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Faithful Seekers of the King

Definitions in **bold letters** are from **Strong's** Exhaustive Concordance
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or Roget's Thesaurus – **December 24, 2017**

Matthew 2:1-12

Introduction: As we look at this week's lesson, we'll see just how much God (Yahweh), Jesus' (Yahshua's) Father, depended on Joseph to do his part in protecting his son AFTER his birth. As was done when Mary was found with child, angels were sent to him at certain times with crucial information given in dreams that required Joseph to walk in God's wisdom in order for HIS plans to come to pass. And we need to be just like him in order to fulfill our purpose!

Matthew 2:1-2, *Now when **Jesus (Yahshua)** was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came **wise men** from the **east** to Jerusalem, Saying, Where is he that is **born King of the Jews?***

NOTE: Herod the king was Herod I, called the Great, no less than NINE members of whose family are mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures. He was, in short, **a monster**. Josephus details his **pride, cruelty, and blood-lust**, as they supported his merciless and implacable (incapable of being pacified) ambition. It was indeed "**night**" when our Lord was born with such a man upon the throne.

There came wisemen ... These were **MAGI**, that is, **astrologers**. Boles pointed out that Daniel "was made president of this order in Babylon (Daniel 2:48), and that Jeremiah spoke of this class among Babylonians." [1] The number of the wise men who came to visit Jesus is NOT known. The conjecture that there were "THREE" probably rose from the fact that **three KINDS of gifts** are mentioned - **GOLD, FRANKINCENSE, and MYRRH**.
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/matthew-2.html>)

NOTE: There came wise men from the east - Or, Magi came from the eastern countries. "The Jews believed that there were prophets in the kingdom of Saba and Arabia, who were of the posterity (descendants) of **Abraham** by **Keturah**; and that they taught in the name of God (*Yahweh*), what they had received in tradition from the mouth of Abraham." – Whitby. That **many Jews** were **mixed** with **this people** there is little doubt; and that these eastern **MAGI, or PHILOSOPHERS, ASTROLOGERS**, or whatever else they were, might have been originally of that class, there is room to believe. These, knowing the **promise** of the **Messiah**, were now, probably, like other **believing Jews**, waiting for the consolation of Israel.
(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/acc/matthew-2.html>)

Matthew 2:2-3 ...for we have seen his **star** in the **east**, and are come to **worship** him. When Herod the king had heard these things, he was **troubled**, and all Jerusalem with him.

NOTE: Herod's consternation was probably occasioned by the agreement of the account of the magi, with an opinion predominant throughout the east, and particularly in Judea,

that some great personage would soon make his appearance, for the **deliverance of Israel from their enemies**; and would take upon himself UNIVERSAL EMPIRE.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/acc/matthew-2.html>)

Matthew 2:4-6, And when he had gathered *all* the **chief priests** and **scribes** of the people together, he demanded of them where **Christ** should be *born*. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is **written** by the **prophet**, 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 (tend [care for the wants of; to watch; to guard] as a shepherd)** **MY people Israel**.

NOTE: The chief priests - Not only the high priest for the time being, called כהן הראש cohen ha-rosh, 2 Kings 25:18, and his deputy, called כהן משנה cohen mishneh, with those who had formerly borne the high priest's office; but also, the chiefs or heads of the twenty four sacerdotal (priestly) families, which David distributed into so many courses, 1 Chron. 24.

In Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet - As there have been several confused notions among the Jews, relative NOT only to the Messiah, and his character, but also to the **TIME of his birth**, it may be necessary to add, to what has already been said on this subject, the following extracts from the Talmudists and Gemarists, quoted by Lightfoot. At the close of a long dissertation on the year of our Lord's birth, (which he places in the **35th** of the reign of Herod, **NOT** the last or **37th** as above), he says: "It will not be improper here to produce the Gemarists themselves openly confessing that the **Messias had been born, a good while ago BEFORE their times**. For so they write: After this the children of Israel shall be converted, and shall inquire after the Lord their God, and David their king: Hosea 3:5.

And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda - To distinguish it from Bethlehem, in the tribe of Zebulon. Joshua 19:15. See on Matthew 2:1; (note).

Among the princes of Juda - In Micah 5:2, it is, the thousands of Judah. There is much reason to believe that each tribe was divided into small portions called thousands, as in England certain small divisions of counties are called hundreds. For the proof of the first, the reader is referred to Judges 6:15, where, instead of my Family is poor in Manasseh, the Hebrew is, MY THOUSAND (אלף) is the meanest in Manasseh...

That shall rule my people Israel - Οστις ποιμανει, Who shall Feed my people. That is as a shepherd feeds his flock. Among the Greeks, kings are called, by Homer, λαων ποιμενες, shepherds of the people. This appellation (name) probably originated from the pastoral employment, which kings and patriarchs did NOT blush to exercise in the times of primitive simplicity; and it might particularly refer to the case of David, the great type of Christ, who was a keeper of his father's sheep, before he was raised to the throne of Israel. As the government of a good king was similar to the care a good shepherd has of his flock, hence ποιμην signified BOTH **shepherd and king**; and ποιμαινω, to **feed** and to **rule** among the ancient Greeks.

(Source: <https://www.studyight.org/commentaries/acc/matthew-2.html>)

Matthew 2:7-8, Then **Herod**, when he had **privily** called the **wise men**, enquired of them diligently what **TIME** the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search **diligently (exactly [precisely according to fact])** for the **young child**; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and **worship** him also.

NOTE: Privily - Secretly, privately. He did this to ascertain the time when Jesus was born. Diligently - Accurately, exactly. He took pains to learn the precise time when the star appeared. He did this because he naturally concluded that the star appeared just at the time of his birth, and he wished to know precisely how old the child was.

Go -search diligently ... - Herod took all possible means to obtain accurate information respecting the child, that he might be sure of destroying him. He NOT only ascertained the probable time of his birth, and the place where he would be born, but he sent the wise

men that they might actually SEE him, and bring him word.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bnb/matthew-2.html>)

Matthew 2:9-11, 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. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great **joy**. 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.**

NOTE: I. See how they found out Christ by the same star that they had seen in their own country, Matthew 2:9,10. Observe, **1.** How graciously God directed them. By the first appearance of the star they were given to understand where they might enquire for this King, and then it disappeared, and they were left to take the usual methods for such an enquiry. Note, Extraordinary helps are NOT to be expected where ordinary means are to be had. Well, they had traced the matter as far as they could they were upon their journey to Bethlehem, but that is a populous town, where shall they find him when they come thither? Here they were at a loss, at their wit's end, but NOT at their faith's end they believed that God, who had brought them thither by his word, would NOT leave them there nor did he for, behold, the star which they saw in the east went before them. Note, **If WE go on as far as we can in the way of DUTY, God** (Yahweh) **will direct** and **enable us** to do that which of ourselves we cannot do Up, and be doing, and the Lord will be with thee. ... This star was sent to meet the wise men, and to conduct them into the presence chamber of the King by this master of ceremonies they were introduced, to have their audience. Now God fulfills his promise of meeting those that are disposed to **REJOICE** and **WORK righteousness** (Isaiah 64:5), and they fulfill his precept.

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/matthew-2.html>)

NOTE: The gifts they presented were, **gold, frankincense, and myrrh**, money, and money's-worth. Providence sent this for a seasonable relief to Joseph and Mary in their present poor condition. These were the products of their own country what God favours us with, we must honour him with. Some think there was a significancy in their gifts they offered him **gold, AS a king**, paying him tribute, to *Cæ sar*, the things that are *Cæ sar's frankincense*, as God, for they honoured God with the smoke of incense and *myrrh*, as a Man that should die, for *myrrh* was used in embalming dead bodies.

III. See how they left him when they had made their address to him, Matthew 2:12. Herod appointed them to *bring him word* what discoveries they had made, and, it is probable, they would have done so, **IF** they had NOT been countermanded, NOT suspecting their being thus made his tools in a wicked design.

...We do NOT find that the wise men promised to come back to Herod, and, if they had, it must have been with the usual proviso, **If God permit God did NOT permit them...**

(Source: <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/mhm/matthew-2.html>)

Thought 1. Jesus is around 2 years old. We know this because, from the calculations of the wise men, Herod determined Jesus' (Yahshua's) age as TWO or under. Matt. 2:16

Matthew 2:12-13, 16, And being **warned** of God in a **dream** that they should **NOT** return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way. And **when** they were **departed**, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a DREAM, saying, Arise, and take the **young child** and his **mother**, and **flee** into **Egypt**, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to DESTROY him.

...Then Herod, when he **saw** that he was **mocked** (insult) 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.