

“Epiphany”

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Introduction

Contained in Psalm 72 are a number of prophecies regarding what the role of Jesus would be: kings would present him with gifts, he would deliver the needy and help the afflicted, pity the weak. The needy would be saved from death, and he would rescue people from oppression.

Prophecies

Similar prophecies are included in Isaiah 60: 1-6. Light comes over darkness, sons come from afar, riches come. In Matthew 2:1-12, the Magi sought out a king of Jews, a Messiah. They found and followed a star and found Jesus. Each of the riches they brought to Jesus is symbolic: gold for royalty, frankincense for worship, myrr for suffering.

Seeking Jesus

The magi (wise men) were astrologers. They prepared for their long journey. They saw the star that showed the birth of the Messiah/King and were moved by it. They asked questions (Who is the King of the Jews?) and talked to Herod. They went to Bethlehem.

We seek Jesus as we look for something greater than ourselves. We ask questions: What is the meaning of life? How did creation happen? Why do good things happen to those we consider to be “bad” people and why do bad things happen to those we believe to be “good” people? Why do illnesses and injuries happen?

I grew up in church which, along with Bible studies, provided a foundation for asking and answering questions. There are different faith stories that can be explored which also offer questions and answers and explanations.

Finding Jesus

The magi found Jesus in a manger.

We find Jesus in church, in Christians showing Jesus' love, in the words of the Bible, in nature, through prayer, meditation, worship, and communion. We find Jesus in many miracles that amaze us and go beyond any logical human explanations.

Following Jesus

The magi worshipped Jesus as they bowed down and offered gifts to the Christ Child. They gave gold to honor Jesus' royalty as the divine. They brought frankincense, used for religious purposes related to priesthood and worship, signifying that Jesus would preach and teach. Myrrh signified the suffering and death that would occur later in Jesus' life.

We follow Jesus by accepting Jesus as our Savior. We form a personal relationship with Jesus. We take up the cross as a way of focusing on Jesus; it is not about us. We follow Jesus by practicing the fruits of the spirit- being gentle, being slow to speak and quick to listen. We love God, others, and ourselves.

Conclusion

We are to seek, find, and follow Jesus continuously.

Benediction

May God the Father who led the wise men by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from light, lead you also in your pilgrimage to find the Lord.