

- PRAY
- READ Matthew 2

**Working Theme for Matthew's Gospel:** "Behold your King is coming to you" (Zech.9:9; Mt.21:4-5).

**SUMMARY OF CHAPTER 2 :** Matthew 2 is about the kings and wise men of the earth coming to Jesus! In Matthew 1, Jesus comes from God. In Matthew 2, magi come from the east.

## **THE MAGI ANNOUNCE THE BIRTH OF ISRAEL'S KING** (vv.1-12)

**Much of the background of Matthew 2, is in my opinion, rooted in the book of Daniel.**

*In Daniel 2, who was going to be put to death?*

*In Matthew 2, who did the king put to death?*

*Comparing Daniel 2 with Matthew 2, what is the irony of the Magi coming west to Jerusalem to worship another king?*

Matthew 2:3

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

Daniel 2:1

Now in the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Nebuchadnezzar had dreams; and his spirit was **troubled** and his sleep left him.

Daniel 2:3

The king said to them, "I had a dream and my spirit is **anxious troubled** to understand the dream."

### **The king**

*From your recollection of Daniel, what was his greatest hope?*

*How do we know that Daniel's eyes were fixed on the city of \_\_\_\_\_?*

#### **DANIEL 2**

Head of Gold = Babylon (2:37)

Chest & arms of silver = Medo-Persia (2:39)

Belly & Thighs of Bronze = Greece (2:39)

Legs of Iron = Rome (2:40-43).  
**NOTE:** During this period of time the everlasting Kingdom of God would be established (2:34,35,44,45)

#### **DANIEL 7 & 8**

Lion with wings of eagle = Babylon (7:4)

Bear = Medo-Persia (7:5; cf.8:20)

Leopard with four wings – Greece (7:6; cf. 8:21)

fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong = Rome (7:7,8). **NOTE:** During this period of time the One like a Son of Man would be presented to the Ancient of Days... **(7:13,14 with Matthew 26:64)**

#### **DANIEL 11**

3<sup>rd</sup> year of Cyrus = Babylon had already fallen (10:1)

"three more kings are going to arise in Persia" (11:2; cf.10:1)

A mighty King = Greece & Alexander the Great (11:2-4)

The King = Time of Roman Empire/**Herodian Dynasty** (11:36-12:4). **NOTE:** This period of time is referred to as "the time of the end" and is closely related to the events of Daniel 9:24-27 (11:35,40;12:4,9; cf.9:26)

B. **Daniel 11:36-45** refers to the time of the Roman Empire. The opposition of the Herodian dynasty against Jesus Christ and the church was prophesied more than 500 years before Herod the Great came to power and more than 500 years before Jesus was born.

1. Daniel 11:36 refers to “the king.” This is the same way that Herod the Great and other members of the Herodian dynasty are spoken of in the Gospels and Acts (Mt.2:1,3,9; 14:9; Mk.6:14ff.; Lk.1:5; Acts 12:1; 25:13,14,24,26; 26:2,7,13,19,26,27,30; 26:30).
2. The king would “show no regard for the gods of his fathers.” (Daniel 11:37)
3. “the king” would not show regard for the desire of women (Dan.11:37; cf. **Gen.3:15**; 1 Sam.9:20; **Hag.2:7**; **Mt.1:5,6**; **Lk.1:48,49**).
4. “The king” would pitch “the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain.”

Herod the King (v.1) – This is not the same Herod who beheaded John the Baptist. The Herod of Matthew 2 is Herod the great the King of Judea and Galilee from 37 BC to 4 BC.

*How could Herod the king have died in 4 B.C. when Jesus had already been born? Wasn't Jesus born in 0 B.C.?*

*Did the religious leaders know about the King's birth?*

*How is it that the magi knew that the King had been born?*

#### ***Did you know?***

The star in the east is part of Orthodox liturgy, where the priest uses a star-shaped object with bent tips to cover but not touch a particle of communion bread. The star from the east is also where the Masonic Order of the Eastern Star got its name. Clarke, *The Gospel of Matthew* pp.18f.

#### ***Did you know?***

Every year the British monarch has two Gentleman Ushers present gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to the Dean of the Chapel Royal in London. Clarke, *The Gospel of Matthew* p.19

#### **“Magi”**

✓ In the Greek Old Testament (LXX), the term “magi” is only found in the book of Daniel and Daniel was made chief over all of them (Daniel 1:18-20; 2:27,47,48; 5:7).

✓ Since Daniel was such an influential wise man, it would be absurd for us to think that the Gentiles never studied his writings. When Daniel

died his wisdom and knowledge did not die with him, but continued to be studied by certain wise men who were not Jewish by birth.

#### **The seventy-weeks prophecy (Daniel 9:24-27)**

*How would the magi from the east have known about the **timing** of the King's birth?*

**NOTE:** the seventy years of Jeremiah's prophecy (25:9-14; 29:10) are the seventy years Daniel reads about in Dan.9:2. The “seventy years” probably are not a precise or literal chronological reference, but rather the 7x10 sabbatical years of rest which God gave to the land (Lev.25:3-5; 26:33-35; 2 Chron.36:21). John Walvoord writes, “It seems to be an approximate number as one would expect by a round number of seventy. Hence, the period between 605 B.C. and 538 B.C. would be approximately sixty-seven years...” (p.204, Daniel).

Jeremiah's prophecy then forms the background for the “seventy-period” of Dan.9:24-27. It would be approximately 490 years from 538 BC that the Messiah would come.

*How do the Jews and Romans honor Jesus as a King later? (Matthew 27:29,37,42)*

***Did you know?***

The magi's visit to Jesus is celebrated in some churches and called "Epiphany."

*From our study of Matthew and Daniel this evening, what are you most impressed by?*

*Were the magi from the Orient as the popular hymn?*

*How many magi came to Jerusalem?*

"One legend had Mary and Joseph robbed of the gold by the thieves later crucified with Jesus, another that it was entrusted to Judas, who embezzled it."

Clarke, *The Gospel of Matthew* p.20

*Why did the magi stop in Jerusalem asking where the King was?*

*Why didn't God simply send an angel to tell the magi where the King was? Why didn't God simply send the star before the magi?*

born King of the Jews (v.2) – Very few have ever been "born king." Men are born princes, but they are seldom born kings. I do not think you can find an instance in history where any infant was born king.

*In what city/town was Messiah to be born? (Matthew 2:6 with Micah 5:2)*

*What does Micah 5 teach us about the birth of Israel's King?*

Maker of the sun,  
He is made under the sun.  
In the Father he remains,  
From his mother he goes forth.  
Creator of heaven and earth,  
He was born on earth under heaven.  
Unspeakably wise,  
He is wisely speechless.  
Filling the world,  
He lies in a manger.  
Ruler of the stars,  
He nurses at his mother's bosom.  
He is both great in the nature of God,  
and small in the form of a servant.  
--Saint Augustine of Hippo, 354-430

*Did the magi find Jesus in a manger? (v.11)*

## **FLIGHT TO EGYPT** (vv.13-15)

## **HEROD'S MURDER OF THE INNOCENTS** (vv.16-23)

## **FOR NEXT WEEK: READ MATTHEW 2**

*What parallels can you find between the life of Jesus in Matthew 2 and the life of Moses and Israel in the Old Testament?*