

Matthew 2:1-23

- REVIEW...

- o The Genealogy...
 - The history of Jesus can be broken up into TWO sections...
 - The book of the GENERATIONS [γένεσις] of Jesus Christ – **Matthew 1:1-17**
 - The BIRTH [γένεσις] of Jesus who was Immanuel – **Matthew 1:18-25**
 - These TWO genesis – give us BOTH natures within Jesus – fully God and fully Man!
- o Immanuel...
 - While still BETROTHED – a young woman named Mary was pregnant of the Holy Spirit...
 - An Angel of the Lord came to her husband Joseph in a DREAM...
 - The child to be born was to be called JESUS – because He would save us from our SINS...
 - All of this happened according to the PLAN of God – spoken by the prophet – **Isaiah 7:14**
 - The Virgin will give birth – the child will be called IMMANUEL – God with us!

- 1ST – BIRTH OF JESUS... vs. 1-2

- o 1st – After the birth... vs. 1
 - Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king!
 - Herod died in the spring of 4 B.C. – according to the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus...
 - So Jesus was born TWO years before the death of Herod – perhaps late Autumn of 6 B.C.
 - The Gospel of Matthew does NOT give an account of the birth of Jesus...
 - We have to go to the Gospel of Luke to read about that – **Luke 2:1-20**
 - Matthew jumps ahead and tells us what happened AFTER Jesus was born!
- o 2nd – Wise men... vs. 1-2
 - Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem. Saying - where is He who is born King of the Jews?
 - WISE men [μάγος] – a name used to describe scholars from Babylon...
 - It is thought these were men influenced by the teaching of the prophet Daniel!
 - Daniel prophesied the coming of the MESSIAH [מָשִׁיחַ] – the CHRIST [Χριστός] – **Daniel 9:25**
 - He gave the VERY specific dates for when the CHRIST would arrive...
 - From the command to rebuild the wall - [March 14 - 445 B.C.] – **Nehemiah 2:6**
 - It would be 69x7 or 483 years [173,880 days] to the arrival of the MESSIAH!
 - The Jews also had the Word of God – they had the Prophecy of Daniel...
 - But very few of them actually knew their Bible – understood the prophecy...
 - So they missed the coming of their MESSIAH – they birth of their KING...
 - That is why it is so important we read – and understand - our Bibles...
 - It is easy to be RELIGIOUS – and miss most important thing of all - Jesus!
- o 3rd – Star in the East... vs. 2
 - We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him!
 - The WISE men came looking for the NEW king - because they saw an unusual STAR...
 - Christmas STAR – some believe Jupiter and Saturn converging in night sky...
 - It appeared in the constellation Virgo [the Virgin] - over the city of Bethlehem!
 - **Psalms 19:1-4** – “The heavens declare the glory of God. And the [earth] shows His handiwork... their message has gone out to all the earth - their words to all the world.”
 - Have you ever been alone on a moonless night at looked up at the stars...
 - And in silent amazement wondered at the power of God who created all this!
 - God has surrounded us with a remarkable world meant to inspire a QUESTION...
 - Who made all this - and more importantly - why did He make it...
 - As we look at His handiwork - the QUESTION is stirred in our hearts - who is God...

- Causing us - like the Wise Men - to begin our journey to find Jesus!
- 2ND - SEEKING JESUS ... vs. 3-8
 - 1st – Not the world... vs. 3
 - Herod the Great...
 - Herod the king heard this!
 - The name Herod can be confusing - because there are FOUR of them in the Bible!
 - This Herod – Herod the Great - was the FIRST Herod - King of Judea [under Rome]
 - A brilliant builder - he undertook massive construction projects in Judea...
 - Most importantly - he remodeled the Temple in Jerusalem [SECOND Temple]
 - But he was a deeply paranoid man – and killed some of his own wives and sons...
 - His deep paranoia is what led him to try and kill Jesus – because He was the King of the Jews!
 - Troubled...
 - [Herod] was troubled - and all Jerusalem with him!
 - It made sense for the wise men to come to Jerusalem – and to Herod...
 - This was the CAPITOL of Israel – and Herod was the KING...
 - If anyone knew WHERE the King of the Jews was born – it would be him...
 - So the WISE men told HEROD about the STAR - asked where the NEW king had been born...
 - Jerusalem knew HEROD was paranoid – they were TROUBLED at what he might do...
 - Herod wanted to find this NEW king – NOT to help – but so he could kill Him!
 - People often look to the world for the ANSWERS...
 - But the wisdom of men does NOT contain the solutions to this life....
 - What MEN tell us – will not to HELP us – more often it keeps us from the TRUTH!
 - 2nd – Not Religion... vs. 4
 - [Herod] gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together.
 - He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born!
 - HEROD went to church [συνάγω] to ask the experts – the RELIGIOUS leaders...
 - But these LEADERS were focused on their TRADITION – they were NOT seeking the Christ!
 - We might THINK we know what the birth of Jesus looked like...
 - But there were NOT three WISE men at the Birth of Christ...
 - Although there were THREE gifts: Gold - Frankincense - and Myrrh...
 - The WISE men would have traveled in a LARGE caravan for safety reasons...
 - And they were NOT there for the BIRTH of Jesus...
 - Likely Jesus would have been almost TWO years old when the wise men came!
 - Many people go through life just following RELIGION – TRADITIONS...
 - And they are proud and think that is enough to get them into heaven...
 - But their RELIGION blinds them – so they do not SEE their need for the Lord...
 - They trust in their RELIGION - rather than SEEKING Jesus!
 - 3rd – The Answer... vs. 5-6
 - [The leaders] said to him - In Bethlehem of Judea - for thus it is written by the prophet:
 - 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!
 - The answer the WISE men were looking for was found in the BIBLE...
 - This is the FIRST of FOUR quotes gives to us from the Old Testament...
 - But the Priests made TWO mistakes: FIRST they left out the final phrase from their QUOTE...
 - Where God told us WHO the Messiah is – the EVERLASTING [עוֹלָם] – Micah 5:2
 - SECOND – they did NOT go looking for the MESSIAH!
 - If we want to know where to find God – who God is - the Bible has the answers...
 - But it is not enough to just KNOW what the Bible says – we need to OBEY it – James 1:22

- The Bible is NOT a textbook we must LEARN - it is an instruction manual to FOLLOW!
- 3RD – FINDING JESUS... vs. 7-12
 - 1st – Wrong motive... vs. 7-8
 - Herod - secretly called the wise men – [to] determine from them what time the star appeared.
 - And he sent them to Bethlehem and said - Go and search carefully for the young Child.
 - When you have found Him - bring back word to me - that I may come and worship Him also!
 - Herod REALLY wanted to know who Jesus was - the STAR appeared TWO years earlier...
 - It took time for the WISE men to TRAVEL from Babylon to Israel...
 - He commanded the WISE men to tell [imperative] him if they found the child...
 - But he had no intention of WORSHIPING [subjunctive] Jesus – he wanted to kill Him...
 - And because he was searching with the WRONG motive – HEROD never found Jesus!
 - People who come to CHURCH – because they think it will make them HAPPY...
 - Or people who read the BIBLE – because it will make them RICH...
 - People who look for Jesus with the WRONG motives – will NOT meet Jesus!
 - 2nd – Right Motive... vs. 9-10
 - When they heard the king - they departed - and behold the star which they had seen in the East.
 - [It] went before them - till it came and stood over where the young Child was.
 - When they saw the star - they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy!
 - The WISE men – WISELY walked away from the KING [world]
 - And instead were LED [imperfect] by the STAR – until it stood over where the CHILD was...
 - Because the WISE men did NOT stop looking – they FOUND Jesus...
 - And the result was EXCEEDING [a lot] – of GREAT [μέγας] – JOY!
 - Looking for the ANSWERS in life – means we do NOT give up until we find Him...
 - Knowing what we get in the END – Jesus – is more than worth the effort and wait!
 - **Jeremiah 29:13** – “You will seek and find Me - when you search for Me with all your heart.”
 - 3rd – True Worship... vs. 11
 - When they had come into the house - they saw the young Child with Mary His mother.
 - [They] fell down and worshiped Him!
 - When the WISE men came into the HOUSE [not the barn Jesus was born in]
 - They WORSHIPED [προσκυνέω] – the word means to SUBMIT [dog licking his master]!
 - When people think of WORSHIP – they tend to picture singing on Sunday mornings...
 - WORSHIP speaks of submission – recognizing that Jesus is our LORD!
 - We might have a LOT of QUESTIONS about WHO Jesus is...
 - We have heard what others have said about him – TRADITION and RELIGION...
 - But if we have NEVER met Jesus personally - never SUBMITTED to Him as LORD...
 - Today is the day of salvation – today is the day when we can FIND Him and be SAVED!
 - **II Corinthians 6:2** – “Behold – [today] is the day of salvation.”
 - 4th – The Gifts... vs. 11-12
 - The Altar...
 - And when they had opened their treasures.
 - They presented gifts to Him: gold – frankincense - and myrrh!
 - All of these were VERY valuable gifts – worthy of a KING...
 - Gold P3.5 million a Kilo – frankincense P60 thousand a Kilo – Myrrh P500 thousand a Kilo...
 - But together they are an ODD collection – but they all point back to the ALTAR of INCENSE!
 - The ALTAR was made of GOLD – **Exodus 30:1-3**
 - ANOINTED with the oil made from MYRRH - **Exodus 30:23-37**
 - On which they burned FRANKINCENSE to the LORD – **Exodus 30:34**
 - The SMOKE from the Altar - represented PRAYERS coming up to the Lord - **Revelation 8:3**

- Because Jesus is the **ONLY** way to come to the Father...
- Only through His sacrifice can we get access into the **HOLIEST** – into the **THONE** room of God!
- The Warning...
 - Being divinely warned in a dream that they should not return to Herod.
 - They departed for their own country another way!
 - The WISE men were warned NOT to go back the way they came!
 - When finally find Jesus – bow down [submit] to Him as our Lord...
 - We no longer held back by RELIGION or TRADITIONS...
 - Like the WISE men – we should NEVER go back to empty life we had before!
- **4TH – HATING JESUS... vs. 13-18**
 - o **1st – The Dream... vs. 13**
 - Now when they had departed – behold - an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.
 - Arise - take the young Child and His mother - flee to Egypt and stay there until I bring you word.
 - For Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him!
 - No sooner had the WISE men left – then Joseph had another DREAM...
 - An angel commanded [imperative] him to take Jesus and Mary and flee to EGYPT...
 - A place under the direct rule of Emperor Augustus - and beyond the reach of Herod the Great!
 - This is the **SECOND** of **FOUR** dreams that God would give to Joseph...
 - Dream are the **ONLY** way we read about how the Lord spoke to him...
 - That does NOT mean God can **ONLY** speak through DREAMS...
 - God spoke to the prophet Elijah in a WHISPER – **I Kings 19:12**
 - God speak to different people in different ways...
 - God might speak to one person through DREAMS – and another through a WISPER...
 - The important thing is we are LISTENING – so not matter HOW – we HEAR Him!
 - o **2nd – Out of Egypt... vs. 14-15**
 - [Joseph] arose and took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt.
 - [He] was there until the death of Herod - that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord.
 - Out of Egypt I called My Son!
 - Joseph immediately [that night] obeyed the command of the Angel...
 - They remained in Egypt until the death of Herod the Great...
 - And we are given the **SECOND** of **FOUR** quotes from the Old Testament - **Hosea 11:1**
 - It was important for Jesus to come out of Egypt...
 - Because everything about the life of Jesus is meant to be an example for us to follow!
 - **I Peter 2:21** – “Christ... [left] us an example - that you should follow His steps.”
 - Just as Jesus came out of the **WORLD** [Egypt] – to live in the **Promised Land** [Israel]
 - So also God calls us to come out of the **WORLD** – and into a new **LIFE** with Him!
 - o **3rd – Wrath of Herod... vs. 16**
 - Killing Kids...
 - Then Herod - when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men - was exceedingly angry.
 - He sent 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 he had determined from the wise men!
 - When HEROD realized the WISE men had PLAYED [deceived] him – he was FURIOUS...
 - He went and killed ALL the BOYS of Bethlehem – under the age of TWO...
 - The age according to when the WISE men had seen the STAR first appear!
 - This was not the **FIRST** or **LAST** time someone would kill Jewish children...
 - Pharoah – tried to kill ALL the Jewish boys when Moses was born – **Exodus 1:16**
 - Hitler – had a **FINAL** solution – that included killing 1.5 MILLION kids...
 - Hamas [חמאס] – murdered babies on October 7!

- Hating Jews...
 - Why so much HATE against Israel – because they are the PEOPLE of God...
 - Through Pharaoh - Satan tried to stop the birth of Moses – who would REDEEM Israel...
 - Through Herod - Satan tried to stop the birth of Jesus – who would REDEEM the world...
 - Through Hitler Satan tried to destroy Israel – because they were the CHOSEN people...
 - But in spite of ALL the effort – Moses was born – Jesus lives – Israel still exists!
 - If satan CANNOT use a KING to kill a BABY born to slaves...
 - If satan CANNOT kill a BABY born to a carpenter in an impoverished Judean slum...
 - If satan CANNOT wipe out a people scattered and homeless for 2000 years...
 - It would be fair to say – satan cannot do ANYTHING unless God allows it!
- o 4th – Weeping... vs. 17-18
 - Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet - saying:
 - A voice was heard in Ramah. Lamentation – weeping - and great mourning.
 - Rachel weeping for her children - refusing to be comforted - because they are no more!
 - The RESULT of the slaughter of Herod – Rachael [the wife of Jacob] wept...
 - In RAMA [city near Bethlehem] – she could not be COMFORTED – because her sons were gone...
 - The THIRD of FOUR quotes from the Old Testament – **Jeremiah 31:15**
 - There is a museum in Israel called Yad Vashem - [יָד וַשֵׁם] – a place and a name - **Isaiah 56:5**
 - It commemorates the HOLOCAUST – where SIX million Jews died in WWII...
 - But the Most humbling place to visit – is monument to the children...
 - A single candle that sits in a dark room with mirrors on all sides...
 - As the names of all 1.5 million children are quietly remembered – TEARS!
- 5th – JESUS OF NAZARETH... vs. 19-23
 - o 1st – Death of Herod... vs. 19-21
 - Now when Herod was dead – behold an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt.
 - Arise - take the young Child and His mother - and go to the land of Israel.
 - For those who sought the young Childs life are dead.
 - Then [Joseph] arose - took the young Child and His mother - and came into the land of Israel!
 - When Herod was ENDED [τελευτάω] – God brought him to an END [death]
 - For the THIRD time and Angel came to Joseph in a DREAM...
 - He commanded [imperative] Joseph to take Jesus and Mary back to Israel...
 - Because those [plural] who sought to kill Jesus – were dead...
 - Joseph woke up – and did exactly what he was told – and moved the family back to Israel!
 - The FIRST time Joseph had a DREAM – he might have had some doubts...
 - But by the time he got to the THIRD dream – he had it down...
 - We might wonder if Joseph was on a first name basis with the angel at this point...
 - Maybe he had a punch card – after three DREAMS you get a free shawarma!
 - Being obedient to the Lord can be hard – especially at first...
 - Was it really the LORD who was speaking to me – what happens if we OBEY...
 - But the more we follow His leading – the more confident we become!
 - o 2nd – Nazareth... vs. 22-23
 - Archelaus...
 - [Joseph] heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod.
 - Archelaus was the SON of Herod the Great by a Samaritan woman...
 - He only ruled in Judah for TWO years – 6 B.C. to 4 B.C.
 - He was such a POOR king that Emperor Augustus of Rome banished him!
 - The Galilee...
 - [Joseph] was afraid to go there - being warned by God in a dream - he turned aside to Galilee.

- He dwelt in Nazareth - that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets.
- He shall be called a Nazarene!
- Because Archelaus was KING [like his dad] - Joseph was AFRAID to return to Judah...
- For a FOURTH and final time we are told God spoke to him in a DREAM...
- And he instead took his family to the GALILEE – to a city called NAZARETH!
- Nazareth was most likely the hometown of both Mary and Joseph – **Luke 1:26-27**
- It was a small town – but it had a BAD reputation!
- **John 1:46** – “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?”
- Nazareth
 - Matthew tells us this fulfilled the FOURTH and final quote from the PROPHETS [plural]
 - But the problem is – there is NO verse in the OT that talks about NAZARETH...
 - Although the name NAZARETH would follow Jesus to the Cross – **John 19:19**
 - Even those who followed Jesus were called NAZARENES – **Acts 24:5**
 - The quote most likely is NOT about the PLACE – but the PERSON!
 - **Numbers 6:2** – “[Anyone who takes the] vow of a Nazirite - sets themselves apart to the Lord.”
 - The church did NOT celebrate the BIRTH of Jesus for first 300 years [336 B.C.]
 - Because the message of the Gospel is NOT about the BIRTH of Christ – is about His DEATH!
 - Jesus was a NAZARITE – He was set apart for God...
 - And the message of the Wise men found – the message that Herod missed...
 - Was that His whole life had one purpose – He came to DIE for our sins!