



RESPONDING TO GOD'S GIFT

Matthew 2:1-12

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Good news travels far but not always fast. The wise men traveled from the East at least as far as Babylon, which was a journey of about 700 miles. 20 miles a day would have taken more than a month to get to Bethlehem from Babylon. The fact that Herod ordered the death of all boys two years old and under suggests it could have been as much as two years from the birth of Jesus to the arrival of the wise men.

Matthew 2:1-12

"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."

What is different between the Magi worship and how Herod wanted to worship?

1. We Can Respond by REJECTING Jesus. (v. 2:7-8, 16)

"as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; **11** no one understands; no one seeks for God. **12** All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." **13** "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." **14** "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." **15** "Their feet are swift to shed blood; **16** in their paths are ruin and misery, **17** and the way of peace they have not known." **18** "There is no fear of God before their eyes." **Romans 3:10-18**

- WORSHIP — deep RESPECT toward God; an act of attributing REVERENT HONOR and homage to God.
- The essence of a proper attitude to God is reverent "FEAR," the absence of this fear is practical ATHEISM.

II. We Can Respond by WORSHIPING Jesus. (v 9-12)

Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem. "Woman," Jesus replied, believe me, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem.

John 4:20-21

- The Lord God DOES NOT need our worship, but DESIRES our worship for His glory.

A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the Lord.

Isaiah 60:6

The Significance of the Magi's Gifts:

1. GOLD – The gift displays God's Royalty
2. FRANKINCENSE – The gift displays God's Deity

"A popular and expensive resinous substance. Significantly, it was also part of the recipe for the only incense that could be used on the altar of the temple. The Odor of God is revealed." Exodus 30:34-38

3. MYRRH – The gift displays God's Mission

He was accompanied by Nicodemus, the man who earlier had visited Jesus at night. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds.

John 19:39

Good news travels far — from Bethlehem to Cypress, CA. The good news has come to you today to give the Gift of salvation just as it was available to travelers over 2000 years ago; We either reject Christ or worship Christ. How will you respond to the Jesus?