

St. David's Bible Study #3 – Matthew 2:1–12

The King, the False King, and the Seekers

In Matthew 2, we encounter three groups: **Herod, the religious leaders, and the Magi.** Each responds differently to the birth of Jesus.

1. Herod: The False King

Herod the Great was an **Idumean (Edomite)**, descended from the region of Edom, whose ancestors were associated with **Esau**, Jacob's brother. Historically, his family gained power under Roman rule and was not from the royal line of David.

Although Herod greatly expanded and beautified the Temple in Jerusalem, his heart was not devoted to God. He sought political power rather than God's kingdom. While he built a magnificent temple, he tried to destroy the true Temple—Jesus Christ Himself.

Spiritual lesson: It is possible to be involved in religious activities and buildings while resisting God's rule in our hearts. God desires obedience and worship more than outward appearances.

2. The Magi: Seekers from the Nations

The Magi were wise men from the East, likely scholars or astrologers from Persia or Babylon. They were Gentiles, not Jews. Yet God used a star to lead them to Christ.

Matthew presents a remarkable picture: while many in Jerusalem ignored the Messiah, foreigners travelled a great distance to worship Him.

Spiritual lesson: God draws people from every nation to Jesus. Those who sincerely seek Him will find Him.

3. The Gifts of the Magi

- **Gold** – Jesus is the King.
- **Frankincense** – Jesus is worthy of worship and serves as our Great High Priest.
- **Myrrh** – Jesus would suffer and die for our salvation.

These gifts proclaim who Jesus is: **King, Priest, and Sacrifice.**

4. A Contrast of Hearts

- **Herod** wanted to kill Jesus.

- **The religious leaders** knew the Scriptures but did not go to Bethlehem.
- **The Magi** sought, found, and worshiped Jesus.

Knowledge alone is not enough. God calls us to respond with faith and worship.

Key Spiritual Theme

Matthew begins his Gospel by showing that Jesus is the true King promised by God. Earthly kings such as Herod cling to power, but Christ's kingdom is built on truth, humility, and salvation. The Magi remind us that God's invitation extends beyond Israel to all peoples and nations.

Key Verse

"They bowed down and worshiped him." (Matthew 2:11)