

The Gifts of the Wisemen

Introduction

Greetings and welcome to our Christmas edition of *“My Thoughts with Dale Van De Bogart.”* We welcome our faithful watchers and if this is the first time watching, all notes are in PDF, and located on our website, vdbm.org. Click on My Thoughts Video Series, scroll down the page to choose the series, and download our notes.

Our Christmas segment is titled, *“The Gifts of the Wisemen.”* I will discuss the significance of each of the three gifts the Wisemen or Magi brought to the baby Lord Jesus. Before I get into these special gifts, let’s talk about the *“Seven Irrevocable Laws Of The Christmas Holidays.”* As I speak of these, our Bible reading will come from Matthew 2:1-12.

Seven Irrevocable Laws of the Christmas Holidays

1. The time you spend finding a parking space is inversely proportional to the amount of time you have to spend shopping.
2. The other check-out line always moves faster – if you don’t believe me, change lines, and see what happens.
3. **Beware of the three most frightening words – Some Assembly Required.** Be aware that unassembled toys take three times as long to assemble as they say because the guy who wrote the instructions speaks 3 languages English not being one of them. And while there will always be at least one missing part, there will always be a pile of nuts, bolts, and washers left over.
4. **The three most often overlooked words are – Batteries Not Included.** Be aware that toys that require batteries seldom if ever come with them.
5. When you return to the store to buy the gift that your husband, wife, or child showed you the previous day, it is gone, and they will not be receiving any more.
6. If you hear a loud crash in the living room, probably, your Christmas tree is lying on its side. If this happens more than once during the season you probably own an indoor pet.
7. If your toilet is ever going to break or your sink plug up it will be when everyone is at your house celebrating.

The Perfect Gifts

Christmas is often seen as that time of year for the giving of gifts. People frantically try to find that perfect gift for that special person to express their feelings and relationship toward one another.

The origin of the gift-giving tradition is obscured in antiquity. I do find in Scripture in the narrative of the birth of Jesus that a group of wise men came from the East (the area of Iraq and Iran) seeking the infant Jesus. Finding Him they presented Him with gifts of Gold, Frankincense, and

Myrrh. The gifts of the Wisemen or Magi were appropriate for they express the very essence of who Jesus is.

There are a lot of lessons we can learn from the story of the Wisemen. Four of them are:

1. We all have a God-given desire to seek Him
2. God has taken the initiative to reveal Himself to us.
3. The enemy fights against our knowledge of God.
4. From the time Jesus was born, Satan went to work trying to undo/stop what God had begun.

Today I want us to look at the lessons of the special gifts brought to the Baby Jesus on that first Christmas.

Passage Text: Matthew 2:1-12

¹ Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,

² saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."

³ When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him;

⁴ and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

⁵ They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet:

⁶ "'And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.'"

⁷ Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared.

⁸ And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him."

⁹ After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was.

¹⁰ When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.

¹¹ And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

¹² And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

The Gifts of the Giver

At the time of Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, there appeared a star over Judea that had never been seen before. This star was the announcement of the birth of the "**Bright and Morning Star**" that is spoken of in Revelation 22:16, "**I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you about these things for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.**"

There is a prophecy of Balaam's in Numbers 24:17, "**I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel;**" This prophecy of Balaam, who lived in the east, might have been easily known by these men; and who, observing such a star appear over the land of Judea, might conclude that now the scepter bearer or king was born.

This was to be among the first prophecies of the coming Messiah. These wise men took the appearance of this star to be a sign of the Messiah's arrival. They interpreted these words to mean when a star shall "**walk**" or steer its course from Jacob, over the land of Israel, then a scepter, or scepter bearer, that is, a king, shall rise out of Israel.

I. Gold

In the earliest of creation, gold was principally used for ornaments. It was very abundant and easily mined. Many tons of it were used in connection with the temple as we can see in 2 Chronicles 1:15, "**And the king made silver and gold as common in Jerusalem as stone, and he made cedar as plentiful as the sycamore of the Shephelah.**"

In our time gold is less plentiful. Most nations have hoarded it in vaults that are nearly impervious to outside elements. Gold is now, and always has been a symbol of great riches and wealth. Our entire economy began on the value of gold as its foundation.

Thus, we see that the gold that was given by the Wisemen to the child Jesus was a symbol of his royalty and riches. Here was the very Son of God, the owner of all the cattle on a thousand hills, the King of the Universe, the King of all Kings, Creator of all things, rich in mercy and grace.

Rich in love and compassion for the fallen state of man, who had left all of those riches of Heaven behind to become a man who would die for the sins of mankind, to reconcile us to God, and redeem us from the curse.

Nothing Can Purchase Salvation

Now we see no amount of gold can be purchased in one moment of life. Even the happiness and joy that comes from wealth fade very quickly. The riches of His grace give us the gift of salvation without price. We cannot pay for it nor earn it. No wealth is needed to purchase eternal life, yet we receive all the wealth of Heaven as heirs with Jesus when we accept His sacrifice for our sins and receive Him as our Lord and Savior.

I have a question for everyone. How can we give gold to the Lord Jesus Christ?

- **In 1 Corinthians 3:11-13**, God says our works and lives when we stand at judgment will either be like gold, silver, and precious stones which are worth something or they will be as wood, hay, and stubble. Let's give God the gold of a life built on the very best foundation. Jesus Christ!
- **In 2 Timothy. 2:20**, let's us give Jesus the gold of being a vessel of honor as we serve him. Let us be someone that he can be proud of.
- **In 1 Peter 1:7**, let's give the Lord the gold of living the life that will resist sin, overcome temptation, face any trials, and pay any price to live for Him.

II. Frankincense

There are over 17 references to Frankincense in the Bible.

- It was one of the ingredients in the perfume of the sanctuary in Exodus 30:34-37.
- It was also used as a part of the meat offering in Leviticus 2:1 and 2:16.

When frankincense burned it gave off a fragrant odor, and because of this, the incense became a symbol of the Divine name of Jehovah God and an emblem of prayer.

By this, we can see that Jesus was given a gift that symbolized the fact that his body was to be a **"meat offering"** unto God for the sins of humanity. His life gave off a fragrant scent of love and compassion for all that came in contact with Him, and the prayers of our Lord were ever going toward the Father in Heaven on behalf of those around him.

Jesus is the sweet, peaceful presence when you are shut in with God in your secret place. All of the love, compassion, and mercy of Christ was mixed with his sacrifice upon the cross for our sins as he became that **"meat offering"** unto God. We can see that the frankincense has a very special meaning to this child, Jesus Christ. Jesus is the one through whom we pray.

Here is another question. How can we give frankincense to the Lord Jesus Christ?

- **Let us offer the frankincense of a life of prayer.**
- **Let us offer the frankincense of material offerings.**
- **Let us offer the frankincense of our all forever put on the altar for his use.**

III. Myrrh

Myrrh was first mentioned as a principal ingredient in the holy anointing oil in Exodus 30:23. Used to anoint every part of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. I remind you that every part of that Old Testament tabernacle was a type and shadow of the coming Savior of the world.

It was also used in embalming of the dead as we can see in John 19:39-40, "***Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. So, they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.***"

Used as a Perfume and for Pain

It was also as a perfume:

- **In Esther 2:12**, all of the women of Ahasuerus' court were anointed with myrrh before coming before the king.
- **In Psalms 45:7-8**, "***You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions; your robes are all fragrant with myrrh and aloes and cassia, from ivory palaces, stringed instruments make you glad.***"
- **In Proverbs 7:17**, "***I have perfumed my bed with myrrh, aloes, and cinnamon.***"

It was also custom of the Jews to give those condemned to death by crucifixion "***wine mingled with myrrh***" to dull the pain of the cross (Mark 15:23). The drugged wine was probably partaken of by the two others being crucified, but when the Roman soldiers pressed it upon Jesus "***he received it not***".

The Real Meaning of Myrrh

The Wisemen's gift of myrrh to the child Jesus has great meaning to us.

- **Gift of sweetness in the love and mercy that he extended to us.** Thank God for the love of Jesus Christ for a lost and dying world. Thank you, Jesus, for loving us before we loved you.
- **Symbol of the anointing upon the life of Christ.** He is the anointed one! The very Son of God. Only through the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the washing of our sins away in the sacrifice of his blood, we can be saved.
- **Symbol of his willingness to suffer for our sins.** He refused to dull the pain for it had to be felt. Refused to give up his suffering or ability to think clearly until the very end. He knew the importance of what his death upon the cross meant to each of us.

Jesus died for you and me. The gifts he received even as a small child were symbols of his love, compassion, and mercy for mankind.

One more question. How can we give myrrh to him?

- Live an anointed life by the power of the Holy Spirit.
- Dying to ourselves that we might say as Paul in Colossians 3:3-5 ***“For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.***

Conclusion

Can we give him anything less? Are you giving Him your gold, frankincense, and myrrh?

Let this Christmas Season be the greatest time of your life. Give Jesus the greatest gift you could ever give. Give Him your heart and life in complete surrender and He will give you the greatest gift you could ever receive in return if he hasn't already, the gift of salvation and eternal life. Now that's what I call a **Real Christmas, Amen!**

I am Dale Van De Bogart and I fully agree on God's Word!

If you are reading this and never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, what are you waiting for? Click on [FREE GIFT](#) and make Jesus the Lord of your life **TODAY!** Remember, read your Bible daily, it's good food! Like and follow us on [Facebook](#), subscribe to our [YouTube](#) channel, and watch this and other My Thoughts videos.

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