

CHRISTMAS

“WORSHIP”

(How Worship Brings Great Comfort to Your Heart)

Matthew 2: 1-11



THE WISE MEN OFFER...

- ◆ Gold (Sovereignty)
- ◆ Frankincense (Supplication)
- ◆ Myrrh (Sacrifice)

“They fell down and worshipped Him, and presented unto Him gifts; gold, frankincense and myrrh.” (V. 11)

Bill Kirk

Introduction "CHRISTMAS WORSHIP"

Text: Matthew 2: 1-11

Subject: "How True Worship Brings Great Comfort to Your Heart."

Introduction Our Text Is V. 2 – The Words of Wise Men

"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.**"

Question: Who is searching for Jesus?

Answer: (V. 1) "There came wise men from the East."

Question: Who are these wise men?

Answer: They are men engaged in the study of astronomy.

- ◆ They lived in Chaldea, Persia or Arabia.
- ◆ They were held in high esteem by the Persian court.
- ◆ They were admitted as counselors to give advice.
- ◆ They were wealthy, educated, skillful and respected.

But most of all, they were hungry to see Jesus.

Question: How did they find Jesus?

Answer: (V. 2) "We have seen His star in the East."

- ◆ The star was not a fixed star (a planet).
- ◆ The star was not a meteor flash,
- ◆ The star was a miracle, supernatural phenomenon that appeared to lead the wise men to Jerusalem.

Question: Why did the wise men travel such a long distance?

Answer: (v. 2) "We are come to worship Him."

Question: What does it mean to worship?

Answer: The word "worship" means:

- ◆ "To acknowledge the worth of"
- ◆ "To give adoration to"
- ◆ "To express reverence, awe and gratitude"

Fact: True worship is unselfish, its end is the glory of God. (Repeat)

- ◆ True worship is not to get blessed, but to bless God.

The question is:

- ◆ How did the wise men worship?
- ◆ Why did they bring what they brought?
- ◆ What's the meaning of the gold, frankincense and myrrh?

- ◆ And, how does it comfort and uplift and undergird each of us this Christmas season?

Three Wise Men Travel Over 1,000 Miles to Reveal Three Incredible Truths

I. The "Sovereignty" of the Lord (Gold)

(V. 11) "And when they were come into the house, they say the young child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him, and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto Him gifts; **gold.**"

Question: What is the first gift mentioned?

Answer: It is gold.

Question: What is the significance of gold?

Answer: In verse 2, the wise men brought their gifts to a child whom they understood was to be "King of the Jews".

Question: Why the gold?

Answer: Because gold was a sign of royalty and was offered to kings.

- ◆ In Genesis 41:42, Joseph wears a gold neck chain.
- ◆ In Daniel 2:32, 38, King Nebuchadnezzar has a head of gold.
- ◆ In Daniel 5:7, 29, Daniel wears gold as a ruler.
- ◆ In II Samuel 12:30, Rabbah's king wears a crown of gold.
- ◆ In Psalm 21, the author of Psalm 21 wears gold.
- ◆ In Ecclesiastes 2:8, the king of Jerusalem is a collector of gold.
- ◆ In Ester 4:11, King Ahasuerus holds a golden scepter.

In Other Words

- ◆ Gold is a gift fitted for a king. (Why?)
- ◆ Because gold represents the sovereignty of that king.

In Other Words

Gold is symbolic of the sovereign rule of the one the gold is given to.

In Other Words

- ◆ Gold given to Jesus is sending a message to every one of us.
 1. Jesus is the Sovereign Lord.
 2. Jesus is over everything that touches your life.
 3. Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of Lords and in charge of what you are not in charge of.

Question: What is the sovereignty of God?

Answer: It is revealed in scripture:

- ◆ Psalm 66:7 "God rules by His power forever."
- ◆ Psalm 93:1 "The Lord reigns."
- ◆ Psalm 96:10 "Say among the heathen, the Lord reigns."
- ◆ Isaiah 52:7 "Our God reigns."
- ◆ Revelation 19:6 "Alleluia" (why?) "For the Lord God omnipotent reigns."
- ◆ Psalm 18:30 "As for God, His way is perfect."
- ◆ Psalm 31:15 "Our times are in His hands."

What is the Sovereignty of God?

1. It is the fact of absolute truth that **God is under no external restraint whatsoever.**
2. The sovereignty of God means that **God is the supreme dispenser of all events.**
3. The sovereignty of God is the fact that **God rules over all with justice, wisdom and grace.**

Question: Why is the gold at Christmas so important?

Answer: Because the sovereignty of God is the great **ground of support and confidence** for His people.

- ◆ Gold given to Jesus means that you can **trust Him** with the things you cannot understand!

#1. Gold means the sovereignty of the Lord.

II. The "Supplication" of the Lord (Frankincense)

(V. 11) "They presented unto Him **frankincense.**"

Question: What is the second gift mentioned?

Answer: Frankincense.

Question: What is frankincense?

Answer: It is a white resin (or gum) substance taken from a tree.

Question: What was it used for?

Answer: It was used in offering something to God.

- ◆ In offering incense, burning coals were taken from the altar of burnt offering.
- ◆ These coals were then placed on the altar of incense in front of the holy of holies.
- ◆ On these coals, the incense was then sprinkled.
- ◆ The sweet, fragrant smoke rising heavenward was symbolic.

Question: What did it symbolize?

Answer: It was symbolic in the Old Testament of the prayers of the people of God.

Psalm 141:2 says:

"Let my prayer be as incense rising and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice."

Question: Why give frankincense to Jesus at His birth?

Answer: It is God the Father telling us something:

1. That Jesus is our great intercessor and receives our prayers.
 2. That as incense on the altar begins with man, and as it burns, ascends upward to God. So likewise, our prayers begin in the heart and ascend heavenward to God.
 3. Incense means that Jesus is waiting to receive our adoration, petitions and supplications.
 4. Frankincense means that it's okay to pour out your heart to God in prayer.
- ◆ It's okay to tell God **how you feel.**
 - ◆ It's okay to **release your burdens** to Him.
 - ◆ It's okay to offer up your **inner most groanings** to the Lord.

- ◆ It's okay to **pour out your prayer on earth**, and believe that it ascends to heaven.

In Other Words

- ◆ If the sovereignty of God involves trusting.
- ◆ Then the supplication involves **telling** God.

Question: Why is frankincense so important?

Answer: Because the golden altar of incense of the Old Testament Tabernacle is a picture of Jesus (our intercessor or supplication).

(Exodus 30: 1-4) "Make an altar to burn incense upon with horns, a crown of gold and golden rings to carry it wherever you go."

Notice your incense altar –

1. **Horns**

- ◆ The altar of incense has four horns (one in each corner).
- ◆ Horns in the Bible represent power.
- ◆ Horns mean that you have power in prayer.

2. **The Crown**

- ◆ The altar was crowned with a ledge of gold.
- ◆ The crown (or ledge) kept the burning coals of incense from falling to the ground.
- ◆ The crown was to give us confidence, that our incense of prayer doesn't fall wasted to the ground.

3. **The Golden Rings**

- ◆ The rings were so the poles could carry the altar all through the wilderness. (Why?)
- ◆ To assure Israel and us that wherever you go, you can touch God in prayer.
- ◆ And God will hear you wherever you are!

#1. God reveals the sovereignty of God.

#2. Frankincense reveals our supplication that God hears.

III. The "Sacrifice" of the Lord (Myrrh)

(Verse 11) "They presented unto Him, gold frankincense and **myrrh**."

Question: What is myrrh?

Answer: It is a bitter substance obtained from trees in Arabia.

Question: What was it used for?

Answer: It was used for embalming the dead. (John 19: 39)

Question: Why myrrh from the wise men?

Answer: The myrrh is symbolic of the suffering and the sacrifice of Jesus.

- ◆ It is symbolic and relevant today!

What's it mean?

1. It means that Jesus is touched with the feelings of our infirmities!
2. It means that Jesus identifies with every pain of your life!
3. It means that as Jesus was sustained by His Father in sorrow, so He will sustain you in your sorrow!

And everybody has seasons of pain and sorrow.

- ◆ A.W. Tozer calls it "**The Ministry of the Night.**"
- ◆ Henri Nouwen called it "**The Ministry of Absence.**"
- ◆ St. John of the Cross called it "**The dark Night of the Soul.**"

When William Barclay (the great Scottish preacher) buried his 21 year old who drowned, he said, "God did not stop the accident, but He did still the storm within my heart, so that somehow my wife and I came through that terrible time on our own two feet."

Barclay said when things like that happen there are just three things to be said.

1. To understand them is impossible.
2. Jesus does not offer us solutions to them. What He does offer us is His strength to accept what we cannot understand.
3. The fatal reaction is a grudge against God, but the one saving reaction is to go on living and find in the presence of Jesus the strength and courage to meet life with steady eyes, knowing the comfort that God too is afflicted in my affliction.

**That's the myrrh,
"God too is afflicted in my affliction."**

Conclusion

Question: What is Christmas worship?

#1. Gold means:

- ◆ **Sovereignty** (You can trust in the sovereignty of God)

#2. Frankincense means:

- ◆ **Supplication** (You can tell the Lord in prayer wherever is on your heart)

#3. Myrrh means:

- ◆ **Suffering** (You can be assured that God too is afflicted in your affliction)

Amen!
Bill Kirk