

## LESSON THREE OF MATTHEW

From Chapter 2:2-14

January 29, 2001

After Jesus was born, in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of Herod the king, the Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"

Isaac blessed his son Jacob, thinking it was Esau, "May nations serve you and people bow down to you. Be lord over your brothers, and may the sons of your mother bow down to you. May those who curse you be cursed, and those who bless you be blessed." This was a patriarchal blessing reserved only for the promised seed. Why did Isaac ignore this? How is it then that Esau, Isaac's elder son, who for a single meal sold his rights as the elder son. Afterwards, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. He could not bring about a change of mind, though he sought the blessing with tears. Now Herod the son of Esau is ruling over Jacob. This could have been avoided by obedience to the word of the Lord.

Adam sold his right God had given him to reign over the creation. Now the prince of the power of darkness rules over the world, men love darkness rather than light

God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world through him might be saved. When the time was fully come, God sent his Son, born under the law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full right of Sons. We have the right, do we appropriate it ?

Now was the right time for Christ to be born. The conditions were just right. His people were in bondage but did not know it. The son of Esau was king, but the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength. When conditions are at their worst, God displays his power and authority.

Herod was just like his father Esau, an astute politician. He cared not for God he bribed his way into being king. Rome was ruling the then known world, and promoted Esau to rule. Herod was so insecure in his position, history reveals that he had his wife and his two sons killed, lest they should usurp his kingdom. It was him who ruled the Jewish leaders, and set up those who bribed him to rule the country. He knew he was hated by his constituents, and had so arranged that when he dies, many of the noblemen should be murdered, so that there would be great mourning throughout the land. But God prevented this from happening.

At this time come wise men asking, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?" No wonder, when Herod heard this, he was disturbed, and not only him, but all Jerusalem with him. Their kingdom which they had so carefully set up, now had a crack in it. Here came a great crowd of dignitaries from a long distance away. They are called Magi, which is a short word for magicians. Astronomers who watched the stars. They may have heard of Balaam, who said, "How beautiful are your tents, O Jacob, your dwelling places, O Israel. Like valleys they spread out, like gardens beside a river, planted by the Lord, like cedars beside waters. Water will flow from his buckets, their seed will have abundant waters, their king will be greater than Agag (a type of Satan), their kingdom will be exalted, they have the strength of a wild ox. I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. A star will come out of Jacob, a scepter will rise out of Israel. He will crush the foreheads of Moab. Edom will be conquered, but Israel will grow strong, A ruler will come out of Jacob Herod thought he was the ruler, now this!

Here were Gentiles who had no part in the patriarchal blessings, to whom God had revealed that the great world ruler was born, the long-promised Messiah, (it is written) kings will come to the brightness of your rising, that time had come, here they were.

God never lacks a method to get his message across, which should cause us to submit to him in reverence and awe and bring us to our knees in worship, but if we sold our birthright for a mess of pottage God's righteousness is far from our minds and hearts then we are scared.

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Herod quickly called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law he asked them where Christ was to be born. In Bethlehem in Judea, they replied. These religious rulers, knew exactly where Christ would be born. in their minds but not in their hearts..

Religiously according to their tradition they were looking for their Messiah, and here were dignitaries from 500 miles away, who said they saw his star, and have come to worship him.

The logical place would be Jerusalem. Now the king of Israel was born and God placed a star in this far off land to let these foreign rulers know. Why did he not inform the rulers of Israel Instead of Gentiles? Because They were not really expecting him , that would spoil their fun.

How very much like today, We celebrate Christmas, we go to church at Easter, we Have the promise of the imminent return of Christ but do we really believe it, nor live accordingly ?

. Listen we shall not all sleep, but we will all be changed - in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet sound, the dead will rise incorruptible and we will be changed. For this mortal must put on immortality. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven with a loud command, and with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. After that we who are still alive and are left will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. This is illogical, unprecedented, and incredible.

Do we really believe this? Are we earnestly desiring to be clothed with our house from heaven ? Are we like these Jewish leaders, they knew the statistics, but cared not. Now here were Gentiles who had a sign from God and their faith moved them to action

They saw this in their home land, and came to Jerusalem. But apparently did not see the sign any more until they started out from Jerusalem, according to Matthew's account, then it appeared again, and stopped right over the house where Jesus was.

Listen to the words of the prophet Hoshea, Let us acknowledge the Lord, let us press on to acknowledge him,, As surely as the sun rise he will appear. Then shall we know if we follow on to know the Lord, his going forth is prepared..

The scripture says if we have this hope we purify ourselves even as he is pure. Which means if we do not have this hope, we are like these Jewish scribes, they knew the letter of the law, but totally neglected the spirit of it. and were totally unprepared when their Messiah came.,

Let us not be like the foolish virgins, who were waiting for the bridegroom to come and get them, they did everything the flesh can do, but did not have the oil of the Spirit.

Are earth's pleasures so alluring, do earth riches so enthrall, that I cannot love my Saviour ,well enough to leave them all, Are we like the rich young ruler, we have kept all that we knew, but what lack I yet. Jesus said, go and sell what you have and give it away, then come and follow me, and you will have treasures in heaven. He considered it but then decided the treasure I now have are worth more to me now, than following a man I do not trust completely.

To know Jesus is to love him. The more intimately you know him the deeper is your intimacy

If we do not know him intimately here in life, what business do we have to expect to enjoy being in his presence through the everlasting ages ? God forbid that we should be like the scribes !

Then Herod secretly called the Magi, and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared, This was to be kept a secret, don't let it be known to the public. He had no plans to go and confirm the report, although he said let me know so that I too may go and worship him

We can just hear the wheels turning in Herod's mind, He was quick witted forging out his own

agenda. He did not want the wise men to tell anyone for he had plans to get rid of the trouble that he foresaw, if there was another king born

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Let us examine the promise that these teachers of the law quoted, found in Micah , The context begins in Chapter four concerning the Lord's plan for Israel. She seems to be on top of things for a space, But another power will strike Israel's ruler on the cheek with a rod it looks like defeat

Then just a small sprig from the stem of Jesse will rise up, on whom rests God's Spirit . But you Bethlehem Ephrata, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel., whose origins are of Old, from ancient times

He is after the order of Melchizedek, no earthly, genealogy, he comes out of Eternity he is .both God and man, A priest forever after the order of Melchizedek

The wise men saw his star in the east, and by faith started out in search of this man who is God They believed God, whom they could not see, then God showed them his star, his Shekinah glory, and when this happens they can do nothing but fall down and worship.

The heavens declare the glory of God, the skies proclaim the work of his hands they saw beyond Everyone under the sun can see the creation the manifestation of the majesty the Lord.. But these wise men saw something that no one else saw.

No man can come to Jesus, except the Father draw him . God revealed himself to those wise men, and they believed. That principle stands to this day. Those to whom God reveals himself will believe., It is God that works in us both .to will and to do of his good pleasure.

. Look at what this cost them. It was a very long journey, months of travel. For what purpose.? To worship the king of Israel. It cost them at least a years wages.

Is knowing the Lord worth that much to us. This is worship. Just how valuable are heavenly things ? Do we have our affection set on thing above, which we cannot see nor experience with our human senses. Can we do as Peter said,. having not seen him you love him, though you do not see him now, you believe in him, and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, and are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

They took up their cross and followed him by faith. They received no earthly reward, and it cost them much more of earthly goods than they received, he is no fool who gives what he cannot keep, to gain that which he cannot loose

Matthew 2 :9

After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.

If the joys of sense depart, we live by faith alone. These men did not follow a visible star all the way. They had seen it in their home land, they believed and started out in search of this King, and as Peter says though you see him not yet you believe, and if you contemplate the end of your search you are filled with an inexpressible, and glorious joy.

If We serve the Lord because we love him, we are led by the Spirit, and walk by faith . This is why these men spent so much time and wealth following a star they had lost sight of, but they kept going, then it appeared again. they were over overjoyed. What does this mean to be overjoyed. It means to be exuberant, your enlightened spirit knows no bounds. you ,may raise your hands, clap you hands, and shout, you have to do something to release the joy.

This was not a normal star far up in the sky, It was similar to the Shekinah glory, it stopped suspended right over the house where Jesus lay. As Peter says receiving the end, or the purpose of your faith, the salvation of your souls. The joy that cannot be expressed keeps us going regardless of the cost. A fire that never stops burning, all we can say is Hallelujah ! Glory ,

"We cannot but express the things we have seen and heard .

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Matt. 2: 13. On coming to the house they saw the child with his mother, bowed down in worship.

Here was a little human baby, who was God when they saw him, fell down and worshipped him.

It does not say this about the shepherds, they spread the news around to others, which is a form of worship, but here were dignitaries, bowed with faces to the ground before the Lord of all the earth. All the natural man could see was a small baby, but the life in that baby was of Almighty God.. These men saw God and when we see him we can do no other but worship,

Through him all things were made, and without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life and the life was the light of men, the light shines in the darkness, but was not seen.

Here were Gentiles from the east, a small cameo of what is written in Isaiah, Arise shine for they light has come, Nations will come to your light and kings to the brightness of your rising.

And that's not all,, they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh. These men had prophetic insight the treasures of this world, looked very small to them compared to the king of all the earth, May God grant us this vision..

They saw the king in all his beauty, They presented Gold, which signifies Royalty, the Mighty God has become a man, which is so incredible, that only those with eyes of faith can see it.

They presented him with incense, which is the type of prayer to God. .

O Lord I call to you, come quickly to me. hear my voice when I call to you, May my prayer be set before you like incense, may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice..

Last of all they presented him with myrrh, bitter herbs, to the king of the whole universe, they presented bitter herbs, which represents the bitterness of death. God gave these men a special revelation, this baby they worshipped was Jesus, made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the captain of their salvation perfect through suffering..

One day they led him up Calvary's mountain, one day they nailed him to die on the tree,

Suffering anguish despised and rejected, bearing our sins, my redeemer is he.

One day they left him alone in the garden, One day he rested from suffering free

Angels came down o'er his throne to keep vigil, hope of the hopeless, my Saviour is he

One day the grave could conceal him not longer, One day the stone rolled away from the door

One day the trumpet will sound for his coming, One days the skies with his glory will shine

Wonderful day my beloved ones bringing, Glorious Saviour this Jesus is mine

Living he love dme, dying he saved me, buried he carried my sins far away

Rising he justified freely forever, One day he's coming, O glorious day !

These men saw him who is invisible, they saw him who loved them, and gave himself for them.

This is a Divine principle, when we see him and realize who he is, and What he has done for us we loose the love we have for ourselves, carnal love which operates as long as it receives,

But the love of God is the opposite, it wants to give, not for the compensation of rewards, it gives because it loves, it is infinite, it keeps on giving. It is reciprocal, as long as it gives it gets more in return. Jesus described it, Forgive and you will be forgiven. Give and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down shaken together and running over will be poured into your lap, for with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.

Peter asked, how long shall I keep on forgiving, what is the boundary, Jesus told him there is no boundary. meaning Be kind and considerate, forgiving as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

May the Lord give us insight, to see what our salvation cost him

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It is not known how long the wise men stayed there at the house where Jesus was, but apparently they spent the night nearby, for they dreamed, where they were warned of God not to go back to Herod but turn to their own country by another route..

Evidently Herod was expecting them to come and give him the report of what they saw and just where this child was, and he had plans to go over in pretense of honoring him and kill him. But the men never came back, he looked and looked, but they never showed up, Now Herod was very angry, his plot had failed. Now he was bent on getting rid of this rival.

Why do the nations conspire and the peoples plot in vain ? The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against the Lord, and against his anointed One. Let us break their chains the say, and throw off their fetters., The one enthroned in the heavens laughs, the Lord scoffs at them. Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath saying, I have installed my king on Zion my holy hill. I will proclaim the decrees of the Lord  
Matthew 2:13.

When they had gone an angel of the of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. Get up, he said, take the young child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there, until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him..

So he got up, took the child and his mother and left for Egypt he stayed until Herod's death

All the trouble that the birth of Jesus caused to Joseph and Mary. She was impregnated by the Spirit of God, and had to endure misunderstanding and rebuke for being with child out of wedlock. Then just the time for her to give birth, the Supreme ruler in Rome demanded that they go to Bethlehem to register, when they got there it was about time for Mary to deliver, and they sought for a place to stay, but everything was full, they had to settle for a stable.

What consternation this all caused them. And now that he was born, they expected to rest a spell, but it was not to be, That night after the wise men left an urgent call from heaven warned them to flee at once, for the child's life was at stake. Go at once, no time for delay, get up out of sleep, and saddle the ass, and put Mary and the child on it, and start down the road for Egypt, about 85 miles away. They had no reservations made to go, and it was night, and robbers were everywhere, how much trouble can one take, and is it worth it all ?

Does Jesus care when my heart is pained to deeply for mirth or song

, When my sad heart aches, till it nearly breaks, and my tears flow all the night long.?

O yes he cares I know he cares, his heart is touched with my grief

When the days are weary, the long night dreary, I know my Saviour cares

It costs to be a servant of the Lord, to be ready to leave at a moments notice. For we are not our own we have been bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and spirit

How much is the knowledge of God worth to us ? In spite of all it costs us can we be obedient And rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice, Let your gentleness be evident to all for the coming of the Lord is near, Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God, And the peace of God which passes all human understanding shall keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Is it worth it all,

It will be worth it all, when we see Jesus, life's trials all seem so small when we see him.

. Finally brothers whatever is true, noble, right, pure and lovely and admirable, and excellent think about such things.. Let your mind dwell on things above not on things of the earth, for you are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God. Where your treasures are there will your heart be .