

I Want... Peace

Matthew 2:1-12

*Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time **some wise men** from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the **newborn king of the Jews**? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." King Herod was **deeply disturbed** when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem. He called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?" "In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote: 'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.' " Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared. Then he told them, "Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!" After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. **When they saw the star**, they were **filled with joy!** They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they **bowed down and worshiped** him. Then **they opened their treasure chests and gave** him gifts of **gold, frankincense, and myrrh**. When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.*

Frankincense symbolized Jesus would be our **High Priest**.

There are two opposing Forces at work in our world:

1. **Holiness** of God.
2. **Sinfulness** of Man!

Hebrews 10:10-12

*For God's will was for us to be **made holy by the sacrifice** of the body of Jesus Christ, **once for all time**. Under the old covenant, the priest stands and ministers before the altar day after day, offering the same sacrifices again and again, which can never take away sins. But our High Priest **offered himself** to God as a single **sacrifice for sins, good for all time**.*

Hebrews 10:14-15

So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin.

Jesus our High Priest — Understands and Cares

2 Peter 1:12-15

So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

He is our Peace in the middle of ALL the storms this life may bring!

Talk About It:

1. What's your favorite Christmas decoration to put up each year?
2. Share a time when you really felt like no one understood what you were going through.
3. How would you describe the opposing forces of God's holiness and our sinfulness?
4. Do you view Jesus as a distant Savior or as someone who understands what you're going through? How does that affect your relationship with Him?
5. How does it feel knowing Christ always understands your struggles and is with you in the middle of them?