

**“The Worship of the King”**  
**Mathew 2:1-12**  
**The Coming of the King**

**Introduction:**

The Gospel of Matthew was written around 60-65 AD to mostly a Jewish audience who were looking for the Coming of the Messiah, the King of the Jews.

**Regarding the Wise Men**

Matthew 2:1-12 – “Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, <sup>2</sup>“Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.” <sup>3</sup>When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. <sup>4</sup>Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. <sup>5</sup>They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:

<sup>6</sup>“And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah,  
Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah;  
For out of you shall come forth a Ruler  
Who will shepherd My people Israel.”

<sup>7</sup>Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time the star appeared. <sup>8</sup>And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.” <sup>9</sup>After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them until it came and stood over the place where the Child was. <sup>10</sup>When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>11</sup>After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. <sup>12</sup>And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.”

**Question #1: Who are the Wise Men and where did they come from?**

“magi from the east....” = a broad geographical term that could cover anywhere east of Israel from Arabia to India to Persia, Iraq and modern-day Iran.

Magi = Greek: *magoi*...from which we get the word Magi.

- a powerful class of priests who lived in the Persian Empire.
- educators and instructors of the Persian kings
- men of learning, skilled in philosophy, medicine and natural science, paying special attention to astronomy.
- the nation’s spiritual advisors.
- truth-seekers

**Question #2: How did the Magi know that a baby was going to be born as the King of the Jews?**

**The Ministry of Daniel in “The East” (around 600 BC)**

“The King placed Daniel in a high position and lavished many gifts on him. He made him ruler over the entire province of Babylon and placed him in charge of all its wise men.” (Daniel 2:48)

Daniel was given the title *Rab-mag* – the Chief of the Magi. Certainly He would have instructed the wise men in the teachings of the Tanakh – the Jewish Old Testament.

Isaiah 9:6 – “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”

Numbers 24:17 – “I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near: a star shall come out of Jacob, and a scepter shall rise out of Israel...”

cf. Daniel 9 where he foretold the number of years until “Messiah the Prince” would come to make an end of sin, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.

### **Question #3: What was the mysterious star, and how did it lead the Magi to Jesus?**

Our view: “It was a miraculous sign in the skies.” - a supernatural heavenly light that appeared exclusively to the Magi to guide them. (e.g. similar to the way God led His people in the Exodus)

### **Question #4: How long after the birth of Jesus did the Wise Men arrive in Jerusalem?**

1. The wise men went into “the house” where Jesus was. (cf. Matthew 2:11)
2. Jesus is called a “child” rather than a newborn “infant.” (cf. Matthew 2:11)
3. Herod’s plot to kill the children two years old and under cf. Matthew 2:16

### **Question #5: Why were Herod and the people of Jerusalem troubled when the Wise Men arrived?**

Matthew 2:3 “When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him...”

#### **Regarding King Herod the Great**

- appointed King of Judea by the Roman Senate in 37 BC and ruled the region for 33 years.
- an incredible builder (Masada, the Second Temple remodel, etc.)
- managed to keep the peace in Palestine...not an easy task...then and now.
- an insanely suspicious and jealous king
- half Jewish and half Edomite, a descendant of Esau.

Matthew 2:8 - “Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.”

Matthew 2:3 - “When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”

Matthew 2:4-6 - “Gathering together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet: ‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, Are by no means least among the leaders of Judah; For out of you shall come forth a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’ (Quoting the prophecy of Micah 5:2 written over 700 years earlier)

### **Application #1: It takes effort to seek God, but the reward is worth it.**

“The magi were seeking the King; Herod was opposing the King; and the Jewish priests were ignoring the King.”

- Are we opposing the coming of the King like Herod?
- Are we ignoring the coming of the King like the Priests and Scribes?
- Are we seeking the coming of the King like the Wise Men?

“they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.”

**Application #2: Worship is costly, but Jesus is worthy of receiving our greatest treasures.**

“He possessed more royalty in a cradle than Herod possessed in his fine palace. He was greater in his infancy than Louis XIV in his ascendancy. He was more powerful as a child than Napoleon as an emperor. But it did not seem that way. The eyes of flesh revealed nothing but a normal baby, gurgling and cooing, moving his tiny hands side to side...”

**Regarding Gold, Frankincense & Myrrh**

Matthew 2:11 “...they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.”

- They gave Him gold because they recognized it was a proper gift for a king.
- They gave him frankincense because that is what a high priest used when he went into the temple to represent the people before God.
- They gave Him myrrh because they recognized that this King would die for the world.

**What does God want from us?**

Romans 12:1 “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”

O worship the King, all glorious above  
O gratefully sing His wonderful love  
Our Shield and Defender, the Ancient of Days  
Pavilioned in splendor, and girded with praise

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTION ITEMS:**

1. In what ways is Christ’s kingship a threat?
2. In what ways do people ignore Christ the King?
3. In what ways does a truth-seeker find Christ?
4. What did you get most out of this message?