



**Old Testament Reading – Psalm 1:1-6 – New Testament Reading – 2
Timothy 3:1-17**

**Behold the King
“The King is Worshipped”
Matthew 2:1-23**

Matthew’s goal was to prove to the Jews that Jesus was the King God promised Israel – He was the Messiah.

- In Chapter 1, Matthew showed how Jesus fulfilled the promise of God by being from the “royal” lineage of Abraham and David, conceived by the Holy Spirit and born to a virgin girl, just as the prophets had said.
- In Chapter 2, Matthew showed how Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament prophecies regarding four specific locations and events of His birth.
- In Chapter 2, Matthew showed how Jesus’ birth was recognized by Persian religious leaders, who determined to find this newborn King, and when they did, they worshipped Him and gave Him gifts suitable for royalty.

Rather than being born out of wedlock to a peasant girl from Nazareth, Matthew proved the miraculous conception of Jesus was by the Holy Spirit to a virgin girl as the Old Testament prophets

said the Messiah would be.

- While that was the essential evidence that Jesus was the Messiah, He had also proved Himself to be the Messiah by manifesting the very nature of God among them, in His life, His ministry, His death, and resurrection.
- After three years of being with Him, Matthew concluded: Jesus was God in the flesh, dwelling among men.

Matthew recorded four prophecies, identifying the specific locations of events relative to the birth of the Messiah that were all fulfilled in the birth and early life of Jesus.

1. The Location of His Birth – Matthew 2:1 – “When Jesus was born in Bethlehem – wise men [came] from the East to Jerusalem.”

The Scripture does not say:

- There were three wise men – *Arab caravans included 12 men, with a detachment of at least 100 well-trained soldiers.*
- These men were “Kings” – *they were “kingmakers” – men who conducted coronation ceremonies for new kings.*
- These men rode “camels” – *they road Arabian horses and sold Arabian horses for their income.*
- They followed a “star” from Persia to Bethlehem – *they saw the star in the East (Persia) and already knew the King of Israel would be found in Jerusalem.*
- These men bowed before the baby Jesus at the manger in Bethlehem – *the 900-mile journey from Persia to Israel could have taken over a year – certainly not the same night...*
- The star shone over Bethlehem – *Jesus was circumcised at the temple in Jerusalem on the 8th day, and Mary performed her purification rites on the 33rd Then they returned to Nazareth, where the Magi found the newborn King, and worshipped Him.*

The Scripture does say:

- “Magi” were skilled in astronomy and astrology and served as counsel to the King of Babylon – *they would probably be called “wizards” today.*
- Daniel influenced by Daniel – *he taught them about God’s promise to send Israel a “new king” to destroy her enemies and re-establish her glory. They were expecting Him.*
- These men came to Jerusalem – *but they were directed to Bethlehem after Herod’s priests discovered the Old Testament prophecies said the new king would be born in Bethlehem.*
- Six hundred years before Jesus was born, God said through the prophet Micah – *a leader would be born in Bethlehem who would be the Ruler of Israel.*
- Bethlehem was known as the “City of David,” which means “House of Bread” – *a fitting name for where the Bread of Life was born. John 6:35*
- As the entourage left Jerusalem, the Shechinah Glory of God re-directed them to:
 - “Nazareth” – *not Bethlehem*

- “A house” – *not a stable or barn*
- “A young child” – *not a baby*

2. His Exodus to Egypt – Matthew 2:14-15 – “He took the young child and his mother, and departed into Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, in order that what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, out of Egypt did I call my son.”

- In Hosea 11:1, God spoke through the prophet, saying: “Out of Egypt I called My son.”
- What Hosea wrote referred to God calling Israel out of their slavery in Egypt and delivering them through the wilderness and into the Promised Land.
- Even though Israel turned against God and worshipped other gods, God did not abandon Israel, but rather He promised to send them a Deliverer to restore them to Him.
- God called Hosea to illustrate His heart for Israel by:
 - Marrying a woman (Gomer) who would turn from him and give herself to other men, and even birth children by those men.
 - Continuing to provide for her physical needs, even though she continued to be unfaithful to him.
 - Giving everything he had to purchase her freedom from prostitution and to restore her as his wife.
- Hosea wrote: God called Israel “His first-born son” out of Egypt, but they had gone back to other gods.
- Matthew saw: God had called “His only begotten Son” out of Egypt – a sign that proved Him as the Messiah.

3. His Escape from Rama – Matthew 2:16-18 – “Then Herod sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, two years old and under.”

In Jeremiah’s Day:

- Rama was a small village north of Jerusalem where the Jewish people were processed – *those who were able to work or were educated were taken captive; those who weren’t able to work or weren’t educated were killed – it was a place of great weeping.*
- Having birthed the leaders of the North and Southern Kingdom, Rachel was called the “mother of Israel” – *she never stopped weeping over the loss of her children.*

In Jesus’ Day:

- Rama is a small village one mile north of Bethlehem – *it is the site of “Rachel’s Tomb,” and dedicated to the mothers who lost their children because of Herod’s terror when Jesus was born.*

- Six hundred years before the birth of Christ – *Jeremiah used an Old Testament event that did happen in his day to describe an event that would happen in Jesus’ day, to prove Jesus was the Messiah, the Savior sent from God.*
- As many as 20 baby boys were killed that night in and around Bethlehem as Herod tried to eradicate this threat to his kingdom.

4. His Life in Nazareth – Matthew 2:20-23 – “When Herod was dead, [Joseph] arose and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel...and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.”

- There is no “specific” verse in the Old Testament that says Jesus would be raised in Nazareth, but Matthew had access to other writings that were not canonized in our Scriptures, or perhaps the translation of the languages did not say “Nazareth,” as small towns were not on the maps in the days of the prophets.
- King Herod died at the age of 69, not long after Joseph, Mary and Jesus had fled to Egypt.
- Historians say Herod’s death was long and agonizing as if God was extracting one moment of Herod’s life for every life he had taken, and that was in the thousands.
- Herod was only one of the many men that tried to kill Jesus Christ or at least remove His truth from the minds of men.
- Their bones have turned to ashes, and their bodies have turned to dust, but Jesus is alive and will return as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords to rule the earth.
- When King Herod died, Gabriel told Joseph it was time to bring his family back to Galilee and to their home in Nazareth.
- That is all we know about Jesus until He went to the Temple with His parents at the age of 12 and baffled the Chief Priests with His theological wisdom. Then, 18 years later He began His earthly ministry at the age of 30 by being baptized by John in the Jordan River.

“And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”

Luke 2:52

Which is your concept of Christ?

- The Christmas Card Christ – what Christ has done for you and what He can do for you and will do for you? How much of your “Christmas” is about “Christ,” the babe in the manger who became our Savior and who is coming again soon to be the King of Kings and Lord of Lords?
- The Messianic Christ – what Christ has called us to do to follow Him; to take up our cross daily, and surrender unto His Lordship. When will you realize the call to “follow Christ” is to “come and die?”

Which response best describes your response to Jesus?

- Herod’s Response – *hatred, hostility* – he perceived Jesus as a threat to his freedom and his kingdom. Do you see receiving Christ as a threat to your freedom?

- Chief Priests and Scribes – *indifferent, ambivalent* – they knew what the Scriptures said, but that knowledge made no difference in their hearts toward God or in their understanding of His plan for man’s redemption. Are you practicing religion or developing your relationship with God?
- The Magi – *fascinated, motivated* – not satisfied to admire Him from a distance – not discouraged by apostate and false religionists – they pressed on until they embraced Christ and worshipped Him with gifts suitable for a King. Have you fully recognized His Lordship over your life?

“Those who look for Jesus will see Him: those who truly see Him will worship Him: those who worship Him will dedicate their lives to Him, and consecrate their substance to Him.”

Charles Haddon Spurgeon