



PITWM VERSE BY VERSE

MATTHEW 2:1-12

LESSON: WISE MEN WORSHIP CHRIST —December 30, 2018

INTRODUCTION:

Chapter 1:18-25 Joseph was faced with a difficult choice after discovering Mary was pregnant. Although he knew that taking Mary as his wife could be humiliating, he chose to obey God's command to marry her. She remained a virgin until her son was born, and Joseph named him Jesus.

LESSON: WISE MEN ARRIVE MATTHEW 2:1-6

2:1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,— Matthew's encounter: After the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem of Judaea, the Magi or wise men came from the east to Jerusalem to enquire of the now reigning king. These wise men were astrologers but had varied job descriptions as teachers, priests, physicians, and sorcerers. Bethlehem was six miles south of Jerusalem. Some scholars say these astrologers were from a different land representing the entire world. We do not know how many wise men there were.

2:2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him. The Magi presented an unexpected question in the city because there was already now a reigning king of the Jews in the palace and that was Herod. This must have seemed awkward! They were asking around Jerusalem about the King of the Jews that was born. They had seen His star in the east. This had to be a miraculous star that they had never seen before, and it appeared at the very time of the prophecy of Jesus' birth. And it appeared to Gentile wise men far away in another nation. They were guided by this star to Jerusalem! All for a purpose! They made it known that they wanted to worship He that was born King of the Jews! It seems in their seeking and searching a star rises out of Jacob in linear movement over an exact position on the horizon - towards Jerusalem. This star appeared and they believed it announced the birth of the King of Jews - the first one since the Babylonian Captivity in the days of Daniel about 600 years earlier.

2:3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. Many of us have the idea that the Magi went straight to Herod and said, *"Where is the newborn king?"* In fact, the Magi were asking around town where He was, and word of this came to Herod. As we read the next few verses, we see that it was only after Herod had a meeting with the scribes and chief priests, did he talk with the Magi. Why was Herod troubled at what the Magi were asking? - Because he himself had been given the title *"King of the Jews"* from Augustus Caesar. The Magi were asking, *Matt. 2:2 "Where is He who has been Born King of the Jews...?"* Herod took this as a personal attack, and knew that one born with the right to be King of the Jews would mean political upheaval.

2:4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. Herod had known that the Jews believed a Messiah was coming. Now, that he's heard the Messiah may have been born, he has a plan. Being in Jerusalem, he had access to the most biblically knowledgeable people on the earth. And so, he gathered the scribes and chief priests together, asking them where this competitor was supposed to be born.

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2:5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,— When they replied, they said He would be born in Bethlehem of Judea, clearly anticipated a literal fulfillment of the written Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah.

2:6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel. This is Micah's 5:2 prophecy in which they quoted to him— *"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings have been from of old, from everlasting."* The ruler in Israel was to come from Bethlehem of the tribe of Judah. The *"Governor"* who will come from Bethlehem is none other than the child-ruler predicted in Isaiah 9:6— *"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder."* The prophet goes on to proclaim that this ruler is the *"Mighty God"* and that the increase of His government shall never end. He will sit upon the throne of David forever.

II. WISE MEN SEARCH MATTHEW 2:7-10

2:7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. Having already formulated his plan of action, Herod secretly called the Magi. *"Secretly"*, meaning that it was done in a way that was hidden, to keep others ignorant of what he was doing. Herod knew that nothing positive could be accomplished having all of Jerusalem knowing that he was meeting with the Magi! He wanted to know as precisely as possible when that star appeared.

2:8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also. Herod sent the Magi to Bethlehem — they didn't know where else to go, but to Jerusalem to look. He told the wise men that his intention was to worship the child also, but his plan was murder. It was God who used an evil man, Herod (without his knowing it), to help the wise men in their search.

2:9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. Now, upon hearing the king, they departed for Bethlehem and behold, they saw the star in which they had seen from their homeland. The miraculous star; the unexpected sign appeared to them again, and stood over the location they were looking for. It was in a fixed position where the young child was.

2:10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Can you imagine? They have gotten to their destination and couldn't help but break out in joy! Could you imagine that in all of their search that Bethlehem was six miles from Jerusalem, and it took them one to two years to find the child born King of the Jews; not the baby. So their search has been fulfilled and their rejoicing began with exceeding great joy seeing the star rest where the young child was! Praise God!

III. WISE MEN WORSHIP MATTHEW 2:11-12

2:11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense and myrrh. So many explanations have been exaggerated over these scriptures for centuries.

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1. The wise men did not find the babe, but they found the young child. According to scripture, *"They saw the young child with Mary his mother."* This would indicate that they did not come to a manger with a baby.
2. The wise men did not find him in a manger but as quoted above, in the house. According to scripture, *"They were come into the house."* This would indicate that the family had now moved out of the stable into a home in Bethlehem.
3. The scriptures never said there were three wise men; did not say how many, but only indicated three gifts.

The wise men fell down and worshipped the child, Jesus and began to pay homage to the King of Jews with wonderful gifts; treasures. They began to present unto him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. The three gifts had a spiritual meaning:

1. gold as a symbol of kingship on earth,
2. frankincense (an incense) as a symbol of deity, and
3. myrrh (an embalming oil) as a symbol of death.

The wise men probably expected the child to be the son of a reigning monarch with all the splendor, wealth, and royalty attached. They probably expected Him to be known by all. But this child they found was not, but, they still gave Him worship and gifts as due a King

2:12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. The first danger was Herod plotting to find Jesus. That's why he sent the wise men ahead, telling them that he wanted them to get back with him so he could also worship this King, which was not the truth. Therefore, to protect the child (Jesus), God warned the wise men in a dream that they should not return to Herod. Mind you, they didn't know of Herod's plot until they had actually found Jesus and worshipped Him. They obeyed God, rather than Herod, and departed into their own country another way. Therefore, God directed and protected them. God's hand was in every turn, in every decision. Will we recognize the amazing signs God places around us that point to the reality of the God-Man, Jesus Christ?

SUMMARY:

Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea during the reign of King Herod when wise men came from the east to Jerusalem enquiring and seeking He that born King of the Jews. They had seen His star in the east and followed the star that they may come to worship Him. After hearing about these things, Herod became troubled and began to gather all his chief priests and scribes asking them where Christ should be born. They answered saying in Bethlehem of Judea as written by the prophet revealed in the Book of Micah (giving biblical revelation) that Bethlehem is the place (2:1-6).

Herod secretly called the wise men, wanting to know precisely the time when the star appeared. So, Herod sends the wise men to Bethlehem telling them to go search for the young child and bring word back to him that he may go and also worship the young child. Upon hearing the king, the wise men departed for Bethlehem, and the star which they had seen in the east guided them and rested over the place where the child was. And the wise men began to rejoice with exceeding great joy when they saw the star. They then see the house where the young child and His mother Mary are, and they entered in and fell down and worship Him, presenting Him with gifts; treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh due a King (2:7-12).