

GOD With Us #4
“King of the Jews: Jesus or Herod?”
Matthew 2:1-16

We’ve all heard the story of the three wise men that were guided by the star to the baby Jesus and the gifts they gave him. The Magi were seeking Jesus so they could worship the King of the Jews. Herod, who was the political King of the Jews, had an agenda for Jesus that was quite different than the Magi. Herod consulted with the Biblical scholars of the day as to where Messiah would be born, but they didn’t take it very seriously. In today’s teaching we will see three different responses to Jesus. These are the same responses we see people making today.

#1. THE MAGI COME TO WORSHIP JESUS, vv. 1-2

- A. The magi came about 2 years after Jesus’ birth, v. 1
- B. The identity of the Magi is uncertain, v. 1
- C. They came to worship the King of the Jews, v. 2
- D. They were led to Jerusalem by the star, v. 2
- E. They needed to find out where Jesus was, v. 2

#2. KING HEROD WAS THE POLITICAL KING OF THE JEWS, v. 1

- A. Herod was a descendent of Esau
- B. Herod was a shrewd politician – a puppet of Rome
- C. Herod was a great builder

#3. HEROD’S RESPONSE TO THE MAGI, vv. 3-8

- A. Herod & Jerusalem were disturbed by the Magi’s report, v. 3
- B. Herod got counsel about Christ’s birthplace, vv. 3-4
- C. Herod was told Bethlehem, vv. 5-6 (Mic 5:2)
- D. Herod found out when the star appeared, v. 7
- E. Herod’s deceptive instructions to the Magi, v. 8

APPLICATION POINT

- ♣ The Chief Priests & Scribes were indifferent to Jesus

©Pastor Bruce Guckelberg, PhD, December 27, 2020

#4. THE MAGI GO TO BETHLEHEM TO WORSHIP THE LORD, vv. 9-12

- A. They were guided to Jesus by the star, vv. 9-10
- B. They bowed down and worshiped the Lord, v. 11
- C. They gave gifts of gold, incense and myrrh, v. 11
- D. They were told by God not to go back to Herod, v. 12

#5. HEROD’S TRUE MOTIVE WITH JESUS IS REVEALED – ELIMINATE HIM, vv. 13-16

- A. The Lord protected them from Herod, v. 13
- B. The real King of the Jews is Jesus – not Herod, v. 13
- C. They stayed in Egypt until Herod died, vv. 14-15
- D. The prophecy of Hosea 11:1 is fulfilled, v. 15
- E. Then Herod ordered Jesus killed, v. 16

#6. HEROD’S LEGACY – WHAT COULD HAVE BEEN

- A. He could have been a hero
 - B. He died shortly after this episode
 - C. He goes down in history as a bad man – “The Wicked”
 - D. He was a man without a conscience
 - E. He saw Jesus as a threat to his throne
-

TODAY’S SCRIPTURE

Matthew 2:1-16

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ²and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him." ³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ⁵"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶“But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.”” ⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him,

report to me, so that I too may go and worship him." ⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. ¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. ¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. ¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." ¹⁴So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." ¹⁶When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

Hosea 11:1: "When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son."

Micah 5:2: "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- #1. Who were the Magi?
- #2. What are your thoughts about King Herod?

- #3. In what way(s) do you think it is strange that Herod and all Jerusalem was disturbed when they heard the King of the Jews has been born? (v. 3)
- #4. The Lord warned both the Magi and Joseph in a dream not to go back to Herod. What do you make of this?
- #5. In v. 15 it says, "Out of Egypt I called my son." How is this fulfilled in Joseph taking Mary and Jesus to Egypt?
- #6. Why did Herod want to have the baby Jesus killed?
- #7. What is Herod's legacy?
- #8. Discuss the three different responses to Jesus in this passage.
- #9. What is your takeaway from this teaching?

TODAY'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOLIDAY BREAK

We are taking a holiday break from our Tuesday night Bible study and Wednesday evening prayer meeting. We will resume meeting January 5th at the usual times.

WE ARE MAKING GREAT PROGRESS

In improving the quality of the zoom service. Thank you for your patience and understanding in this matter. We have been working very hard to set forth the best quality experience possible for those in zoom land.

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you for financially supporting the ministry of Hillcrest Church. You can give online at the church website or mail your check to the church. This is the time to think about making a year-end contribution, which is fully tax deductible, to the following:

- Give to the general fund (our operating expenses)
- Give to the elder's fund (to assist those in financial need)
- Give to the Great Commission fund (for the missionaries of the CMA)