

## COME, LET US ADORE HIM

Sing the chorus of “**O Come all Ye faithful.**” Our theme for Christmas this year is **ADORE**. I’m afraid that, like so many other words, we have made this word so common that we don’t understand it. We say a baby is “*adorable*” because they are cute and cuddly. We might even say an outfit for such a baby is “*adorable*” because it’s pretty or cute and will make the baby even more cuddly. We say we adore a certain desert or restaurant or store. I’m not suggesting that the Christ child wasn’t cute and cuddly, or that the cloth He was wrapped in didn’t make Him appear even more so – or that He wasn’t the sweetest little baby that ever lived. But His appearance had nothing to do with the call to “*come and adore*” Him.

The word “**ADORE**” is late Middle English from the Latin “*adorare*” literally meaning “*to verbally praise someone, idolizing; revering, and even venerating them.*” We might think that the chorus of that beautiful Christmas hymn was lifted directly from the pages of Scripture, but that’s not the case. In fact, the closest thing you find to the expression is not even found in the majority of translations of Scripture. So, I call your attention this morning to the Douay Rheims Translation of Matthew 2:1-11. Since I doubt that many, if any, will have that version with you today, it’s on the screen for your convenience.

**<sup>1</sup> When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem of Juda, in the days of king Herod, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> Saying: Where is he that is born king of the Jews? / For we have seen his star in the East, and are come to adore him. <sup>3</sup> And king Herod hearing this, was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup> / And assembling together all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, he inquired of them where Christ should be born. <sup>5</sup> But they said to him: In Bethlehem of Juda. For so it is written by the prophet: / <sup>6</sup> And thou Bethlehem the land of Juda art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come forth the captain that shall rule my people Israel. / <sup>7</sup> Then Herod, privately calling the wise men learned diligently of them the time of the star which appeared to them; <sup>8</sup> And sending them into Bethlehem, said: Go and diligently inquire after the child, / and when you have found him, bring me word again, that I also may come and adore him. <sup>9</sup> Who having heard the king, went their way; and behold the star which they had seen in the East, / went before them, until it came and stood over where the child was. <sup>10</sup> And seeing the star they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. <sup>11</sup> And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his mother, and falling down they adored him: and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh.**

The word in GREEK: translated “*adore*” here - or as “*worship*” in most translations is “*Proskuneo*” which literally means “*to kiss towards one*” - as in throwing a kiss. It was a token of deep affection or reverence. Among the Orientals, especially the Persians, it would include kissing the hands or feet of the one that they honored.

Their humble adoration was almost always demonstrated by falling to the knees, even touching the ground with ones' forehead as an expression of profound reverence. Perhaps the best way to determine what the Magi meant by their words "*We have come to adore Him*" is to consider what they did when they actually arrived on the scene. Returning to our text...

**THEY FELL DOWN.** It's worth noting that this was what they had come to do. The term is akin to falling from a great height, which would almost assuredly result in broken-ness. There is much emphasis today upon standing and raising hands in worship, and there is certainly Biblical foundation for that. Some churches encourage kneeling, even supplying benches for that purpose. I've seldom seen the kind of surrender that we have pictured here. I recall a young lady at my former pastorate coming forward at the altar call who literally threw herself face down across the steps and wept. One of the men in our assembly followed suit. What was odd, was that my lesson that morning had not been one calling for repentance, but rather an attempt to depict the Lord of glory.

Simon Peter fell at Jesus' feet when he became convicted of his unworthiness to be in His presence (Luke 5:8). According to Revelation 1:17, John the apostle did the same when he saw Jesus standing among the golden lampstands. And that's what the Magi did when they saw Jesus for the first time. Though He may have been a striking figure, I don't think it was so much how He looked – but because they recognized who He was.

On that occasion in Michigan, my elders didn't know what to do. They had never seen such a display. One tried to comfort the young woman. Another tried to coax the man back to his seat. But when I put my hand gently upon his shoulder, he looked up at me in tears as I knelt down beside the adoring worshipper.

**THEY OFFERED HIM GIFTS.** This wasn't spontaneous. They didn't search the pockets for a few coins. They had brought gold and frankincense and myrrh – gifts fit for a king. For all intent and purpose, they laid their treasures down at Christ's feet. Did He need these rich treasures? All He needed at that time was mother's milk and her warm embrace...perhaps a blanket and soothing voices. Yet, what did He deserve?

I am sorry that so many have manipulated worshippers into giving money to them – or guilt-ed them into supporting causes they would not otherwise been moved to. Yet, it is undeniable that we will be moved to give gifts to One we adore. And the more we adore Christ, the more we will give of our time, talent and treasure. We cannot ignore One whom we adore in this regard. In fact, we will usually be disappointed that we cannot give more, do more, honor more the One we adore.

Solomon's just one king of Israel who received great gifts from admirers. We read of the event in 1<sup>st</sup> Kings 10:1-2, 10 when the Queen of Sheba came with a great train of camels.

And guess what they carried? Spices, and gold, and precious stones. Sounds kind of familiar doesn't it? A lot like what the wise men did for the newborn king.

Yet, nearly 30 years later, because His own people neglected to honor Him, Jesus said this about that incident: **"The queen of the south shall rise at the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the ends of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom; and now one greater than Solomon is here."** (Matthew 12:42)

This Christmas, shouldn't we honor the Prince of peace and King of kings? This is the Holy One, the Messiah, the only begotten Son of God. He is the Creator of all things. He is our Wonderful Counselor, the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and End. He is the Ruler of the world, the Living Word, Emmanuel, the Bright and Morning Star. This is the perfect Lamb and the Chief Shepherd. He is the Resurrection and the Life. He is our High Priest, our Defender and our Advocate in time of trouble. He is the Author and Finisher of faith. He is the Redeemer of mankind and Savior of the World. He is the Lord of Glory.

So. today and every day this season and in every season, I urge you to accept our invitation to ***"Come and adore Him."***