



Famous Chapter 2's of The New Testament

Matthew 2

I have watched a few videos by some good scholars on the wise men and where Jesus was born. My ears have heard several sermons on King Herod and the temperature in Jerusalem at Jesus birth. What more can be said? There are so many interesting views on His birth. Of the Luke or Matthew account, which is better? Both are different views on the same event. Each one gives us something the other does not. It's like two witnesses to a crash telling it from a different perspective. This Matthew account of Jesus is fun because it tells the story from Herod's and the Magi's point of view.

This chapter 2 is famous because it tells the story of how baby Jesus was found or not found. The birth story is only a mere mention. I have looked into this Herod guy. Some people have questioned who he is. The Herod's were a family or a title depending on who you talk to. Regardless, they were getting replaced all the time. History says that this particular one loved astrology and the mystics. There were (at that time) Persian prophesies floating around just as much as Jewish ones. They all pointed to the stars and the signs. This avid astrology king would have been intrigued by the flavor of the day. The arrival of Magi (astrologers possibly) must have got his attention.

Did Mary and Joseph know of these astrology and Christ child rumors? Were they just innocent adults coming to fulfill the government census? Were they having a baby at an

inconvenient time? Providence says God works all things together for the good of those involved. The stars were aligning with a bunch of things coming together at once. Herod wanted to know if the Christ child rumors were true. Mary was pregnant. Joseph was doing his citizen duty by being counted in the census. The Magi were following astrological signs. Prophecy was being fulfilled. Was the will and plan of God coming into fruition? Matthew 2 is famous because it gives the account of how all these unseemly different events come together. We read this played out within literally 18 verses.

Time has little value in the Bible. How long were the Magi traveling and searching? When did Herod know? How long did Mary and Joseph stay in Bethlehem? Were they in the barn the whole time? We know that Jesus was near two years old when the Magi found him. We also know that Joseph and Mary were still in Bethlehem when the Magi arrived. That's a long time within 18 verses. Within that time, God was directing traffic. He saved Jesus and the Magi. The rest of this chapter is directed by God. Joseph and Mary flee to Israel for a time to escape Herod who has decided to kill all the Jewish babies under 2 years old. Was it because Jesus would become a king that could dethrone Herod? I am betting it was more about unrest. The Herod's were being replaced often. Why? Partly it's because of Jewish unrest. There had been several revolts. What if this Christ child grew up to be a powerful leader? Herod tried to quell any chance of a revolt by the Jews.

Joseph and Mary hiding in Egypt is an Old Testament theme. Joseph hid in Egypt. So did Moses. In the meantime, Herod died and the threat to Jesus was over. Think about it. Moses came back to deliver his people when a Pharaoh had died. Joseph's pharaoh died too. This chapter tells a familiar tale that the Jews knew. This chapter is famous because it relates to the

reader (the Jews). For us modern folk it comes across as deception, intrigue, and divine leading. Matthew 2 is much more than just the birth of Jesus story.

In the end, God saves the Magi by telling them (in dreams) to go back a different way. They never told Herod where the Christ child was. Joseph, Mary and Jesus are saved from Herod by being in Egypt. God lets them know when to return in a dream too. Although this is a telling of the birth of Jesus, there is a ton of literary meaning in this chapter. We have murders, astrological signs from the heavens, angels, and dreams. Plus, underneath it all is prophesy fulfilled all over the place including Jesus being connected to Egypt, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Nazareth. God is good at directing traffic. The stars and events align and the Christ child is born.