. --June Sawyers

“Of the many recently discovered earliest Christian documents, Revelation of the Magi is by far the most fascinating. Landau’s presentation is bright and sharp as a gemstone emphasizes the unique challenge and radical depth of this ancient text’s theology.” (John Dominic Crossan, author of *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography* and *The Greatest Prayer*) “The fascinating story of the Wise Men from the East who came to see baby Jesus is presented, for the first time in English, in a remarkable new version based on an ancient Syriac text, and the result is a tale that is astonishing, delightful, and theologically sophisticated.” (Marvin Meyer, author of *Gospels of Mary*) “Unread for centuries, the Revelation of the Magi retells the Biblical story of three wise men who visited Jesus at his birth, expanding their minor role into an epic tale. In a new, lucid translation, Landau offers English readers a chance to hear this remarkable story for the first time.” (Karen L. King, author of *The Secret Revelation of John*) “This lovely text, skillfully translated and accompanied by expert commentary shows that early Christians approached the Christmas story with refreshing creativity. Landau is to be congratulated for bringing this important and unexpectedly influential work to light.” (Jennifer Knust, author of *Unprotected Texts*) “Revelation of the Magi should be of interest to not only biblical scholars but also students of the Christian story who want to know more about these elusive fellows.” (Booklist) “For all of [The Wise Men’s] popularity, the mysterious travelers from the East ... appear in only one short passage in the New Testament. Now, a first-ever English translation and detailed analysis of a little-known eighth-century text uncovers a far more substantial version of the wise men story.” (USA Today) “This year a number of Christmas stockings will no doubt be stuffed with a copy of a beautiful little book, *Revelation of the Magi*. ... Quite luminous and wonderful... Like incense, the pages radiate divine grace, mercy, and love. They seem infused with light, glory, majesty, epiphany, and joy.” (Day 1.org) “Landau shows, with skill and authority, how the *Revelation of the Magi* contains a valuable message of tolerance that is needed as much today as in the years of its composition.” (Los Angeles Times (online))

This awesome book is one of my all time favorites I first heard about it from Ron Chapman, who used to be with KLIF in Dallas, TX, several years ago. A long time listener of Ron’s, I decided to

give his recommendation a try. Then, I suggested ROM for the book club I was a member of; those members were equally impressed. After, and, even a couple of times during, reading this book, I've given it away. Because every time I read it I see something I've missed, start talking about it, and just have to share. No matter your religious affiliation, or even if you have none, thoughts and suggestion ROM produces is worth your time.

The Revelation of the Magi has two parts. The first part includes Landau's explanation of how he "discovered" the ancient manuscript, his work in translating it and his interpretation of its meaning. The second part is his English translation of the text which was originally written in ancient Syriac. He also includes explanatory notes. It is always interesting to read about how scholars go about analyzing and interpreting ancient texts and this was no exception. Actually I wish Landau had gone into a bit more detail about this aspect of his work. The interpretation of the "revelation" is intriguing and thought provoking, that "Christ" (for lack of a better word to indicate the phenomenon) has appeared to many different peoples and that all religions have received the message of the light. This interpretation is not one that Christians who believe that the Bible is the literal word of God will accept easily. (How they can believe that God spoke in the 17th century English of the KJV has always surprised me.). However, Christians and others who have studied the history of the compilation of the New Testament and know about the many other Gospels and writings will appreciate this Revelation as another example of the complexity of early Christian beliefs.

Four REVEALING Stars! This unusually fantastic story is not the traditional Christmas season story of the Three Wise Men bearing gold, frankincense, and myrrh and seeking the Christ Child. This is the first English translation of the only known manuscript of the apocryphal "The Revelation of the Magi": a lengthy document written in the Syriac language probably by at least 2 authors. It had been relatively unknown to the general public until found by author, educator, and theological research expert Dr. Brent Landau in the Vatican archives. The entire book is a very scholarly work which is divided into: an introduction dealing with how the author located and translated the document; the translation of "The Revelation of the Magi" itself with 32 relatively short chapters; and then conclusive commentary, analyses, and questions. These Magi, although their origin may differ, seem to generally travel the same path contained in the synoptic Gospel of Matthew and the general trajectory of: following the "star

I didn't know what to expect after reading an interview with the author which made the book sound

farfetched, but this book's story is amazing. The author is very good at explaining his research on trying to date and authenticate the main document he used to write the book, and he is great at detailing other references which helped explain aspects of the book and the story. I never felt like he was in any way "reaching" or "stretching" any facts or elements about the story to reach its end result - which by the way, is kind of mind blowing! The story of the Magi, their preparation for the events that would change history, their description of the trip to Bethlehem, and their re-telling of their conversations with all involved, for me, had a feeling of truth about it. For those of us that don't have access to Vatican documents and can't translate Syriac, thank you Mr. Landau!

Thoughtful and meticulous translation of a now essential Gnostic text with thoughtful commentary by the author. A must read for collectors of esoteric and occult literature. Beautifully printed book replete with sources. Supplemental images of related artworks included. All-around impressive work. Thank you, Mr. Landau!

The Lost Tale reveals the universality of the desire of our Maker to have us all live with one another in peace. Religions sometimes make it sound like just a few chosen ones are to be saved from our corrupt natures. Now we all need to embrace that spirit of universal peace.

These ancient writings are magnificent! A lot of introductory material that was of less interest, however if one appreciates ancient writings such as the Pseudepigrapha, then this is marvelous! I personally treasure this manuscript as filling in much description no more astonishing than the virgin birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christor as His Hebrew name was actually understood, 'Yeshuah'. Lovely reading which my husband and I enjoyed every evening till done and then began again to savor more slowly, the second and third time through. For us, it was a truly beautiful. spiritual experience.

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