



LIFE IS A CHRISTMAS TREE

BY: SCOTT DANE – EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, AMERICAN LOGGERS COUNCIL

While in DC I had the opportunity to visit the National and Capitol Christmas Trees, a symbol of the Christmas season. I reflected upon the many symbolisms that the Christmas tree represents and how it can display the true meaning of Christmas. Of course, the correlation to the logging industry was not missed either.

When I watch my wife decorate the Christmas tree, I can't help but see the picture of our life together manifested in the ornaments hanging on each branch. Branches themselves that represent the growth of our marriage and family.

There are two bears and a heart that says, "Scott and Melody - 1988", the year we met. Then there is a crystal ornament with two doves that is inscribed "Our First Christmas - 1989", the year we were married. In 1992 we added a "Baby's First Christmas" for the birth of our first son, and another "Baby's First Christmas" ornament in 1994 for our second son. Homemade Popsicle stick ornaments with glued on buttons were made by the boys. Sand dollars and seashells hang on the tree from the years we lived on a tropical island. Ornaments from other areas mark travels to Maine, Minnesota, and Arizona. The "Nutcracker" ornament is a souvenir from attending the Nutcracker Ballet on Christmas. The ornaments on the Christmas tree chronicle the joyous events or our life and family. We added a new ornament with a "C" which represents our foster son.

The Christmas tree is a symbol of the Christmas Holiday which celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. The perpetual green of the evergreen represents the eternal life of our Lord and Savior. The Christmas tree lights are for the stars of the universe created by God. The gifts beneath the tree are worldly tokens of the blessings bestowed upon us, much like the frankincense, gold and myrrh brought as gifts to the baby Jesus

Many years ago, I was working in the Persian Gulf and made ports of call to Oman, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. In the market there was Frankincense and Myrrh for sale. I bought some for Melody as a souvenir and to round out the gifts of Frankincense, Gold, and Myrrh I bought an Eternity ring that Melody wears as a wedding band.

These gifts brought to the baby Jesus represent the following:

- **Myrrh** is an aromatic gum resin from a small shrubby tree that was used as a healing stimulant and as a burial spice. Myrrh, like Frankincense, also is the sap from a tree that is



AS WE SEE IT: DEC 2021

hardened and then used. However, unlike, Frankincense which is sweet...Myrrh has a bitter taste to it. Myrrh was mostly used to embalm the dead because it had the property to preserve. It was also used as a perfume, an ingredient of holy ointments mentioned in Exodus but its most practical use for Mary & Joseph would be its medical uses. Lastly, Myrrh represents the bitter cup that Christ had to drink in suffering for our sins and the healing for us that his death brings

- **Frankincense** is a fragrant gum resin obtained from certain trees, frequently associated with Myrrh. It was used in making of perfume and in sacrifices. Frankincense is made by cutting a tree named "Arbor Thurisfrom" found Persia, Arabia and India. It's like a sap that is gathered and then dried for 3 months and becomes like a hardened resin or gum. Frankincense is used as a perfume but mostly it was burned as a sweet incense during worship. During the Exodus Aaron would burn Frankincense at the alter as a sweet offering to the Lord. Practically Frankincense would be a familiar smell to baby Jesus as this was the same God that was worshiped in the Old Testament. Symbolically Frankincense represented the divinity of Christ because as mentioned Frankincense was burnt as an offering to God
- **Gold** represents kingship. The King that Christ is for us. It also represents the purification process we go through in our trials as a Christian. Gold is one of the only metals that when heated with fire will not lose anything of its nature, weight, color, or any other property. Genuine faith is the same way. Gold is used in scripture when talking about the strength of someone's faith. Job refers to gold after he has been through all his trials. Job 23:10 Jobs says, "But He knows where I am going. And when He tests me, I will come out as pure gold.

But even these gifts, like those beneath our Christmas trees, pale in the light of the gift of forgiveness and eternal salvation given to us through Jesus Christ.

Atop the Christmas tree is a star depicting the star that the scripture tells us marked the birth of the Savior. The tree itself symbolizes our Lord and Savior. The branches reaching out like our Lord's arms stretched out and nailed to the cross. Hanging on those branches are the ornaments that represent our family, love, and life. But without those blessings being supported by the branches they are just meaningless trinkets. This makes me remember that family, love, and life are not complete without Christ as the center on which all the rest is built upon.

From myself and the American Loggers Council, I wish you each a Merry Christmas and encourage you to take a moment to reflect upon what and Who the "Christ"mas season celebrates.