

Matthew 2:1-12—Worship the King

- Chapter 1—introduction to the King
- Chapter 2—invitation to worship the King
 - This is NOT a Christmas story but a CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE!!
 - This narrative is NOT about the shiny things but about the True King, Jesus!
 - The point Matthew is making is not the significance of the items (we don't even know there were 3 wise men). The point is, they came and unloaded their treasures in worship before the king!
 - They did NOT casually stroll up to the house to see Jesus! They knew who he was! They came to worship him!
 - Matthew is not concerned with entertaining us with a festive holiday story but about calling us to search for, find and worship the True King of the Universe!
- MIT—Jesus is the True King and He is calling US to acknowledge him as King!
- Opposition to Jesus
 - Herod—been given reign over Judea in 40BC and considered “King of the Jews”
 - Matthew is making a clear point...there is one CALLED King of the Jews and one who is BORN King of the Jews!
 - When Herod hears that powerful, influential people have traveled hundreds/thousands of miles to find the “King of the Jews” he is angry, terrified, disturbed (v.2-3)
 - His fear and anger would rage to the point where, in verses 7-9, he begins to deceive the wise men in his plot to murder Christ!
 - Herod represents our fallen depravity which, so often, rejects and seeks to destroy the kingship of Jesus because we want it for ourselves!
- The King Proclaimed (v.1-2)
 - In the wise men (v.1)—we see the universal proclamation to the entire world that the True King is here in Jesus and ALL people are implored to acknowledge him as so.
 - These “wise men” were pagan magicians/astrologers from Persia!—No matter who you are, if you will bow before King Jesus, you can follow him!
 - “Born King”—Juxtaposition—the phony efforts of Herod to be King; the reality of the one who was BORN KING and truly is king!
 - Jesus' true Kingship is being set up against Herod's pretense and falsehood!
 - Before Herod—they stand...Before Jesus—the will fall down and worship
 - The False King is disturbed by opposition and the true King is in peace in victory.
 - The false King is looking for a child to kill in fear of being destroyed...the True King is building a Kingdom that will NEVER be destroyed.
 - The false King is secretly conniving and waging war and the True King has OPENLY ALREADY WON!
 - King of the Jews (v.2)—to his own, familiar people, the same proclamation and invitation is offered
 - In the wise men, we see God's global purpose in all of history. In the announcement to the Jews, we are reminded of God's particular purposes in our lives as placed under his Kingship!
 - Imagine—in a book by a Jew written to Jews, the first people we see worshipping Jesus are magicians from the nations!
 - Jesus is NO TRIBAL deity! He is not only the King of the Jews but of all peoples!

- **The King Prophesied (v.3-6)**
 - “Herod was troubled and all Jerusalem with him”—most likely all the religious leaders were troubled by this news of a King
 - Chief Priests and Scribes—the religious leaders, who oversaw the interpretation and implementation of Jewish Law and Jewish worship, were indifferent and indignant toward Jesus.
 - **PROXIMITY TO JESUS DOES NOT = WORSHIP OF JESUS.**
 - **KNOWLEDGE ABOUT JESUS DOES NOT = WORSHIP OF JESUS**
 - These leaders answer Herod’s questions by quoting the OT—even they knew what the Scriptures said, they did absolutely NOTHING about it—DANGER!!
 - **Numbers 22**—story of Balak and Balaam. God’s people were moving toward the promised land and growing in number and might. Balak became fearful and summoned a magician from the east, Balaam to come and curse the people of Israel. God warns Balaam not to curse them but bless them and he obeys by blessing them 3 times (Numbers 24:16-19)
 - **Numbers = a man from the east prophesying a star and a King of the Jews**
 - **Matthew = a man from the east following a star to a King of the Jews**
 - **Isaiah 60:1-6**—Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples; but the Lord will arise upon you, and his glory will be seen upon you. And nations shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes all around, and see; they all gather together, they come to you; your sons shall come from afar, and your daughters shall be carried on the hip. Then you shall see and be radiant; your heart shall thrill and exult, because the abundance of the sea shall be turned to you, the wealth of the nations shall come to you. A multitude of camels shall cover you, the young camels of Midian and Ephah; all those from Sheba shall come. They shall bring gold and frankincense, and shall bring good news, the praises of the lord.
 - **Isaiah—the nations will come with their gifts and treasures to worship God’s light**
 - **Matthew—the nations are drawn to the light over God’s Son and bring their treasures in worship!**
 - **Matthew 2:6**—a reference/quotation of Micah 5:2
 - Do a comp chart
 - **Micah 5:2—But you, O Bethlehem of 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 going forth is from of old, from ancient days.**
 - Not exact verbatim with Matthew 2:6
 - Matthew mentions Bethlehem, in the land of Judah rather than Ephrathah (why? To highlight Jesus’ kingly lineage!)
 - The place where King David was born becomes the place where King Jesus is born.
 - Less about GEOGRAPHY and more about Jesus’ city being David’s city!
 - Mentions Bethlehem as “by no means least among the leaders of Judah”
 - Jesus has turned Bethlehem from a backwoods poedunk nothing town into a town of immeasurable significance! He has invaded!
 - He adds, “who will shepherd my people Israel”
 - 2 Samuel 5—God promises David that he will shepherd my people Israel and be a ruler over my people Israel.
 - **Emphasis = Jesus is the Son of David, born in the city of David, to rule the people of God like David!**
 - What’s the point!?—The prophecy is there VALIDATING Jesus—Jesus is the True King and he calls us to acknowledge him as such! All history and time has been building to the welcome of the True King.

- **The King Praised (v.7-12)**
 - **The Star**—before the Wise Men praise Jesus as King, the Star is doing so!
 - Supernatural—Matthew is making a point about this King—He is above and outside of nature and rational order. He was born by the Spirit. He is identified by a supernatural star
 - God, in his gracious providence, took the initiative to engage these wise men with the news of the King in a way they could process right where they were.
 - That initiative led them to an encounter with the living God in the person of Jesus.
 - That encounter produced a response of worship and praise to the True King.
 - **Gold = Royalty/Kingship**
 - **Frankincense = Worship/Priest (Israel gave incense to the priest for offering—Jesus as High Priest)**
 - Interesting note: Incense was NEVER used for a sin offering—Jesus was the sinless one to whom were offered gifts of worship and thanksgiving.
 - Barnhouse: eternal royalty and holiness of Christ were announced from his earliest years. He had come forth from heaven to perform the work of redemption, and he was prepared in every way to do the Father's will so that he might fulfill every demand and obligation of the law. Thus only would he become eligible to die on the cross; and by that cross alone redeem the world. That life could show that he was the fit candidate for the cross, and we cling with surety to the work that was accomplished there at Calvary, since we know that our sin-bearer was himself without sin.
 - **Myrrh = Humanity/Death/Embalming—Jesus was the God-Man, the Supreme Savior who would die for us!**
 - Myrrh used by living humans as perfume; dead humans as embalming fluid!
- **Conclusion**
 - Matthew is saying, Jesus is the True King of the whole world and he beckons all of us to recognize him as such! **Matthew's point = Jesus is not just a good guy but a King! How them will we respond?**
 - **Responses:**
 - **Like the Magi**—Offer our lives in joy as worshippers of the True King
 - Would we open up the treasure chest of our hearts and lay them down before King Jesus in abandoned worship and surrender!!?
 - **V.12—“by another way”**—the wise men begin their journey and pursuit of Jesus in allegiance to the false king, Herod, and, in the end, they finish their journey in allegiance to the True King, Jesus.
 - **Like Herod**—Reject Jesus' kingship and claim kingship of our own
 - **May we spend our lives in abandon as witnesses (Matthew 28)**
 - The God who would sovereignly arranged all of nature to draw the magi to the Son wants to sovereignly work in every part of your life to make the glad praise of Christ as King known among the peoples of the earth!!
 - No accident that the nations are here in Matthew 2 and they are front and center in Matthew 28!
 - **May we come and open our treasures and bow down to him and acknowledge, “he is the king of the whole world and he is MY KING!”**