

Matthew 2:1–8

- 1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem,
- 2 saying, “Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.”
- 3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
- 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.
- 5 So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:
- 6 ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’ ”
- 7 Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared.
- 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also.”

“Where is He that is born King of the Jews?”
Matthew 2:1-8

INTRO:

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, it is surprising to consider who sought Him. Did the religious leaders of the day – the Sanhedrin, the scribes, the Pharisees? They knew He was coming, they even knew where to look for Him, but they did not seek Him out. Did Herod, the Great, he who bore the title, ***“the King of the Jews?”*** No, he did not. How about the average Jewish person of the day? Nope. No one sought the Savior who was born this day, except a group of Shepherds who had seen the *“divine press release”* presented by the angelic chorus, and some Magi from the East who had seen the Lord’s birth star!

We want to consider the Magi we met in **Matthew 2:1-8**.

I. THE WISE MEN WHO SOUGHT HIM (v. 1-2)

II. THOSE WHO DID NOT (v. 3-6)

I. THE WISE MEN WHO SOUGHT HIM (v. 1-2)

Matthew 2:1–2 *“Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him.’”*

A. Like Luke, Matthew also included an account of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem. Matthew in his account did not mention the Shepherds. He focused instead on the visit by the magi from the East.

1. Matthew exhorted us ***“to look and see”*** these wise men coming from the East to Jerusalem looking for Jesus.

“Behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?’”

2. Who were these wise men? The word used to describe them is ***magi***, which means ***“wizard, magician, astrologer, or astronomer.”***

B. We are told that they came from ***“the East.”*** We do not know where that East is. Some speculate that these men came from Persia or even Babylon.

1. We read of some like this in **Daniel 2:2 and 10.**

“Then the king gave the command to call the magicians, the astrologers, the sorcerers, and the Chaldeans to tell the king his dreams. So they came and stood before the king.” “The Chaldeans answered the king, and said, “There is not a man on earth who can tell the king’s matter; therefore no king, lord, or ruler has ever asked such things of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean.”

2. There is another mystery about these men. Where did they get information suggesting Israel might be looking for a special King to be born? If they were from the land of Babylon, the remaining Jewish population no doubt taught much about the Messianic hope of Israel. So, when they saw the special star, they immediately concluded that this was the Star of the Messiah who was to come.

3. It had to be an especially rude awakening when the Magi arrived in Jerusalem and asked, ***“Where is he that is born the King of the Jews?”*** This was the title Herod the Great claimed for himself when the Romans granted him a kingdom over what had been the nation of Judah. He loved that title, even though he was not Jewish himself. He was an Edomite.

C. One thing we can say about these Magi, is that they came a long way to seek this child and to worship Him.

II. THOSE WHO DID NOT (v. 3-6)

A. While there were those who sought out the Lord Jesus when they heard the news of His birth, some did not want anything to do with Him. Matthew wrote about some who were not happy He had come. First, there was King Herod, himself. We read in **verse 3**. ***“When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”*** Do you know why King Herod was troubled? It is because he was a jealous man.

1. He put to death the grandfather of his favorite wife, then he killed her two sons. Then he killed his wife herself. Then a few days before his death he killed his son. Finally, he ordered all the nobles to be assembled around him in his last moments and then to be killed after his death so that death might be attended with universal grief. He would be troubled by anyone who would claim his title, even a little baby boy.

2. Herod was so full of himself he had no place for the true King of the Universe. Herod did not seek Him except to destroy Him out of jealousy.

v.16 ***“Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.”***

While we might not ever be as evil as Herod, the truth is, at times we have no place for the King of Glory in our lives because we want to be king! Let us be among those who give Jesus His rightful place in our lives.

B. The second group who did not seek Him were the people of Jerusalem. We read in **verse 3**;

“When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.”

Obviously, Matthew did not mean every last person in Jerusalem was troubled by the news that the Magi brought. Yet when the news got around town there was quite a stir.

1. I remember when I was young and we would have “evangelists” come in and preach a week of special meetings. Invariably, they would latch on to **1 Thessalonians 4:13-17** and use it as a club. ***“The Lord is coming soon! It could be today! Will you be ready?”*** We would be terrified. These evangelists forgot **verse 18**. ***“Therefore comfort one another with these words.”***

2. Do you know why we were all terrified? We were afraid because we were not those who ***“loved His appearing.”*** There was something we loved more than the Lord Jesus Christ. If the prophet Isaiah were to appear to us today and say, tomorrow morning at 10 am the Lord Jesus is coming again. Would we greet this news with joy, or would we be like Herod and all Jerusalem, troubled? Does Jesus have His rightful place in our lives? Is He King and Lord? Or have we given something else that place?

C. The third group which did not seek the Lord is found in **verses 4-6.**

“And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. So they said to him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”

This is the group who are the most culpable. They are the ones who knew He was coming and even where He would be born, yet they did not seek Him.

1. It is utterly amazing to me these men did not seek Him. When these strangers from the east show up to ask ***“Where is He who is born the King of the Jews?”*** They knew where to find Him, they still did not move from their studies to go seek Him. Why was this so? It was because they had no room for the living God in their religious life. They had their system of doctrine; they did not want that system disrupted by the advent of the Son of God!

2. How about us? We know something about how our Lord came, but do we know Him? Have we sought Him out? Is He our Lord and Savior? May we not be guilty of the sin of the scribes and religious leaders? We know where to send people to find Him, but we have not sought Him ourselves!

So, beloved, if someone were to walk up to you today and ask, *“Where is He who is born the King of the Jews?”* I hope you can say, *“He is in my heart and life and He can be in yours, let me show you how!”*

Hymn #328 *Have You Any Room For Jesus?*