

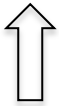
# The Gospel of Matthew

WHO DO YOU SAY I AM?

## LESSON TWO

### MATTHEW 2

#### Day 1



*Heavenly Father, help me to hear afresh your word today. Help me to see you and understand your ways and help me to love my Savior and live this day in the light of his love for me.*

- Read through the passage.
- The Gospel of Matthew emphasizes Jesus as King. Read the passage again and underline words or phrases that point to this truth. Another theme in Matthew is the fulfillment of prophecy in scripture. Highlight the verses displaying this theme in chapter 2.
- What is one truth in today's passage that moves your heart to praise, thanksgiving, confession, action or love for God?

#### Day 2: Matthew 2:1-12

Scholar's Note: "King Herod was Herod the Great, born in 73 BC, the son of the Idumean Arab Antipater, head of the police force who kept order for Rome. He not only took over for his father but was named king of Judea by Rome in 37 BC. Known for his paranoia and jealousy, he killed his wife Mariamne and two of his sons." <sup>1</sup>

1. From the information in verses 1 and 2 describe those who came in search of Jesus.

Scholar's Note: "Magi in the ancient world were a priestly caste of magicians and astrologers who were wise in interpreting the stars (hence "wise men")."<sup>2</sup>  
"Apparently these men came to Bethlehem spurred on by astrological calculations. But they had probably built up their expectation of a kingly figure by working through assorted Jewish books."<sup>3</sup>

2. How did they identify Jesus in verse 2?

-How did they identify the star?

-What was their purpose in coming?

For Discussion: Verse 3 tells us that Herod and all of Jerusalem was troubled when the wise men inquired about a king of the Jews who had been born. Why do you think Herod was troubled? Why do you think all of Jerusalem was troubled?

3. What response did the chief priests and scribes have to the coming of the long awaited King?

For Discussion: Why do you think the scribes and priests didn't go to see Jesus?



The scribes were the experts in the study of the scriptures, that's why Herod called upon them to tell him what the prophecies said. All the Old Testament scripture they studied pointed to Jesus; still they missed him. They were too wrapped up in their

studying to see Jesus. But Jesus was the point! How sad! They were the religious people, the people who knew the answers. They were the church people.

Let's make sure that in our studying and church going, we don't miss Jesus. He's the whole point.

- ❖ As you study the Bible, how do you connect with Jesus? How does belief and expectations play a part in this?
  
- ❖ How can just accumulating knowledge harden your heart?
  
- ❖ What attitudes do you struggle with that lead to indifference to Jesus? Ask God to make you aware of these attitudes as they start arising and help you to turn to Jesus and find satisfaction in him.

Scholar's Note: "Bethlehem, the place near which Jacob buried his Rachel (Gen 35:19) and Ruth met Boaz (Ruth 1:22-2:6), was preeminently the town where David was born and reared." <sup>4</sup>

#### Old Testament Ties

Verse 2:6 is taken from Micah and 2 Samuel

Micah 5:2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

2 Samuel 5:1-2 Then all the tribes of Israel came to David at Hebron and said, "Behold, we are your bone and flesh. In times past, when Saul was king over us, it was you who led out and brought in Israel. And the LORD said to you, 'You shall be shepherd of my people Israel, and you shall be prince over Israel.'"

- In the Micah passage, what do we learn about the ruler who will come from Bethlehem?

- How does Matthew in verse 6b, connect Jesus to King David in the Samuel passage?

Ezekiel 34:15-16a I myself will be the shepherd of my sheep, and I myself will make them lie down, declares the Lord God. I will seek the lost, and I will bring back the strayed, and I will bind up the injured, and I will strengthen the weak...

- Who does Ezekiel connect shepherding the people with?

### **Day 3: Matthew 2:9-12**

4. After Herod finds out where the Anointed One was to be born and tells the wise men, what supernatural event occurs and what was their reaction according to verses 9-10?
5. In verse 11 we see the wise men bowing down and giving Jesus gifts fit for a king. Thinking back to the entire story of the wise men, how else did the wise men worship Jesus?

-How could/does your worship of Jesus look like the wise men's?

Scholar's Note: "[Some] Commentators, ancient (Origen, Contra Celsum 1. 60) and modern (Hendriksen), have found symbolic value in the three gifts--gold suggesting royalty, incense divinity, and myrrh the Passion and burial."<sup>5</sup> (The wise men may not have known of the symbolism their gifts represented, but couldn't God, who orchestrated all the events surrounding his Son's birth, have orchestrated the gifts they brought as well?)

6. What are all the ways God providentially intervened in the wise men's lives?



Luke, in his gospel, highlights poor Jewish shepherds who were looked down upon as the lowest in society, coming to worship Jesus. Matthew focuses on equally unlikely worshippers—wealthy Gentile (non-Jewish) astrologers. God spoke their language, somehow showing the stargazers a sign in the heavens that the King of the Jews, who would be a blessing to all nations, was born. At the very beginning of Jesus' life on earth God was already showing the true colors of his redemptive plan to provide salvation, not just to the Jews, but to the whole world.

- ❖ God intervened in many ways in the wise men's life to bring them to worship Jesus. How has God intervened in your life to bring you to him?
  
- ❖ Who can you encourage by sharing the ways God has intervened in your life?
  
  
- ❖ Who can you be praying for, that God would intervene in their life?

7. Answer True or False to the following statements using the information in chapter 2. (Make sure to look carefully at the chapter and not go by popular Christmas songs and books.)

\_\_\_ There were 3 wise men

\_\_\_ The wise men were royalty

\_\_\_ The wise men came from the East

\_\_\_ The wise men worshipped Jesus at the stable

\_\_\_The wise men brought valuable gifts

\_\_\_The star led them on their journey to Jerusalem

Off the Beaten Path...The wise men were from the East. Scholars say possibly Arabia, Babylon or Persia. The time it took the wise men to travel to Jerusalem leads some scholars to favor Babylon because of its distance from Jerusalem. Hundreds of years before Jesus was born, Daniel, an exile from Israel, was part of the magi in Babylon. Read the first five chapters of Daniel to get a glimpse of the life of the magi. Imagine if the magi who traveled to worship Jesus were the fruit of Daniel's witness in Babylon!

#### **Day 4: Matthew 2:12-18**

8. How did God intervene to keep Jesus safe and accomplish his purposes in verses 12 and 13?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. How quickly did Joseph obey? How is a sense of urgency conveyed in verse 14?

#### Old Testament Ties

Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

Here in 11:1 Hosea is personifying Israel and speaking of God's love for his people and how God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. God enacted his story of redemption throughout the history of Israel and especially in the exodus. Matthew

tells us that Jesus fulfilled Hosea's prophecy by living in Egypt, so then who would we equate Jesus with in the prophecy?

10. How were Herod's true intentions toward Jesus made evident in verse 16?



Herod was so fearful of being dethroned that he didn't hesitate to commit mass murder. Hostility to God is the result of wanting to sit on our own throne, be our own authority and have the world revolve around us.

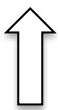
- ❖ Even as believers our sinful nature tempts us to climb back up on the throne of our lives. We want to rule and we want to be worshipped. How do you see these two things manifesting in your life?
  
- ❖ Ask God to make you aware of these sinful inclinations and submit to his rightful place in your life.

Digging Deeper: In Revelation God gives us a glimpse behind the curtain to grasp the true nature of the hatred of Herod. What kind of spiritual warfare was taking place as the kingdom of God was inaugurated with Jesus' birth?

How is this relevant for our lives today?

What will be the final outcome for evil and Satan?

Revelation 12:1-5a, 9-10 "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. <sup>2</sup> She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. <sup>3</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. <sup>4</sup> His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. <sup>5</sup> She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron... <sup>9</sup> And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. <sup>10</sup> And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.



*Father thank you that nothing and no one can thwart your plans. Your purposes will always prevail! What a comfort that is to me living in this broken world that is set against you. Help me to put on the armor of God and to pray!*

#### Old Testament Ties

With Herod's horrific act all Bethlehem wept and mourned for the baby boys who were cruelly murdered. (Scholar's estimate that 12-20 boys were killed in the small town.) In verse 18, Matthew quotes Jeremiah 31:15 that spoke of another horrendous time of mourning when God's people were taken into exile in Babylon. He depicts Rachel, who was the beloved wife of Jacob and the symbolic mother of the nation, mourning for her descendants as the nation was destroyed. Yet in the very next verse in Jeremiah, the prophet says, there is hope for your future. D.A Carson explains, "The tears of the Exile are now being "fulfilled"--i.e., the tears begun in Jeremiah's day are climaxed and ended by the tears of the mothers of Bethlehem. The heir to David's throne has come, the Exile is over, the true Son of God has arrived, and he will introduce the new covenant promised by Jeremiah."<sup>6</sup>



In the seemingly hopeless situation Jeremiah lived in he painted a picture of Rachel refusing to be comforted— and the barbaric act of Herod evokes the same emotion. It



is into this cruel and violent world that Jesus comes to bring life and hope. We learn from Matthew that God is providentially directing events in history and intervening in individual lives to bring about his promised salvation. This is God's way. So in the midst of the dark and broken times we live in, we can be sure that God is still ordering history. And in the troubled circumstances of our own personal stories we can trust that God is working redemptively for us as individuals. Jesus leaving heaven and coming to this broken world is the proof.

- ❖ During hard trials and tragedy it is difficult to see the redemption God is working, but the life of Jesus is evidence—he died, but then he rose from the dead! For the Christian, death leads to resurrection not only in the future, but now in our daily lives. Suffering, repenting and sacrificial love bring a form of death to our lives. During these times be on the look out for the resurrection God will bring.<sup>7</sup> How have you seen Jesus bring life from death in your own life?

### **Day 5: Matthew 2:19-23**

11. How does God continue to guide Joseph in verse 19-20?

Scholar's Note: "Archelaus was much disliked because of his cruelty, and the Jews sent a delegation to Rome, complaining that Archelaus had massacred three thousand shortly before, near the temple (Josephus, Ant. 17:200-18). Indeed he was deposed in AD 6 and exiled to Gaul."<sup>8</sup>

12. It appears that Joseph planned on going back to Judea, possibly to Bethlehem, the City of David, but God had other plans. Where did God direct Joseph to go according to verse 22?

For Discussion: Why do you think God chose to give the angel messages to Joseph instead of Mary?

Digging Deeper:

Luke 1:26-27 In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David and the virgin's name was Mary.

John 1:45-46 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

Where were Joseph and Mary from?

What reputation did Nazareth have?

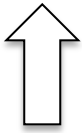
#### Old Testament Ties

In the final verse of chapter 2, we see another prophecy fulfillment. This one is unique in that it is not a direct quote, but "a summary of several prophetic texts rather than a quotation from a particular passage."<sup>9</sup> The following passages are Messianic—they tell about the coming Messiah. If Jesus had been known as a Bethlehemite—from the town of David, that would have afforded him a reputation more befitting a king, but to come from derided Nazareth fulfills these Old Testament prophecies.

Isaiah 53:3 He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Psalms 22:6-7 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by the people. All who see me mock me; they make mouths at me; they wag their heads.

- What reasons do you think God might have had for a Messiah who was not esteemed and from a respected place?



Father thank you that Jesus became lowly to save me. Help me to see the marginalized and outcast through your eyes of mercy, love and compassion. Forgive me for being judgmental and arrogant in my thoughts.

One Thing: Look back over this week's study. Pick one thing that God impressed on you, convicted you about, or something new that you learned and write it here. How will this truth impact the way you think and act?

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<sup>1</sup> Osborne, Grant R.. Matthew (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on The New Testament series Book 1) (Kindle Locations 2234-2236). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Expositor's Commentary Copyright © 1998-2018 Olive Tree Bible Software

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> This idea of suffering, repentance and sacrificial love bringing death that leads to resurrection is from Paul E. Miller in his book J Curve, Dying and Rising with Jesus in Everyday Life. Crossway Publishers, 2019

<sup>8</sup> Osborne, Grant R.. Matthew (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on The New Testament series Book 1) (Kindle Locations 2653-2655). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.

<sup>9</sup> Osborne, Grant R.. Matthew (Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on The New Testament series Book 1) (Kindle Locations 2669-2670). Zondervan Academic. Kindle Edition.