

“He Gave Gifts unto Men, Part 2”

By Brother Parrish Lee

Sunday, December 13th, 2015

Thank you. Thank you for your hearts, thank you for your lives, thank you for your sacrifice, thank you for listening to the call, and thank you for joining us and leading in praise and worship this morning. You know, you can't speak for everybody, but how many can't wait to enter into the presence of God? You know, I sing in my car a lot, and it's a good thing that nobody else is in that car with me, because I can't get half of the notes that are going on, but I know he who is the receiver of all good and perfect gifts, He listens to every word. But, the Bible says, when you come together, forsake not that assembling of yourselves together as the manner of some is, as you see that day approaching (Hebrews 10:25), and how God inhabits the praises of His people (Psalms 22:3). Amen. Amen.

Well, giving honor to that God that we talk about, that they talk about so much this morning; that we sang to, that we love, and loves us back. Giving honor to Him. Who, as the Bible says, is the Rose of Sharon, the Bright and Morning Star, the Lily of the valley, the Ancient of Days, but whom we know as our Comforter, whom we know as our Provider, whom we know as the one who does not leave us, even when we should be left, who is the ever-living, ever-forgiving God. That God that we know, giving honor to Him. Giving honor to all those who have come before us, who have paved the way for this ministry, from our founding pastor, he and his family, for our pastor, he and his family, and all those who got called and listened, who stood in the gap to make up the hedge, to allow the ministry to continue going forth. And giving honor to all of y'all, who present yourselves, bring your hearts, and bring your lives, and say, instead of sleeping in, instead of doing something else, instead of working overtime, instead of making any excuse, “I will put myself there, to come and worship my God this morning.” Giving honor to all of y'all.

We have—this month is designated as a month where our theme is, “He Gave Gifts unto Men.” And our Scripture theme is:

Ephesians 4:7-8 *But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.*

He gave gifts unto men. Pastor Ulysse taught all of us, but I really heard, as he was teaching a really good lesson, to definitely take time to give reverence, to give honor to God's Word when we read that from the scripture.

Matthew 2:1-11 *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. 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.

Remain standing for prayer. Lord, we thank You, Mighty God. Every time we come into Your presence, we get humbled and just sometimes don't know what to say, just, "Thank You, Almighty God for what You have done for us, which would take the rest of this week to even mention. We ask that You, in this time of sermon, in this time of fellowship, in this time of congregating, this time of presenting ourselves to You, the Almighty One. And we ask God, we ask, that Your Word is true; as You said, it will not return unto You void, but will surely accomplish that to which You sent it. And this we do, come, pray, and claim, in Jesus' name, and everyone said, amen.

You may be seated, Saints.

Part 1: They Gave Gifts

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem..." Now, if we could just provide a little bit of a setting, here: At the time of our Lord's birth, the Bible goes on to talk about how He was born in Bethlehem, and everything about our Lord had significance. Everything, everything, everything about the Lord had significance. But, it says He was born in Bethlehem, and this was to be from the prophecy in the Book of Micah.

Micah 5:2 *But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.*

And, in verse two (of Matthew chapter two), the wise men said, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star..." Again, the prophecy, from the Book of Numbers, this time

Numbers 24:17 *I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.*

The Bible goes on to talk about these Wise Men, and how they came before the Lord. It says when they found the star, they rejoiced. It's kind of interesting, we had the chance to go to Israel a few year ago, it was some time ago, but, it's amazing how far away Bethlehem is from Jerusalem. And how, you must have known that they were travelling on camels, and they were being guided by the stars. But, it's quite a little distance to go; we had to get on a bus, and we had to travel quite a ways to get to that specific site where they say—and who knows? They know the exact spot where the manger was, where He was born, where the inn was? They just have a place where they call, they say where He was born. But, from Bethlehem to Jerusalem was quite a little ways in travel. And, while we were there, you could see that there was this thing, where some of the people were wondering, and some of them were saying, "Those people are chasing a far-off dream, because who would actually know where this star was, where this great significance was that took place here?"

And, as the wise men found the star, and they rejoiced, even modern-day scientists are looking for what kind of sign that must have been, because truly it must have been something great and significant. And they go on, you have the scientists, you have the astronomers, and they are quite perplexed, thinking that they could just figure it out. And they think it was an alignment of the stars, maybe, an alignment that came together, and maybe that's what made it bright... But, the fact of the

matter is, even at the time when the Lord was born, even though He was right there in their midst, the people of Jerusalem never saw it. Because, the truth of the matter is, the things of God, even though they could be right in front of us, they don't become revealed to us without His blessing, without His anointing. For he is the one who gives knowledge, and understanding, and anointing. So, even though people might look, He blesses those that, as it says in His Word, "Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:" (Isaiah 55:6) He is the One who opens the eyes.

The message title today is actually, "He Gave Gifts Unto Men, Part 2," and, generally, our brother Jesse would be doing all the speaking this morning, but, Jesse asked if he could take a reprieve today, and he gave me some notes, and he said, "I've got this wonderful message," but I've got a little something going on in my throat, and I won't be able to give it, but, here, here are the notes." And I looked at the notes that Jesse had, and I was like, "I can't do that. Jesse, those are some beautiful notes, and maybe sometime you'll be able to share it, but, you know, it's like David said, you can't go out in somebody else's armor. You know? You have to prove it for yourself." And even though I can see what God might do for somebody else, I can talk about it, but I can't talk from it, like it happened to me. I can talk like it happened to somebody else—these are the things that I can say that happened to me.

So, as the Wise Men went there—I love this part, because it just calls them Wise Men. Of course, some people say they were three kings, some people say they were the Magi, kind of like astronomers, they were the scientists of the modern-day time, but the truth of the matter is, they came and they told Herod, "Where is he who is born King of the Jews? We have seen His star, and we have come to worship Him. We're not just coming to see this thing that might have happened, we are come to worship Him. This is a king that even the stars declare the greatness of this guy."

And so, as this is revealed to them, we see that, when they rejoiced, they also, according to the Bible, it says they came into the house, and they saw the young child with his mother, because it took them a while to get there. When they came into the house, the Bible says, they fell down and worshipped. They fell down before Him, and this would show that image of respect and honor that we want to give to this who we saw as King. They fell down to lower themselves to say that, "We are in the presence of one greater than us." They fell down to show this outwardly to show that this is what belongs to this new-born King. But this was the outward showing, because the Bible also says they fell down and worshipped Him. They fell down and worshipped Him, because worship is something that you do from the inside. Worship is something that it comes out and it goes a blessing, obeisance, an honor given to someone who is worthy of it. So, on the one hand, you had the admiration, and on the second hand, you had the adoration. On the one hand you show the honor, on the other hand you show the love, and the worship that they brought for our new-born King.

Now, they presented Him with gifts. When we do some studying on the gifts, you know there are several things that it says about it. But, things that were relevant at the time are unmistakable. So, they gave Him gifts, they gave Him gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. And gold is something that you give; it's a sign of wealth. You give gold to kings, and people of great honor, because it cost you quite a bit to give gold, but you give it to one who is worthy of receiving it. One who is deemed worthy. But frankincense, frankincense is a little bit different. Frankincense is actually a perfume. We know that it has an aura about it, but frankincense, specifically, that you give to royalty. And not just any old royalty. Not everybody in the king's house; you give it specifically to the king. You give to one who is in royal authority, that, whenever you walk into their presence, you realize that you are in the presence of an anointed one, of a royal one in authority. Frankincense is given, and it is presented, to even show a sign of deity, one of great leadership, one of great authority. And myrrh, myrrh, believe it or not, at the time, was given at funerals. Myrrh was an anointing oil that you did over dead bodies a lot. It was a sweet and permeating smell, but you would give it to those who were in great leadership, great kings, great authority to show that your *whole life* is precious, and your death means something to the entire land. So, these three gifts that they would give, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh; gold is a symbol of kingship on earth, frankincense as a

symbol of deity, and myrrh as a sign of death, and whoever's death they give it to, was going to be something that meant something. Their whole life was summed up, and it was something precious to give.

So, this was part one of part two's message of how they brought gifts, and they brought these precious gifts.

Part 2: He Gave Gifts

Now, we talked last week about some of those gifts that they gave—you know, I'm still kind of hooked up from that praise and worship this morning. I'm still kind of touched. I'm going back and forth in my mind. Holiness, holiness is what I live for. Good gracious alive. Holiness is what I need. You know, sometimes we need to cut this part out and keep that part going.

He gave gifts to men, and we talked last week about some of those gifts, because, if you go through the entire Bible and you see that God gave so many gifts, and truly, the gifts that God gives are the gifts that keep on giving. From the Book of John, we're just going to talk about a couple of those gifts. From the Book of John,

John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name:*

I have a friend at work who met a lady some time ago, they fell in love. And the lady, she had a son before she met him. And they fell in love, and my friend, he loved both the lady and the son. And, they got married, and, as time went on, they had other children. It's a beautiful family. And they've grown up together, and, something happened. The birth father of the son wasn't in the picture too much. And the son, obviously had feelings about that. Well, as this beautiful family grew together, and did things together, and he belonged to them, this beautiful family, something happened. When that young man, that son, got to be twenty-one years of age, he didn't even tell my friend, he didn't even tell him, he took himself down to the Federal Building, and he got his name changed to match the man who had raised him, to the man who was a father to him—unbeknownst to my friend. And, my friend, after all the legal papers were signed and the name as formally changed, my friend came to me and he didn't even know what to say. He said, "My son," and he told me the story, "He didn't even tell me he was going to do it." But, what is it like to see the father that you want, and want to be able to have his name, and realize that, "Well, I've got to go down to the Federal Building. It's going to cost me money. I don't even know how my dad is going to take this. But this is something that I want to do. This man has done what a father is supposed to do for me." And that's a powerful thing, that we don't have to make a journey at all. We don't have to dig around and find some money. We don't have to do that, because, you see, to as many as believe on His name, to them gave He power to become the sons, or the daughters, of God, and, yes, we get His name.

So, He gave us this power to become a son of God. And, not a spectator, which is one who knows what's going on, he can see it. And not a servant, who is close, and can identify with part of it, but still at a distance, as far as relationship goes. And, he didn't give them power even to be a friend, because a friend, even though he's included, and the relationship is nice, likeable; a friend shows a strong bond, but it does not show family, it does not show blood. To us gave He power to become a sons of God, one who is given outright the birthright. He gave us the birthright to be a son of God. He gave us the attributes that He would have; when you are a son, you get the attributes of your father. And, He gave us the Father's love. He gave us the Father's love.

And one thing that we recognize about the gifts of God is, one, we can't out-give Him. No matter what we do, and you know we pray, and we honor Him, and we do other things, but, how many know that, no matter how we give to that God, you always seem to get more back. You just cannot beat God giving. And, two, God gives, as we said earlier, God gives the gifts that keep on giving. His gifts stay with you. God gives a blessing, that blessing flowing in your life. God's gifts keep on giving.

Talk about being a son of God.

John 17:21 *That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they I [we could say us] also may be one in Us: that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me.*

That we would be one with God. Giving us access. To be one with Him. Now, what kind of a blessing is that? To be one with God. That is a relationship. Along us to be a partaker, or to take part in, righteousness. To be able to take part in the Lord's righteousness. To be able to follow the path that the Lord walked. To be able to partake, yes, also, of His sufferings, also of His temptations, also of His persecutions, that we could also partake in His victories, and is power, His anointings, and His glory.

John 14:2-3 *In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*

So, He goes to prepare a place, that He might receive us and be with us, that where He is, we may be also. How precious a love that *must* be, for Him to bring us to Him. Now, many of us know, and we have heard about this place that He has gone away to prepare for us, and we would cheat ourselves if we think that that place would exist *after* this life is over. For, the truth of the matter is, that place exists even today. For, even today, he inhabits our praises that we could be together. Even today, He speaks to our hearts and minds that we could be with Him. Even today, He is loving us with a love that the world has never seen or noticed before, that we could be together with God.

Part 3: **The Promise and the Hope**

The promise and the hope. Talking about just a few more gifts. I've got another gift of God, is His promise. A promise is a statement of something that will be. It's a statement of something that will be, but it's not here right now. In this case, it's a promise, and a divine assurance of good. A divine assurance of good with God. A promise is something that the Jews held onto for hundreds, and even thousands of years. A promise something that, He told the Jews that they wouldn't be left in their sins. He told them they wouldn't be left in captivity. They wouldn't be left unloved. A promise is something that God had said He would be our God, and we would be His people. ##25:15##

Jeremiah 24:7 *And I will give them an heart to know me, that I am the LORD: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return unto me with their whole heart.*

Saith the Lord. A promise is what is unto us, and to our children, and to as many as are afar off, even those that Lord our God shall call. A promise that, if we were to bring our tithes and offerings to the storeroom, He said that he would pour out a blessing (Malachi 3:10). A promise, a promise, He would pour out a blessing we would not be able to contain. A promise. The promises of God.

And, another gift is hope. The gift of hope. And hope is something that

Is longed for, but, when you have hope, you have a chance that it might be obtained. Hope is something that is longed for, that can be obtained. Hope that you won't have to be ashamed of things you do, because there's no redemption in it. Hope that, wherever you go, a greater is coming. Hope that, though our sins would be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool (Isaiah 1:18). Hope that, when we fall, we won't have to stay there. And, hope that none of this is the end of the story, for there is more to come. Hope that, if we listen to God and do our best, He will do all the rest.

And our last Scripture—I didn't even have to talk too long—our last Scripture. When we think about the gifts, and the promises, and the hopes, and the things that God has bestowed on us, of course, it would be impossible to count them all. For, wherever you have a need, you notice what great thing He brings to pass.

2 Peter 1:4 *Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.*

Amen. Give the Lord a praise.

