

Dustin Daniels | River Bible Church
Matthew 2:16-18 | Herod's Wrath
 February 20, 2022

WELCOME:

- Please turn your Bibles to Matthew 2
- Bibles in back—our gift to you.

REVIEW:

For the last several months, we have been studying the life of Jesus through the Gospel of Matthew.

Have you noticed how different Matthew's Gospel is from Mark's?

We've looked at the genealogy of Jesus and the virginal conception of Jesus.

Matthew has taught us about the Magi and that famous star.

And last Sunday, the Holy Spirit taught us about the *Flight into Egypt* with Jesus, Mary, and Joseph.

KEYPOINTS:

- There is no doubt that Joseph was filled with doubt. *receiving those dreams? Traveling.*
- How Jesus is the fulfillment of the OT.
- Recapitulation: How Jesus is a "Do-Over" for Israel and all mankind.
 - Jesus is the New Moses leading a new Exodus.
- The Sovereignty of God—God is in control regardless of what we believe or how we feel.
- We discussed what separates a Disciple from a Christian. It's all in choices that we make—specifically choosing not only to love God's promises but also His commands.

- Lastly, we learned how it's in our trials, burdens and sufferings to where we cannot fake obedience.

Most of these lessons came from Joseph's obedience.

Joe is not a super saint.

There was nothing special about him.

He is a sinner who needs God's salvific grace, just like you and me.

Joe was not perfect, but he was imperfectly obedient.

I pray that's encouraging to you this morning.

especially for those of you
who are perfectionists

INTRODUCTION:

Today, we will get the other side of the story from last week.

As Jesus, Mary, and Joseph were traveling to Egypt, something appalling happened in the land of Israel.

King Herod learns that the Magi skipped town without telling him where the Messiah was born.

Is that going to be an issue?

Let's find out.

Please stand for the reading and honoring of God's Word.

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 2:16-18 CSB

Matthew 2:1—After Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, wise men from the east arrived in Jerusalem,

Matthew 2:2— saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star at its rising and have come to worship him."

Matthew 2:3— When King Herod heard this, he was deeply disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

Matthew 2:4— So he assembled all the chief priests and scribes of the people and asked them where the Messiah would be born.

Matthew 2:5— "In Bethlehem of Judea," they told him, "because this is what was written by the prophet:

Matthew 2:6— And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah: Because out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Matthew 2:7— Then Herod secretly summoned the wise men and asked them the exact time the star appeared.

Matthew 2:8— He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the child. When you find him, report back to me so that I too can go and worship him."

Matthew 2:9— After hearing the king, they went on their way. And there it was—the star they had seen at its rising. It led them until it came and stopped above the place where the child was.

Matthew 2:10— When they saw the star, they were overwhelmed with joy.

- Matthew 2:11**— Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and falling to their knees, they worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.
- Matthew 2:12**— And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.
- Matthew 2:13**— After they were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Get up! Take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. For Herod is about to search for the child to kill him."
- Matthew 2:14**— So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night, and escaped to Egypt.
- Matthew 2:15**— He stayed there until Herod's death, so that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled: Out of Egypt I called my Son.,
- Matthew 2:16**—Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men.
- Matthew 2:17**— Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:
- Matthew 2:18**— A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.,

PRAY:

*Sing to the Lord, you his faithful ones,
and praise his holy name.*

*For his anger lasts only a moment,
but his favor, a lifetime.*

*Weeping may stay overnight,
but there is joy in the morning.*

(Psalm 30:4-5)

EXEGESIS:

Matthew 2:16—Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage. He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, in keeping with the time he had learned from the wise men.

Several weeks ago, we learned that Herod wanted the Magi to report back to him regarding the location of The Messiah— not to worship Him but to kill Him.

Herod may have waited a day —maybe two— but probably not much longer than that before he gave this order.

Bethlehem is only five miles away from Jerusalem.

It's a two-hour journey.

So a few days have passed, and Herod realizes that Magi are not coming back.

Matthew 2:16—Then Herod, when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage.

Herod The Great was tricked! He was deceived!

In Herod's mind, the Magi are mocking him— how dare they mock King Herod *The Great*.

Question: Is it really the Magi who tricked Herod?

Let me point you back to verse twelve from last week.

Matthew 2:12—And being warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their own country by another route.

↳ Magi
According to verse 12, who warned the Magi? God.

So who tricked Herod? God.

The Magi are simply obedient to the leading of God.

The Magi have another Divine Disruption to their lives.

They were planning on going back the same way they came and stopping by Jerusalem on the way to tell Herod where the Messiah was.

They were going to do as Herod asked!

But, they too, like Joseph, had a dream from God providing a divine intervention.

And as many of us know, a divine intervention will change the course of your life forever.
I wonder how many times we get mad at people or a situation in our own lives - And we too are mad at the wrong person - when it's God redirecting our lives.

Matthew 2:16—...when he realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, he flew into a rage.

The scene here is that Herod completely loses control of his emotions.

Have you heard the phrase, "He sees red."

Herod is like a bull, where the matador mocks him with the red flag.

Herod allows his passions to overrule his judgment.

Herod doesn't control his anger— his anger is now in control of him.

His arrogance and pride now blind all common sense.

In his sick, twisted, and rage filled-mind, if Herod can't kill the one "born King of the Jews," then he's going seek revenge on the very town that bore him.

Obviously, it's never a good idea to make decisions when you're filled with rage.

KEYPOINT 1:

Anger is evidence of our pride.

Let's learn a life-saving lesson from Herod today.

Proverbs 14:16—A wise person is cautious and turns from evil, but a fool is easily angered and is careless.

Proverbs 29:11— A fool gives full vent to his anger, but a wise person holds it in check.

Anger: a strong emotion of irritation or agitation that occurs when a personal need or expectation is not met.

Angry people in Scripture are described as hot tempered or quick-tempered.

Proverbs 29:22— An angry person stirs up conflict, and a hot-tempered one increases rebellion.

Proverbs 14:29—A patient person shows great understanding, but a quick-tempered one promotes foolishness.

The Hebrew word in the OT that is used the most when it comes to anger is *aph*.

Aph gives the picture of someone's nose or nostrils flaring with anger.

Reminds me of the Matador's bull.
Isn't that interesting?

Scripture specifically provides a physiological and visceral response to anger.

Like most other emotions, anger has an impact on our bodies.

Let's read our text again to get the full picture of what's happening.

Matthew 2:16—...when Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the wise men, flew into a rage.

Herod's blood-vessels became highly excited.

His pulse becomes strong and hard.

Herod's face becomes red and swollen.

His eyebrows frown and his eyes swell...before he says one word.

So Herod's whole body is thrown into turmoil.

And he's about to do something really stupid.

Proverbs 14:17 NLT—Short-tempered people do foolish things.

Controlling and subduing our anger is a form of self-control.

This kind of self-control must be learned.

Everybody deals with the sin of anger at varying levels, but nobody is exempt.

I was at a men's conference several years ago.

There were about 300 men in the room, and the pastor asked the men to close their eyes and raise their hands when he mentioned a subject/sin they were struggling with.

When he got to the subject of anger, I'm not kidding, nearly every hand was raised.

Dear friends, anger is not a sin that we have to continue dealing with.

It can be controlled, but only by the power of the Holy Spirit living within you.

As we all know, giving full vent to our anger is incredibly embarrassing and shameful.

Most people regret what they say or do

We see instant consequences when it comes to Herod's rage.

Matthew 2:16—He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under,

Herod's fury is so fierce that it destroys all common sense.

In Herod's rage, he chooses to execute children willfully.

He murders babies in cold blood—he has zero compassion.

Now, does that sound like a decision that a good, sane, moral and responsible person would make?

of course not.

+ That's why Scripture says.

Proverbs 27:4 NIV—Anger is cruel (and fury) overwhelming,

And because God says that fury is overwhelming, it's no wonder that Herod loses self control.

When people go into a rage like this, many times they move into a state of temporary insanity—but that's not an excuse to justify sin.

Question: If it's God who warned the Magi, and it's God who tricked Herod, then who is Herod really angry with?

Answer: God.

But is God concerned about Herod's anger?

Psalm 2 is known as the Coronation/Crowning Psalm. Listen to this:

+ **Psalm 2:1**— Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain?

+ **Psalm 2:2**— The kings of the earth take their stand, and the rulers conspire together against the Lord and his Anointed One: - Exactly what Herod is doing

+ **Psalm 2:3**— "Let's tear off their chains and throw their ropes off of us."

+ **Psalm 2:4**— The one enthroned in heaven laughs; the Lord ridicules them.

+ **Psalm 2:5**— Then he speaks to them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath:

+ **Psalm 2:6**— "I have installed my king on Zion, my holy mountain."

Now please don't confuse God's anger with Herod's anger... or even your anger, for that matter.

God's anger is a righteous and holy anger.

In other words

God's wrath is based in love toward sin.

We get angry because we don't get our way.

Our anger is based on selfishness—not love for others.

When we're angry, are we loving that person the way we love ourself?

Don't kid yourself!

There is little righteousness in our anger.

We get angry because that person is in the way of what we want to do.

So God's anger doesn't compare to ours.

Back to...

Matthew 2:16—He gave orders to massacre all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under,

Now, It probably didn't take long for the Romans to execute these children.

It probably happened the same day that Herod gave the order.

How many children were murdered that day?

Bethlehem is a small village between 300-500 people so several dozen children could have been murdered that night.

However, we don't know for sure.

Scripture doesn't say, and there are no other secular historical records of this event.

Some people say that this story is made up because no one else records it.

How do we, as Disciples of Jesus, respond to this allegation?

Well, here's the deal.

First, if Matthew made this story up, which is Scripture, then God is a liar.

And if God is a liar, then we all have an eternal problem on our hands—which means we can't trust Him.

But, Scripture says that God doesn't lie in Titus 1:2—so the story is true.

Secondly, Bethlehem is a small village out in the middle of nowhere.

The world doesn't
Nobody cares about Bethlehem.

In other words... Herod executing children out in the middle of nowhere— is not front-page news for the Jerusalem times.

Sadly, that's the reason no historian recorded it.

+ **Matthew 2:17**— Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled:

Notice here that Matthew is not interested in Herod's temper tantrum.

What Matthew is interested in— is how Herod's rage fulfills OT Scripture.

+ **Matthew 2:18**— A voice was heard in Ramah,
weeping, and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children;
and she refused to be consoled,
because they are no more.,

Matthew quotes Jeremiah 31:15.

KEYPOINT 2:

Notice how one man's rage is tied to another woman's weeping.

So why is Matthew quoting the OT prophet, Jeremiah?

Let's break it down.

Matthew 2:18— *A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping, and great mourning,*

There are four places known as *Ramah* in the OT.

This prophecy happened at *Ramah in Benjamin*, which is near Jerusalem.

This particular village is where Nebuchadnezzar gathered the Jewish people before bringing them back to Babylon as slaves.

The Jews going into Babyloian captivity is why there is weeping and great mourning in the first part of this verse.

Let's look at the second part.

Matthew 2:18— *Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.*

Rachel was Jacob's wife.

Jacob is one of the forefathers of the faith. (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob).

So in the first part of verse 18, Israel weeps, but now it's a person weeping, *Rachel*. Why?

Rachel's been long dead—she's not even in Bethlehem. *When this massacre happens.*

So what's going on?

Rachel is what's called a Biblical Type—super fun!

+ **Typology:** A biblical interpretation where a person, place, or thing in the OT points to another person, place, or thing found in the New Testament.

For example:

The Passover lamb in the OT is a type that points to Jesus as the Lamb of God in the New Testament. (1 Cor 5:7).

The rock from which Israel drank in the OT, prefigures Christ Himself as the Rock and Living Water in the New. (1 Cor 10:3, 4).

Jesus said to Nicodemus, "*As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up.*" (Jn 3:14; cf. Nm 21:9).

+ Back to our ^{PASSAGE w/ That context.} text:

Matthew 2:18— Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.

So, Rachel is a type that represents all the mothers of Bethlehem who are weeping because ^{their} her children are being murdered by Herod.

Pretty ^{heavy} have text for us today.

We have a lot to learn from it.

I'd like to focus on anger as we close.

+ **PREACH:**
I learned a lot about anger from my own dad.

He taught me things not to do.

As a little boy I remember going through the car wash.

Dad drove a black Pontiac Trans Am with T-Tops—just like the one in the movie *Smokey and the Bandit*.

I'll never forget that car. ~~My dad bought one just like it.~~

I would sit in the passenger seat, and my younger brother would sit on the armrest while he drove.

There weren't any seatbelt laws back then.

Needless to say, safety was not much of a concern for my dad.

Besides, what could possibly go wrong?

Well, we go through the carwash.

But instead of drying the car with a towel (like a normal person), he decided that he would drive really, *really*, fast to “air dry” it.

I looked at the speedometer, and we were going over 100 mph through the suburban streets of Ft. Wayne, Indiana.

I'm guessing the speed limit was 40 or 50 mph max.

After passing several cars at what seemed to be mach speed, dad finally had to slow down because of traffic.

Some of the cars that we passed started catching up with us.

One of the drivers that passed us ~~gave us~~ ^{my dad} a certain hand gesture as he drove by.

This gesture sent my dad into overdrive himself.

He didn't say anything, but decided to switch lanes very quickly as we pulled up to the red light.

That car was directly in front of us.

Dad tapped this car with his front bumper and then slammed on the gas pedal.

The next thing I knew, his *Smokey and the Bandit* Pontiac Trans Am was screeching and spinning its tires while grey smoke filled up the intersection!

I specifically remember the passenger looking back at us in terror.

After a few seconds, dad started pushing this car out into the middle of the intersection with oncoming traffic.

The driver finally released his own brake, slammed on the gas, ran the red light, and drove off into safety.

Like I mentioned, I learned what not to do...I have more stories, but you'll have to join a small group to hear them.

is in the Foundations class

Is anger a sin?

Psalm 4:4 NLT—Don't sin by letting anger control you. Think about it overnight and remain silent.

You don't have to give in to your anger like Herod or my dad.

It is a choice to be angry.

For many of us, irritation and anger are the default mode of how we deal with problems.

Have you ever wondered why you get angry?

It's not the person place or thing—those are surface level issues.

The reason we get angry is because we still have a fractured relationship with Jesus Christ at some level.

King Herod did not have a relationship with God and he sinned.

My dad thought he had a relationship with God and he sinned.

And the reason we get angry is because of the remaining sin in our life as well.

Now, our ^{of Anger} sin manifests itself out in many different ways.

Let me give you three sources of anger:

→ There's more but I'm not going to go see Dr. Phil or you. - Biblical Counseling

1. We get angry because our heart is wounded. (Genesis 37:3-4)

God has designed all of us to have a need for unconditional love.

When we are rejected or experience some kind of emotional pain—we get angry.

Why? To protect ourselves from getting wounded again.

But that's not God's design.

You may have heard the expression that, "hurt people hurt other people."

There's a lot of truth in that.

We're all hurt and broken, but we don't have to stay that way.

2. We get angry because of fear and worry. (1 Samuel 18:8-12)

God created us with a need for security.

And sudden

A change in our circumstances cause us to fear—which causes us to worry.

That worry reveals a brokenness in our lives.

At some level we don't trust God—and that lack of trust is another reason we get angry.

3. We get angry because of frustration. (Genesis 4:3-8)

A lot of our frustration is tied to our performance.

① Everyone has a God-given need for significance.

⑤ But, when our ^{performance does not} efforts don't meet our expectations then our significance is threatened, causing anger.

Frustration over unmet expectations is a major source of anger. X2

How do we overcome these sources of anger?

Psalm 38:18—So I confess my iniquity;
I am anxious because of my sin.

For us to be at peace with God and others, ~~the~~ Scripture tells us to confess our sins.

How do you do this practically?

1. Confess anger as sin.

1 John 1:9—If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

James 5:16— confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

2. Ask God to reveal the source of your anger.

This is a great thing to pray about when you tithe your time in the morning.

3. Talk to a trusted Brother or Sister in Christ about your anger.

There's no such thing as a lone ranger Christian.

This idea that you can live the Christian life apart from the Church and apart from discipleship comes from the pit of hell.

And if your doing life by yourself then you're certainly not fulfilling the G.C. There's a reason the worst punishment a prisoner can receive in prison is solitary confinement.

And yet, many Christians voluntary choose to close themselves off and isolate themselves.

There are few things more tragic than voluntarily placing yourself in solitary confinement. Not physically but emotionally/spiritually.

If you want to talk to someone today or need prayer we invite you to stay after the service.

We have our prayer room through the foyer and to the right and fellowship to the left.

We want to get to know you. I pray that you walk let us.

PRAY:

— Forgive us for our sin of anger, fear, worry, frustration, performance

That is don't know what to do.

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