

GIFTS FOR A KING – PART 2

Matthew 2:1-12 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod **the king**, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, 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. When Herod **the king** had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where **Christ** should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come **a Governor, that shall rule** my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard **the king**, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him **gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh**. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country **another way**.

Just like the wise men, there's a battle to the death between two KINGS in our lives. One king must DIE for the other king to REIGN.

We don't know how many wise men there were, or even where they came from – but we do know the GIFTS that wise men give to a KING! The Queen of Sheba brought similar gifts to Solomon (2 Chron. 9:1), and behold, a greater than Solomon is here! (Matthew 12:42)

FRANKINCENSE was a very costly and fragrant substance distilled from the Boswellia tree found in desert in the Middle East, where it has been traded for over 5000 years! It is a white resin or gum obtained by slitting the bark of the tree, allowing the sap to flow out. The Hebrew word for frankincense is "labona" ("whiteness"), referring to the white colored juice flowing out of the wound in the tree. This gum hardens for three months, and is gathered at the end of the summer, then sold in the form of "tears" (clumps of hardened resin). It was used as medicine and as perfume, but its most important use was in worship. Frankincense is highly fragrant when burned, and was therefore burned as "a sweet savour" to the Lord (that phrase is found 16 times just in Leviticus).

Frankincense was burned on the Altar of Incense, burned in the "meat (meal) offering," and placed on the loaves of the Table of Shewbread. It was also taken behind the veil on the Great Day of Atonement.

Exodus 30:7-8 And Aaron shall burn thereon sweet incense every morning: when he dresseth the lamps, he shall burn incense upon it. And when Aaron lighteth the lamps at even, he shall burn incense upon it, a perpetual incense before the LORD throughout your generations.

Leviticus 6:15 And he shall take of it his handful, of the flour of the meat offering, and of the oil thereof, and all the frankincense which is upon the meat offering, and shall burn it upon the altar for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it, unto the LORD.

Leviticus 24:7 And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the LORD.

Leviticus 16:12 And he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from off the altar before the LORD, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil:

Since frankincense was used by the ancient Egyptians, the Jews may have learned how to prepare it while they were slaves! Instructions on how to properly use frankincense can be found in Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Because of its association with sacrifices, frankincense in Scripture represents prayer and worship, which must be pleasing to God. That's why it is associated with "bread" in the Tabernacle (meal offering, Table of Shewbread) – because worship must conform to the WORD.

Psalms 141:2 Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

Luke 1:10 And the whole multitude of the people were praying without at the time of incense.

Rev. 5:8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.

FOUR WORDS ON WORSHIP ...

HOT

Frankincense was burned on the altar, where the fire was never allowed to go out. God describes Himself as a consuming fire and a jealous God. Paul says that our WORK will be judged by fire. Your WORK is either worship or idolatry in God's eyes! What is your passion "burning" for?

Deuteronomy 4:24 For the LORD thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God.

1 Corinthians 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

HOLY

Frankincense was WHITE in color, a pure substance. Our worship must come from a holy LIFESTYLE, or it is worthless.

1 Peter 1:15-16 But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.

2 Peter 3:11 Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness,

HEAVY

Frankincense had a heavy scent to provide a "sweet smelling sacrifice." What does that mean? Think about it – the tabernacle was constantly filled with the smell of burning FLESH! You can't worship God and flesh!

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

Romans 8:7-8 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

HURT

Frankincense was produced as a result of a WOUND in a tree. This is one of the reasons it was an appropriate gift for Jesus, who was wounded and died on a tree for us! Can you worship when wounded?

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Psalms 68:6 God setteth the solitary in families: he bringeth out those which are bound with chains: but the rebellious dwell in a dry land.

Psalms 27:10 When my father and my mother forsake me, then the LORD will take me up.

Both "the king" and "The King" are competing for your worship!