

Matthew: Jesus, The King of Kings

Divinely Warned

Matthew 2

The Gospel - Romans Road

Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"

Romans 5:8 - "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"

Romans 10:9 - "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"

Romans 10:13 - "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved"

Last week: Joseph, Mary, Dreams and Jesus born

[Pray]

2:1-8

Born in Bethlehem - the home of David

Small town, six miles from Jerusalem - about as far from the army base to here

Remember, no cars *driving excavator tomorrow*

Herod - title/name for king, this one was "Herod the Great"

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He was wealthy, politically gifted, intensely loyal, an excellent administrator, and clever enough to remain in the good graces of successive Roman emperors. His famine relief was superb and his building projects (including the temple, begun 20 B.C.) were admired even by his foes. But he loved power, inflicted incredibly heavy taxes on the people, and resented the fact that many Jews considered him a usurper. In his last years, suffering an illness that compounded his paranoia, he turned to cruelty and in fits of rage and jealousy killed close associates." (Carson)

ii. *“Augustus, the Roman Emperor, had said, bitterly, that it was safer to be Herod’s pig than Herod’s son. (The saying is even more epigrammatic in Greek, for in Greek huios is the word for a pig, and huioi is the word for a son).” (Barclay)*

iii. *The reign of Herod also gives us a chronological marking point. “Jesus was born before the death of Herod the Great, which is probably to be dated in 4 BC; the exact date of Jesus’ birth is unknown.” (France)*

Wise Men - astronomers

Dreams, astrology, magic, books, references to the future

DGC Church traditions even tell us their names — supposedly Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar. You can see their supposed skulls in the great cathedral at Cologne, Germany.

From the East - exiles, Jewish belief? I tend, accurately or not, to fall into the camp that they were from further east than that - Middle East, Asia - places where math, science, astronomy, and also occultic practices originate, and God called them out - maybe like Abram from the Ur of the Caldeez, to come and worship the true God.

Troubled

Herod Troubled and all of Jerusalem with him

Herod was not a nice guy, and the people feared him, in a bad way. When he was troubled, look out.

Saul troubled by an evil spirit - tried to kill David, the music soothed him

He was troubled because his throne was challenged

All dictators hold onto their power by any means necessary and see everyone as a threat
Kim Jong Il not having surgery for fear someone would kill him

- **Troubled**
 - **to agitate**, trouble (a thing, by the movement of its parts to and fro)
 - to cause one inward commotion, take away his calmness of mind, disturb his equanimity
 - **to disquiet, make restless**
 - to stir up
 - to trouble
 - **to strike one’s spirit with fear and dread**
 - **to render anxious or distressed**
 - to perplex the mind of one by suggesting scruples or doubts

Deep down Herod knew he was wicked, whether he realized it or not, and it made him insecure as his rule was not righteous. He was King of Israel, but not godly. And an ungodly man could not be comfortable in a Godly position.

They quoted Micah 5:2

Herod secretly called them

Maybe not to show his worry about the messiah

Maybe not to show his worry about the signs in the heavens

Maybe not to give credit to the “theory” these guys were bringing forward

Nicodemus at night with Jesus

The wise men didn't show up at Jesus' birth, it was a few years later

Biblically accurate nativity scenes!

The sign of the star had been available to see for a while - but only to those who were looking for it

God is there, if we'd but look

Romans 1:20 KJV - For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, [even] his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Herod was crafty - he knew their motive to worship, so he played off of that
He had no intent to worship, only to murder and protect his throne

Ironically, if he had worshipped, maybe God would have let him keep the throne
Jesus wasn't there to establish an earthly Kingdom just yet.

:9-12

The star moved

Was it even a star? Was it an angel in the heavens? Was God manipulating creation?

Joshua 10:12-14 NKJV - Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel: "Sun, stand still over Gibeon; And Moon, in the Valley of Aijalon." So the sun stood still, And the moon stopped, Till the people had revenge Upon their enemies. [Is] this not written in the Book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and did not hasten to go [down] for about a whole day. And there has been no day like that, before it or after it, that the LORD heeded the voice of a man; for the LORD fought for Israel.

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. *“We believe it to have been a luminous appearance in mid-air; probably akin to that which led the children of Israel through the wilderness, which was a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Whether it was seen in the daylight or not we cannot tell.” (Spurgeon)*

ii. *And stood over where the young Child was: Adam Clarke says that this is more literally, stood over the head of the child. In his thinking, it was some kind of meteor that guided them to the very house where Jesus was. He goes on to say that this idea of a star-like shine associated with the head of Jesus gave rise to the idea of the halo in ancient and medieval art.*

Exceedingly Great Joy

Sphodra megas chara

Exactly what it says - joy above everything else. They had found the Messiah they had been looking for.

“I still haven’t found what I’m looking for”

They had found it - the joy in finding it. Not just that the scriptures were right. Not that the heavens foretold it.

But that right before them, in the flesh, was God’s answer for sin. God’s way for salvation. The work was being done by God, right in front of them. Their hope was made complete.

They worshiped - they knew who Jesus was. This wasn’t an earthly King, they knew He was the King of Heaven AND Earth

Maybe they had ties to Daniel and the Babylonians

Gifts

Gold - royalty

Frankincense - divinity (prayers in temple)

Myrrh - death spices

ii. *“How useful this gold was to Joseph in the following months! It helped him to defray the cost of the journey into Egypt and back, and to maintain his precious charges there. The Heavenly Father knew what those needs would be, and met them by anticipation.” (Meyer)*

Divinely warned in a dream not to return to Herod

Maybe they had been naive enough to believe Herod, he was probably very convincing

Maybe they had their suspicions - but God again used supernatural means here - to bring them to Jesus and to protect Jesus from Herod.

They were obedient to the divine revelation - imagine if they hadn’t. The next few chapters could have been different.

*Satan has always wanted to snuff out God's plan for salvation - birth of children
And to copy it*

:13-15

This angel has been busy, if it's the same angel

Appearing to Joseph several times, the wise men, maybe the shepherds

Very specific directions

Take the Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, stay there until the angel says so
Herod wants to kill him.

It's one thing to have God lead you to move somewhere

It's another to have God lead you to flee to a foreign country for the life of the baby in your care

By night - night is good cover

Nightvision and warfighting at night

Yet this was all God's word still fulfilled - nothing catching God by surprised

Hosea 11:1 - these "minor" prophets having major messianic words given to them

i. "We are not told into what part of Egypt Joseph went, nor how long he stayed there: some say six or seven years; others but three or four months." (Poole)

:16-18

Herod saw that he was deceived by the wise men

But was he? God told them not to go back. They did not trick him. But I have a feeling they weren't forthcoming with directions, astronomical maps or exact plans out of caution.

Herod blamed the wise men, but it was God preventing Him

The wicked will blame the innocent when God thwarts their sinful plans

Killed all babies 2 and under

The estimate of Jesus' age based on the star

Yet, this was still prophesied

Why would God allow this?

God didn't do it. Herod did.

The babies are in heaven.

But wicked rules on this earth until the last day, somehow for a greater purpose of giving all time to repent.

i. "Incredible? Anything is credible of the man who murdered his own wife and sons. This deed shocks Christians; but it was a small affair in Herod's career, and in contemporary history." (Bruce)

ii. Especially in his last years Herod was cruel and suspicious. When he knew that his death was approaching, Herod had many Jewish leaders of Jerusalem arrested on false charges. He ordered that as soon as he died, they should all be killed — he knew well no one would mourn his own death, so he was determined that some tears be shed when he died.

iii. "Actually, the story is in perfect harmony with what we know of Herod's character in his last years...The death of a few children (perhaps a dozen or so; Bethlehem's total population was not large) would hardly have been recorded in such violent times." (Carson)

Yet, even if it was "only" 12 children - God prophesies it. They're all precious in his sight.

Jeremiah 31:15

:19-23

Joseph, Mary and Jesus start a little life in Egypt

Goes to work, lives somewhere, maybe make friends, maybe not - in a foreign land
How'd they learn the language? Did they feel isolated and alone?
Were they always looking over their shoulder for someone from Herod?

Finally for them, an angel appears and says it's time to go back

Does God change course here, was the first message a mistake?

Go back, but oh yeah, go to Galilee

No again, God's plan - for Jesus to be near Galilee with the fisherman, be called a Nazarene

But it's interesting that God's directions and Joseph's awareness of the political scene went hand-in-hand

Sometimes we think that we should plow headlong into danger or make decisions without considering the practical or the political - yet it's clear, **Godly wisdom is both spiritual and practical.**

c. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: It was remarkable that Joseph came back to Nazareth, the hometown of Mary and presumably Joseph (Luke 1:26-27). It was remarkable

because Nazareth was an unremarkable town, and because it was where everyone knew Mary and Joseph and the strange circumstances surrounding the birth of their son.

i. Nazareth was an unwalled, unprotected town with a somewhat bad reputation; Nathanael wondered if anything good could come from Nazareth (John 1:46). In God's plan, Jesus came from a small, insignificant place that, if it had any reputation, it was a bad one. This is where Jesus grew up and matured into adulthood.

God was involved in Jesus' life. Not an orphan. Watching over him.

Same with your life and mine - stories growing up

He has plans and purposes for you - look for the directions. Ask for the wisdom. Seek to Worship the King of Kings and it will become clear and his protection and provision will be more than evident.