

# WESTERN WISDOM BIBLE STUDY

## "They Presented Unto Him Gifts"



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.

Matt. 2:11.

In the manger of his heart, which he has been striving all the year to purify of the animal propensities in his nature, the sincere aspirant trusts the Christ-child will at Christmas be born. He knows, with Angelus Silesius, that:

"Though Christ a thousand times in  
Bethlehem be born,  
And not within thyself, thy soul will be  
forlorn."

He has been conscientiously trying to release himself from the toils of the desire body which separates him from his fellows, and live up to the vibrations of the vital body which unites him with all life. As he succeeds, the Christ is being formed in him, and he becomes imbued with the Christ Spirit of Universal Love, which makes him capable of being a brother to all men. And at the proper time—his Christmas—the birth of his Christ is announced to his consciousness, and in reverent and holy joy he worships him, presenting his gifts, as the Wise Men of old, gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The gold we always hear spoken of in symbology is the emblem of the Spirit, which was blinded by becoming entangled in matter, and this caused all the sorrow in the world. The gold which the aspirant, symbolized by the Wise Man, offers to the Christ is the Spirit, a symbol of his desire to return to the Universal Spirit of Love.

The next Wise Man brings myrrh.

Myrrh is the extract of an aromatic plant that grows in Arabia, a very rare plant indeed. It symbolizes the soul that man extracts when he has cleansed his blood of passion, and become plantlike, chaste and pure. It is an actual fact when we say that there are men who are so holy that they emit an aroma. This is said of some saints and it is true. We hear of the alchemists who tried to transmute base metal into gold; that is the spiritual way of saying that they wanted to purify the threefold body, refine it, and extract from its experiences the soul essence. Therefore the gift of the second Wise Man is soul, which is to be devoted to the service of Christ.

The third gift was frankincense, which is a physical vapor. It symbolizes the physical body which has been etheralized by a holy life. We must surrender this to the will of the Babe newly born in the manger of our hearts rather than to the dictates of our animal natures.

This is the key to the three gifts offered by the Wise Men: the spirit, the soul and the body. As the Christ said, if you want to follow Him, you must sell all that you have. *You are not to keep anything for yourself.* We are to give up body, soul, and spirit, everything, for the higher life, everything for the Christ. Not to an exterior Christ, but to the Christ within. The Three Wise Men are said in the legend to be yellow, black, and white, representatives of the three races we have on earth, the Mongolian, the Negro, and the White Man. Therefore it is very well shown in the legend that they will all eventually come into this beneficent Christ religion. "To Him every knee shall bow."