

ADVENT: WEEK FOUR

day 22

Wise Men

Matthew 2:10–11, Isaiah 40:18, 21–23



These words remind me of the power the Wise Men found emanating from this Holy Child upon their arrival in Bethlehem. They were not afraid or proud to bow before a child. As much as Jesus on the cross should fill us with awe and joy and even sorrowful repentance, I believe Jesus in the manger or Jesus as the young toddler the wisemen encountered should stir up the same kind of wonder in us. We are quick to move past the scandalous nature of a God choosing to wrap Himself in human flesh. I think this is in part because we often reject focusing on things we cannot fully understand. Author Madeleine L'Engle writes, *"There is no more beautiful witness to the mystery of the Word made flesh than a baby's naked body. I remember with sensory clarity sitting with one of my babies on my lap and running my hand over the incredibly pure smoothness of the bare back and thinking that any mother, holding her child thus, must have at least an echo of what it is like to be Mary; that in touching the particular created matter, flesh, of our child, we are touching the Incarnation."* Jesus came as a child and entrusted Himself to a teenage girl. He came to experience all manner of temptation, all the challenges of being housed in a body, not to mention humiliation on a scale none of us can fathom. He became the Word Made Flesh. May we humble ourselves in worship this Advent season, for He is worthy. As we draw ever closer to the celebration of Christmas Day, these words by Scott Cairns on the mystery surrounding the nature of the One we serve seem more relevant than ever: "...we prepare to witness the Mystery, the God made flesh. While it is good that we seek to know the Holy One, it is probably not so good to presume that we ever complete the task, to suppose that we ever know anything about him except what he has made known to us. The prophet Isaiah helps us to remember our limitations when he writes, 'To whom then will you compare me ...? says the Holy One....' Think of it like this: he cannot be exhausted by our ideas about him, but he is everywhere suggested. He cannot be comprehended, but he can be touched. His coming in the flesh—this Mystery we prepare to glimpse again — confirms that he is to be touched."

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prayer:



***Jesus, thank You for coming to allow us to experience a restored relationship with You. Even though we are still waiting for complete restoration, what we have access to now is beyond our comprehension. Thank You for coming in the flesh. May we not ignore the power of the mystery simply because we cannot understand it. May we be like the wise men and bow in reverence before You again and again!
In Your name we pray, Amen.***

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