

**MATTHEW (THE KING, HIS KINGDOM AND ME)
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SERIES: Matthew (The King, His Kingdom And Me)

TITLE: Program 3 – Clash Of The Kings

WEDNESDAY

OPEN

Sometimes, do you feel as if the world is against you because of your Christianity? Oh they'd be happy with you if you would be quiet, if you would not say that there's a right and a wrong, if you would not proclaim that there is Jesus Christ and He is the Son of God and the only way to God, if you would not stand for the Ten Commandments and they would be happy with you. But the minute you let your voice be heard like the rest of the world is doing it, it seems like there is a clash, a clash between you and the world. What's going on? We'll talk about it today from Bethlehem.

PART ONE

Welcome to Bethlehem my friend. I'm on the rooftop of a house that belongs to a friend of ours. They're Arab Christians and they have a shop down in Manger Square, "Bethlehem Souvenir Shop" that has been there for sixty years. I'm on the roof of a home where this family for years has had

their generations growing up here in Bethlehem. And as I came up the stairs to the top of this roof I saw “God Bless Our Home.” These people also live in the midst of a conflict. You and I need to understand, Beloved, that when Jesus Christ was born, when He came to this world He brought a dividing line. He separated the masses because He proclaimed that [“He was the Way, the Truth and the Life and that no one could come to the Father but by Him.”] (PARAPHRASE, John 14:6) And where did it all start? It started here in Bethlehem. “O Little Town of Bethlehem” was just a village then. But now, as you can hear in the background, it’s a bustling city. It is Easter and they have all come down to Manger Square to go into the Church of the Nativity and to go into the caves where Jesus could have been born. Because you see when it says, “**...there was no room...in the inn,**” (Luke 2:7) in those days the inn was next to the caves and it was in the caves that they would put the animals. We’re in Bethlehem. Bethlehem comes from “beth’-le-hem.” “Beth” means house. It’s “the house of bread.” And this is where the Bread of Life was born. Well we want to begin in Matthew chapter 2. It says, “**Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and [we] have come to worship Him.’”** (Matthew 2:1-2) Now as we stop you need to look at the text and remember we’re observing the text. You need to see “who” is this about? What is happening? When is it happening? Where is it happening? And you want to mark your time phrase. As you look at verse 1 it says “**Now after Jesus was born**” (Matthew 2:1a) After Jesus was born some magi showed up in the days of Herod the king. Now Herod the king is a very, very interesting character. He’s a man that was a great builder. He was a man that was a master politician. But he was also a mad man. Herod the Great ruled from 37 B.C. to 4 B.C. when he died. He died in the year that Jesus Christ was born. When these two kings intersected Herod the king of the Jews and Jesus the King of the Jews, when

their lives intersected, some terrible things happened in this city because Herod the Great was jealous of Jesus Christ. He didn't want anyone to take his position. Now Herod the Great was, as I said, a brilliant politician. He was a magnificent builder. He had taken Herod's temple, the Temple Mount area, and he had built that so that it was a magnificent structure. He wanted it to be greater than Solomon's Temple. And he was known for his buildings. He was known for Herodium which is right over my shoulder. It's that spot that comes up that is like almost a volcano. Herodium was built by Herod as a palace for himself as a place to store food so he could run there if he got into any trouble with the Jews. It was a place where he planned on being buried. And yet to this day they have no idea where Herod was buried. Herod was a man that put to death his wife, that put to death three of his sons, that put to death his good friends. He was a man that was very, very paranoid. He was a man that was a terrible, terrible despot. And in his time was born the King of the Jews; the King that would not care about Himself, but the King who was born to die, born to die so that you and I might live. What a contrast in kings. But what God wants you to know and what He wants you to understand is this event happened at a certain time. It happened "when Herod was the king." It happened in a place in Bethlehem in Judea. And it was an event that was recognized by magi that came from the east. Now the magi were astronomers. They were scientists. And they looked up and they saw the star in the east. They saw His star. Whose star? Well it says in verse 2 and they asked **"Where is He who has been born King of the Jews...?" (Matthew 2:2)** Now one of things that you want to mark all the way through the gospel of Matthew is you want to mark every reference to the "king." You want to mark every reference to the "kingdom" but as I have already taught you Matthew is presenting the Messiah, the Christ as the King. He is the King of Israel. He is not only the King of Israel, but He is someday going to be the King of all the nations. All the nations are going to come and all the nations are going to bow the knee. (See Philippians 2:10-

11) All the nations are going to be subservient to Him. Now that time is yet to come. But you can rest assured that it's coming. Well they come before Herod. Now catch this. He tells us in verse 1 it is **"...Herod the king..."** (2:1a) and they come, the magi and they ask **"Where is he who has been born King of the Jews...?"** (2:2) You can almost see Herod kind of bristle because, what is Herod's title? Herod is known as the king of the Jews. And they said **"...For we [have seen] His star...."** (2:2) Oh this King has a star. He has a star in the heavens. And it says **"...We [have seen] His star in the east and [we] have come to worship Him."** (2:2) It's not that they've come to worship Herod the earthly king of the Jews. But they have come to worship the One who is the true King of the Jews. And this is where you can almost hear the cymbals clash because Herod the king of the Jews is not happy with this announcement. And it says, **"When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him."** (Matthew 2:3) He was not only troubled and kept it to himself but he began to talk. And they began to talk—why? Because in Jerusalem, which is very, very close to here; I think Jerusalem is maybe about eight miles just north of here. So because all Jerusalem saw these magi come in; now you've got to remember the towns were smaller then and they saw these magi and they saw them coming from the east and they recognized them as in different attire and different clothes. The word began to spread. They came to find the One who was the King of the Jews. They saw His star in the east and seeing that, all of Jerusalem was troubled. Now during this time many false Christs many false Messiahs and let me just say it again: The word "Messiah" is the Hebrew word. The word "Christ" is the Greek word that is the equivalent of Messiah. So it would be ah "Yeshua" and so when we talk Messiah we're talking Christ. When we talk Christ we're talking Messiah. There were many false Christs that had arisen and yet here was one that had His own star in the east. And all of Jerusalem was troubled. And they said to him and **"Gathering together all the chief priests and [the] scribes of the people...."**

(**Matthew 2:4**) Now the scribes are the ones that translated and taught the law. They copied the words of God. They copied them on the scrolls so that they could be read in the synagogues. And it says that **“...the chief priests and [the] scribes of the people, he inquired of them where... Messiah was to be born.” (2:4)** Now what you learn from this and I would suggest that all the way through if it's the word “Messiah” maybe not Christ, but if it's the word “Messiah” that you might want to draw like a star of David over that and color the inside yellow, the color that we're using for God. But they wanted to know **“...where... Messiah was to be born.” (2:4)** They understood that Messiah was coming. They understood that Messiah was going to be born in a certain place. Did the Scriptures tell them this? Because see every common man couldn't run to the Word of God and say, “Okay, where is it?” Because they didn't have the Word. This is why they would go to the synagogues and there they would take the Torah scrolls and they would read those to the people and they would read the Apocrypha and the Parashah. They would read different portions of the Scripture. And it says, **“They said to him, ‘In Bethlehem of Judea; for this is what has been written by the prophet:’ ‘And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the leaders of Judah....’” (Matthew 2:5-6)** Why? **“...‘For out of you shall come forth a Ruler who will shepherd My people Israel.’ Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined...the exact time [that] the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I... may come and worship Him.’” (2:6-8)** Now he's saying that and yet we know later on that he's going to send his soldiers to Bethlehem and he's going to kill every child that is two years and under. He's going to kill those children because he wants to get rid of this One who is the King of the Jews. It's a clash of the kingdoms. And this is what you're going through, Precious One. If you feel like the world is against you then you can know this it is a clash of the

kingdoms. But stand fast because it's our King who will rule and reign and all the earth will give obedience to Him. We'll talk about it in just a minute.

PART TWO

Welcome to Bethlehem; Bethlehem, where Jesus the King of the Jews was born, Bethlehem that was ruled over by another king another king that was called the king of the Jews. His name was Herod. ["The magi come from the east. They come from the east because they have seen His star, the King of the Jews' star in the east and they have followed that star from the east to the west."] (PARAPHRASE, Matthew 2:1-2) Now it is normal, it is normal for a star to move from east to west. That's the normal course. But for a star to go north to south is not normal whatsoever. And yet this was a very, very precious star. It was a star that we feel was prophesied by when Balaam stood and gave forth this prophecy that just poured out of his mouth because Balaam an Old Testament prophet intended to prophesy against the Jews and instead a blessing came. I want you to go in your Bibles to Numbers chapter 24 and we want to look at verses 15 to 25, Numbers chapter 24 verses 15 to 25. And it says **"He took up his discourse and said, 'The oracle of Balaam the son of Beor, and the oracle of [a] man whose eye is opened, the oracle of him who hears the words of God, and knows the knowledge of the Most High, who sees the vision of the Almighty, falling down, [and] yet having his eyes uncovered. I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; a star shall come forth from Jacob, a scepter shall rise from Israel....' (Numbers 24:15-17) "...A star shall come forth from Jacob...." (24:17)** Well you and I know from studying the genealogy of Jesus Christ that Jesus was born. He was the son of Abraham. Abraham gave birth to Isaac. Isaac gave birth to Jacob. Jacob's name was changed to Israel. So **"...A star shall come forth from Jacob, [shall come forth from Israel] a scepter shall rise from Israel...." (Numbers 24:17)** A scepter means a ruler, scepter. A king shall come from Israel. **"...And shall**

crush...the forehead of Moab, and tear down all the sons of Sheth.”
(24:17) And it goes on and it gives the prophecy. But as you look at this prophecy could this be the star that the magi saw in the east? They saw His star and they came to worship Him. And it says in verse 7 **“Then Herod secretly called the magi and determined from them the exact time [that] the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and search carefully for the Child; and when you have found Him, report to me, so that I too may come and worship Him.’ After hearing the king, they went their way; and the star, which they had seen in the east, went on before them....”** (Matthew 2:7-9) Now remember I told you stars go from east to west but they do not go from north to south and yet this star took them from the north from Jerusalem to the south to Bethlehem. And it says, **“...[it] went on before them until it came and [it] stood over the place where the Child was.”** (Matthew 2:9) They didn’t know where they were going. And yes, it was not this bustling metropolis but it was a village and there were lots of babies in that village. Now watch what we learn from observing the text very carefully. It was the star that went from the north to the south that showed them where the child was. The star pointed out the child. And then it says that **“When they saw the star, they rejoiced [with] exceedingly... great joy. After coming into the house....”** (Matthew 2:10-11) Oh Jesus was laid in a manger. The Bread of life was laid in a feeding trough in a manger that was outside a cave because there was no room for them in the inn. And yet it says that the star pointed them to where the child was and they came to the house. Mary and Joseph had settled in Bethlehem and this is where they were making their home. It says and **“After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him....”** (2:11) Now there are two Greek words. There’s a Greek word for a baby, for an infant and then there’s a word for a child who was not just a newborn infant. This is the word that is used for the child who is not a newborn infant. So we know that

at this time Jesus was a little bit older. He wasn't just freshly born. And it says, **"After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother ...they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, [and] frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way."** (2:11-12)

What do you see? You see these magi that are coming from the east. They're bringing gold and frankincense and myrrh. It really is a picture. It's a picture of the nations bringing their wealth to the King of kings. O Precious One, right now you may feel like the world despises you and the world may despise you. And the more that you live for Christ, the more that you are the salt of the earth, (See Mark 9:50) the more that you act as the light and giving forth the light, the more you let your light shine before men, the more they see your good works the more they understand that these good works belong to God, (See Matthew 5:16) you can understand that the world wants to extinguish the light. That the world wants you out of the way because your righteousness and your belief, in a sense, condemns the world. They're condemned because they do not believe in Jesus Christ. They do not believe that He's the Son of God and therefore they don't want you around. But someday know this, that the world that despises you and **"...the whole world lies in the power of the evil one,"** (1 John 5:19b) it's a kingdom of darkness. That the darkness is going to be extinguished because the Light of the world, the Light of life, the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of the Jews, is coming to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. And He's going to reign about eight miles north of here. He's going to reign in that holy city, Jerusalem, where God has put His name and where He will dwell among His people. It will be truly holy ground. So Precious One, what is your precept for life today? The question is have you recognized Him as your King? Have you bowed the knee? Have you said "Everything that I have belongs to You?" Have you honored Him for who He is? He is the King of kings and

He is coming someday. **“And on His... thigh... [will be] written ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords.’” (Revelation 19:16)** When He comes in His glory, in His power, the Son of Man coming on the clouds of glory, He will come to Jerusalem and He will rule in Jerusalem; and all this area, Bethlehem, and all the area of this land, will give obedience to Him. Don’t wait until that time. Now is the day. Now is the hour to acknowledge that there is no king, there is no lord, there is no god except One and that is [“God the Father who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ so that you and I might not perish but have everlasting life.”] (PARAPHRASE, John 3:16) And when the world criticizes you and feels like your enemy, it’s all right. You have the truth. You have the light of life. You’ve worshiped the true King of the Jews and of the world.