

Spc144 – The Presence of The King – Matthew 2:11 (2017)
Pastor Dave Shepardson Calvary Chapel Nuevo / www.wordbymail.com

Open your Bibles. The title of the message this morning, for the Christmas message, “The Presence of The King.” The key verse is Matthew 2:11. But turn to Isaiah Chapter 9 to begin today.

What do we have that we can offer today that is most in line with the true focus and the true power of the Christmas story? What do we have to offer today? Do we take the poverty of the Christmas story and make it into a massive production? Do we re-write the story – to make it fit our own conception of how we think that night would have gone?

What was there in that stable that would drive the shepherds from their fields? What was there in that stable that would drive the host of heaven to come crashing into the earthly realm? What was there in that stable that would drive the wise men to travel and search relentlessly until they reached Bethlehem?

In that stable born to a young couple with no earthly means, born with no earthly grandeur, born with no fanfare or production was *the presence of the King*. And what we have here today that comes from the true power of the Christmas story is *the presence of that same King*. And the question that the main characters in the Christmas story were forced to answer on *that* day is the same question each of us are forced to answer *today*. How will we react to “The Presence of The King?”

Let’s pray. *Lord Jesus, bring it all down to that, to your presence. To your presence in the stable on that Christmas morning, and to your presence here to the question that the characters were forced to answer on that Christmas day and the question that we are forced to answer today. How will we react, Lord? How will we respond to your presence, God? We pray, Lord, that you would take center stage right now in our hearts, in our minds, as we prepare to go into our cultural tradition of Christmas. We pray that you would break through and that you would become our entire focus. For your glory and in your name, Jesus, amen.*

We are in the presence of the same King today who was born on the Christmas morning and we are not far from similar stables as the one he was born in. The question is – *how are we reacting* to being “in his presence?”

The best known Old Testament Christmas verse is a promise from God, a guarantee of what God will bring to pass. It speaks of both the first and second comings of Jesus

Christ to this earth. And it is a declaration of *who* Jesus Christ *is*, and *who* he came to be in your life.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 For to us a child is born . . .

That is the full humanity of Jesus. He was born as a man, to live the human life – *perfectly* in order to conquer sin and death in our place (on our behalf.)

But clothed in human flesh that morning was *not just humanity*.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 . . . to us a son is given . . .

That is the full deity of Jesus Christ. It was God giving his Son to be the Savior of the world and the complete agony of God becoming a man in order to pay the full penalty for your sin and mine is all caught up in those words – *to us a son is given*.

And this eternal Son of God born as a child in a manger will ultimately carry the government of the world on his shoulders.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 . . . and the government shall be upon his shoulder . . .

This is referring to the reign of Jesus Christ both on this earth from Jerusalem during the Millennium and in heaven for all eternity.

And then Isaiah 9:6 begins to tell us *who* this King in the manger came to be – *for us*.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 . . . and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor . . .

“His Name” refers to his character – his nature. This is who Jesus Christ came to be *in your life*. The word “wonderful” means “*supernatural*.” He is a wonder of a Counselor, a Supernatural Counselor for every situation in your life.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 . . . [and his name shall be called] Mighty God . . .

EL GIBBOR – The Mighty God.

This name refers to complete victory in every battle. He is the Omnipotent Mighty God. Matthew 28 tells us all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him. Hebrews 1:3 says He upholds the universe by the word of his power and he came to be that Victorious, Mighty God – in *your life*.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 . . . [and his name shall be called] Everlasting Father,

This is a Hebrew “figure of speech.” It means literally – Jesus is the *source of Everlasting*.

He is the SOURCE of Eternity

He is the CREATOR of ALL things.

JOHN 1:4 says – “*In Him is LIFE*” and he came to offer you that life – eternally.

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV)

6 . . . [and his name shall be called] Prince of Peace.

SAR SHALOM.

Jesus came to the manger to BE your Peace. Jesus didn’t come to show you the way to peace. He came to BE the Prince of Peace in your life.

The King of Kings was Born in that Manger – TO BE

YOUR - Wonder Counselor

YOUR - Mighty God

YOUR- Source of Life

YOUR - Prince of Peace

And he came to pay the price required to establish his ultimate rule and reign over all of earth and heaven.

Isaiah 9:7 (ESV)

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David (in Jerusalem) and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

God will make this happen! He has promised it. These are God's guarantees of what this King, lying in that manger came to accomplish.

And God WILL accomplish it. BUT, that does not mean it will *automatically apply* to your life.

Whether any of what Jesus Christ was born to accomplish applies to your life – or not- has to do with how YOU respond to *the presence of the King*.

So, let's see how three different people in the Bible responded to the presence of the King on that first Christmas. And then we'll ask how will WE respond to *being in his presence?*

Let's start with King Herod.

Matthew 2:1–3 (NLT)

1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking,

2 “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

3 King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.

King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this.

You see, King Herod was a ruthless ruler. He was ruler of his own Empire and King of his own world and he saw the birth of a new King as a direct threat to his self-rule and self-will. And so for King Herod, his response to the presence of this new King was simple – to remove him.

Herod reminds me – of our culture today because our culture is so bent on removing any possible impact Jesus Christ may have on it. Matthew 2:16 tells us the extent Herod went to try to remove Jesus Christ from his life.

Matthew 2:16 (NLT)

16 (later in the story) Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men's report of the star's first appearance.

What great lengths we will go to in order to remain ruler of our own Empire and king of our own world. You might respond to the presence of this new King Jesus in a similar way as Herod did – as a threat to your “self-ruled” life. But the truth is, the self-ruled life

is your ultimate threat and Jesus came to save you from the certain destruction that the self ruled life brings.

Next, let's look at the most religious of all those in the Christmas story. How did they "respond" to the presence of the King? If there was a new "King of the Jews" coming, Herod figured the religious leaders would know about him *and they did*.

And so, back up in Matthew 2:4-6 we read,

Matthew 2:4–6 (NLT)

4[King Herod] called a meeting of the leading priests and teachers of religious law and asked, "Where is the Messiah supposed to be born?"

5 "In Bethlehem in Judea," they said, "for this is what the prophet wrote:

6 'And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel.' "

They knew this prophecy off the top of their heads. They knew from the scripture that God was going to send a Messiah, a King. They knew exactly *where* he would be *born*. In fact, the Old Testament (which these guys knew inside and out) includes over three hundred prophecies of the birth and life of the Messiah.

The problem was, when this King came, he wasn't the King they wanted. As the life of Jesus unfolded, it turned out he wouldn't do what they wanted him to do. He wasn't offering to be a King on their terms. Jesus Christ came as the King of Kings with a higher plan – an eternal plan – a plan of transformation and an eternal Kingdom. But he didn't come on the terms of the most religiously knowledgeable people and so they rejected him. Those with the most knowledge about the *King of Heaven*, rejected him because he didn't fit their religious ideas.

We see so many people like that today, don't we? People who are so set in their religious ideas that they actually miss the *presence of the King*. They want God on *their terms*. They want him to do *what they want* him to do. But he won't and so they reject him.

Please, *don't replace the Presence of the King with religious ideas and man's traditions*.

Instead, may we respond to the Presence of the King like the wise men did.

(again) Matthew 2:1–2 (NLT)

1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking,

2 “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.”

We don’t know any “worldly information” about these wise men. We know they are from the East and that’s about it. Most likely from the area of Babylon where the people of Israel were in captivity for 70 years. Daniel the Prophet was there and he was placed with the wise men in Babylon and his prophecies would have still been there for sure.

But the important thing about the wise men is HOW they responded to the *presence of the King*. These gentile wise men, outside the Jewish faith, were the first to believe – by faith alone. And not only did they believe by faith alone, they did something about it – they had faith that worked.

They travelled for months, maybe as much as 1,000 miles, to be *in the presence* of this newborn King. But worldly Kings were born all the time and these wise men certainly didn’t travel like this for every worldly king. They knew by faith and (most likely) through the prophecies *this King* was the King of Heaven.

And when they finally arrived, they went to where they assumed a new King would be found – in the city of Jerusalem and beginning their search (I’m sure) in the most noble and honorable places, which is (I’m sure) what disturbed King Herod so much.

So after King Herod’s meeting with the religious leaders he called in the wise men.

Matthew 2:7–8 (NLT)

7 Then Herod called for a private meeting with the wise men, and he learned from them the time when the star first appeared.

8 Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

Of course what Herod meant to say was “so that I can completely eliminate him from my life once and for all.”

Matthew 2:9–10 (NLT)

9 After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was.

10 When they saw the star, they were filled with joy!

The same star which led them from the East now led them right to the True King. And when they saw this star reappear they rejoiced with *exceedingly great joy*. They knew they were going to see the King. And it had actually been quite some time – maybe more

than one year and Jesus and his family were staying in a house (maybe the same house where the stable was.)

Matthew 2:11(A) (NLT)

11 They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him . . .

They finally found the King and in his presence they knew exactly what to do. They bowed down and worshipped him. No matter how long the road was to find him *it was worth it* and when they found him they knew *to worship him*. And notice (in verse 11) the wise men worshipped *only Jesus*. I'm sure they respected Mary as his mother. But their worship was reserved *for Jesus alone*.

They travelled 1,000 miles following a star through the desert and now, risking their lives after meeting with Herod and they did all that to worship in the *presence of the King*.

That's it? Yeah... that's it.

They didn't take back any words of wisdom or teaching they could start a church with – or anything? NO! They *just worshipped him*.

But what about the gifts? They gave gifts, right? Yeah, but that was an act of worship and the gifts spoke *prophetically* of WHO this King was.

Matthew 2:11(B) (NLT)

11 . . . Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

The gold is a symbol of deity and kingship because Jesus Christ is the only divine King of Kings! The frankincense is the incense of the Priests burned before the Lord in the Temple (in the Holy Place) and Hebrews tells us Jesus Christ is our Great High Priest who intercedes *for us*.

The gold and frankincense were both appropriate gifts for a King. The myrrh – not so much. Myrrh was a symbol of suffering and even death. It was used to wrap a body after death.

Because ultimately, Jesus Christ *came to the manger in order to die on the cross... to pay for our sins and to make a way for us to live with him in his Kingdom – forever.*

When the wise men finally reached Jesus they saw, by faith, the King of heaven. They knew they were in *the presence of the King of Kings* and they knew their only response – their only job – was to worship him.

And so, along with all of heaven the wise men bowed their lives to King Jesus and they worshipped him. The long road had been worth it. The difficulty and danger had been worth it. In the end, they *had the privilege* of bowing before the King of ALL Kings and worshipping him with their lives.

This Christmas – all we have to offer you is *this same thing*.

The presence of this same King is with us today and can be every day and our only appropriate response is to worship him with *all of our lives*.

Let's pray. *Lord Jesus, we're still so easily distracted. We're so easily confused. We're so easily drawn to the things of the culture. And even good things – family things and traditional things of this season. But Lord, are we bowing our knee at the manger in the stable, in that low and humble place, and saying "My only right response is to worship the King of Heaven. My only right response is to worship the one who came to pay for my sins, to die in my place so that I could spend eternity with him in heaven." Lord, make that real to us, like you made it real to the wise men. Make it a revelation to our hearts.*

I want to give you a chance to just go personal with the King of Kings. The image is clear of the stable, the manger, the feeding trough, with the King of Glory lying in it. And you can even see the light shining through the roof onto the manger. Is your heart bowed before this King? Or is your back arched and your chin up and your chest puffed out in pride, fully removing him from your life or rejecting him from your religious philosophies? This is the King of Glory, the Creator of All that's Been Created, the Author and the Giver of Life. Will you worship him? Will you bow your heart to him and say, "I believe you are who you say you are." If you would, I just encourage you to do that right now.

Say, *"Jesus, I believe. I believe you are the King. The King of Heaven. Today I want you to be the King of my life. I bow my own rule to you as my Lord. Thank you for coming to die for me. I receive your gift of life. Make me your subject, your disciple. Lead me and guide me, fill me with your Spirit and cause my life to glorify you. I bow my heart to you this Christmas, Jesus, and I worship you with all of creation. In the presence of the King, I bow down. Thank you Jesus.*

Lord, be real to us this morning, as real as you were that first Christmas morning, Fill our hearts, fill our lives with your presence as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. We surrender our lives to you Lord. We pray you would be glorified in them. In your name, amen.