

Daily Devotional, December 13, 2020

“Frankincense”, (Matthew 2:11, NKJV)

“And when they had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.” (Matthew 2:11)

These “**wise men from the East**” came from afar to see Baby Jesus in “**the house**” (Matthew 2:1,11). They were led by His Messianic Star to the very place where the Christ Child was. They knew Him to be the newborn King of Israel, and demonstrated faith in Him by their efforts and actions. These magi, astrologers/astronomers by profession—they were not kings—brought gifts to Jesus. So too ought we to bring Him gifts, our heart of worship, every time we come to Him in prayer. Today’s devotional will focus on the second of the three gifts listed, “**frankincense**”, and tomorrow we will look at the third gift, “**myrrh**.”

“**Frankincense**” is associated with the worship of God in the Old Testament Law. “**And the LORD said to Moses: “Take sweet spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, and pure frankincense with these sweet spices; there shall be equal amounts of each”** (Exodus 30:34). It would be offered by the priest in the context of the grain offering. “**He shall take from it his handful of the fine flour of the grain offering, with its oil, and all the frankincense which is on the grain offering, and shall burn it on the altar for a sweet aroma, as a memorial to the LORD”** (Leviticus 6:15). Frankincense was associated with the holiness and sinlessness of God, and therefore could not be used with a sin offering. “**But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering. He shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering”** (Leviticus 5:11).

Today, Christians come to God in prayer through our Mediator, Jesus Christ our High Priest (1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 4:14). As both High Priest and Divine Person, it was fitting that the magi brought Jesus “**frankincense**.” Consider the attitude of the Old Testament worshipers who made annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and the magi who made their great pilgrimage to see their Savior. When you make your daily pilgrimage to His throne of grace, do you come with a sense of awe of His holiness?