

## God Faithfully Keeps His Promises

Matthew 2:1-12

December 20, 2020

1. God's faithfulness triumphs over all human and demonic opposition – Herod the Great, the “King” of the Jews (1-3)
  - a. Herod's Lineage
    - i. Descendent of Esau, and not a full blooded Jew.
    - ii. A man of extraordinary abilities, began as governor of Galilee, but he gained favor from Rome by collecting heavy taxes and was eventually made King of Judea.
    - iii. After receiving the title “King”, he had to topple the current Hasmonean King of Judea, which he did after a 3 year war, crushing Israel's brief independence from Rome.
  - b. Herod's Architecture: To Appease the Jews and Grow His Influence, Herod Transformed Judea with His Amazing Feats of Architecture.
    - i. He Built 7 Palaces and 7 Theaters.
    - ii. He Built a Stadium that could seat 300,000 people.
    - iii. He is best known for building Caesarea.
    - iv. Herod's Temple, Rivaling Solomon's Temple for Size and Grandeur (one of the wonders of the world)
    - v. Aqueducts: The caesarean aqueduct was six miles long and remained in use for 1200 years.
    - vi. The Fortress, Masada
  - c. Herod's Cruelty
    - i. He murdered many rabbis who spoke out against him.
    - ii. Murdered his wife Mariamne and their two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus.
    - iii. It's safer to be Herod's swine than one of Herod's sons.
  - d. Herod's Fear (1-3)
  - e. Herod's Demand (5-6) – He gathered all the chief priests and scribes together and demanded of them where Christ should be born.
  - f. Herod's Deceit (7-8)
    - i. He privately calls the wise men.
    - ii. He discovers when they had seen the star (likely 2 years before).
  - g. Herod's Rage (16).
    - i. Bethlehem was a small town, so the number of baby boys slaughtered was likely no more than 20.
  - h. Herod's Disease: He was afflicted with intestinal parasites, he was covered with open sores. He was so afraid that no one would mourn his death that he ordered that a large number of Jews be killed at his death.
  - i. Application: There have always been and always will be people who oppose Jesus Christ.
    - i. “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:9-11).
2. God is faithful even when we are not – The Chief Priests and Scribes (4-6)
  - a. They were troubled with the Wise men's question (2-3).
    - i. The Wise Men's entourage and question would have set Jerusalem on its head.
    - ii. The Wise Men's question would have greatly troubled the high priests especially.
      1. The priests had amassed great political power, and a Messiah would displace them.
      2. The priests had developed a very cozy relationship with Herod.
  - b. They knew exactly where the Messiah was to be born, but they were not interested in finding Him (4-6).
    - i. These people possessed astonishing amounts of religious learning and understanding.
    - ii. 1 Cor. 8:1 “Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth.”
  - c. In stark contrast to the Shepherds, they did not go to Bethlehem to see the Messiah for themselves.
    - i. They did not have the faith to believe the Word of God.
    - ii. They were blinded by their religion and their own righteousness.
    - iii. Matthew 23:13 “**Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses, and for a pretence make long prayer: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation.**”

3. God is faithful to save those who seek Him – The Wise Men (2:1-3, 9-12)
  - a. The Wise Men’s Origen – “wise men from the east” (2:1)
    - i. The Persians/Parthians were enemies of the Roman empire, and enemies of Herod.
    - ii. The Magi were priests and astrologers.
    - iii. The Magi were king makers and law makers (Esther 1:13).
    - iv. First occurrence of Wise Men is in the book of Daniel (2:10; 4:7)
    - v. Daniel was the master of the wise men (4:9; 5:11).
    - vi. Daniel was in a powerful place of influence over these very influential men, and he would have been able to teach them the prophecies concerning the Messiah from the Hebrew Scriptures.
    - vii. Daniel would have been able to teach them of Balaam’s prophecy in Numbers 24:17-19.
    - viii. The Magi would also have likely read Daniel’s prophecy of the timing of the Messiah (Dan. 9:26)
  - b. The Wise Men’s Quest – “Where is he that is born King of the Jews...” (2:2, 9-10)
    - i. They were searching for the Jew’s Messiah (2).
    - ii. God miraculously provided them with a star to guide them to Jerusalem (1).
      1. Why Jerusalem First?
      2. This was God’s way of announcing the birth of Israel’s Messiah to the nation! They rode into town likely on Arabian horses with an enormous entourage! All Jerusalem was troubled!
    - iii. God miraculously provided them with a star to guide them to the very home of the Messiah (9-10).
      1. Jer. 29:13 “And ye shall seek me and find me when ye shall search for me with all your heart
  - c. The Wise Men’s Worship – “fell down and worshipped him...they presented unto him gifts...” (11).
    - i. The attitude of worship (complete trust and humility)
      1. Philippians 2:9-11 “Wherefore, God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”
      2. Isaiah 55:1-6 “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without out money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? And your labour for that which satisfieth not...Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near:...”
      3. John 3:16 “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
    - ii. The display of worship – they gave out of their treasures.
      1. Romans 12:1-2 “I beseech ye therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service.”

Application: So, in which category are you?

1. Are you opposing Christ? Bow the knee to Him today!
  - a. Christian, are you opposing Christ? He still loves you! Repent of your rebellion and worship Him today!
2. Has your religion blinded you to your need of Christ? Without the working of the Holy Spirit, you are likely blinded to your need right now! Beg God to open your eyes.
  - a. Christian, has your walk with Christ become more about religion than a relationship, blinding you to truth?
3. Are you like the Wise Men?
  - a. Are you seeking the Savior? He wants to Save you!
  - b. Christian are you seeking the Savior?
  - c. Are you following the light that God has given you?
  - d. Christian are you serving the Savior?

<p>Herod the King</p> <p>Wise men from the east</p> <p>All Jerusalem</p>	<p><b>Mat 2:1</b> 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,</p> <p><b>Mat 2:2</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:3</b> <b>When Herod the king had heard <i>these things</i>, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.</b></p> <p><b>Mat 2:4</b> And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:5</b> And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,</p> <p><b>Mat 2:6</b> And thou Bethlehem, <i>in</i> 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.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:7</b> Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:8</b> And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found <i>him</i>, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:9</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:10</b> When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:11</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:12</b> And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:13</b> And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:14</b> When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:</p> <p><b>Mat 2:15</b> And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:16</b> Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:17</b> Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,</p> <p><b>Mat 2:18</b> In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping <i>for</i> her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:19</b> But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,</p> <p><b>Mat 2:20</b> Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:21</b> And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.</p> <p><b>Mat 2:22</b> But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:</p> <p><b>Mat 2:23</b> And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.</p>
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