

Answers: Christmas Edition 2019

Question: Hi Bishop, is it a sin to put my Christmas lights and have a Christmas tree?

Most people use **Jeremiah 10 and Isaiah 44** as the arguments against Christmas trees and decorations.

ESV Jeremiah 10:3 for the customs of the peoples are vanity. A tree from the forest is cut down and worked with an axe by the hands of a craftsman.

4 They adorn it with silver and gold; they fasten it with hammer and nails so it will not totter.

5 Their idols are like scarecrows in a cucumber field, and they cannot speak; they have to be carried, for they cannot walk. Do not be afraid of them, for they cannot do evil, neither is it in them to do good."

The thing to remember about all scripture is **context** (the circumstances around an idea or event that give clear meaning of the intent). **Jeremiah 10 and Isaiah 44** are both talking about worship which is idolatry!

These people were cutting down trees and decorating them for the purpose of worshipping them as a deity! Most people don't do that!

Question: What is meant by "purification rites"? Is there an equivalent in the church today?

Purification originated with The Law of Moses where the priests in OT and carried over to God's people being **unclean**(sinful) and unfit to enter the presence of God! (Ex 29:4)

Purification of the people happened in (Lev 15:213)!

However, when the NT (Acts 21:26) mentions **purification** the apostle Paul did what is known as "The Nazarite Vow"!

Question: The magi brought gold, frankincense and myrrh as gifts. Do these three items have a Biblical meaning or were they just simply expensive gifts?

Also, Were the Magi what we would consider astrologists? Do Magi or Biblical astrologists still exist?

I'll answer these two questions together!

First I believe they do have meaning, as most things in scripture have symbolic and prophetic as well as a direct meaning.

Gold is symbolic of Divinity; Frankincense symbolic of Worship and Myrrh a perfume is symbolic of Beauty!

These are gifts of honor and reverence were given in worship to The King of kings and LORD of lords!

KJV Psalm 29:1 <A Psalm of David.> Give unto the LORD, O ye mighty, give unto the LORD glory and strength.

2 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

KJV 1 Chronicles 16:29 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come before him: worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

KJV Psalm 96:8 Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come into his courts.

9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness: fear before him, all the earth.

There was a time when **astronomy** and **astrology** were the same thing.

Astrology is now considered an **occult practice** of looking to the stars for guidance and destiny!

Astronomy is considered a scientific study of the stars and the universe.

The **magi** clearly studied the stars and understood their significance in human history!

KJV Psalm 19:1 <To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David.> The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.

2 Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they reveal knowledge.

Amo 5:8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion And changes deep darkness into morning, Who also darkens day into night, Who calls for the waters of the sea And pours them out on the surface of the earth, The LORD is His name.

These are **constellations** that were known, studied and understood to some degree in their relationship to God and man.

Genesis 1:14 And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years!

An Angel of the Lord appears to Joseph and tells him to keep his wife (Matt 1:20 amp). An Angel of the Lord appears again to Joseph to tell

him to go to Israel (Matt 2:20 amp)..but God, not an Angel, warns the Magi (Matt 2:12 amp) to not go back to Herod and God again, not an Angel warns Joseph and he leaves for Galilee (Matt 2:22 amp). Is there a difference between God sending an Angel and God communicating (or sending a warning) directly?

No, God speaks in many different ways at various times!

Num 12:6 He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream.

*KJV Hebrews 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;*

Merry Christmas Bishop! I was wondering how do we stay in step with what's going on in the spirit realm during the holiday season? So much is going on with Trump's impeachment and deaths in families, it's hard to know how to hear what's really going on during a time that's meant to celebrate Jesus.

Great question! Isaiah 59:1 *Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save, or his ear dull, that it cannot hear;
2 But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*

Isaiah tells us iniquity (lawlessness has divided) **and sin** (missing the mark) **causes God to turn away** (not relating intimately) **with us!**

KJV John 16:13 Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

Meditation is the key to hearing plainly and consistently from God!

*ESV Psalm 63:5 My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise you with joyful lips,
6 when I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night.*

There were **3 watches** of the night, sunset to **10pm**; **10pm to 2am** and **2am to sunrise!**