

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021

Genesis 33:11 *“Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need.’ And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.”*

Matthew 2:11 *“On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary and they bowed down and worshipped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh”*

Do you like giving or receiving gifts? What are your motives for giving a gift? Are you gifted? Freebies are often welcome because it is something for nothing but usually we give gifts for deeper reasons. Guilt, compassion, sympathy and love are the ‘nice’ ones. Gifting for favour, to seek attention or for bribery are not.

Jacob had had to flee from his brother, Esau’s wrath when he had deceitfully taken Esau’s birthright. Now a day of reckoning was at hand as Esau approached Jacob’s camp. Jacob had sent cattle and goats ahead to help mollify Esau’s anger and he and his family members paid humble respect. Surprisingly Esau was all charm and at first refused to accept his brother’s gifts. Were the cattle a bribe? Or an offering for the guilt of deceiving his brother? We can only speculate but certainly the brothers were reconciled.

The Magi’s gifts were different. Their gifts had symbolism with gold considered as fit for a king, incense for a deity and myrrh for someone going to die. They recognised this child as the Messiah and were happy to bow down and worship him.

These were all material gifts but given for reasons. All of us have gifts within ourselves. Are we prepared to use those gifts to further the spread of God’s word and ways by being kind, compassionate, considerate and generous to our neighbours?