

THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

# JESUS IS KING



## To Egypt and Back

**Text:** Matthew 2:1-23

### 1. The wise men arrive in Jerusalem. - Matthew 2:1-2

**Bethlehem** was the ancestral home of David, the great king of Israel and founder of their royal dynasty; however, it was not a large or significant town. Bethlehem was quite a little town six miles to the south of Jerusalem. In the olden days it had been called Ephrath or Ephratah.

**In the days of Herod the king:** This was the one known as *Herod the Great*. Herod was indeed great; in some ways great as a ruler, builder and administrator; in other ways great in politics and cruelty.

**And have come to worship Him:** The wise men came first to Jerusalem, assuming that the leaders of the Jews would be aware and excited about the birth of their Messiah. The wise men are about to find that this wasn't the case at all.

### 2. Herod is troubled - Matthew 2:3

Herod was constantly on guard against threats to his rule, especially from his own family. He assassinated many family members whom he suspected of disloyalty. His being **troubled** is completely in character.

### **3. Herod is taught about the Messiah - Matthew 2:4-6**

***See Micah 5:2***

From this passage in Micah, they understood not only that the Messiah would be born in **Bethlehem**, but also that He would be a **Ruler in Israel**.

### **4. Herod's tried to disguise his evil intentions - Matthew 2:7-8**

The irony is strong. Herod claimed a desire to **worship** Jesus, when he really wanted to kill Him.

### **5. The wise men present gifts to Jesus - Matthew 9-12**

**They saw the young Child with Mary His mother:** We notice that Jesus here is called a **young Child**, likely being between 6 and 18 months old. We also notice that (against custom) the **Child** is mentioned before the **mother**.

The idea that there were three wise men comes from the fact that there were three gifts. We may say that gold speaks of royalty, incense speaks of divinity, and myrrh speaks of death. Yet it is almost certain that the Magi did this unintentionally; they simply wanted to honor the King of the Jews.

### **6. Joseph, Mary, and Jesus flee to Egypt. - Matthew 2:13-15**

**Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt:** The command was urgent, and came right when the wise men **had**

**departed.** It would not have sounded *completely* strange to Joseph that they should find refuge in **Egypt**.

**Out of Egypt I called My Son:** In the process, another prophecy was fulfilled. At first glance, we might wonder how this prophecy from Hosea 11:1 is fulfilled in Jesus. But Matthew makes it clear that even as Israel as a nation came out from Egypt, so would the Son of God.

***See Hosea 11:1***

Egypt typically in the Bible is a type or a picture of the world.

The lesson is this: if we don't come out from the world and live like a follower of Jesus Christ our life will be consumed by consequences and hardships.

***See Romans 12:1-2***

## **7. The Massacre of the Innocents. Matthew 2:16-18**

**In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning:** This quotation from Jeremiah 31:15 originally referred to the mourning of Israel's mothers during the conquest and captivity of the nation. Here **Rachel** is a representation of Bethlehem's mothers.

***See Jeremiah 31:15***

## **8. The return to Israel. - Matthew 2:19-21**

**And came into the land of Israel:** Jesus might have spent a few years in Egypt, a refugee from the murderous Herod, but He would certainly come back **into the land of Israel**.

## **9. They settle in Nazareth. - Matthew 2:22-23**

**And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth:** It was remarkable that Joseph came back to Nazareth, the hometown of Mary and presumably Joseph (Luke 1:26-27).

**He shall be called a Nazarene:** In the plan of God the Father, inspired by God the Spirit, and embraced by God the Son, the Messiah grew up in the somewhat despised town. Indeed, Jesus would become known as “Jesus of Nazareth”.



## GROWTH GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think there were several “conflicting” prophecies concerting the Messiah?
2. Does it strengthen your faith to know that all of these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus?
3. How do you reconcile this wonderful story of the birth of Jesus with the terrible massacre of the innocent children?
4. What is the difference between a Nazarite and a Nazarene?
5. Why do you think God spoke to Joseph so often in his dreams?
6. How did you speak to your heart from Matthew chapter 2?