

# Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

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THE SAGES, THE STAR, AND THE SAVIOUR.

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## A Sermon

DELIVERED ON LORD'S-DAY MORNING, DECEMBER 25TH, 1870, BY

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“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.”—Matthew ii. 2.

THE incarnation of the Son of God was one of the greatest events in the history of the universe. Its actual occurrence was not, however, known to all mankind, but was specially revealed to the shepherds of Bethlehem and to certain wise men of the east. To shepherds—the illiterate, men little versed in human learning—the angels in choral song made known the birth of the Saviour, Christ the Lord, and they hastened to Bethlehem to see the great sight; while the Scribes, the writers of the law and expounders of it, knew nothing concerning the long-promised birth of the Messiah. No angelic bands entered the assembly of the Sanhedrim and proclaimed that the Christ was born; and when the chief priests and Pharisees were met together, though they gathered around copies of the law to consider where Christ should be born, yet it was not known to them that he was actually come, nor do they seem to have taken more than a passing interest in the matter, though they might have known that then was the time spoken of by the prophets when the great Messiah should come. How mysterious are the dispensations of grace; the base things are chosen and the eminent are passed by! The advent of the Redeemer is revealed to the shepherds who kept their flocks of sheep by night, but not to the shepherds whose benighted sheep were left to stray. Admire therein the sovereignty of God.

The glad tidings were made known also to wise men, magi, students of the stars and of old prophetic books from the far-off east. It would not be possible to tell how far off their native country lay; it may have been so distant that the journey occupied nearly the whole of the two years of which they spake concerning the appearance of the star. Travelling was slow in those days, surrounded with difficulties and many dangers. They may have come from Persia, or India, or Tartary, or even from the mysterious land of Sinim, now known to us as China. If so, strange and uncouth must have been

The speech of those who worshipped around the young Child at Bethlehem, yet needed he no interpreter to understand and accept their adoration. Why was the birth of the King of the Jews made known to these foreigners, and not to those nearer home? Why did the Lord select those who were so many hundreds of miles away, while the children of the kingdom, in whose very midst the Saviour was brought forth, were yet strangely ignorant of his presence? See here again another instance of the sovereignty of God. Both in shepherds and in Eastern magi gathering around the young Child, I see God dispensing his favours as he wills; and, as I see it, I exclaim, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." Herein we see again another instance of God's sovereign will; for as of old there were many widows in Israel in the days of Elias the prophet, but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto the woman of Sarepta; so many there were who were called wise men among the Jews, but unto none of them did the star appear; but it shone on Gentile eyes, and led a chosen company from the ends of the earth to bow at Emmanuel's feet.

Sovereignty in these cases clothed itself in the robes of mercy. It was great mercy that regarded the low estate of the shepherds, and it was far-reaching mercy which gathered from lands which lay in darkness a company of men made wise unto salvation. Mercy wearing her resplendent jewels was present with divine sovereignty in the lowly abode of Bethlehem. Is it not a delightful thought, that around the cradle of the Saviour, as well as around his throne in the highest heaven, these two attributes meet? He makes known himself—and herein is mercy; but it is to those whom he has chosen—and herein he shows that he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and he will have compassion on whom he will have compassion.

We will now endeavour to learn a practical lesson from the story of the wise men who came from the east to worship Christ. We may, if God the Holy Spirit shall teach us, gather such instruction as may lead us also to become worshippers of the Saviour, and joyful believers in him.

Notice, first, *their enquiry*; may many of us become enquirers upon the same matter—"Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" Notice, secondly, *their encouragement*—"We have seen his star." Because they had seen his star they felt bold to ask, "Where is he?" And then, thirdly, *their example*—"We have come to worship him."

I. THEIR ENQUIRY—"Where is he?"

Many things are evident in this question. It is clear that when the wise men thus enquired, there was in their minds *interest awakened*. The King of the Jews was born, but Herod did not ask, "Where is he?" until his jealousy was excited, and then he asked the question in a malicious spirit. Christ was born at Bethlehem, near to Jerusalem; yet throughout all the streets of the holy city there were no enquirers, "Where is he?" He was to be the glory of Israel, and yet in Israel there were few indeed who, like these wise men, asked the question, "Where is he?" My dear hearers, I will believe that there are some

here this morning whom God intends to bless, and it will be a very hopeful sign that he intends to do so, if there be an interest awakened in your mind concerning the work and person of the incarnate God. Those who anxiously desire to know of him, are but a slender company. Alas! when we preach most earnestly of him, and tell of his sorrows as the atonement for human sin, we are compelled to lament most bitterly the carelessness of mankind, and enquire mournfully—

“Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by;  
Is it nothing to you that Jesus should die?”

He is despised and rejected of men, men see in him no beauty that they should desire him; but there are a chosen number who enquire diligently, and who come to receive him; to these he gives power to become the sons of God. A happy circumstance it is, therefore, when there is interest evinced. Interest is not always evinced in the things of Christ, even by our regular hearers. It gets to be a mere mechanical habit to attend public worship; you become accustomed to sit through such a part of the service, to stand and sing at such another time, and to listen to the preacher with an apparent attention during the discourse; but to be really interested, to long to know what it is all about, to know especially whether you have a part in it, whether Jesus came from heaven to save you, whether for you he was born of the virgin, to make such personal enquiries with deep anxiety, is far from being a general practice: would God that all who have ears to hear would hear in truth. Wherever the word is heard with solemn interest, it is a very encouraging sign. It was said of old, “They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.” When a man listens with deep attention to the word of God, searches God’s book, and engages in thoughtful meditation with the view of understanding the gospel, we have much hope of him. When he feels that there is something weighty and important, something worth the knowing, in the gospel of Jesus, then are we encouraged to hope good things of him.

But in the case of the wise men we see not only interest evinced, but *belief avowed*. They said, “Where is he that is born King of the Jews?” They were, therefore, fully convinced that he was the King of the Jews, and had lately been born. As a preacher I feel it to be a great mercy that I have to deal generally with persons who have some degree of belief concerning the things of God. Would to God we had more missions to those who have no sort of faith and no knowledge of Christ; and may the day come when everywhere Jesus Christ shall be known. But here at home with the most of you we have something to begin with. You do believe somewhat concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was born King of the Jews. Set much store by that which you have already believed. I count it no small advantage to a young man to believe his Bible true. There are some who have a hard fight to reach so far as that, for infidel training has warped their minds. It is not, of course, an advantage which will save you, for many go down to hell believing the Scriptures to be true, and thus they accumulate guilt upon themselves from that very fact; but it is a fine vantage ground to occupy, to be assured that you have God’s word before you, and not to be troubled with questions about its inspiration and authenticity. O that you may go from that

point of faith to another, and become a hearty believer in Jesus. These wise men were so far advanced that they had some leverage for a further lift of faith, for they believed that Christ was born, and born a King. Many who are not saved, yet know that Jesus is the Son of God. We have not to argue with you this morning to bring you out of Socinianism—no, you believe Jesus to be the divine Saviour; nor have we to reason against doubts and scepticisms concerning the atonement, for these do not perplex you. This is a great mercy. You certainly stand in the position of highly favoured persons. I only trust you may have grace given you to avail yourselves of the favourable position in which God has placed you. Value what you have already received. When a man's eyes have long been closed in darkness, if the oculist gives him but a little light he is very thankful for it, he is hopeful that the eye is not destroyed, that perhaps by another operation further scales may be removed, and the full light may yet stream in upon the darkened eyeball. So, dear friend, be thankful for any light. O soul, so soon to pass into another world, so sure to be lost except thou have the light divine, so certain to be cast into the outer darkness, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth, be thankful for a spark of heavenly light; prize it, treasure it, be anxious about it that it may come to something more, and who knows but yet the Lord will bless thee with the fulness of his truth? When the great bridge across the Niagara was made, the difficulty was to pass the first rope across the broad stream. I have read that it was accomplished by flying a kite, and allowing it to fall on the opposite bank. The kite carried across a piece of string, then to the string was tied a line, and to the line a rope, and to the rope a stronger rope, and by-and-by Niagara was spanned, and the bridge was finished. Even thus by degrees God works. It is a fair sight to see in human hearts a little interest concerning things divine, a little desire after Christ, a feeble wish to know who he is and what he is, and whether he is available to the sinner's case. This hunger will lead to a craving after more, and that craving will be followed by another, till at last the soul shall find her Lord and be satisfied in him. In the wise men's case therefore we have, as I trust we have in some here, interest evinced, and a measure of belief avowed.

Furthermore, in the case of the wise men, we see *ignorance admitted*. Wise men are never above asking questions, because they are wise men; so the magi asked, "Where is he?" Persons who have taken the name and degree of wise men, and are so esteemed, sometimes think it beneath them to confess any degree of ignorance, but the really wise think not so; they are too well instructed to be ignorant of their own ignorance. Many men might have been wise if they had but been aware that they were fools. The knowledge of our ignorance is the doorstep of the temple of knowledge. Some think they know, and therefore never know.

Had they known that they were blind, they would soon have been made to see, but because they say, "We see," therefore their blindness remains upon them. Beloved hearer, dost thou want to find a Saviour? Wouldst thou fain have all thy sins blotted out? Wouldst thou be reconciled to God through Jesus Christ? Then blush not to enquire, admit that thou dost not know. How shouldst thou know if heaven teach thee not? How should any man attain the knowledge of divine things, unless it be given him from above? We must all be taught of the Spirit of God, or be fools for ever. To know that we need to be taught of the Holy Ghost is one of the first lessons that the Holy Ghost himself teaches us. Admit that thou needest a guide, and diligently enquire for one. Cry to God to lead thee, and he will be thine instructor. Be not high-minded and self-sufficient. Ask for heavenly light, and thou shalt receive it. Is it not better to ask God to teach thee, than to trust to thine own unaided reason? Bow, then, the knee, confess thine aptness to err, and say, "What I know not, teach thou me."

Notice, however, that the wise men were not content with admitting their ignorance, but in their case there was *information entreated*. I cannot tell where they began to ask. They thought it likeliest that Jesus would be known at the metropolitan city. Was he not the King of the Jews? where would he be so certain to be known as at the Capital? They went, therefore, to Jerusalem. Perhaps they asked the guards at the gate, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" and the guards laughed them to scorn, and replied, "We know no king but Herod." Then they met a loiterer in the streets, and to him they said, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" and he answered, "What care I for such crazy questions? I am looking for a drinking companion." They asked a trader, but he sneered, and said, "Never mind kings, what will you buy, or what have you to sell?" Where is he that is born King of the Jews? said they to a Sadducee, and he replied, "Be not such fools as to talk in that fashion, or if you do, pray call on my religious friend the Pharisee." They passed a woman in the streets, and asked, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" but she said, "My child is sick at home, I have enough to do to think of my poor babe; I care not who is born, or who may die beside." When they went to the very highest quarters, they obtained but poor information, but they were not content till they had learned all that could be known. They did not know at first where the new-born King was, but they used every means to find him, and asked information on all hands. It is delightful to see the holy eagerness of a soul which God has quickened; it cries, "I must be saved; I know something of the way of salvation, I am grateful for that, but I do not know all I want to know, and I cannot rest satisfied till I do. If beneath the canopy of heaven a Saviour is to

be found, I will have him; if that book can teach me how to be saved, I will turn its pages day and night; if any book within my reach may help me, I will spare no midnight oil if I may but in the reading thereof find out Christ my Saviour. If there be one whose preaching has been blessed to the souls of others, I will hang on his lips, if perhaps the word may be blessed to me, for Christ I must have: it is not I may or I may not have him, but I *must* have him; my hunger is great for this bread of heaven, my thirst insatiable for this water of life; tell me, Christians, tell me, wise men, tell me, good men, tell me any of you who can tell, where is he that is born King of the Jews? for Christ I must have, and I long to have him now."

Notice further, that in reference to these wise men from the east, there was for their search after Christ *a motive declared*. "Where is he," said they, "that we may go and worship him?" Ah! soul, and if thou wouldst find Christ, let it be thy motive that thou mayst be saved by him, and that then henceforth and for ever thou mayst live to his glory. When it comes to this, that you do not hear the gospel merely as a habit, but because you long to obtain its salvation, it will not be long before you will find it. When a man can say, "I am going up to the house of God this morning, and O may God meet with me there," he will not long go there in vain. When a hearer can declare, "As soon as I take my seat in the congregation, my one thought is, "Lord, bless my soul this day?" he cannot for long be disappointed. Usually in going up to God's house we get what we go for. Some come because it is the custom, some to meet a friend, some they scarce know why; but when you know what you come for, the Lord who gave you the desire will gratify it. I was pleased with the word of a dear sister this morning when I came in at the back gate; she said to me, "My dear sir, my soul is very hungry this morning. May the Lord give you bread for me." I believe that food convenient will be given. When a sinner is very hungry after Christ, Christ is very near to him. The worst of it is, many of you do not come to find Jesus, it is not him you are seeking for; if you were seeking him, he would soon appear to you. A young woman was asked during a revival, "How is it you have not found Christ?" "Sir," said she, "I think it is because I have not sought him." It is so. None shall be able to say at the last, "I sought him, but I found him not." In all cases at the last, if Jesus Christ be not found, it must be because he has not been devoutly, earnestly, importunately sought, for his promise is, "Seek, and ye shall find." These wise men are to us a model in many things, and in this among the rest—that their motive was clear to themselves, and they avowed it to others. May all of us seek Jesus that we may worship him.

All through there was about the wise men an intense earnestness, which we would delight to see in any who as yet have not believed in

Jesus. They were evidently not triflers. They came a long way, they underwent many fatigues, they spoke about finding the new-born King in a practical, common-sense way; they were not put off with this rebuff or that; they desired to find him, and find him they would. It is most blessed to see the work of the Spirit in men's hearts impelling them to long for the Saviour to be their Lord and King; and so to long for him that they mean to have him, and will leave no stone unturned, by the Holy Spirit's help, but what they will be able to say, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, and he is become our salvation."

Am I at this moment speaking to anybody in particular? I trust I am. Some years ago there was a young man, who, upon much such a morning as this—cold, snowy, dark—entered a house of prayer, as you have done to-day. I thought as I came here, this morning, of that young man. I said to myself, "This morning is so very forbidding that I shall have a very small congregation, but perhaps among them there will be one like that young man." To be plain with you, it comforted me to think that the morning when God blessed my soul, the preacher had a very small congregation, and it was cold and bitter, and therefore I said to myself this morning, "Why should not I go up merrily to my task, and preach if there should only be a dozen there?" for Jesus may intend to reveal himself to some one as he did to me, and that some one may be a soul-winner, and the means of the salvation of tens of thousands in years to come. I wonder if that will occur to that young man yonder, for I trust he has the enquiry of the wise men upon his lips. I trust he will not quench those desires which now burn within him, but rather may the spark be fanned to a flame, and may this day witness his decision for Jesus. Oh, has the Lord looked on that young woman, or on that dear child, or on yonder aged man? "I know not who it may be, but I shall indeed bless God this morning, if the cry may be heard from many a lip, "Sir, what must I do to be saved? Where is he that is born King of the Jews?"

II. Having spoken of their enquiry, I shall now notice **THEIR ENCOURAGEMENT**. Something encouraged these wise men to seek Jesus. It was this, "We have seen his star."

Now, the most of you seekers after Christ have a great encouragement in the fact that you have heard his gospel; you live in a land where you have the Scriptures, where the ordinances of God's house are freely dispensed. These are, as it were, Jesus Christ's star; they are meant to lead you to himself. Here, observe, that to see his star was *a great favour*. It was not given to all the dwellers in the east or west to see his star. These men, therefore, were highly privileged. It is not given to all mankind to hear the gospel, Jesus is not preached in all our streets; his cross is not lifted high even in every place that

is dedicated to his worship. You are highly favoured, O my friend, if you have seen the star, the gospel, which points to Jesus.

To see the star involved these wise men in *great responsibility*. For, suppose they had seen his star and had not set out to worship him, they would have been far more guilty than others, who, not having received such an indication from heaven, would not have been able to set it at nought. Oh, think of the responsibility of some of you, who in your childhood heard of a Saviour, for whom a mother has wept many tears; you know the truth, in the theory of it at any rate; you have the responsibility of having seen his star.

The wise men *did not regard the favour of seeing the star as a matter to be rested in*. They did not say, "We have seen his star, and that is enough." Many say, "Well, we attend a place of worship regularly, is not that enough?" There are those who say, "We were baptised, baptism brought regeneration with it; we come to the sacrament, and do we not get grace through it?" Poor souls! the star which leads to Christ they mistake for Christ himself, and worship the star instead of the Lord. O may none of you ever be so foolish as to rest in outward ordinances! God will say to you, if you depend upon sacraments or upon public worship, "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me. Who hath required this at your hands, to tread my courts?" What careth God for outward forms and ceremonies? When I see men putting on white gowns, and scarfs and bands, and singing their prayers, and bowing and scraping, I wonder what sort of god it is they worship. Surely he must have more affinity with the gods of the heathen than with the great Jehovah who has made the heavens and the earth. Mark ye well the exceeding glory of Jehovah's works on sea and land; behold the heavens and their countless hosts of stars, hark to the howling of the winds and the rush of the hurricane, think of him who maketh the clouds his chariot, and rideth on the wings of the wind, and then consider whether this infinite God is like unto that being to whom it is a matter of grave consequence whether a cup of wine is lifted in worship as high as a man's hair or only as high as his nose! O foolish generation, to think that Jehovah is contained in your temples made with hands, and that he cares for your vestments, your processions, your postures, and your genuflexions. Ye fight over your ritual, even to its jots and tittles do ye consider it. Surely ye know not the glorious Jehovah, if ye conceive that these things yield any pleasure to him. Nay, beloved, we desire to worship the Most High in all simplicity and earnestness of spirit, and never to stop in the outward form, lest we be foolish enough to think that to see the star is sufficient, and therefore fail to find the incarnate God.

Note well, that these wise men *did not find satisfaction in what they had themselves done to reach the child*. As we have observed, they may

have come hundreds of miles, but they did not mention it; they did not sit down and say, "Well, we have journeyed across deserts, over hills, and across rivers, it is enough." No, they must find the new-born King, nothing else would satisfy them. Do not say, dear hearer, "I have been praying now for months, I have been searching the Scriptures for weeks, to find the Saviour." I am glad you have done so, but do not rest in it; you must get Christ, or else you perish after all your exertion and your trouble. Jesus you want, nothing more than Jesus, but nothing less than Jesus. Nor must you be satisfied with travelling in the way the star would lead you, you must reach HIM. Do not stop short of eternal life. Lay hold on it, not merely seek it and long for it, but lay hold on eternal life, and do not be content until it is an ascertained fact with you that Jesus Christ is yours.

I should like you to notice how these wise men were not satisfied with merely getting to Jerusalem. They might have said, "Ah! now we are in the land where the Child is born, we will be thankful and sit down." No, but "Where is he?" He is born at Bethlehem. Well, they get to Bethlehem, but we do not find that when they reached that village they said, "This is a favoured spot, we will sit down here." Not at all, they wanted to know where the house was. They reached the house, and the star got over it. It was a fair sight to see the cottage with the star above it, and to think that the new-born King was there, but that did not satisfy them. No, they went right into the house; they rested not till they saw the Child himself, and had worshipped him. I pray that you and I may always be so led by the Spirit of God that we may never put up with anything short of a real grasping of Christ, a believing sight of Christ as a Saviour, as our Saviour, as our Saviour even now. If there be one danger above another that the young seeker should strive against, it is the danger of stopping short of a hearty faith in Jesus Christ. While thy heart is tender like wax, take care that no seal but the seal of Christ be set on thee. Now that thou art uneasy and out of comfort, make this thy vow, "I will not be comforted till Jesus comfort me." It would be better for thee never to be awakened than to be lulled to sleep by Satan—for a sleep that follows upon a partial conviction is generally a deeper slumber than any other that falls upon the sons of men. My soul, I charge thee get to the blood of Christ, and be washed in it; get to the life of Christ, and let that life be in thee, that thou be indeed God's child; put not up with suppositions, be not satisfied with appearances and perhaps; rest nowhere till thou hast said—God having given thee the faith to say it, "He loved me and gave himself for me, he is all my salvation and all my desire. See, then, how these wise men were not made by the sight of the star to keep away from Christ, but they were encouraged by it to come to Christ, and do you be encouraged, dear seeker, this morning to come to Jesus by the fact that you are blessed

with the gospel. You have an invitation given you to come to Jesus, you have the motions of God's Spirit upon your conscience, awakening you; O come, come and welcome, and let this strange winter's day be a day of brightness and of gladness to a many a seeking soul.

I have turned my thoughts on this last head into verse, and I will repeat the lines—

O where is Christ my King?  
I languish for the sight,  
Fain would I fall to worshipping,  
For he's my soul's delight.

Himself, himself alone,  
I seek no less, no more,  
Or on his cross, or on his throne,  
I'd equally adore.

The sages saw his star,  
But rested not content,  
The way was rough, the distance far,  
Yet on that way they went.

And now my thoughts discern  
The sign that Christ is nigh,  
With love unquenchable I burn,  
T' enjoy his company.

No star nor heavenly sign  
My soul's desire can fill,  
For him, my Lord, my King divine,  
My soul is thirsting still.

III. And now we shall conclude, by considering THE EXAMPLE of these wise men. They came to Jesus, and in so doing, they did three things: they saw, they worshipped, they gave. Those are three things which every believer here may do this morning over again, and which every seeker should do for the first time.

First, *they saw* the young Child. I do not think they merely said, "There he is," and so ended the matter, but they stood still and looked. Perhaps for some minutes they did not speak. About his very face I do not doubt there was a supernatural beauty. Whether there was a beauty to everyone's eye I know not, but to theirs there was assuredly a super-human attraction. The incarnate God! They gazed with all their eyes. They looked, and looked, and looked again. They glanced at his mother, but they fixed their eyes on him. "They saw the young Child." So, too, this morning let us think of Jesus with fixed and continuous thought. He is God, he is man, he is the substitute for sinners; he is willing to receive all who trust him. He will save, and save this morning, every one of us who will rely upon him. Think of him. If you are at home this afternoon, spend the time in thinking upon him. Bring him before your mind's eye, consider and admire him. Is it not a wonder that God should enter into union with man and come to this

world as an infant? He who made heaven and earth hangs on a woman's breast for us! For our redemption the Word was made flesh. This truth will breed the brightest hope within your soul. If you follow that babe's wondrous life till it ends at the cross, I trust you may there be able to give such a look at him that, like as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, and they that looked were healed, so you looking may be healed of all your spiritual diseases. Though it is many a year since I first looked to him, I desire to look to Jesus again. The incarnate God! My eyes swim with tears to think that he who might have crushed me into hell for ever, becomes a young child for my sake? See him, all of you, and seeing worship.

What did the wise men next? They *worshipped* him. We cannot properly worship a Christ whom we do not know. "To the unknown God" is poor worship. But, oh, when you think of Jesus Christ, whose goings forth were of old from everlasting, the eternally-begotten Son of the Father, and then see him coming here to be a man of the substance of his mother, and know and understand why he came and what he did when he came, then you fall down and worship him.

" Son of God, to thee we bow,  
Thou art Lord, and only thou ;  
Thou the woman's promised seed ;  
Thou who didst for sinners bleed."

We worship Jesus. Our faith sees him go from the manger to the cross, and from the cross right up to the throne, and there where Jehovah dwells, amidst the insufferable glory of the divine presence stands the man, the very man who slept at Bethlehem in the manger ; there he reigns as Lord of lords. Our souls worship him again. Thou art our Prophet, every word thou sayest, Jesu, we believe and desire to follow : thou art our Priest, thy sacrifice hath made us clean, we are washed in thy blood ; thou art our King, command, we will obey, lead on, and we will follow : We worship thee. We should spend much time in worshipping the Christ, and he should ever have the highest place in our reverence.

After worshipping, the wise men presented *their gifts*. One broke open his casket of gold, and laid it at the feet of the new-born King. Another presented frankincense—one of the precious products of the country from which they came ; and others laid myrrh at the Redeemer's feet ; all these they gave to prove the truth of their worship. They gave substantial offerings with no niggard hand. And now, after you have worshipped Christ in your soul, and seen him with the eye of faith, it will not need that I should say to you, give him yourself, give him your heart, give him your substance. Why, you will not be able to help doing it. He who really loves the Saviour in his heart, cannot help devoting to him his life, his

strength, his all. With some people, when they give Christ anything, or do anything for him, it is dreadfully forced work. They say, "The love of Christ ought to constrain us." I do not know that there is any such text as that in the Bible, however. I do remember one text that runs thus—"The love of Christ constraineth us." If it does not constrain us, it is because it is not in us. It is not merely a thing which ought to be, it must be. If any man love Christ, he will very soon be finding out ways and means of proving his love by his sacrifices. Go home, Mary, and fetch the alabaster box, and pour the ointment on his head, and if any say, "Wherefore is this waste?" thou wilt have a good reply, thou hast had much forgiven thee, and therefore thou lovest much. If thou hast gold, give it; if thou hast frankincense, give it; if thou hast myrrh, give it to Jesus; and if thou hast none of these things, give him thy love, all thy love, and that will be gold and spices all in one; give him thy tongue, speak of him; give him thy hands, work for him; give him thy whole self. I know thou wilt, for he loved thee, and gave himself for thee. The Lord bless you, and may this Christmas Sabbath morning be a very memorable day to many out of the crowd assembled here. I am surprised to see so vast a number present, and I can only hope the blessing will be in proportion, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

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PORTION OF SCRIPTURE READ BEFORE SERMON—Matthew ii.

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