

Learning From Some Wise Guys

January 6 is recognized by many Christians as Epiphany, commemorating the arrival of the Wise Men to worship Baby Jesus and present their gifts. Because they were not Jewish, it is often recognized as the time Jesus was first revealed to Gentiles.

Matthew's depiction of these Wise Men can help us in our own quest to find the Savior. It is believed that they consulted the writings of Daniel and other Old Testament prophets whom they considered to speak for God. They paid attention to these prophecies and were expecting God to fulfill His promises. That's a good strategy for us because God still speaks through His Word as well as through His created world.

They also acted on what they knew. They didn't wait until every question was answered and every detail completed. They sought Jesus with what they knew, and as a result, they became part of the fulfillment of God's prophecies. We, too, should act on what we know. We don't have to have all the blanks filled in to trust in Jesus. As we respond in faith, He reveals Himself to us.

These individuals went to great lengths to worship Jesus. They didn't make excuses that the journey was too long, the terrain too difficult, or the temperatures too uncomfortable. The excuses we generate to avoid attending Sunday worship are shameful compared to those of these non-Christians who trudged many difficult miles to find the One worth finding.

They also brought gifts to Jesus. Their worship not only costs them time and effort, but it also costs them financially. All three gifts were expensive and represented an aspect of His future life and ministry, with gold foreshadowing His kingship, frankincense His priesthood, and myrrh His sacrificial death.

Our worship should also involve our financial resources. These offerings are not made to the church nor to the pastor, but to God Most High. It is then up to the local congregation to allocate resources in obedience to Jesus' commands and bring glory to God. We may not have the three gifts they brought, but we should bring what we do have to advance Jesus' Kingdom today.

Their encounter with worshipping Jesus also altered their actions. Instead of going home the same way they came, they feared God enough to change routes. When we discover and worship Jesus, it will cause us to change our ways, too. If we have truly worshipped Him, we will leave differently than we came and obey God every way

we can. To persist in sinful paths indicates a failure to understand, appreciate, and receive the newborn King.

We can be thankful for the Magi who journeyed to find the King of the Universe, for they are akin to all of us who aren't Jewish. As we ponder their struggle to make their trip, their generosity in presenting gifts to Jesus, and their changed behavior after encountering Him, may we do likewise as we worship the Savior today.

George Bowers – CBC Executive Board

Weekly Prayer Point

El Olam, our Everlasting Father, though You overshadow time, You see us entering a new year in time. Just as You limited your actions to the fullness of time, to creation, the honoring of feast days, we ask that You fill us with the expectation of what You have for us in this new year! Open our eyes to see You in every facet of our lives. As our eyes are lifted to and fixed on the Greatness of You, let the things of this world be in our peripheral vision. Open our hearts to see Your Kingdom and await the fullness of that vision to come to pass. Direct us to walk in Your Kingdom with our feet planted on this earth. Open our ears, Holy Father, to hear Your voice, both in Your Word and in our conversations with You! Heavenly Father, You have blessed us beyond our comprehension. We thank You for our families, for the Body of Christ, and for all our needs being met. We desire to bless Your Name and bring glory to You in this new year! Lead us into that field that You say is ready to harvest. We ask this in Your Name.

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Hazelton Congregation in Bruceton Mills, WV and Pastor Michael Bernard
- Holy Temple Church of God in Uganda, Africa and Pastor Stella Lukledde

CBC Prayer Committee