

Matthew deliberately calls him, "King Herod" three times through verse 9. But in verse 11-

They (Magi) came to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. They opened their gifts and gave him treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Matthew 2:11

Just like a coronation and then Matthew references Herod 6 more times and never uses the title of king in verses 12-23.

That's so we'll know who the real King is, Jesus!!!

Community Group Questions:

Joseph had a big pill to swallow taking on a pregnant Mary and then facing the wrath of a megalomaniac like King Herod. What trials are you currently facing that you are feeling discouraged over?

What did you hear in the message from Matthew to help you deal with your discouragement during this time of year when celebrating Jesus' birth is so hard for so many?



When Herod Came for Jesus

Matthew 2:1-23

Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem in Judea during the time when Herod was king. When Jesus was born, some wise men from the east came to Jerusalem.

Matthew 2:1

Jesus is born in the time of big trouble. King Herod had been given by Rome the title *King of the Jews*, actually a formal title. By birth Herod was actually an Edomite, and he was the kind of guy who would do anything to retain the title of king.

"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 in the east and have come to worship Him.' When King Herod heard this he was disturbed and all Jerusalem with him."

Matthew 2:2,3

¹⁶When Herod saw that the wise men had tricked him, he was furious. So he gave an order to kill all the baby boys in Bethlehem and in the surrounding area who were two years old or younger. This was in keeping with the time he learned from the wise men. ¹⁷So what God had said through the prophet Jeremiah (3:15) came true:¹⁸"A voice was heard in Ramah of painful crying and deep sadness: **Rachel** crying for her children. She refused to be comforted, because her children are dead."

Matthew 2:16-18

Rachel the wife of OT patriarch Jacob is a personification for all Israelite mothers.

What is the Bible telling us about Joseph's troubles?

¹³After they left, an angel of the Lord came to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up! Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt, because Herod is starting to look for the child so he can kill him. Matthew 2:13

*God wants us to know if we have trouble-**don't you give up.***

Matthew quotes an OT verse from the prophet Jeremiah: *'A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.'* Jeremiah 3:15

Genesis tells us, that Jacob buries Rachel in Bethlehem, (approx. 1,800 BC) and during Jeremiah's time, some 1,200 years later the nation of Israel is carried off to exile by the Babylonian Empire in 586BC.

Ramah is just outside Bethlehem, and it is where the Babylonians staged the exiles to be killed or taken away. So with the exiles and later the slaughter of the Innocents, Matthew is equating their times of great suffering. But he is also wants us to know is that no trial, no expression of evil goes on forever.

Why does Matthew tell us about the agony of Bethlehem?

Because if Jesus could enter into a world of unthinkable evil and suffering then maybe Jesus could come into my world of loss and loneliness, heartache and suffering today.

8 times Matthew uses the words "the child" in this story, why?

If Jesus, who is God becomes a helpless and defenseless child, and this Christmas you feel the same, weak, hurting, then remember Jesus has been there.

Jesus says this remarkable statement when He grows up, and if you think about it in light of His own life, it becomes that much more remarkable.

"I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3

Jesus changed and became a little child. *God is at work in real deep ways in Bethlehem, in Israel, in Egypt, in your life and mine.*

What does Matthew want us to know?

¹⁹After Herod died, Matthew 2:19

Herod could have welcomed Jesus in, but he chose another path. The Magi oddly enough who were these pagan guys, end up kneeling before Jesus and giving Him their worship.

Matthew wants us to know that despite all his wealth, power, and splendor, Herod the Great is now Herod the dead!

"Which road are you going to go down?"

Because there's a road that will put you on your knees and there is a road that will put you on your throne and then in your grave.