

# The Arrival of Great Hope

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ]     Now turn towards God's Word and we'll read from the book of the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 2. Gospel of Matthew, chapter 2, we read from the beginning.
- This is an account of the wise men coming to seek out Jesus. This is God's Word, may we hear it.
- Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, 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? 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. 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 to him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, And thou, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art thou not least among the princes of Judah?
- [ 1 : 3 3 ]     For out of thee shall come a governor, that shall rule my people Israel. Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.
- And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search diligently for the young child, And when you have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.
- 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. And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, They departed unto their own country another way.
- [ 2 : 5 4 ]     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 to Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word.
- For Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt, And was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophets, saying, Out of Egypt I have called my son.
- Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, 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 inquired of the wise men.
- Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In Ramah was there a voice heard, Lamentation and weeping, And great mourning, Ritual weeping for her children, And would not be comforted, Because they are not.

But when Herod was dead, Behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, Saying, Arise, And take the young child and his mother, And go into the land of Israel, For they are dead which sought the young child's life.

[ 4 : 40 ] And he arose, And took the child and his mother, And came into the land of Israel, But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, In the room of his father Herod, He was afraid to go thither.

Notwithstanding, Being warned of God in a dream, He turned aside into part of Galilee, And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Amen. May the reading of God's word be blessed to us. We'll continue in our place by singing to God from Psalm 2, From the beginning. Psalm 2, from the beginning.

Singing down to the end of verse 6. Why rage the heathen, And vain things, Why do the people mind? Kings of the earth do set themselves, And princes are combined.

To plot against the Lord and whose anointed, Saying thus, Let us asunder, Break their bands, And cast their cords from us. He that in heaven sits shall laugh, The Lord shall scorn them all, Then shall he speak to them in wrath, In rage he vex them shall.

[ 6 : 10 ] Yet notwithstanding, I have him to be my king appointed, And over Zion, My holy hill, I have him king anointed.

We'll sing these verses to God's praise, Why rage the heathen. Why rage the heathen, Why do the people mind?

whose the holy and many hell. His grace the heathen. And auxilus, In the original name of the prince, In the bracelets, How are the s, And some- estratégia know God.

That knows the conduct witness to God's Movie, Thank you.

And cast them forth from the earth. He that in heaven exists shall love.

[ 7 : 49 ] The Lord shall storm them all. Then shall He speak to them in wrath.

And rich events them shall. Yet not will stand in the eye of Him.

To be my King of heaven. And oversight my holy hill.

I have 15 anointed. I have 15 anointed.

Well for the moments we have left together. If you could consider the passage that we read. And we'll take as our text the words from verse 2. Where is he that is born King of the Jews?

[ 9 : 14 ] Where is he that is born King of the Jews? Now since it is the day after Christmas. I feel it is suitable to look at an account.

That follows on after Jesus' birth. It's often a time, an account that we associate it. With the time of Jesus being born.

When he was born in the manger. We have all seen the nativity scenes. Where Jesus will be lying in a manger. The shepherds will come.

As it is revealed to them by the angels. That a child has been born. And then shortly after the shepherds come. Usually following them will come something like three wise men.

Riding on camels. But it doesn't actually seem to happen like that. Yes the shepherds came. But the wise men it says.

[ 10 : 17 ] Came to a house. There in verse 11. And when they were come into the house it says. Nor does it say in our passage.

How many wise men there were. And to back up the idea. Of a later arrival. By these wise men.

We have the words of Herod. Who sends out this horrifying order. To have all the male children under the age of two killed.

So it would make no sense to order things like that. If the wise men had come. At the time when Jesus was born.

And it gives us some sort of time frame here. Most likely in relation to when the wise men had told Herod.

[ 11 : 14 ] About the appearing of the star in verse 7. But there is also. There is a period of time. That would have also.

Taken him to realize that he had been fooled. Out of this two years. We don't know how long that time was. We don't know how long since the star first appeared either.

We only have this total of two years. That Herod declared. A valid period. Where Jesus had been born.

From the appearing of the first star. Was Jesus nearly two by this point? It's possible.

But there are so many unknowns for us in the passage. Like. Did the wise men actually tell Herod the truth? Did they know Herod was. A bad king.

[ 12 : 14 ] And did they tell him something else? We don't know. Did the star actually appear before Christ was born? We don't know that either. But whatever happens.

It seems to imply in our passage. That the traditions we have in our mind. Of the wise men. Coming at the manger scene. With a star overhead.

Didn't really take place. Like that. The wise men. In the passage here. In the original Greek language.

Are referred to as Magi. They're not. Called wise men. And Magi kind of. Points in the direction of magic.

But what it means is. That these men. Would have been experts in. Mysteries. Mysteries in writings. Mysteries of wisdom. Dreams. And reading the star.

[ 13 : 13 ] So giving them the title of wise men. Seems at the outset to be. In a way kind to them. But when we consider them in the passage. We'll see.

That they are. Justifiable. Of that title. As we said. It doesn't say. There are three. And if there is anything in this passage.

That. We can learn. Is. That we must be attentive. To what it says. To what the word of God says.

What does the word of God. Actually say. And not. What interpretations. We have of it. In our minds. Because. If we can make.

Misconceptions of. The Bible. And. The simple things. Here. You know. How dangerous. Dangerous. Is it. To misunderstand.

[ 14 : 05 ] The Bible. In matters. That are so serious. So as we said. It is highly unlikely. That. We have three wise men. Riding camels.

Coming to the manger. With the star. Above. But what else. Is going on. In this passage. Beyond. Any. Misconceptions. Or trivial things.

That we. Have here. Well. There are. Reactions. To the wise men's. Words. Reactions.

To this. Arrival. Of this baby. This is the greatest. Gift. That has ever been given. It is actually. The beginning. Of the gospel. Message. Outworking itself.

In reality. In a sense. But how do the men. Of the time. Respond to it. And that's what I want to do today. Just a quick look. At how. These men respond to it.

- [ 15 : 00 ] And maybe consider ourselves. How. How we respond. To the birth. Of this. King. King. So. We'll look at. Herod first. What about.
- King. Herod. Well. He is also referred to as. Herod. The great. He was the king. Of this. Region. And he was a man.
- Known for great. Building projects. He actually. Restored. The temple. In Jerusalem. But he seems. A ruthless. And cunning man. As we read about.
- Him in the passage. It is. Believed. Historically. That he. Murdered. His own wife. And even. Two of his sons. Or some of his sons.
- Possibly. To keep the throne. For himself. So you can see. If that were the case. Why he's taking so much. Of an interest. In what these.
- [ 15 : 57 ] Wise men. Have come. With. Another. King. Has been born. And he's going. No. Way. Will I.
- Have another. King. Over me. And it says. In verse 3. That. When king. When Herod. The king. Had heard. These things. He was troubled.
- Now. If anything. Herod. Himself. Can identify. Here. I believe. Something. Beyond. His own. Ability. You know. Who has directed.
- This star. Where have. Where have these men. Come from. Why have they come. What sight. Have they seen. That is worthy. Of them coming. You know.
- What's. What's. Worth. Worth. Noting. That he didn't. Brand them. As fools. Maybe. He realized. Himself. And recognized. That they were.
- [ 16 : 56 ] Sensing. These men. As they came. You know. They weren't foolish men. And. That thought. Is backed up.
- By the chief priests. And scribes. That come. After. And they're almost there. Like. To give a backup. To what. You know.
- To pass their own judgment. Rather. To what these men. Have claimed. It's almost like. Someone came to you. With news. And you'd be like. I don't know if I believe that. Or not. And you'd go.
- Come. Come. Come. And listen to this guy. And see. See if you believe. What he's. Saying to you. And what the wise men. Have said. In this passage. It seems to be.
- Backed up. By the chief priests. And the scribes. That had gathered. To pass their own judgment. Upon. This claim. That they have made. Are these men.
- [ 17 : 54 ] Speaking truth. Well. It seems to be. And so. In verse 4. He. The king. Herod. He demands. Upon them. Where is this.
- Christ. To be born. At the end. Of verse 4. Where is this. Christ. To be born. They've come to the conclusion. That this is the Christ. These men are looking for.
- And you can. You can see them. Reasoning together. And going. Well. Scripture. Tells us. In the words. That were prophesied. By Micah. 700 years ago. That. This king.
- Was to be born. In. Bethlehem. That's what it says. In. Verse 6. There. And thou. Bethlehem. The land of Judah. Art thou. Not least.
- Among the princes. Of Judah. For out. Of thee. Shall come. A governor. That shall rule. My people. Israel. A ruler. Will come.
- [ 18 : 51 ] Out. Of Bethlehem. To shepherd. Israel. And anyway. Herod. Sends the men. Away.
- To continue. In their search. He sends them off. But he says to them. Bring me word again. That I may come.

And worship him. And we know that. Was a lie. Interesting. That he was troubled. And he was bothered.

By the thought. Of this. Baby. Possibly being. The long awaited. Christ. And yes. This King Herod.

Had spent his time. And his money. In restoring. The temple. In Jerusalem. Maybe he was someone. Who. Liked to make good impressions.

[ 19 : 46 ] Upon men. You know. Showing all respect. Outwardly. To God. But actually. Well. And actually. What he said about the baby.

That he would come. And worship him. But within his heart. It's totally different. And he's just deceiving. The people. What he shows. Outwardly.

Is not. The truth of his heart. And there are many. In this world. Today. Who have. A deep. Rooted. Bitterness.

Towards Christ. Christ. And even people. Who. Would be supportive. Of. The gospel message. Physically. Materially.

But when it comes. To themselves. Maybe they question it. And they won't. Have it. In their hearts. They won't.

[ 20 : 39 ] Accept it. Themselves. You know. This was only a baby. To King Herod. What on earth.

Would Jesus. Do. At this point. Against him. This king. This Christ. You know. He came. In all tenderness. And fragility.

Before this mighty. King. But he is a baby. That would not be destroyed. By him. And his might.

And in a sense. It is the same. With us today. And as Jesus. Reveals himself. To men today. He comes with. Complete tenderness.

And love. Towards men. And women. Jesus is not. Against. You or anyone. But so many.

[ 21 : 34 ] Are inclined. To turn their anger. Against him. The world. Says. I do not. Want. Him. To be king. Over. My life. The proud man.

Says. I am king. And I will have no. Other. Telling me. What to do. And all they can't do. And all they want to do.

Is push Jesus. Out of the picture. Which is exactly. What Herod was doing. Pushing Jesus. Out of the picture. You know. This should have been.

A great. Time. Of excitement. But he couldn't. Swallow his pride. And in fact.

Herod didn't actually. Live long after this event. A few years. Of that. And sadly. This seems to be. His swan song.

[ 22 : 29 ] In a sense. To murder. All the male children. Under two years. Of age. And for what purpose. He didn't achieve.

What he wanted. To achieve. It was a failed. Venture. A hostile. Heart. Against Christ. Endeavoring.

At any cost. To silence him. And it'll be the same. For men and women. Today. Maybe not going to such.

Extremities. As Herod. But trying to push. Christ. Out of the picture. You know. You'll only find. That you'd have. A failed. Venture.

You'd be wasting. Your time. You'd be wasting. Your efforts. You know. Herod was a king. But in a sense. He was a proud fool.

[ 23 : 24 ] To think that he. Could silence. God. So who else. Do we have. In the passage. We of course. Have. The wise men.

Or. The. Magi. As they are called. God. Now. These. Their reaction. They give every consideration. To this king. To the star.

That appeared. But. You know. We ask ourselves. Did they know. Who he was. Did they know. That they were looking. For the Christ. We know.

It says in verse 2. That they asked. Where is he. That is born. King of the Jews. In verse 2. Does this mean. They knew him. As a Christ.

But we are not. Entirely sure. About this. And there is a question. Over a. Prophecy. Made by Balaam. In Numbers. 24. Verse 17. About a star.

[ 24 : 21 ] That shall come. Out of Jacob. And a scepter. That shall rise. Out of Israel. Did they know. About this. I don't know. It seems. A long shot.

In my eyes. You know. That the disciples. Couldn't even. Put things together. Very well. At the time. Of Christ. Until the spirit. Came upon them. Having these men.

With the ability. To identify. This one verse. Out of the old. Out of the whole. Scriptures. That they had. It's possible. But. We are not.

Sure. Exactly. We do not know. How. The Lord. Revealed it. To them. But. Regardless. Of how he did. They had.

They had. Clear. Clear. Indication. That a king. Had been born. Not. Someone. That would. Be anointed. As a king. But someone.

[ 25 : 17 ] Who was to be. Born. A king. You know. Whatever revelation. They had. It was clear. Enough. For them. To follow this. Indication.

And to travel. Across. Lands. And nations. In search. Of this baby. Clear. Enough. For them. To take gifts. That were. Of immense.

Value. For this baby. And. These men. Weren't Jews. Which makes it. All the more. Remarkable. That they came.

At all. It wasn't. Even their king. That they sought. But still. It was. Worship. That they came. To give. No worship.

For Herod. Only worship. For this new king. You know. It's one of these passages. Where I wish. We had a bit. More detail. From the wise men.

[ 26 : 12 ] But what are the differences. Between the wise men. And Herod. You know. We ask ourselves. Did either of these. Men. Doubt. That it was true.

Doesn't seem so. Did they doubt. That he was a king. Again. Doesn't seem so. Did they either. Reject. Or ignore. The revelation.

No. Did they either. Have fool. Or definitive answers. No. They didn't. The difference.

Of response. Is purely. Within. Themselves. You know. A wise man. Will endeavor. To reason. Things out. In his life.

He doesn't know. All the answers. And admits. He doesn't know. All the answers. But he'll take all. Account. Of everything. And consider it. And weigh it up.

[ 27 : 08 ] But a proud man. Will take a bit of it. And tell you. A reason. And he will give you. An answer. So these men. Were.

Wise men. They didn't have. All the answers. But their heart. Was to seek it out. Their heart. Was to seek it out. Herod thought.

He had the answer. And he didn't care. Any more. For. Any other. Thought. But the wise men. Questioned themselves.

And thought. Well. What implication. Will this. Have. For us. What is. Your. Honest. Response. To the gift.

Of Jesus. Today. Jesus. Has. In a sense. Been unwrapped. For us. In the word. Of God.  
And you know.

[ 28 : 02 ] That you can find him. In here. He has the greatest. Gift. Ever given. The greatest. Gift.  
Ever to be accepted. But he has also. The greatest. Gift. Ever to be rejected. Do you.

Accept. Or do you. Reject. This man. Do you. Aim to blot him. Out of your life. Or do you.  
Seek after him. Diligently. Are you.

Giving your mind. To what the bible. Teaches us. To think upon it. To make wise.  
Judgements. Of what. It is teaching us.

And not to be proud. And to make. Rash. Decisions. Of what. Is revealed. To us. In  
scripture. Are you.

One. Who has. Found. Christ. Have you. Been diligent. In seeking. Him out. Have you.  
Given up. On your treasure.

[ 29 : 03 ] And given them. For his glory. You see. Jesus. Must have a response. Whether it is. In  
this life. Or in eternity. And we know this.

Is to be true. We know. He is a king. For sure. And he cannot. Be ignored. Forever. And  
we do not know. All the answers.

But he asks you. Today. For a response. How do you respond. To Jesus. Today. He  
came.

And humbled himself. In the fragility. Of man. As a babe. Led. To the.

Humility. Of the cross. He didn't come. With armies. And he will do you. No harm. And yet.

[ 30 : 00 ] Still men. Want to treat him. As if he were dead. Men do not. Want to hear. A word. From  
him. Because they want.

To be. Their own king. And the heart. Of each man. Comes out. In their actions. Herod.  
Was angered. And he acted.

With a sword. The magi. Willingly. Left. All that they knew. Gave of their time. Gave of  
their possessions.

To seek out. As child. And they brought. Gifts. Gold. Frankincense. And myrrh. And there  
are many.

Opinions. Of. Why it was gold. Why it was frankincense. And why it was myrrh. And they  
can explain. The gold for the king. The frankincense. Is what they. The incense.

[ 30 : 55 ] That was offered. In the temple. And the myrrh. Was a herb. That was used. For  
embalming bodies. Maybe representing death. You know. Whatever. We can think about  
these things.

But I. Again. I don't think we can say for sure. And we can. In a sense. Maybe waste our  
time. Trying to reason it out. What is worth.

Our consideration. Is that. What they gave. Was worth. A lot. You know. Gold.  
Frankincense. And myrrh. Probably one of the. Most valuable things.

They could have given. At the time. Gifts. That only a king. Would have had. This is worth.  
A lot. Of money. I think. This is why.

We are told. What they brought. Not so we can reason it out. Spiritually. And apply it  
spiritually. But to see. Just how serious.

[ 31 : 52 ] These men were. It is far better. For us to consider that. The hearts of these men. And the  
giving of these men.

And the willingness of the heart. To give. To this king. But is that not often. Where we feel.  
Even as Christians.

Giving our valuables. To Jesus. The things that we value. In our lives. We like to hold on to them. We don't like to share them.

We don't like to give. The best. Of what we have. But these men do. And maybe that's a lesson. For us.

You see. These men. Could have easily. Have been called. The eastern magicians. But when you look at them. Closer. They are rightly qualified. As the wise men.

[ 32 : 49 ] But who else. Do we have. In our passage. Well. There is. The Jew. After all.

Is this. Not. The king. Of the Jew. That they are considering. It is interesting. When you read. Verse. Three. When Herod.

The king. Had heard these things. He was troubled. And. All. Jerusalem. With him. Was this nation. Not waiting.

For. A messiah. To come. The promised king. That would reign. In justice. And righteousness. Why on earth. Did this.

Trouble them. As a nation. As a city. Well. Most likely. The same reason. Of Herod.

[ 33 : 43 ] Rejecting. Christ. Most likely. Because. Of their pride. They didn't want them. To come. That would have meant.

A change for them. A change. From a way. That. They probably knew. Themselves. Was not. Pleasing to God.

But it was something. That they enjoyed. How they lived. Their lives. Things were great. And they're hearing.

That there's. New kings coming. This king. That's been promised. The messiah. This is going to change things.

And it bothered them. That they might lose. The lives. That they knew. And that's the problem. Again with us. Sin that is in us.

[ 34 : 44 ] The problem of it is that. We enjoy it. We like it. And we put idols in place of God. We are greedy.

And we are hostile towards God at times. And it can be taken to extremes. Of theft and adultery.

And murder. And if we are living a life that. Enjoys sin. And God makes an impression upon it.

What do we say. Not just now. I don't like this. This is bad timing. No we think.

No. No. Come back again. You can see why they would be troubled. If they were enjoying their lives. They didn't want it to change. They didn't know what implications this king would bring upon them.

[ 35 : 46 ] Troubled enough. But not troubled enough to seek him out. And there is one thing in this passage. That I cannot get my head around. And we are not 100% certain.

But it seems most likely. That the chief priests and the scribes. Who came to check. What the wise men were saying. They seemed to concur together.

That the Christ would be born. And then they sent him away. You know. Bethlehem was only about. Two to three hours walk away.

And these men. Didn't even bother. Going. To look themselves. I can't. Grasp. That. Why did they not go.

When they reasoned. Yep. He'll be born in Bethlehem. This is the promised Messiah. This is the greatest prophecy. Of their religion. Staring them in the face.



- [ 36 : 50 ] They're the leaders. Of. They're the religious leaders. Of the day. And they didn't seem interested. They weren't bothered.
- That there was a possibility. That the promised Messiah. Was born. Just up the road. It's no wonder. That God.
- Revealed himself. To the men. That would seek him out. From a different land. And maybe at times.
- We don't realise. How close God. Gets to us. But we don't bother. God. And we don't want to. And we don't want to.
- Seek out Christ. And we don't want to. Find him. Because we're enjoying our lives. And this is to me. As much as it is. To all of us. It is that we must examine.
- [ 37 : 50 ] Our hearts. And our desires. But God is in this passage. As well. And his grace. Is to all men.
- The revealing of his son. To the. Human race. The promised Messiah. That would come. He revealed himself. To the fool. As he did.
- To the wise. To the people. That were his own. Who didn't go after him. To the people. That were not. Who sought him out. The grace. Of God.
- Is right through. This whole passage. And even from the beginning. Of the revealing of God's grace.
- There is. Great love. And great hostility. Towards it. And God would have known.
- [ 38 : 48 ] Of the hostility. And the evil. Of man's heart. And the love. Did not hinder him. In the giving of his son. A son.
- That so willingly obeyed. For each of us. That is here. Imagine. In conclusion. That you. Had a friend. Who had worked all year.
- And he decided. That every penny. He would make this year. He would buy you a present. With it. And he would give you a gift. At Christmas time. And he would spend all year.
- Laboring. And working hard. And working diligently. And he found a gift. That he would give for you. And thought. This is. This gift is. Perfect for him.
- This is exactly. What he needs. And this. Will give him. Enjoyment. And the man's whole year. Would have essentially been. Lived for you.
- [ 39 : 47 ] And at the end of it. He'd wrap it up. He'd label it. That is. This is given. With this love. And.
- If he gave it to you. And you unwrapped it. You opened it. You looked at it. And you walked away. Leaving it.
- At his feet. What do you think. The man. Would feel like. After. Doing all this. For you. And you walk away.
- And leave it. At his feet. How on earth. Do you. How on earth. Would he think. How would he feel. If you walked away.
- And he might see you. Picking up. Something else. Picking up. A pointless. Gift. That someone else. Would throw in his hand.
- [ 40 : 49 ] A novelty. Of little worth. And you're. Distracted. By playing. With that. Little thing. That is of. So little.
- Value. But this is. Exactly. What we are doing. With God. And Christ. We're shrugging our shoulders. As a nation. To the greatest.
- Gift. That has been given. To the great. Expense. Of God. Giving his son. And it's not a year's worth.

Of work. It's a life's. Worth. Given. Completely. Out of his grace. And out of his loving kindness. For you.

But. We are found. Pleasing ourselves. With worthless. Novelties. We're playing. With different things. To distract us.

[ 41 : 47 ] And the devil. Has given. To us. Jesus. Unwrapped. May be the last thing. That you want. God. But he is the very gift. That each of us here.

Needs. He is the very gift. That will give us. Enjoyment. In our lives. And satisfaction. In it. Contentment. In it. And we will be happy. With him.

As an everlasting. Gift. So what did you do. With Jesus. Yesterday. What do you do. With Jesus. Today. What is your response.

To the birth. Of this. Man. Jesus. Amen.