

The N-Town Plays - Play 18: Magi

Translated and edited by Lila Miller

Translator's Introduction

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.’”
(Matthew 2:1-2, King James Version)

In the Bible, only twelve verses are written about these wise men. We don’t know their names, or how many there were, or if they were scholars or astrologers or kings. But following Christ’s death and throughout the Middle Ages, mythologies formed around this short story. Typically, there are three wise men, corresponding with the three gifts, and over the centuries they developed characteristics.

According to many of these traditions, Melchizar (or Melchior or Melichior) of Persia is the oldest and is described with long grey hair and beard. He is often depicted as the first to speak and the first to kneel, though in this play those roles are filled by Baltazare. Baltazare (or Balthazar or Balthasar) is from Arabia or Ethiopia and is often depicted as African. Jaspas (more often called Caspar) is the youngest of the three and is from India or Central Asia.

In medieval England, one way these traditions were created and passed along was through mystery plays. These were short plays put on by churches and guilds which retold stories written in the Bible. Little attempt was made to be historically or culturally accurate, and the writers and actors told these old stories as if they were set in their own time period and society. For example, in the focal play of this project Herod’s soldiers are called “knights,” which does not align at all with historical Jerusalem.

However, the purpose of these plays was not scholarly education but to teach the common people tales from the Bible and help them connect these stories and characters to themselves. Because of that, these plays can serve as a bridge for modern-day readers to see the world and the Bible through the eyes of a medieval Christian.

The play chosen for this project is *N-Town Play 18: Magi*. Unlike most sets, the N-Town Plays aren’t tied to a particular town or region, though scholars think they were performed in western Norfolk and Suffolk in the late 1400s. Beyond this, little is known about the N-Town plays. *Magi* tells the story of the three kings—or Magi—as they follow the star to Bethlehem, meet with Herod

and make the mistake of telling him about the baby king, kneel before the infant Jesus and his mother Mary, and return to their own countries.

Translator's Notes

You are about to read a side-by-side with the original Middle English text and a modern translation. For this translation, I updated the spelling and translated the words which no longer exist in English today, and also changed a few of the oldest and most difficult words and phrases. I added notes on the most important or interesting edits, as well as a couple notes on cultural tidbits. A few times I shuffled the word order of a line or changed the wording to make the meaning clearer.

I also added some stage directions to make the scenes easier to picture. My additions are in italics, and the originals are non-italicized.

The last change I made involves the Magi themselves. In the original text, though the kings introduce themselves, the script calls them “Rex 1,” “Rex 2,” and “Rex 3,” *rex* being the Latin word for “king.” In my translation, I instead label them by their names: Baltazare, Melchizar, and Jaspas. I found that this makes it easier for the reader to distinguish between the characters while also turning them from distant figures into memorable and relatable individuals. My hope is that you’ll enjoy their story, and perhaps reread those twelve Bible verses with a new perspective.

Lila Miller, translator and editor
John Adams College, 2026

Middle English	Modern English	Notes
Herodes Rex As a lord in ryalté in non regyon so rych, And ruler of all remys I ryde in ryal aray, Ther is no lord of lond in lordchep to me lych, Non lofflyere non lofsummere, evyrlastyng is my lay! Of bewte and of boldnes I bere evermore the belle; Of mayn and of myght I mastyr every man! I dyngge with my dowyntes the devyl down to helle, For bothe of hevyn and of herth I am kynd sertayn! I am the comelyste kynge clad in gleteryng golde, Ya, and the semelyeste syre that may bestryde a stede! I welde att my wyll all wyghtys upon molde! Ya, and wurthely I am wrappyd in a worthy wede! Ye knyghtys so comely, bothe curteys and kene To my paleys wyl I passe, full prest I yow plinth. Ye dukys so dowty folwe me dedene! Onto my ryal paleys the way lyth ful ryght! Wyghtly fro my stede I skype down in hast	[<i>Enter Herod on a horse.</i>] KING HEROD: As a lord in royalty in none region so rich, And ruler of all realms I ride in royal array, There is no lord of land in lordship to me like, None lovelier, none more praiseworthy, everlasting is my song!* Of beauty and of boldness I bear evermore the belle;† Of power and of might I master every man! I beat with my might the devil down to hell, For both of heaven and of earth I am king certain! I am the comeliest king clad in glittering gold, Yea, and the seemliest sire that may bestride a steed! I wield at my will all the creatures upon earth! Yea, and worthily I am wrapped in a worthy attire! Ye knights so comely, both courteous and bold To my palace will I pass, full pressed I assure you. Ye dukes so valiant follow me at once! Onto my royal palace the way lieth full right! Boldly from my steed I skip down in haste To my high halls I haste me in my way.	* The original word, “lay,” could be translated as either “lei,” meaning a set of laws for a country or people, or “lai,” meaning a song or poem sung by minstrels. As in this particular section, Herod leans into near-poetical rather than practical boasting, I have interpreted the latter translation as more appropriate. † A Middle English idiom, typically referring to the lead cow or sheep of the herd who wears a bell, but it can also refer to a bell sometimes given as a prize in contests.

To myn heygh hallys I haste me in my way. Ye mynstrell of myrth, blowe up a good blast Whyll I go to chawmere and chaunge myn array. Rex 1 Heyl be ye, kyngys tweyne, Ferre rydyng out of youre regne! Me thynkyth be youre presents seyne Ye sekyn oure Savyour. Fro Saba have I folwyd ferre, The glemynge of yon gay sterre, A chydys blood shal bye us dere That ther is born in bestys boure. My name is Kyng Baltazare, Of prophetys speche I am ware. Therefore, a ferre wey I fare, A maydenys childe to seche, For he made man of the moolde And is Kyng of Hevyn holde. I wyl hym offere the rede golde As reson wyl me teche. Rex 2 melchizar, that my name is kydde, In hote love myn hert is hydde To the blosme upon his bedde Born by bestys bynne. In tarys I am kyng with crowne, By bankys and brymmys browne. I have travaylid by many a towne, My Lordys love to wynne.	Ye minstrel of mirth, blow up a good blast While I go to chamber and change my array. <i>[Herod exits and kings enter.]</i> BALTAZARE: Hail be ye, kings two, Far riding out of your reign! I think by your presents seen Ye seek our Savior. From Saba* have I followed far, The gleaming of yon joyful star, A child's blood shall buy us dear That there is born in a beast's shelter. My name is King Baltazare, Of prophets' speech I am aware. Therefore, a far way I fare, A maiden's child to seek, For he made man of the dirt And is King of Heaven's stronghold. I will offer him the red gold† As reason will me instruct. MELCHIZAR: Melchizar, that my name is known, In hot love mine heart is hid To the blossom upon his bed Born in a beast's manger. In Tarys‡ I am king with crown, By banks and waters brown. I have labored through many a town,	* Saba refers to the Kingdom of Sheba in what is now modern Yemen in South Arabia. † Each of the three gifts has traditional symbolism and meaning that is reflected in the dialogue of this play. Gold is the gift for a king and represents royalty and kingship. ‡ Tarys is typically identified as Tarsus, an ancient city that was on the southern coast of modern-day Turkey.
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Iseke hym with ensens sote. Of all prestys he shal be rote. His bryght blood shal be oure bote To brynge us out of bende. The childe shal be chosyn a preste, In al vertuys fowndyn meste! Beforn his Faderys fayr breste, Ensens he shal up sende. Rex 3 In Ypotan and Archage I am kyng knowyn in kage. To seke a childe of semlant sage, I have faryn ryght ferre. Jasper is my name knowyn In many countrés that are myn owyn. Thorwe byttyr blastys that gyn blowyn, I stryke aftere the sterre. I brynge myrrre to my present, A byttyr lycour, verament, For he shal tholyn byttyr dent. In a maydonys flesch is clad, On byttyr tre he shal be bent — Man and God omnypotent. With byttyr betynghe his flesch be rent Tyl all his blood be bledde.	My Lord's love to win. I seek him with incense§ sweet. Of all priests he shall be the root. His bright blood shall be our deliverance To bring us out of captivity. The child shall be chosen a priest, In all virtues found greatest! Before his Father's fair breast, Incense he shall higher send. JASPER: In Ypotan and Archage* I am king known in chapel. To seek a child of demeanor sage, I have traveled right far. Jasper as my name is known In many countries that are mine own. Through bitter blasts that blew, I strike after the star. I bring myrrh† for my present, A bitter sap, truly, For he shall suffer bitter blow.‡ In a maiden's flesh is clad, On bitter tree he shall be bent — Man and God omnipotent. With bitter beating his flesh be rent Till all his blood be bled.	§ Incense, or frankincense, was often burned in religious ceremonies. It is the gift for a deity and represents divinity and worship. * Ypotan and Archage can't be confidently traced in medieval geography, and could be badly corrupted or even invented names. But they likely are meant to refer to somewhere in India or Asia. † Myrrh, which was used for healing, anointing, or embalming, is the gift for a mortal, and represents suffering and death. ‡ "Dent" or "dint" specifically means the blow of a weapon.
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Herodes Rex Now I regne lyk a kynge arayd ful rych, Rollyd in rynggys and robys of array! Dukys, with dentys, I dryve into the dych; My dedys be ful dowty demyd be day! I shall marryn tho herytykys that belevyn a mysse, And therin sette there sacrementys. Fallse they are I say! Ther is no lorde in this werde that lokygh me lyke, iwysse; For to lame herytykkys of the lesse lay, I am jolyere than the jay! Stronge thevys to steke That wele oure lawys break — On tho wrecchis I wyll be wreke And hont hem undyr hay In kyrtyl of cammaka kynge am I cladde! Cruel and curryd in myn crowne knowe — I sytt her ondyre Sesar in my sette sadde! Sorwyn to sottys such seed wyll I sowe, Boys now blaberyn, bostynge of a baron bad In bedde is born, be bestys suche bost is blowe! I shall prune that paphawk and prevyn hym as a pad Scheldys and sperys shall I ther sowe, My knyghtys shalle rydyn on rowe, Knave chylderyn for to qwelle, Be Mahound, dyngne duke of helle, Sowre deth his lyff shall selle, Such thrett wolde me throwe.	<i>[Scene cuts away from the kings and back to Herod, now in new attire.]</i> KING HEROD: Now I reign like a king arrayed full rich, Rolled in rings and robes of array! I drive dukes, with blows, into the trench; My deeds are deemed full bold and brave by all! I shall destroy those heretics that believe amiss, And therein set their sacraments. False they are I say! There is no lord in this world that look like me, certainly; For to lame heretics of the lesser law, I am jollier than the jay! Strong thieves to stab That will our laws break — On those wretches I will be avenged And hunt them under net.* In cloak of camaca† king am I clad! Cruel and curryd‡ in my crown known — I sit here only under Caesar in my firm seat! Sorrowing to simpletons such seed will I sow, Boys now blabbering, boasting of a baby§ lowly That in a manger is born, by beasts such boast is told! I shall prune that infant and prove him as a toad Shields and spears shall I there sow, my knights shall ride in ranks,	* A net for catching wild animals, especially rabbits. † A rich, silk-like fabric, likely imported from the East. ‡ What this word means is debated. Some interpretations scholars have suggested are well-combed or dressed, excellent or magnificent, or cursed. § The word written here is “baron,” but given the context in which it is used here and later in the play, I think what is intended is the similar sounding word “barn,” meaning infant or baby, and translated accordingly. “On rowe” or “reue” means in row, rank, order, company, group or army.
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Styward bolde, Walke thu on wolde And wisely beholde All abowte Iff any thinge Shuld greve the kynge. Brynge me tydyng If ther be ony dowte. Senescallus Lord, kynge in crowne: I go fro towne By bankys browne I wyll abyde, And with erys lyste Est and west Iff any geste On grownde gynnyth glyde. [Tunc ibit Senescallus et obuiabit tribus regibus et dicit eis:] Kyngys thre, Undyr this tre In this countré Why wyll ye abyde? Herowde is kynge Of this wonynge! Onto his dwellynge Now shul ye glyde.	Male children for to slay, By Mahound, dignified duke of hell,¶ Bitter death his life shall sell, Such threat would I overthrow. Steward bold, walk through the land And wisely behold all about If anything should grieve the king. Bring me tiding If there be any doubt. SENESCALLUS: Lord, king in crown: I go from town By banks brown I will abide, And with ears listen east and west If any tale on ground begins to glide.* [Then the steward will go and meet the three kings, and say to them:] Kings three, under this tree In this country why will ye abide? Herod is king of this territory! Onto his dwelling now shall ye depart.	¶ “Mahound” is a corrupted version of “Muhammed,” used by medieval Christians to imply false religions and deities, paganism, and the devil. Because Herod was in opposition to God and Christ, many mystery plays depict him as a worshiper or ally of Mahound. Here, Herod is invoking the name as a curse. * This is a straightforward translation of this passage. However, there is another equally valid interpretation. “Geste” can also mean a poem or song about heroic deeds, which could be supported by “with ears listen.” So Senescallus could be saying he is looking for travelers in the area or alternatively he is listening for the spread of threatening news and stories such as an “infant king.”
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Rex 1 Now lede us alle To the kyngys hall. How it befallē We pray to thee, Wyttys to wete, He may us peté: In flesshe be glete, Godys frute fre. Senescallus Folwith in stownde Upon this grownde To the castel rownde. I shal yow tech Where kynge gynnyth wyde Up in this tyde In pompe and pryde — His myght gynnyth reche. Sere kyng in trone, Here comyth anone By strete and stone Kyngys thre. They bere present. What thei have ment Ne whedyr thay arn bent I cannot se. Herodes Rex I shal hem crave What they have. Iff they rave Or waxyn wood, I shal hem reve,	BALTAZARE: Now lead us all† to the king’s hall. How the birth happened we ask of thee, For our minds to know, if Herod may give us pity: In flesh by filth,‡ God’s noble fruit. SENESCALLUS: Follow in a little while Upon this ground To the castle round. I shall you show Where the king’s land spreads wide up in this time In pomp and pride — his might begins to reach. <i>[He goes ahead to Herod]</i> Sir king in throne, here comes at once By paved road with stones, kings three. They bear presents. What they have meant Nor where they are bent I cannot see. KING HEROD: I shall them crave what they have. If they speak irrationally or get angry, I shall them rob, their wits destroy; Their heads cleave, and shed their blood.	† Here, the three kings abandon the path marked by the star to seek human information. Tradition tells that the star temporarily disappears or they lose sight of it during their time with Herod. ‡ “Glet” means earthly or body filth, slime, or mucus, or more figuratively it can mean moral corruption or sin. Here, it is used to reference Christ’s divine self-descending into an earthly body.
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Here wyttys deve; Here hedys cleve, And schedyn here blood. Rex 1 Heyl, be thou kyng in kage ful hye! Heyl, we nyghe thin halle ryght nye! Knowyst thou ought that chylde slye He is born here abowth? He is born of a mayd yynge; He shal be kyng ovyr every kyng. We go to seke that lovely thyng, To hym fayn wolde I lowth. Rex 2 Balaam spak in prophecy: A sterre shulde ful lovelye Lythtyn upon mayd marye. Comyn of Jacobys kynn, The childe is born and lyth hereby, Blomyd in a madenys body. A sterre hath strekyn upon the sky And ledde us fayr be fenne. Rex 3 The sterre hath ledde us out of the est To seke a baron born best. He shal be kyng of myghtys mest, As prophecy gynneth spell. We be kyngys in wey werey. Syr kyng, for thi curtesy: Tell us to that childe so lovely — In what town gymnyth he dwelle?	[<i>Kings enter</i>] BALTAZARE: Hail, be thou king in dais full high! Hail, we approach thine hall right near! Do you know about that wise child Is He born here about? He is born of a young maid; He shall be king over every king. We go to seek that lovely thing, To him eagerly would I bow. MELCHIZAR: Balaam spake in prophecy: A star should full lovely Alight upon maid Mary. Coming of Jacob’s kin,* The child is born and lies hereby, Born in a maiden’s body. A star hath streaked across the sky And led us well through fen.† JASPER: The star has led us out of the east To seek a baby born best He shall be king of might’s most, As prophecy begins to spell. We are kings in way weary. Sir king, for thy curtesy: Tell us about that child so lovely — In what town does he dwell?	* Balaam was a wise man from the East who prophesied in the Old Testament that “there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel...” (Numbers 24:17, King James Version) † A “fen” is a marsh or swamp. It’s often used to imply difficult or dangerous terrain to cross.
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Herodes Rex Ye thre kyngys rekenyd be rowe: Ley now downe youre wurdys lowe. Such a carpynge is unknowe, Onrekenyd in my regne! I am a kynge of hygh degré! Ther shal non ben above me! I have florens and fryghthis fre, Parkys and powndys pleyne. But goth to fynde that ye sech, And yf ye knowe such a lech And ye hym fynde, I yow besech Comyth agen be me, And I shal be both blyth and bowne That all worchep to hym be done! With reverens I shal seke hym sone And honour hym on kne. Therefore, kyngys, I yow pray Whan ye have don youre jurnay, Come agen this same way The trewth to me to telle. Come and tell me, as ye spede, And I shal qwyte ryght wel youre mede With gold and tresour and rych wede, With furrys rych and wurth pelle.	KING HEROD: Ye three kings reckoned be in group; Lay down now your rumors low. Such foolish talk is unknown, Unheeded in my reign! I am a king of high degree! There shall none be above me! I have plants and fruits abundant, Forests and ponds plenty. But go and find that ye seek, And if ye know such a healer* And you find him, I you beseech Come again by me, And I shall be both joyful and ready That all worship to him be done! With reverence I shall seek him soon And honor him on my knee. Therefore, kings, I you pray When ye have finished your journey, Come again this same way Tell the truth to me. Come and tell me, as ye speed, And I shall quite right well reward you With gold and treasure and rich attire, With rich furs and worthy skins.	* “Leche” literally means physician or surgeon, and can more figuratively mean one who saves another, protector, preserver, helper, or healer. I chose to use the latter for this translation.
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Rex 1 Kynge, have good day! I go my way To seche Lord of myght. He shal be ryght Oure leche. Rex 2 Kynge, ful sterne Be felde and ferne I goo To sekyn a kynge. He takyth wonynge In woo. Rex 3 If we hym fynde, Oure kynge ful kynde, Be a may From kynge and qwen, We comyn agen This day. Herodes Rex A, fy, fy on talys that I have ben tolde Here befor my cruel kne! How shuld a barn wax so bold Be bestys yf he born be? He is yong, and I am old An hardy kyng of hye degré! This daye tho kynggys shal be kold If they cum ageyne be me! My goddys I shall upreysse! A derke devyll with falsnese, I saye,	BALTAZARE: King, have good day! I go my way To seek Lord of might. He shall be right our healer. MELCHIZAR: King, full stern, by field and fern, I go to seek a king. He takes his dwelling in woe. JASPER: If we him find, Our king full kind, By a maiden from king and queen, We come again this day. <i>[The kings leave Herod.]</i> KING HEROD: <i>[to himself]</i> A, fie, fie on tales that I have been told Here before my cruel knee! How should a baby grow so bold If he be born by beasts? He is young, and I am old, a hardy king of high degree! This day those kings shall be killed If they come again by me! My gods I shall raise up!*	* Herod again calls on pagan gods, and now attempts to cast a misdirection spell on the kings.
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Shall cast a myst in the kynggys eye Be bankys and be dalys drey That be derk, thei shall cum this weyys. Rex 1 Go we to sek owr lord and our lech! Yon stere will us tech the weyis full sone! To save us from myschyff, God, I here besech! Onto hys joyis that we may rech I pray hem of this bone. [Tunc ibunt reges cum muneribus ad Jhesum et Primus Rex dicit:] Heyle, be thu kyng cold clade!* Heyll, with maydynnys mylk fade! Heyll, I cum to thee with gold glade! As wese wrytyng bere it record: Gold is the rycheeste metall, And to weryng most ryall. Gold I gyff thee in this hall, And know thee for my lorde. Rex 2 Lorde, I knele upon my kne. Sote encence I offere to thee. Thow shalte be the fyrst of high degré, Non so mekell of myght In Goddys howse as men shall se! Thow shalt honour the Trynité,	A dark devil with falseness, I say, Shall cast a mist in the kings' eyes By banks and by dales dreary That be dark, they shall come this way. <i>[Herod exits. Focus shifts back to the kings.]</i> BALTAZARE: We go to seek our lord and our healer! Yon star will us show the ways full soon!† To save us from mischief, God, I here beseech! Onto his joys that we may reach I pray Him of this boon. [Then the kings will go with gifts to Jesus (<i>and Mary</i>) and the first king says:] Hail, be thou king humbly clothed!* Hail, with maiden's milk fed! Hail, I come to thee with gold bright! As wise writing bear it record: Gold is the richest metal, And to wearing most royal. Gold I give thee in this hall, And know thee for my lord. MELCHIZAR: Lord, I kneel upon my knee. Fragrant incense I offer to thee. Thou shalt be the first of high degree, None so great of might In God's house as men shall see!	† Now that they have left Herod, the star reappears. * The only explanation I can find for the description "cold clad" is that perhaps they are referring to his humble clothing.
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Thre personys in oon Gode free And all oo Lord of Myght. Rex 3 Lord, I knele downe be thy bede. In maydyns fleshe thu arte hede. Thy name shal be wyde rede And kyng ovyr all kynggys! Byttyr myre to thee I brynge, For bytter dentys on thee thei shall dyng, And byttyr deth shall be thy endyng, And therfor I make mornying. Maria Kynggys kynde, Frome the fende God yow defende. Homwarde ye wende And to your placys ye lende That ye shulde tende. Rex 1 Now have we the place fownde! To Herode go we this stownde — With owr wordys we were bownde That we shulde cum ageyne. Gowe a pace and sey owr spech, For we have fownde oure lord and lech. All the truth we wyll hem tech How the kyng is borne of a quene.	They shall honor the Trinity, Three persons in one God free And all one Lord of Might. JASPER: Lord, I kneel down by thy bed. In maiden's flesh thou art hidden. Thy name shall be wide read And king over all kings! Bitter myrrh to thee I bring, For bitter blows on thee they shall beat, And bitter death shall be thy ending, And therefore I make mourning. MARY: Kings kind, From the fiend May God defend you. Homeward you go And to your places return That you should tend.* <i>[The kings leave Mary and the baby]</i> BALTAZARE: Now have we the place found! To Herod go we soon — With our words we were bound That we should come again. Go a pace and say our speech, For we have found our lord and healer. All the truth we will to him say How the king is born of a queen.	* “Tend” here likely means to focus or concentrate, specifically on good deeds or ministering.
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Rex 2 Myn hede is hevy as lympe of leede, But yf I slepe, I am adrede My witt shall fare the warse! I wax hevy in lyme and flanke — Downe I ley me upon this banke, Under this bryght sterre, iwys. Rex 3 Brother I must lye thee bye! I will go never ovyr this styte Tyll I have a slepe. The yong kyng and hys mother mary Save us all from every velany! Now Cryst us save and kepe. Rex 1 Such hevynese have us cawght — I must drynk with yow a drawght To slepe a lytyll whyte. I am hevy, heed and footte I shulde stumbyll at resche and root And I shuld goo a myle. [His dormiunt reges et venit Angelus et dicit eis:] Angelus Ye kynggys on this hill: Werk ye not aftyr Herodys wyll! For yf ye do, he wyll yow kyll This day or nyght.	MELCHIZAR: Mine head is heavy as a lump of lead, But if I sleep, I am afraid My wit shall fare the worse! I grow heavy in limb and flank — Down I lay me upon this bank, Under this bright star, certainly. JASPER: Brother I must lie by thee! I will go never over this road Till I have a sleep. The young king and his mother Mary Save us all from every villainy! Now Christ save us and keep. BALTAZARE: Such heaviness have us caught — I must drink with you a draught to sleep a little while. I am heavy, head and foot I should stumble at rush and root if I should go a mile. [Here the kings sleep and the angel comes (<i>in a dream</i>) and says to them:] ANGEL: Ye kings on this hill: Work ye not after Herod's will! For if you do, he you will kill This day or night.	
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My Lorde yow sent this tydyng To rest yow kynggys in rych clothynge. And whatn ye rysyn and goo to your dwellyng, Tak home the wey full ryght! Whether that ye be wakyn or slepe, My Lorde God shall yow keppe. In goode tyme, ye ded down drepe To take yowr rest. Herodes, to the devyll he tryst, To marre yow in the myrke myste. My Lord God is ful of lyst To glathe yow for his geste. And therfore, kyngys, whatn ye ryse, Wendyth ferth be weys wyse Ther your hall be sett in syse In dyverse londe. Fadyr of God, in all thyng Hath yow grawntyd his swete blyssynge. He shall yow save from all shendynge With his ryght honde. [Tunc surgant reges et dicat Primus Rex:] Rex 1 A bryght sterre ledde us in to Bedleem — A bryghtere thyng I saw in drem, Bryghtere than the sunnebeem! An aungell I saw ryght here. The fayre flowre that here gan falle	My Lord sent you this tiding To stop you kings in rich clothing. And when you rise and go to your dwelling, Go home the way full right!* Whether that you be waking or sleep, My Lord God shall you keep. In good time, you did down droop To take your rest. Herod, to the devil he trust, To mar you in the murky mist. My Lord God is full of lust† To welcome you for his guest. And therefore, kings, when ye rise, Go forth by ways wise There your hall be properly set In diverse land. Father of God, in all things Has granted you his sweet blessing. He shall save you from all harm With his right hand. [Then let the kings rise and the First King says:] BALTAZARE: A bright star led us in to Bethlehem — I brighter thing I saw in my dream, Brighter than the sunbeam! An angel I saw right here.	* Or “most direct” or “straight back.” † Any source of pleasure or delight.
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From Herowdys Kynge he gan us kalle. He taught us hom tyll oure halle A wey by another mere. Rex 2 I sawghe a syght — Myn hert is lyght To wendyn home. God, ful of myght, Hath us dyght Fro develys dome. Rex 3 Oure God I blysse — He sent us, iwys, His aungel bryght. Now we wake The wey to take Home full ryght.	The fair flower that here descended From Herod the king he called us. He taught us home to our palace A way through another country.* MELCHIZAR: I saw a sight — My heart is light to go home. God, full of might, Hath us delivered† From the devil’s power.‡ JASPER: Our God I bless — He sent us, certainly, His angel bright. Now we wake The way to take home full right.	* “Mere” means the boundary between kingdoms or the outer limits of a country. It can also mean the borderland along the boundary. † Literally, “dyght” means to prepare, arrange, put in order, transport, or set. ‡ “Dom” specifically means judgement, decision, command, or power to rule or govern.
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