

A night landscape featuring rolling hills in the foreground, illuminated by a soft, warm light. The sky is a deep, dark blue, filled with numerous stars. A prominent, bright star with a four-pointed diffraction pattern is located in the upper left quadrant. The overall mood is serene and contemplative.

The Journey...

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. "In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written:

"But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel." Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down

and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.

Mt 2:1-11

Giving To God Is An Act Of Worship

- Goal: Primary goal was to worship
- Fulfillment: They expressed their worship
- Action: They presented Him with gifts

Our giving is an expression of a heart of love for God

Is my giving an expression of worship or simply a financial transaction?

True Biblical Giving Should Be Sacrificial

- Significant: Every gift had a meaning
- Costly: Every gift was costly
- Sacrificial: Every gift was the result of personal sacrifice

2 Sam 23:13-17 *"Far be it from me..."*

2 Sam 24:18-24 *"I will not sacrifice to the Lord my God burnt offerings that cost me nothing!"*

Giving Is An Act Of Faith And Anticipation

- Faith: God YOU are enough!
- Anticipation: I KNOW you will be faithful to meet my needs!

“Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this,” says the LORD Almighty, “and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit,” says the LORD Almighty. “Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land,” says the LORD Almighty.”

Malachi 3:10-12

The Challenge For Today

- **Is your giving an act of worship?**
- **Is your giving an act of personal sacrifice?**
- **Is your giving an act of faith and anticipation?**