

Where is He?

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Preacher: Mr Joe MacPee

[0 : 00] Seeking the Lord's blessing. Let's turn again to the portion of scripture that we read together. The Gospel of Matthew, chapter 2, and verse 2.

Matthew 2, verse 2. Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?

For we have seen his star in the east and have come to worship him. Where is he who has been born King of the Jews?

This particular narrative draws our attention once again to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the incarnation and to the nativity, in a sense, but beyond the nativity.

And it calls to our attention something quite remarkable. That it was to shepherds and to men from the east that this great revelation was given.

[1 : 23] We see in this narrative a visitation of the magi, men, wise men from the east. They were the second group, as it were, to come to Jesus.

The first, as you know from Luke's Gospel, were the shepherds. The shepherds to whom God revealed his glory in the Shekinah glory, in the bright light that shone around them.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly hosts, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, good will toward men.

So it was when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us.

And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger. When they had seen him, they made widely known to say, which was told them concerning this child.

[2 : 41] So we have a revelation to shepherds. And we have a visitation of the shepherds. And in this particular narrative in Matthew, a visitation from the magi, the wise men from the east.

Who are the magi? They were counsellors who surrounded the throne of monarchs in the far east.

Magicians, magi. It's from the word magicians that we get magi. And they were men of great wealth, great power, great importance.

They were counsellors to kings and to rulers. So they were important men. And here we see these men from the east.

From the east. And I'll come back to that shortly. And here they come, and they come in pursuit of the king. Where is the king of the Jews that we might worship him?

[3 : 53] So they're looking for a king. A king of the Jews. But there is more to their inquiry than just simply that he is a king of the Jews.

I think it's safe enough for us from this narrative to suggest very strongly that these magi were looking to this king as their own king.

Their own king. It was more than just an inquiry. There was something going on deep in the heart of these men. When they saw the star at verse 10, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.

And when they came in to the house. And note that, the house. And I'll come back to that. They saw the young child with Mary, his mother, and fell down and worshipped him.

Their inquiry was about one who is king of the Jews and king of the Gentiles. Their inquiry is of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[5 : 02] Christ the king of kings and lord of lords. And they've come to worship him. And note this too. Where is he who has been born king of the Jews?

It wasn't as a result of his birth that he was a king. He was a king already. A king already. Anointed and appointed.

As we sang in that great psalm. Yet notwithstanding, I have him to be my king appointed. And over Sion, my holy hill, I have a king anointed.

Where did that anointing and appointing take place? It took place in eternity. It took place in the councils of eternity between the Trinity.

Between the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Appointed and anointed from all eternity. And in the fullness of time. Come. Come.

[6 : 04] Come. And the fact that he was a king. Presents us with another great truth. This office of king.

Or of kingship. Is allied to the very fact that he is a mediator. And as mediator, he is not just a king.

He's a prophet. And a priest. A prophet. And a priest. Each of these offices of Christ as mediator.

Has its own particular and peculiar work. Where is he who is born king of the Jews?

Where is he who is king already? And is now born? And he's born. And he's born for a very specific purpose. And we've come to worship him for a very specific purpose.

[7 : 06] Our Lord himself. When he was before Pilate. Pilate said to him. Are you a king then? And Jesus answered Pilate and said to him.

To this end was I born. You say that I am a king. And it's as if Jesus was saying to Pilate.

You say that I am a king because I am a king. I've been born for this. I've come into the world for this very purpose.

Where did the idea or the prophetic idea of a king come from in terms of the Bible?

We know that he was appointed and anointed from all eternity. But where did the idea of a king come from? Where did that begin? It must have been a beginning.

[8 : 04] Well you see the beginning of it remarkably in Genesis and chapter 3. Genesis and chapter 3. Where we read there.

That the seed of the woman is going to bruise or crush the head of the serpent. Genesis 3 and verse 15.

And I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your seed and her seed. He shall bruise your head. The seed of the woman bruising or crushing the head of the serpent.

This is a direct reference to kingship. Because this is what kings would do. They would stand as it were on the head of the enemy.

Or the one who was the head of the enemy. And in doing so it would declare that the victory was theirs. Theirs would be the victory as the king.

- [9 : 10] And down through the whole narrative of scripture. You see this whole theme of kingship appearing time and time and time again.
- We sang to be not in the psalms. The psalms are so full. So full of the kingship of Christ. And of the coming of a king.
- Even in these great chapters in Isaiah. Isaiah chapter 6. The vision that Isaiah saw.
- Who did he see? He saw a king. Who was the king that he saw? It was King Jesus. In chapter 11 of Isaiah.
- Unto us a child is born. Unto us a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulders.
- [10 : 10] The government. The rule shall be upon his shoulders. This great king. Zechariah himself breaks out in worship.
- Rejoice greatly. Thy king cometh unto thee. And you know yourself when he entered Jerusalem. That these very words of Zechariah are repeated.
- They came to fulfilment and fruition. When he came in to Jerusalem. And here he is finally reaching that point in time.
- Where the king was to be born. To be born. And the picture that you have here is a picture. Of Christ. And God in his infinite wisdom.
- Revealing Christ to. To shepherds. To the poor people. To the people doing the job that nobody really wanted to do.
- [11 : 21] And here you have a picture of God revealing Christ to the Gentiles. To the Gentiles. And it's a picture. One of the great pictures.
- One of the many pictures that you see in the Bible. Of the Gentiles coming to Christ. From north, south, east and west. The Greeks came to him.
- And they said. We would see Jesus. The remarkable thing about that narrative is this. The way that our Lord responded to that. When he said.
- No. My oath has come. It's as if the Lord recognized. Of course the Lord knew. But it's as almost as if he recognized.
- That no. My oath has come. Now I can see. Now I can see the great purposes. For which I came into this world. Now I can see it being fully revealed.
- [12 : 21] He is to be king of Jew and Gentile. And the other picture you have here. The other picture you have.
- Is the remarkable picture of the rejection of Christ by the Jews. The rejection of Christ by the Jews.
- How did these magi. How did these magi. Learn about Christ. Learn about the king. Well I think it's safe enough for us to suggest.
- That these magi came from the east. And most of the commentators acknowledge that they came from Babylon. From Chaldea. And you know yourselves. From the history of the Bible.
- Some of the remarkable things that happened. In Babylon. Babylon. What happened in Babylon. Well the Lord's people. Were taken away to Babylon.
- [13 : 25] As a punishment. For their sin. Well that's not a very. Pleasant picture. God's judgment. God's judgment against his own people.
- God's punishment. And his rebuke of his people for their sins. What kind of picture is that giving us? Well it's giving us a picture of the remarkable sovereignty of God.

God. That out of the sin. That out of the sin. And the rebellion. And the rejection of God by his people. And the onset. And the onslaught of Babylon.

And all that Babylon. Signified. The greatest power. In the world at the time. This huge empire. God. And God. In his wrath.

Sends his people to exile. And allows the Babylonians. To take his people captive. And his people have taken captive.

[14 : 25] And they're taken back to Babylon. And amongst those who were taken captive. To Babylon. Was one who was called. Daniel. And Daniel.

And the Lord's. Remarkable providence. And this is such a fantastic. Providence. A remarkable narrative. When they're in the whole. Of Daniel. You see.

You see. The Lord. Working. Now the second year. Of Nebuchadnezzar's reign. Nebuchadnezzar had dreams. And his spirit was so troubled.

That his sleep. Left him. This wasn't just an ordinary troubling. This was a divine troubling.

And he calls the magi. He calls the magicians. The king gave the command. To call the magicians. The astrologers. The sorcerers. And the Chaldeans.

[15 : 24] To tell the king his dreams. And they could not. Who can interpret the dreams? The Lord. And up steps.

And up steps. Daniel. Oh there is one. Taken from among. The nation. Taken from among Israel. The nation of God.

Thanks be to. The king cream.

The king's. of these kings, the core of heaven will set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to other people. It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Stand forever. And Daniel goes on in his remarkable prophecy in chapter 7 and chapter 9 in particular, and he goes on to prophesy about the king and the kingdom. And all of these years later, you have these magi. Where is the king of the Jews? Where is this king of the Jews? We have seen this star in the east and have come to worship him. God calling these men. However many of them there were, the Bible doesn't tell us that there were only three. There could have been twenty-three. For all we know, we have no idea. And he calls them. And he calls them as a sign for you and for me that this

Christ was to be born. Born to die is king of kings and lord of lords. He is king of the whole earth. He is king of every person in the whole world. Whether they realize it or not is another matter entirely. Entirely. We have seen his star. These were people who were magicians. They were astrologers. They were sorcerers. They looked on these things. They looked on the stars and the planets. But here was a divine light. A divine light. What light was it? Well again I think it's safe to say rather than speculating about this star or that star. But whatever light it was, it was the Shekinah glory of God. The Shekinah glory of God.

[18 : 31] The same glory that shone around the shepherds by night. So that midnight became midday. The same glory. The same light. God's Shekinah glory. And light in the Bible is often allied to the glory of God. And remember this that the Bible tells us that when Christ comes again he's going to come as what? As blazing light. Blazing light. And the people will cry for the rocks and the mountains to fall on them and hide them from this blazing light of his glory. And they come. And when Herod the king heard this he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. Herod the king. Who was Herod the king?

The king. Well we know that he wasn't really a king. He wasn't even a Jew. He was an Edomite. An Edomite. One who assumed kingship. And this authority was granted to them by the Romans so that he would keep control over Judea. He was an evil man. A very evil man.

And here these magi from the east. These important men. Come into Jerusalem. And that's remarkable in and of itself that they came to Jerusalem. And they say to Herod we want to see the king of the Jews. And here is Herod the king of the Jews.

And he's troubled in his spirit. Troubled in his spirit. He thought himself that he was the king of the Jews. Who are these people? Who are they looking for?

One that would usurp my authority and my throne. And he was renowned. Renowned for his cruelty.

[21 : 02] And his evil. And he killed his wife. If not more than one of his wives. Apparently he had ten. And he killed one of his wives.

At least. And her mother. And murdered two of his sons. Because of his paranoia. About his own status.

And about his own kingship. It was a false status. But he assumed it. And the Romans were happy to buy into that authority that Herod had.

So here is Herod troubled by these Magi and by this request. And not only that. But all Jerusalem with him.

All Jerusalem with him. Why wasn't Jerusalem rejoicing? Why weren't all the Jews rejoicing? When these Magi came into Jerusalem?

[22 : 07] Surely. Surely. They believed. The report of the shepherds. Luke tells us that the shepherds went out.

And they were telling people. That the Messiah. The promised one. Was come. He was born in Bethlehem. Just as the Lord. Had promised and prophesied.

But that's not what you find. You don't find anybody making any fuss whatsoever. Instead you find trouble. The Jews were troubled.

It seems to have been a complete and utter surprise to these people. Bethlehem was only five miles away.

But here you see. No urgency whatsoever. No fuss whatsoever. In relation.

[23 : 12] To the King of the Jews. Where is he who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen a star in the east. And have come to worship him.

And what does heaven do? He gathers the chief priests and the scribes. He inquires of them what Christ was to be born. And they tell him. Because they know the scriptures.

And they quote the prophet Micah. And they know the scriptures. And yet. They are wholly ignorant.

Of the reason. For the season. Wholly ignorant.

Of this remarkable. Fact. That the Messiah.

[24 : 09] The anointed one from all eternity. The one who was revealing himself. In the unfolding history of the world. Revealing himself. Time and time again to his people.

Who have now come. As a child. Mary had rejoiced. Joseph. Had rejoiced.

Elizabeth. Had rejoiced. And Zacharias. Had rejoiced. And the shepherds. Had rejoiced. But what about all Jerusalem? Nobody was listening.

Nobody seemed to be making any fuss whatsoever. Isn't it remarkable. Isn't it remarkable.

That those with the most spiritual privileges. Are often those with the least zeal for Christ. It's a fact.

[25 : 14] Those with the most spiritual privileges. Are often the ones with the least zeal for Christ. There was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn.

And there doesn't seem to be any room here either. He said. For him among his own people. He came to his own. John reminds us. He came to his own.

But his own received him not. And Herod calls after this. He calls the Magi.

Determine from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem. Go and search carefully with the day and child. When you have found him. Bring back word to me. That I may come and worship him.

Also. Also. So the trouble in his soul. The trouble in Jerusalem.

[26 : 21] Caused by the visit of these men from the east. And Herod determines to find out what's going on. And he sends them to Bethlehem.

The Magi seek a redeemer. Herod fears for his life and for his kingship. He fears a successor.

And if his birth as an infant makes proud kings tremble. How much more will the great tribunal on the day of judgment.

Make people tremble. Have you ever thought about that? If this birth made all of Jerusalem tremble.

What will the tribunal on glory. When Christ comes again. Sitting as he will on the judgment seat. Well what a fearful thought.

[27 : 35] What a fearful thought. So the wise men. Go to Bethlehem. They go.

And they see the star. They see the glory. The Shekinah glory. When they see the star. They rejoice with exceedingly great joy.

And the star leads them. And points them to a house. Not a manger. A house. And with pinpoint accuracy.

Far more accurate than anything. That we might have a satna. Or a GPS. Or whatever it might be. This with pinpoint accuracy. Takes them to a house.

And they rejoice. When they come into the house. They saw the young child with Mary his mother. What do they do? They fell down and worshipped him.

[28 : 36] They fell down and worshipped him. They fell down and worshipped the king. They have found the king. They recognise him for who he is.

And they also recognise him for what he's going to do. For what he's going to do. Do we bow down?

Do we really bow down and worship the king? When did you last bow down? When did you fall on your knees last? And put your mouth as it were in the dust.

With such adoration and awe for Christ. Speaking with all reverence. And he came in that door.

What would you do? What would you do? How would you recognise him? Is the question. Would you know? Would you know him? There's a story told about Queen Victoria.

[29 : 45] When she was listening. At one time. To Handel's Messiah. Handel's great opera. The Messiah.

And when it came to the part. When it's talking about the king of kings. And the lord of lords. Queen Victoria stood up. She stood up in honour.

In honour. Of what was being sung. And in honour of him. About whom they were singing. The king of kings.

And lord of lords. Here she was. This great powerful ruler. Queen Victoria. And she stood. And she stood. In reverence before.

As it were the king of kings. And lord of lords. They worshipped. The word worship means to kiss. To kiss towards.

[30 : 46] That's how full of love the hearts were. For this child. For this child. For this saviour.

This is real worship. Real love. Real affection. Real faith. Saving faith. Adoring faith.

No distance. Too far. To seek Christ. No cost. Too much.

For Christ. And when they had opened their treasures. They presented gifts to him. Gold. Frankincense. And milk. They opened their treasures. To him.

Gold. As to a king. Recognising that they had come to the king. Of kings. Gold. Signifying his sovereignty. And his rule.

[31 : 46] Frankincense. Which was used in the worship of God. They came to know all of these things. All of these things are symbolic. And really symbolic.

Of what was in their hearts. They knew. That frankincense was used. In the temple worship. Of God. Of God. And here they come. With gold.

Recognising who he is. Frankincense. Used in the worship of God. Acknowledging him as God. And milk. Milk. That was used.

To embalm dead bodies. They knew. That he was born. To die.

They knew. That he had to die. That this child. Had to die. That salvation necessitates.

[32 : 43] Laying down. His life. For his people. Then. Then. Then. Being divinely.

Warned. In a dream. That they should not return. To Herod. They departed. For their own country. Another way. Herod inquired. As you know.

That they would go back. And tell him. That he would come. To worship. Jesus. Jesus. But of course. We know. From the Bible. That that wasn't. His motive. His motive.

Was to kill. Jesus. To kill him. And these gifts. Of gold. Frankincense. And myrrh. Were used.

In the providence. Of God. To keep. Mary. And Joseph. And our Lord. When they went.

[33 : 37] To Egypt. And during their stay. In Egypt. It was used. To keep them. They had nothing. When they came. To circumcise.

Jesus. They brought. The offerings. Of the very. Poor people. Of very. Poor people. The remarkable.

Thing. About this. Narrative. Is this. That. The gospel.

Is a gospel. First and foremost. For everyone. Jew and Gentile. You and me. Nobody excluded. Nobody in here.

Excluded. From the gospel. Secondly. We can say this. That it is God. Who reveals.

[34 : 34] Christ. To us. There must be. A divine. Revelation. A divine. Revelation.

Unless. God reveals. His son. No one. Will come to him. It is the Holy Spirit. That leads. Souls. To Christ.

Oh yes. He uses means. No matter. How little. And how insignificant. Thirdly. There is this. I mentioned this already.

That those often. With the. Most spiritual. Privileges. Are those with the least. Zeal for Christ. We can know. Our Bibles. We can know.

The scriptures. We can know. The promises. We can attend. Every week. Every year. And still. Have a dead.

- [35 : 32] Cold. Heart. Heart. Wayne. mentioned. That's a solid thought. Herod and the Jews were surrounded by light, but they chose darkness.
- What about you? What about you? Are you still choosing darkness over light? What about you?
- We should leave different people. But we've gleaned a little bit more knowledge about this great saviour who is that saviour. We should leave differently.
- We should take with us at least one thought. One truth. One further bit of knowledge. To enable us to grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and saviour, Jesus Christ.
- The reality is that worshippers always become like the object of worship. If we worship man on the world and the things of the world, we will be worthy.
- [37 : 13] Of that, there is no doubt. We will become worthy. If you worship the Lord Jesus Christ as often as you possibly can, but the means of grace as often as you possibly can, then you will become more Christ-like.
- There was a divine re-rooting here of Mary and Joseph.
- The providence of God that provided for them while they were to be in Egypt. There is no doubt. There is no doubt. There is no doubt.
- There is no doubt. There is no doubt. There is no doubt. Sin makes men like Herod irrational and fearful.
- Sin always makes people irrational and fearful. Sin also, here was a heavenly Messiah with a heavenly kingdom, not a worldly kingdom.
- [38 : 20] He didn't want to usurp Herod's authority as king of the Jews. He had a heavenly kingdom. His heavenly kingdom, he said, is not of this world.
- And Herod was more concerned about saving his throne than saving his soul. They reckoned that he was about seventeen at this time.
- Seventeen. More interested in saving his throne than saving his soul. Saving his soul.
- And as you know from this narrative, he committed a grievous act. When he saw at verse 16 that he was deceived by the wise men, he was exceedingly angry.
- And he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its districts, from two years old and under according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.
- [39 : 30] And he said, we must remember, at verse 17, what time the star appeared, our Lord would have been perhaps a year old or perhaps a little bit older.
- At this time, he was in a house with a manger. Many things had happened. And that's why Herod was trying to work out in his head.
- What age is he? What age is he? And because of his evil, he decreed that all the male children under two years old should be killed and put to death.
- And he said, what evil. What evil. But you see what hand lies behind Herod, the hand of Satan. The hand of the one who knew that his head was going to be crushed by the seed of the woman, by Jesus Christ.
- And if you follow, if you follow the Bible down through its course as it unfolds in history, you see time and time again the cause of Christ hanging as well by a thread, by a thread.
- [40 : 46] But God is in that thread. No matter how thin and how fine it might be, God is in it. The narrative here is so like the narrative at the beginning of the book of Exodus.
- There are all of Pharaoh who knew not Joseph. But God intervened wonderfully then. And he intervenes wonderfully and sovereignly and majestically here.

What about you? The last Lord's Day of 2016.

What about you and what about me? Do we really worship? Do we really bow down? Do we say, where is the King of the Jews that I might worship?

Is this what captures and captivates our hearts and minds? If it's not, then my prayer for you, and my plea to you, is to come and worship.

[42 : 03] And bow down and on our knees, as the Son said before the Lord, go to make it. Let us fall. To the Lord, let us fall.

For all our graveyard of Jesus, let us fall. I do as a National Pickle of lamentation for all our graves and thanks to God.