



Responding to the Call of Christmas

THE CHRISTMAS JOURNEY
PART 1 NOAH LARGENT 12/11/13

Matthew 2:11 “they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts”

Matthew 2:1-12 After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.”³When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.⁴When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born.⁵“In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: ⁶“*But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.*”⁷Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared.⁸He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.”⁹After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was.¹⁰When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.¹¹On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.¹²And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route. –NIV

“It is safer to be Herod’s son *than* his son.”
–Caesar Augustus *friend and patron*

Magi: wise men, astrologers, physicians or priest.

3 of them?: No number given, unlikely it was just 3 people. A journey from the “east” required support and protection.

From the East: The Jews had 500 years of history with the Persians, dating back to Daniel and the Exile.

The Star: Haley’s Comet? Alignment of stars? Super Nova?

Numbers 24:17; Psalm 72:10; Isaiah 61:1-7

Arrival?: According to Matthew they entered a “house”. No mention of Shepherds or Angels.

Gold: The most precious earthly commodity.

Incense: Burned as a pleasing offering.

Myrrh: Used for embalming.

Herod’s Response:

1. Familiarity with the Truth doesn’t necessarily mean that you’ll **benefit** from it.

Herod saw Jesus as a threat to his “kingdom”. Like Herod often we act out of self-protection and personal promotion, protecting our “kingdom” at the expense of **celebrating** The King.

Magi’s Response:

1. The “Good News” is not just for religious insiders, or the socially elite, or those with political power.

2. The Magi were willing to take great risk, journeying towards an unknown outcome, ready to present their treasures and worship a new King.

Your Response?

As Christmas approaches, ask yourself: In what ways am I living like Herod? How am I living like the Magi?

Notes: