



Grace Fellowship of Morehead, KY

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Message preached on Wednesday, December 7, 2022

Over the next few weeks we are going to take a Bible study and look at myths or misunderstandings of the Christmas story.

There are obvious ones that I think are overkill...when was Jesus actually born, Jesus was born in 0AD, etc.

Most of these make people angry and frustrated.

I wanted to point out a few things that are way off.

- 1.) Luke 2:16 – “And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger.”
IN FACT: Only Jesus was in the manger!
- 2.) Zechariah 2:6 – “Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.”
IN FACT: Santa Claus is NOT mentioned in the Bible.
- 3.) NO, the wise men were not from the east coast of America and Washington DC –
IN FACT: There are very few WISE MEN in Washington DC.

Well, I want to go ahead and build on that last MYTH...the MYTH of the WISE MEN!

One of the most popular Christmas songs we sing is “We Three Kings of Orient Are”...you’ve heard the term three strikes and you are out? Well this song is out!

LISTEN: I don’t care if you listen or even like this song. That is not my purpose. But making sure we know and understand is my purpose.

STRIKE ONE: There were NOT three...

STRIKE TWO: They were NOT kings...

STRIKE THREE: They were NOT from the orient.

Many of you have listened to Rick Renner's teaching on this topic...I have even covered some of this topic...but I want to show you a few things that will really encourage you.

Matthew 2:1-12,16

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there ***came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,***

MYTH #1: Were they wise men? Kings?

ANSWER: They were Magi...or a group of priests (set apart) to watch the skies, and read the stars...astrologers, and dream interpreters!

They were THE MOST powerful men of the east. Though they were NOT kings...they were defined as KING-MAKERS. They could put KINGS into power and strip kings of their power.

NOTE: It is said that even NERO rolled out the red carpet when the KINGMAKERS came to town. He was on his best behavior.

NOTE: At one time they even temporarily removed Herod the Great from power...so it make sense that Herod did NOT like when they came to town.

They operated under Daniel and revered him because of his interpretation of dreams and prophetic visions...his writings became sacred for these men...the Scriptures he held dear were sacred to these men (even though they were heathen)!

MYTH #2: They were from the orient (or oriental). East simply means Babylon...which is where Daniel was located.

Daniel prophesying the coming of the GREATEST KING ever...was something they listened to...THEY WERE KING-MAKERS!

Daniel told them a king like NO OTHER was coming!

These men were also EXCEEDINLY RICH! Even more so than KINGS!

2 ***Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews?*** for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to ***worship him.***

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

"Saying" – said and said again...over and over again! They were asking everyone!

"King" – king, emperor, or highest ruler. It is capitalized in Greek...therefore it meant the HIGHEST OF HIGHEST...the HIGHEST above all! Highest ever born!

NOTE: They knew what Daniel's Scriptures had prophesied!

"Worship" – kiss the ground before a superior; to fall down prostrate.

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NOTE: This TROUBLED Herod!

Herod was a ruthless, vain individual. His rule was known for a time of great fear, suspicion and slaughter.

He even killed his three sons, his wife and his brother-in-law when he felt they were coming for his throne.

When HE GOT TROUBLED...people died!

THEREFORE: “...all Jerusalem with him.”

He was already terrified of these KING-MAKERS...now they were looking for a baby born to be the GREATEST KING ever!

- 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.
 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,
 6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

“Demanded” – gave them the fifth degree...inquired, investigate, intense inquiry.
 SO...a child...born recently...hmmm

- 7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

He did the math of when it was!

- 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the **young child**; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.
 9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

Young child...not newborn baby!

They entered the picture about 2 years after Jesus' birth.

- 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.
 11 And when they were come into the house, they saw the **young child** with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had **opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.**

This verse has led to the most misunderstandings.

They even have names for the THREE Magi...

MYTH #3: There were WAY more than three magi that came to Jesus.

The Magi traveled in a huge caravan with hundreds of servants.

They even traveled with a huge army. Part of that army was 10,000 cracked bowmen who had already defeated a legion of 10,000 member Roman infantry to protect the treasure (which we will get to in a moment). Roman troops were afraid of them.

I have heard from 50 Magi to around 300 Magi traveled with gifts for the NEW KING!
GREATEST KING EVER! All of them with gifts!

NOTE: A group like that coming into your city WOULD CAUSE some trouble when they start asking for the New KING!

MYTH #4: Just a small container of gold and a small bottle of frankincense and myrrh?
Nope!

Remember, these men were the richest of the rich!

They were traveling with tens of thousands of people...including an army to protect that little box of gold?

“Opened their treasures” – a storehouse; major entrance; magnificent opening! The gifts came and kept coming!

Think of how many camels they traveled with...camels can carry up to 900 lbs for 25 miles a day, up to 40 miles an hour!

These men would bring gifts to kings and the size of their gifts was in proportion to the significance of the king...well JESUS was the GREATEST KING EVER!

Gold, frankincense and myrrh were some of the gifts; but it would have included vases, urns, plates, carpets, clothing, gold, silver, and other expensive materials.

Gold was the BEST gold in existence...and the frankincense and myrrh were more rare and expensive than the gold.

Peter Daniels had a team of theologians calculate how large the offering was...over 400 million American dollars.

Why would Jesus need this?

- a.) The family was getting ready to move to Egypt for 3 to 4 years and would have needed money...Joseph possibly would not have been able to work.
- b.) The funds provided for Jesus and His family after Joseph passed away.
- c.) Jesus' ministry! He didn't take any offerings.
- d.) God sent His Son on a mission...He provided all the supplies and finances for that mission.

12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

Conclusion: Spiritual Takeaway?

- * If God calls you...He will provide!
- * Worship is more than singing a song...it is kissing His feet and giving!
- * Oh, what a planner! Oh, what a plan! The Kings of kings was identified and anointed by KING-MAKERS!