

01-12-14

Scripture:

Title: Magi

Psalms 1 – his delight is in the Law of the Lord...

Review of Matthew

Jesus is the King

He has the pedigree of a King

He has a miraculous, virgin birth

He is God come in the flesh

Magi

Matthew 2:1

 *Bethlehem*

Beth – house, *lehem* – bread

The bread of life was born in the house of bread

Birthplace of King David

Jacob's wife Rachel was buried here

Ruth, who married Boaz, lived in Bethlehem

Not really significant place, little village

Main significance is Jesus was born here

 *...in the days of Herod the king*

Herod was considered at this time the king of the Jews

He was not Jewish – he was an Idumean or Edomite

He played up to Rome, got them to make him king

More in a bit...

 *...magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem*

Who were these men?

Tradition gives us names – Caspar, Belthizar and Melchior

Scripture is silent

Said to be kings – three in number

Scripture says – magi, no number

Their skulls are said to be in Europe, in a cathedral, w/ their eyes fixed toward Bethlehem
Scripture is silent

Magi, wisemen – Greek – magos
Untranslatable word...
Word has come to mean magician, sorcerer

Basically a pagan, priestly tribe of people from the Medes and Persians

Blended science and astronomy w/ superstition of astrology
They were influential in Babylonian empire
Jews were captured by Babylon
Daniel became one of them
Big influence on this group
Knew about Jewish prophesy
Shared info about OT
Daniel very influential

Uncertain how much influence on this group, had to have some...

The Magi had great political power in Babylon
Their power was so great that it is said every Persian king must learn their knowledge and wisdom and must be approved by them
Often consulted by kings b/c of their wisdom
Hence – wise men

The Star

Matthew 2:2

We know Mary believed God's promise of a Messiah
Along with Joseph, Zachariah, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna
And others – Jews were looking for God to fulfill
His promise

Interesting there are others in this same time, outside of the Jews, outside of the Bible, historians, several of them record this same desire in the world – a looking for a king, a ruler, and interestingly enough this ruler would come for the land of the Jews

There was going to come a great Savior of the world, a
great leader, ruler

Not sure the source of this expectation
Several historians talk about it

Many questions about this star, what it was...

Some say it was Jupiter

Jupiter is called the king of the planets.

Some say that it was the conjunction of Jupiter and Saturn in the
sign of the fish.

Some say it was just an erratic comet.

Some say it was a low hanging meteor

Some say it was the star of destiny in the heart of mankind...

Don't really know what it was

God's glory often represented as light

Children of Israel – pillar of cloud by day and fire by night

God's glory shining in the tabernacle

Jesus' transfiguration – shining

It was a bright sign in the sky – God's glory had come to earth

Numbers 24:17

And then...

Matthew 24:30

Revelation 1:16

... and His face was like the sun shining in its strength.

Some kind of bright light in the sky...

 *I think your lights might be too bright this year...*

Scripture doesn't say the star guided them from their country

They saw the star and knew where to go

It did guide them from Jerusalem to Bethlehem

They saw something they had never seen before,

It had to be something unique

They tied it together with what the Old Testament said

What Daniel had told them

No astronomical research gave them their direction,
God revealed Himself

...For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.

They saw the “star” and headed out
Headed to the royal city of Jerusalem
God gave these Gentile Magi, wise men
Gave them a sign, they knew
They headed to Jerusalem

They knew He was to be worshiped
This King was to be worshiped
These Gentile wise men w/ partial knowledge
Set out on a journey to worship the King
While the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem w/ the Torah, the prophecies
stayed home and missed the whole thing...

King Herod

Matthew 2:3

He was troubled, agitated (like a washing machine)
These were the guys in the know, w/ the power
The Magi were looking for a king
A king they had the power to make, if they chose
The people in Jerusalem reacted w/ concern, even fear

Herod worked hard to earn the title – King of the Jews
Then these guys show up from out of town
Looking for the King of the Jews, asking Herod
You bet, he was concerned, worried, agitated

The Kings, w/ partial knowledge, Gentile...
Saw a star, a light and headed out
A young peasant girl reacted w/ joy and God’s Messiah
And old childless couple had joy at His coming
Simeon and Anna rejoiced to see this baby
And...
King Herod, and the whole city, a city of Jews

Was troubled and worried
Missed the whole thing
Jesus came to His own, and His own didn't receive Him

Herod was not the best of kings
Did some good – began construction on the temple
Several other buildings
Had some welfare projects for the people

However,
He was incredibly jealous and suspicious
He was threatened by everyone so he constantly planned murders

He had 10 wives and 12 children
He killed one wife's brother
Then killed at least one wife and also her mother
He killed 2 of his sons – was afraid they wanted his throne
Also had another son executed
He was a cruel, bloodthirsty, panicky tyrant
He was known as a killer.

Worship the King

Matthew 2:11

Jumping down to 11 – will pick up other verses next week...

The men, the Gentile, foreigners w/ at least a godly influence in their past by Daniel

Acknowledge Him, worship Him as King

- *...coming into the house*

This is sometime after Jesus' birth – not sure when

Probably after they had been to temple for purification

With Simeon and Anna

They had offered the sacrifice of turtledoves

For the very poor – if they'd receive gifts of magi – probably would've bought a better sacrifice

At least a month after His birth

They're now in a house

These men of great wisdom, great power, power to make a man king came to Jesus, as a baby and...

Jesus is King because of His lineage

Jesus is King because He is God come in the flesh

Jesus is King because the wise men recognized Him and they worshipped Him

Proskuneo is Greek word used here for worship

This worship, is worship reserved only for God

Revelation 19:10

10 Then I fell at his feet to worship (proskuneo) him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God.

Not only were they worshipping a King

They were worshipping the King

They were worshipping God

✚ *Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.*

Interesting – they didn't just fall down and worship

Part of their worship was giving

They gave gold, they gave frankincense and myrrh

✚ You know guys, rumor has it...

Now we get the gold – it's still valuable today

A gift of gold is something extravagant, something costly

What about the other 2?

Frankincense came from the sap of a tree

A certain tree was cut and this white juice came out

It was used in the meal offerings in Leviticus 2

Scent ascended to heaven as offering

It was used in Song of Solomon at the wedding

Need to smell good...

Myrrh – also a perfume from a little tree in Arabia

Used in Proverbs to perfume the bed, put on clothes
Mentioned in Esther when she was going before the king
Mixed w/ wine in Mark 15 – used as anesthetic
Used in John 19 in preparation for Jesus' burial

Gold is the gift for a King, for the King

Myrrh was a gift for a mortal – Jesus will die for the sins of the world – the Son of Man

Frankincense was a gift to God – incense used in worship – rising to God

The gold for the King

The Myrrh for the man

The Frankincense for God

Matthew 2:12

Again we see God's protection and timing

Had Herod discovered the exact whereabouts of the baby

He could've come and killed Him, immediately

As we will read next week – Herod was left to guess which baby was this new King

God will warn Joseph in a dream

They will escape Herod's wrath

Conclusion:

There are many reactions to Jesus exhibited in this account today

Herod is agitated, troubled

He thinks only of himself

What would a new king do to him?

It would mess up his plans

He reacts ultimately in great violence

The religious elite who should've known are totally indifferent

They know where the Messiah is to be born

They have read the Bible – they know – and yet...

They do not react with joy and excitement

Again this would mess up their lives

They had a good thing going here w/ Rome

They were looked up to

They had “the power”
A new king would change all that

Then we have these kings – Gentiles, foreigners

They see a special light

Drop everything and head out

They were not foolish and head strong

They knew the truth

They knew a great king was coming

They came and worshipped Him

They sacrificed time to go see him

Traveled great distance w/ great expense

They offered Him gifts – expensive gifts, gifts worthy of a
this new King of kings

The signs are there for us as well

Jesus is the promised Messiah

He is the King of kings

How will you react to Him?

Will you seek Him – take and make time

Will you worship Him as your King

Will you offer Him your life?

Benediction:

Philippians 2:10-11

...at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Sermon outline

01-12-14

Matthew 2:1-12

M_____

The S_____

King H_____

Worship the K_____