

Fools and Wise Men, Part 2

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I. Introduction.

- A. Text: Matthew 2.
- B. The theme of the New Testament is Jesus Christ.
- C. Matthew presents Jesus as the Messiah king.
 - 1. He has the right to rule by lineage.
 - 2. He is king as evinced by how people respond to him.

II. The arrival.

- A. Magi were high ranking officials. They were king makers in the ancient near east.
- B. They not only expected a political king—they foresaw a spiritual king as well.
- C. They were a formidable group that had come to worship Jesus.

III. The agitation.

- A. Herod was agitated when he learned of a new king.
- B. He gathers the chief priests and scribes together.
 - 1. The high priest was the only priest allowed to go into the holy of holies in the Temple. They were top dog.
 - 2. The captain of the temple was the chief of the temple police.
 - 3. The chief priest (unofficial title) refers to the high priest, ex-high priests, captains of the temple, administrators of the temple and the Sanhedrin. They were the aristocracy. They only administered at interval.
 - 4. The bottom of the chain were the rest of the Levites who ministered through music or policing.
 - 5. The chief priests were corrupt politicians seeking their own gain by the time of Jesus. They are in conflict with Jesus.
- C. Herod wanted to know about Jesus but not for the right reasons.
- D. Micah predicted that a true ruler would come and be born in Bethlehem.
- E. Matthew was suggesting that the people would get to trade in a Herod for a ruler who shepherds.

F. The authorities rejected Jesus with all the information about him in front of him. There were three responses.

1. Some rejected him with hatred and hostility such as Herod. (John 15)
2. Others rejected him with indifference such as chief priests and scribes.
3. Others accepted him with adoring worship such as the magi.

IV. The action.

A. The magi received a revelation from God.

B. They came in and worshipped the baby Jesus.

1. The American church does not know what it believes nor does it know the meaning of worship.
2. We are saved to worship.
3. God does not want famous singers—he wants worshippers.
4. The magi worshipped in giving, which is a great way to worship. The gold, frankincense and myrrh was given to support the family.
 - a. Gold is a gift for a king demonstrating that Jesus is king.
 - b. Myrrh is a gift for a mortal man showing that Jesus was a man who would die.
 - c. Frankincense is a gift for God showing Jesus' deity (Exodus 30:34; Ezekiel 16:18)

Application Questions:

1. Does your church do a good job of emphasizing Jesus kingship? Is it a subject you think about much? What does the church look like that centers itself on the kingship of Jesus Christ?

2. What is the meaning of worship?

3. Are there times when believers can fall into the attitudes of Herod and the chief priests to some degree? How can we guard ourselves against these attitudes?
