



December 14, 2025

The Promise: Foretold & Fulfilled

King

Matthew 2:1-3



1. Opening Discussion: (You will probably want to use only one of these openers)

- As a child, were you ever in a Christmas play or as an adult in a Living Nativity? If so, what character were you? Who would you have preferred to be and why?
- Why are we so fascinated with royalty? Have you, or anyone you know, ever met a member of a royal family?
- How have your travels changed now that we have GPS and no longer need to rely on paper maps?

2. Prayer:

- While we would not agree with some of his theology, this prayer, by Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153), seems to be a fitting model for us to use as we consider Jesus as our KING at this materialistic time of year:

*Come, Lord Jesus,
take away scandals from your kingdom, which is my soul,
and reign therein, you who alone have the right.
For avarice comes to claim a throne within me;
haughtiness and self-assertion would rule over me;
pride would be my king;
luxury says, "I will reign";
ambition, detraction, envy, and anger struggle within me for mastery.
Come, then, O Lord, and disperse these enemies in your power,
and reign in me, for you yourself are my King and my God,
who gives salvation to your chosen ones.*

- Pray for this Least Reached People Group: **Wasi of Tanzania** (from the IMB "Loving the Lost Through Prayer" guide.)

"The Wasi (wah-SEE), also known as the Alagwa (ah-LAH-gwah) people, are found only in north-central Tanzania. They number around 60,000 people and live in 15 villages on a rocky hill terrain. The Wasi are farmers, growing maize and millet, and they work together to meet community-wide needs. They practice folk Islam, blending Islamic practices and beliefs with those of traditional African religions. The Wasi are very reserved and don't easily allow outsiders to live among them. Some Bible portions, gospel recordings, and the JESUS film are available in their language. But they have yet to hear the good news of Jesus Christ, and they have no missionary presence among them. Ask God to send someone to go and make disciples among the Wasi people."

3. Sermon Key Points:

- The Birth of Jesus Began A Conflict Between Kings and Kingdoms

- i. Matthew uses the word king 3 times to describe 2 very different people
- ii. God had promised a true and eternal king like David would come
- b. Embrace King Jesus Over Any Other King
 - i. Jesus was the true and worthy king of Israel, Herod wasn't
 - ii. Jesus died to be the absolute king of your life – embrace no other!
- c. Devote Yourself to Christ's Kingdom
 - i. Jesus came to usher in His kingdom here on earth
 - ii. Devote yourself to that mission, the expansion of Christ's Kingdom

4. Bible Study: This week's study is on Matthew 2:1-3. Read the short passage each day before continuing with the discussion question.

- a. **Sunday Afternoon** – As soon as possible after the sermon, make time to consider:
 - i. What stood out to you the most in this sermon?
 - ii. What new truth did you learn, or what truth were you reminded of?
 - iii. Is there a particular Scripture passage you feel God is leading you to meditate on or commit to memory?
 - iv. What is one thing God is leading you to do after hearing this message?
 - v. Did God convict you of a need to make any changes in your life and walk with Him?
- b. **Monday:**
 - i. Your answers will be pure speculation, but why do you think Matthew skipped all of the details about Jesus' birth that Luke carefully provided?
 - ii. What is significant about Bethlehem according to
 - 1. Genesis 35:19
 - 2. Ruth 1:22-2:6
 - 3. 1 Samuel 16:1 & 17:12
 - 4. Micah 5:2 (see Genesis 35:16 and 48:7 to learn the meaning of Ephrathah)
 - iii. Bethlehem literally means “house of bread”. What symbolic implications would that meaning have for the child Mary would give birth to (see John 6:48, 51, & 58)?
 - iv. Note: The only chronology Matthew provides for Jesus' birth is that it was “during the time of King Herod.” This was Herod the Great, who ruled in Jerusalem from 37 to 4 B.C. and was known both for his construction projects (including major renovations to the temple) and his ruthless, evil nature (murdering many of his own family). Caesar Augustus reportedly said that he would “rather be Herod's pig than his son.” One of his sons did survive and was the one who killed John the Baptist and taunted Jesus during His trial.
- c. **Tuesday:**

- i. Matthew 2:1 introduces some of the best-known yet most mysterious participants in the Christmas story – the magi or wise men or, according to the carol, three kings. Read verse 1 carefully and make a list of everything it tells us about these men. What don't we know? What is the only thing we do know?
 1. Looking at a map of the Bible lands, where might the magi have come from?
 2. Read Daniel 2:2 & 10. The earliest Greek translations of the Old Testament use the word Magi for the Hebrew word for astrologer. What does that suggest (but not prove) about their possible occupation? How does their statement in verse Matthew 2:2b support that possibility?
 3. Despite being famous for the three gifts they brought Jesus, for what should they really be given credit (compare the last two words of verse 2 and Acts 9:15, 11:18, & 13:16)?
- ii. Why would the Magi have gone to Jerusalem rather than to Bethlehem? Reading verse 2 carefully, what does it say about why/how they ended up in Jerusalem? How does verse 9 show their travel changing after they have met with Herod? What does this suggest about what God intended for the Magi to do?

d. Wednesday:

- i. According to Matthew, how do the Magi open their conversation with Herod? Why would they logically begin their search at Herod's palace?
- ii. According to the Magi's question, what was Jesus' status at the moment of birth? How is this vastly different from all other kings of Israel (see, for example, 2 Kings 8:16-17 & 25-26)?
- iii. In the last two weeks, we saw that the child's common name, Jesus, tells us what He will do, and His title, Immanuel, who He is, God with us. In the same vein, what might we say that "King" tells us about the child?
- iv. The Kingship of Jesus is foretold in many places throughout the Old Testament. Read these passages and summarize/discuss what they tell us about His Kingship:
 1. 2 Samuel 7:15-16 & 29
 2. Isaiah 9:2-7 & 11:1-9
 3. Jeremiah 33:14-17
 4. Ezekiel 34:22-31
 5. Daniel 7:13-14
 6. Micah 5:2-5
- v. After reading these passages, why do you think Matthew begins his Gospel with a genealogy in which David occupies a prominent position?

e. Thursday:

- i. What do these verses teach us about the nature of Jesus's kingship and kingdom: Mathew 4:17, 19:28, 25:31-34, & 27:11; Luke 17:20-21; John 18:36-37; and Revelation 19:11-16?

- ii. What does John 6:15 tell us about how Jesus viewed His Kingship?
- iii. When was Jesus' kingship most widely and visibly acknowledged (see Luke 23:38)? How do Romans 8:32, Ephesians 1:3-11, and 20-22 show the importance and nature of His death as essential to establishing His Kingdom?
- iv. Given what Paul says in Philippians 2:9-11 and John in Revelation 19:11-16, how should Jesus' kingship influence us?

f. **Friday:**

- i. According to Matthew 2:2, what motivated the Magi to come seeking the newborn king?
- ii. When did they see the star, and does the description seem to imply that it could still be seen?
- iii. If the Magi had been exposed to the Hebrew Old Testament (probably since many Jews remained "in the east" after the Babylonian exile), how might Numbers 24:17-19 and Isaiah 60:1-6 have guided their understanding when they saw the star?
- iv. Many attempts have been made to identify some astronomical event as "His star". Why is this neither necessary nor desirable (consider Hebrews 11:3, Psalms 8:3 & 147:4)?

g. **Saturday:**

- i. Read the short focal passage, Matthew 2:1-3, one more time, meditating on what applications it has to your life.
- ii. The Magi told Herod that they had come "to worship Him." What should our response be to Jesus? Read about Jesus' third temptation in Matthew 4:8-10. How might this apply to us in our extremely materialistic society?

5. **Application:**

- a. Jesus is King. He was born King, He continues as King, and one day in the future, all will acknowledge him to be the "King of Kings and Lord of Lords". As Christians living in a world that rejects His authority, we are obligated to obey our King, not just because of His authority, but because obedience flows from our love for Him (John 14:23-24).
- b. Worship. Man was created to worship God (all three Persons of the Trinity). In western society, worship has often been relegated to an hour on Sunday morning – if it is not too inconvenient. The Magi likely travelled a thousand miles or more to worship Jesus. What should we be willing to do?