

Matthew 2:1-12 *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, ²Saying, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him." ³When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. ⁵And they said unto him, "In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, ⁶'And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes [cities] of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel¹.'" ⁷Then Herod, when he had privily [privately] called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. ⁸And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, "Go and search diligently for the young child²; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also." ⁹When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east³, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. ¹¹And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. ¹²And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.*

I. Introduction

- A. The familiarity we tend to have with some Bible stories, especially the Christmas passages that we read every year, doesn't mean we can't get something out of them. We need to guard against such spiritual complacency.
- B. Views of Jesus in four gospels
 - 1. Matthew: Jesus King of Israel

Genesis 49:10 *The scepter* [a staff a king was given at his coronation] *shall not depart from Judah* [the king of all Israel will always be from the tribe of Judah], *nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be* [until the people gather to honor the King in the place where His throne will sit].

¹ "...that shall rule my people Israel." This saying had a clear meaning to every Jew of that day, meaning someone to sit on the throne of David and rule over all of Israel. It was understood, because of the teaching of the scribes, that he would free them from any occupation (in this case, Rome) and rule in righteousness and wisdom.

² Note that Herod did not ask the wise men to search for a baby, but for a young child. The answer from the wise men to Herod had indicated that the child was born much earlier, before they left their homes in the east. It would have been necessary for the wise men to travel from the east with their gifts and with enough protection to prevent them from being robbed on the way. Note also that verse 11 refers to Jesus as a "young child" in a house, not as a baby in a manger.

³ Note this is the second appearing of the star, after they leave Jerusalem. The first appearing was when Jesus was born.

Psalm 132:11 *The LORD hath sworn in truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne* [from the descendants of King David will come the one person who will rule all Israel from his throne].

2. Mark: Jesus Servant of the Lord

Isaiah 42:1 **Behold my** [God's] **servant**, *whom I uphold; mine elect* [the One I have chosen], *in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles* [He shall show the Gentiles the ways of God].

Philippians 2:5, 7 *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus* [understand the way Jesus thought about His own importance and copy it]: ... ⁷*But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

3. Luke: Jesus Son of Man

Daniel 7:13, 14 *I* [Daniel] *saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the **Son of man** came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days* [God the Father], *and they* [the worshippers around the Ancient of Days throne, see verse 10] *brought him near before him. ¹⁴And there was given him dominion* [the authority to rule], *and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.*

Jesus is the only person who has experienced being both God and man.

1 Timothy 2:5 *For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*

4. John: Jesus Son of God

Proverbs 30:4 *Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended* [who has lived in both heaven and on earth]? *who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth* [who has done these three impossible things]? *what is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell* [If you recognize the power of Someone who can do these things, do you know Him like you know a man and his son]?

Luke 1:35 *And the angel answered and said unto her* [Mary], *The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called **the Son of God.***

II. Arrival of King Jesus

A. Jesus of royal bloodline is the reason for the genealogy in Matthew 1:1-17

1. Jesus had legal right to David's throne because His legal father, Joseph, is of the lineage of King David.

2. David's throne, when Jesus sits on it, will last forever

Isaiah 9:6-7 *For unto us [Israel] a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. **Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.***

3. Main truths are plain truths – Jesus birth was a miracle, but it was also ordinary. A young woman giving birth happens every day, but a virgin having a baby has not happened before or since.

B. Jesus is the manifestation of prophecy (Matthew 1:18-24)

1. Frequently Matthew uses words like “all this was done, that it might be fulfilled **which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet** (1:22)” or “thus **it is written by the prophet** (2:5)”

2. Jesus fulfilled more than 330 Old Testament prophecies at His first coming

3. Prophecy is God's promise of a future event. It is God showing us that He has control of the future no matter what is happening around us. Our faith should be strengthened when we see how God has predicted something to happen hundreds of years beforehand, then it happens. This should also give us confidence that other things He has promised will also happen.

4. Promise of future son – Immanuel (“God with us” – Matthew 1:23)

Isaiah 7:14 *Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.*

III. Reception in Jerusalem

A. Wise Men (many translations use the word “Magi”) arrival to Jerusalem

1. They come to Jerusalem asking where the “King of the Jews” was born
2. Wise Men in awkward position
 - a. They asked where they could worship the “King of the Jews”
3. They were not referring to King Herod appointed by the Romans, who considered himself the King of the Jews. This Child represented a threat to Herod, and he was determined to eliminate Him.
4. References to magi (wise men, magicians) in book of Daniel
 - a. Magi were priestly tribe in Persia (not under Roman rule, present-day Iraq/Iran) who were “kingmakers.” In order to be coronated as king you were taught all the wisdom and science of the empire by the Magi.
 - b. Daniel numbered among the magi of Babylon (Daniel 2:13, 48)

5. Jesus is the Kings of kings & Lord of lords

1 Timothy 6:15 *Which in his [Jesus'] times he shall shew* [Because Jesus will return when God determines that the time is right], *who is the blessed and only Potentate* [the Supreme, all-powerful King], ***the King of kings, and Lord of lords;***

B. King Herod the Great was hostile toward anyone who would challenge his position

1. Romans gave Herod the Great title of “King of the Jews” (in secular sense)
2. Herod paranoid about his authority over the Jews
3. Herod known as very brutal king who murdered two of his own sons
4. Herod became troubled by the wise men inquiring for “King of the Jews,” since they weren’t asking for him.
5. All of Jerusalem troubled because Herod troubled. Herod was so evil that when he thought the people should mourn with him, he would kill several Jewish leaders that the people respected. When Herod couldn’t find the child Jesus he had every male child under two years of age killed, Matthew 2:12-18

C. Religious leaders with apathy

1. King Herod gathered the religious leaders together to ask for Messiah’s birthplace
2. They knew of location of Messiah’s birthplace in Bethlehem from Micah 5:2
3. Knowledge accessible to religious leaders, but not acceptable to them. These religious leaders would not yield their positions even for God’s chosen One.

D. Wise men (magi) with humility

1. King Herod met the magi secretly & asked when the star first appeared.
2. Herod tried to trick the wise men that he wanted to worship this new King as well.
3. Star moved to above the home where Joseph, Mary, & the young child lived in Bethlehem.
4. Magi very pleased & glad to find the young child Jesus.

IV. Opportunity to Worship

A. Wise men’s first priority was the young child

1. They came a long distance from the East
2. They actively searched for the One born “King of the Jews”
3. Jesus was a small child by the time they had travelled from their homes

B. Wise men worshipped the young “King of the Jews”

1. They worshipped the Christ-child only
2. They did not worship Mary, although she was there watching what was happening. For a plain carpenter and his young wife this must have been something they would never forget.

3. The gifts they received presumably helped them in their travels to Egypt and back to Galilee (Nazareth).

C. Magi presented gifts to the young “King of the Jews”

1. They gave gifts after they offered their worship.
2. Gold: Gift for royal king
3. Frankincense: Incense for prayers by priest.
4. Myrrh: Embalming ointment used for the preserving a body before burial. This could be valuable since people had to bury their own family members.

V. King Herod’s Rage []

A. God’s warnings

1. God warned wise men not to go to Herod on their homeward journey
2. God warned Joseph to immediately flee with his family to Egypt

B. King Herod the Great’s revenge

1. King Herod determined that the star appeared less than two years previous
2. He killed all young males under two years of age in entire area around Bethlehem, Jeremiah 31:15

VI. Conclusion

A. Jesus is Emmanuel, “God with us”

B. Jesus came to conquer sin & death. Jews were expecting the Christ to conquer the Romans and restore an earthly kingdom for Israel.

C. Jesus is the king who saves humans from their sins first. He will save people from their oppressors later. His priority is our relationship with God, not our enrichment.

D. Inside yourself, who is ruler of your heart?