

## The Epiphany of the Lord

### ■67th Reflection on the Word

#### ●First Reading: Isaiah 60:1-6

This passage, often referred to as Third Isaiah, prophesies hope for the restoration and prosperity of Jerusalem to the people of Israel who returned from Babylonian captivity (586?538 BC). Though the world is shrouded in darkness, God pours light upon Jerusalem, and this light (hope) shines over the entire world. Kings from different nations are drawn to this radiance, and scattered sons and daughters of Israel return to Jerusalem. Wealth is brought across the seas, filling the city with prosperity. From Midian and Ephah come caravans of young camels, and Sheba brings gifts of gold and frankincense. The Israelites rejoice as Jerusalem's prosperity becomes international.

The flourishing of Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity signifies the fulfillment of God's covenant with Israel. Through this miraculous restoration, people recognize God's greatness and power, spreading His glory across the world.

Explanations of Key Terms:

【Midian き g】

A nomadic people descended from Abraham, living in the northwest of the Arabian Peninsula and parts of Jordan.

【Ephah】 The name of Midian's son and the region where his descendants settled.

【Camel】 Used for trade, camels were essential for transporting goods over long distances.

【Sheba】 A city known for its thriving trade. Gold was a precious commodity, and frankincense was a costly and significant product used in trade.

#### ●Second Reading: Ephesians 3:2, 3, 5?6

Paul speaks of the mission given to him by God to preach to the Gentiles. The previously hidden plan of the Gospel is now revealed through the work of the Holy Spirit in Paul. Jesus unites Jews and Gentiles into one church, allowing them to share equally in God's promises.

【The Mystery of God's Plan】

1. Jews and Gentiles are united as one through Jesus.
2. The plan of redemption through the Savior's birth and sacrificial death on the cross (Galatians 4:4, 1 Peter 2:24).
3. In the Old Testament, salvation was understood collectively by nations, but Jesus' salvation is for all humanity (Psalm 22:27-28).
4. The Church becomes the place where God's plan is carried out concretely.

【Inheritance through Christ】

1. Becoming citizens of God's Kingdom (Matthew 25:34).
2. Gaining eternal life (John 3:16).
3. Receiving spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3).
4. Sharing in Christ's suffering and glory (Romans 8:17).

#### ●Gospel Reading: Matthew 2:1-12

The Magi (Gentiles) from the East (likely Persia or Babylon) learn of the Savior's birth through a star (Numbers 24:17). They meet King Herod in Jerusalem, declaring their intent to worship "the new king." This announcement reveals God's plan of salvation but troubles the self-centered Herod. Gathering priests and scribes, Herod learns of the prophecy in Micah 5:2 that the ruler of Israel will come from Bethlehem.

Guided by the star, the Magi reach the house where Jesus was born. There, they worship Him and offer gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, symbolizing His kingship, divinity, and future suffering and burial. Warned in a dream, they return home by another route.

Herod, driven by power and greed, commits the sinful and destructive act of ordering the massacre of infants in Ramah (Jeremiah 31:15). Yet, this tragedy also points to future hope (Jeremiah 31:17).

**【The Gifts】** Gold: Symbolizes Jesus' authority as king. Frankincense: Represents His divinity.

Myrrh: Foreshadows His death and burial.

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