

## Episode #701 Matthew 2 Part 2-Visit to the King

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being “in Israel,” in contrast to believers today who are “in Christ.”

II. Last time we saw the arrival of the wise men from Babylon in Jerusalem, asking for the King of the Jews. Herod, the godless usurper, was on the throne, and he was less than happy to learn of this! Last time he was interviewing the chief priests and scribes as to where the Christ (Messiah) was to be born. They said Bethlehem in Judah, and quote the prophecy.

III. Magers from the East.

- A. Verse 6. Bethlehem “not least” means actually “great.” The “rulers” in Micah 5:2 says “though you are little among the thousands of Judah.” The thousands refers to the rulers of thousands. Bethlehem was not big enough to contribute a ruler of thousands to Judah. He will shepherd Israel, but also far more, as we know.
- B. Verse 7. He wants to know when and how long the star appeared so he can estimate when the child was born or conceived and learn how old He must now be.
- C. Verse 8. This was terrible hypocrisy, claiming to want to worship Him when in fact he wanted to murder him. Herod believes there will be a Messiah, he believes the prophecies about where He is going to be born, but he does not submit to these things. Faith is taking God at His word and responding accordingly. Herod believes the truth, but responds with rebellion. Like King Saul who believed God’s word about David and tried to kill him.
- D. Verse 9. They started toward Bethlehem. Yet Luke 2:39 tells us they moved back to Nazareth. They were surprised, for this was very un-star-like behavior. This star was a supernatural phenomenon from beginning to end. They first saw it in the east, but now it is there no longer, but moving in front of them to guide them! Not toward Bethlehem, though that is where they started for. The star was sent to lead them in the right direction.
- E. Verse 10. Their rejoicing tells us they were not expecting such help. From beginning to end their mission was Divinely led. God was behind this, not astrology.
- F. Verse 11. They came to a house, not a stable or a manger. This was their house in Nazareth, whence the star guided them. The mother only is mentioned, but this does not mean Joseph was not there. He doubtless was the one who opened the door! Notice He was a young child, not an infant or a newborn. They opened their treasure chests.
  1. Gold symbolizes His heavenly glory, being the heavenly color.
  2. Frankincense is the fragrance of His humanity. Others suggest it indicated His priestly character, being offered in the temple.
  3. Myrrh was the embalming fluid of the east. It symbolizes his death. He was indeed buried with myrrh, John 19:39, but there is no indication it was this myrrh, which was probably long since sold to support His poor family.
- G. Verse 12. God advised them. Bullinger suggests this word implies they had questioned God about this. Starting from Nazareth they were already away from where Herod expected them. The route back east from here would be much easier to avoid Herod than the road from Bethlehem. They were already on the way from Nazareth.

IV. The Flight to Egypt.

- A. Verse 13. An angel, not THE Angel, for He was now born as a babe. Joseph’s second dream communicating from God. They are to flee to Egypt until the angel brings him

word from God again. Herod seeks the child's destruction. Some have tried to make out this word means "loss," but clearly here destruction is meant!

V. Conclusion: The wise men, these mages from Babylon, show a Godly attitude not matched by the wise men of Jerusalem. They make a long and dangerous journey to worship the King God sent. God honors their attitude by miraculously guiding their mission. Are we likewise eager for God's truth? Or are we happy to know the truth and sit at home, like the wise men of Jerusalem? Let us be like these noble, Godly wise men!