

King, Priest, Prophet

December 14, 2014

The Wise Men and Their Gifts

- Matthew 2:1-11

How Did The Wise Men Know about the Coming King?

- Common Knowledge of the Time
 - “During that time there was widespread expectation of the coming of a great king, a great deliverer. The Roman historian Suetonius, speaking of the time around the birth of Christ, wrote, ‘There had spread over all the Orient an old and established belief that it was fated at that time for men coming from Judea to rule the world.’ Another Roman historian, Tacitus, wrote that, ‘there was a firm persuasion that at this very time the east was to grow powerful and rulers coming from Judea were to acquire a universal empire.’ The Jewish historian Josephus reports in his *Jewish Wars* that at about the time of Christ’s birth the Jews believed that one from their country would soon become ruler of the habitable earth.”¹
- Daniel
 - Daniel 2:48
 - Five hundred years before Jesus Daniel was in a very influential place to communicate the prophetic Jewish scriptures to the wise men of Babylon about the coming King, Priest and Prophet.
- Other Prophecies
 - Isaiah 9:6-7—100 before Daniel the prophecy of a King
 - Psalms 110:4—500 years before Daniel the prophecy of a Priest
 - Deuteronomy 18:15—1,000 years before Daniel the prophecy of the Ultimate Prophet

A coming King, Priest, and Prophet had been well established. Daniel surely shared those prophecies with the wise men of Babylon, who then passed those prophecies down for five centuries, until the birth of Jesus.

The Three Gifts—Prophetic Pictures

Gold

- A metal of Kings and this baby (toddler) is a King
- John 1:49
- Luke 19:38
- John 18:37
- John 19:19
- 1 Timothy 6:15
- 1 Timothy 1:17
- Revelation 15:3

¹ John F. MacArthur, Matthew: *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1985), 28

No wonder they bowed down, worshipped, opened their treasures, gave Him gifts...the coming King was before them in the manger!

Frankincense

- Jesus is our Praying Priest
- Exodus 30:1, 6-8
- Exodus 30:34-36
 - Frankincense represents something perpetual and unending between God and His priest
- Hebrews 7:23-25
 - Frankincense represents Jesus as our Praying Priest who always lives to make intercession for us, Jesus prays for us perpetually and unceasingly before the Presence of God the Father—those prayers rise as incense.
 - Revelation 8:3-4. The prayers of the saints are mixed with the incense and rise before the throne of God.

Myrrh

- Jesus, the Martyred Prophet
 - Deuteronomy 18:15. Jesus is the Prophet foretold by Moses. Acts 3:22-23 and 7:37 affirm it.
- Mark 6:15
- Luke 13:31-33
 - Jesus not only claimed to be a prophet but also that He would perish and be martyred in Jerusalem
- John 19:38-40
 - Myrrh represents Jesus' martyrdom, death and His sacrifice for the sins of the world.

Practical Application

1. Glorious King

- Jesus has delivered us from darkness and brought us into His kingdom of love
 - Colossians 1:13. We've been welcomed into a kingdom where the King loves His children.
- Jesus gives us an unshakeable Kingdom
 - Hebrews 12:28. Nothing rattles, much less can overthrow, the kingdom God has given to us. The coming kingdom is indeed coming, just like its King, we can count on it—it's unshakable.

2. Praying Priest

- We know Jesus is praying for us
 - Hebrews 7:25
 - Luke 22:31-32

3. Martyred Prophet

- 2 Corinthians 5:21
 - Jesus became my sin, was sacrificed in my place, and suffered my punishment so I could become righteous before God.

Discussion Questions

1. What is the best gift you've ever received? What made it so special? What special meaning did you place on that gift?
2. Why do you suppose God directed Gentile wise men to be the ones who lavishly received Jesus as the new King of the Jews?
3. How can your worship of the Lord become more sacrificial and lavish like that of the wise men?
4. Read Zechariah 9:9-13. What was Jesus proclaiming about Himself by the way He entered Jerusalem (see Luke 19:35-38)?
5. What does it mean to you to know Jesus' kingdom is unshakable?
6. Describe, in your own words, what Jesus being King means to you?
7. What does knowing that Jesus is praying for you mean to you? How does knowing that help you in difficult times?
8. What does it mean to you to know Jesus is a martyred Prophet for you?