

The Parish of Wellow

Christmas Day 2005

Matthew 2: 1-2, 9-12

Christmas presents

Passage, Sermon Notes and Questions

Please feel free to take these sermon notes home with you and you may wish to find some time during next week to consider the questions below.

1. Sermon Passage

Matthew 2: 1-2, 9-12

1 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem

2 and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."

9 After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

10 When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.

11 On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

2. Sermon Notes

2.1 Wise men's gifts to Jesus

On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of frankincense and of myrrh.

Matthew 2:11

- i. Gold
- ii. Frankincense
- iii. Myrrh

2.2 Gold - Who Jesus is

Gold a gift fit for a King.

Jesus was the King of Kings.

Are we prepared to come under Jesus' sovereignty?

Are we prepared to put Jesus on the throne of our lives or do we wish to continue to run our lives our way?

2.3 Frankincense - What he came do

Frankincense used by priests in the temple. It is a tree resin collected from one of two types of frankincense trees found in Southern Arabia and Northern Somalia.

Jesus was the ultimate high priest, who was to make the final reconciliation between God and Humankind.

Are we prepared to put our trust in him?

2.4 Myrrh - What it cost him

Myrrh was used to embalm the dead. It is a bitter, aromatic, transparent gum exuded from the bark of vari-

ous trees and shrubs that are native to Africa and southern Asia. Myrrh had many uses in Biblical times: as incense, (Exodus 30:23), as a perfume to freshen garments (Psalm 45:9), as a painkiller (Mark 15:23) but its main use was to embalm the dead.

'Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds. Taking Jesus' body, the two of them wrapped it, with the spices, in strips of linen. This was in accordance with Jewish burial customs.' John 19:39

The baby lying in that manger was destined to die for our sins.

Are we grateful to him for what he has done?

3. Questions to consider back at home

3.1 Imagine yourself as one of those wise men - what might you be feeling?

3.2 What do you think Mary and Joseph made of the arrival of the wise men?

3.3 What do you think Mary and Joseph thought about the three presents given by the wise men?

3.4 In what sense was Jesus a king?

3.5 Does the role of a priest today differ with the role of a priest in Jesus' time?

If you would like to discuss these questions further please feel free to call me on 01761 432293

Matthew Street 25th December 2005