



12/29/25

Last week of 2025. Can you believe it? Are you a New Year's Resolution person? Some people think they're silly. Some love them. I like to consider where I've come from in the previous year and what I want to pursue with the Lord in the year to come. So I guess that's making resolutions. My resolution is to stick to my resolutions... and not make so many that it's impossible to accomplish. How about you? Are resolutions part of your new year's plans?

*Blessings,
Jonna*

Matthew 2:1-12

This is one of those situations like in the movies when the caption reads, "2 Years Ago" or something like that. Yesterday, the message was about Joseph having to take Jesus to Egypt because Herod got mad that he had been duped by the wise men from the east. So how did that happen? Let's go back in time...

Jesus had been born in Bethlehem. He was probably about 2 years old by now. Joseph and Mary had settled there and were living in a house. About that time, wise men from the east showed up in Jerusalem asking where they could find the King of the Jews so that they could worship Him. They had seen His star.

This is so cool. They were from the east, where Daniel had lived hundreds of years before because he was taken into captivity, and then raised to high leadership in Babylon. God had given Daniel prophecies of the coming Messiah, and the "wise men" had been watching all those years for the sign of His coming. These men were astrologers. How cool that God allowed them to see this sign from so far away, and that He had set the plan for them to study hundreds of years earlier!

Well... Herod, who considered himself the king of the Jews, was "troubled." This man was not a good guy. He killed his own sons because he was paranoid that they would try to take the throne from him. He killed his own wife. So when he was troubled, all of Jerusalem was

troubled. What would he do to them to satisfy his concerns? We know from what happened after the wise men left that the people in Jerusalem had every reason to be troubled.

Herod brought all the chief priests and scribes together to tell him where the Christ was to be born. They KNEW the answer!!! And they didn't go to find out for themselves!!! They were supposed to be the ones who loved God and His word the most!!!

They told Herod that Jesus was supposed to be born in Bethlehem. They quoted the prophecy from Micah 5:2, "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd My people Israel." Wow. So sad that they knew this and they weren't looking for the sign of His coming... They didn't even care when Gentile wise men came to worship Him.

So Herod summoned the wise men SECRETLY. Any time someone has to isolate people from others in order to accomplish his purpose, it's a bad sign. The intentions are never good. Herod asked the wise men when they saw the star... indicating when the baby would have been born. And he asked them to search for the baby and then come back and tell him where He was so that he could worship Jesus, too. LIE. He had no intention of worshiping Jesus. He wanted to take Him out. But God is greater. No one can thwart His plan.

The wise men went to find Jesus in Bethlehem, which is only 5 miles from Jerusalem. They saw the star settle over His home. They were so excited!!! They went in to see Jesus and they fell down and worshiped Him. Wow.

What must this scene have been like? I'm sure Joseph and Mary were totally shocked. Who would expect Gentile men from the east to come and worship their toddler, and give Him gold, frankincense, and myrrh? Gold represented His kingship. Frankincense represented His priesthood. Myrrh, being an embalming oil, represented His suffering and death. Such deep meaning.

After they left the home, they were warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, so they left another way. They were so open to God's leading. That's cool.

I can only imagine what Joseph and Mary must have been thinking by this whirlwind moment. They didn't have long to think, because they were about to leave for Egypt.

How do I respond to this? I pray that I will look for Jesus as the wise men did, and that I will be excited to worship Him as they did as well. I pray that I will NOT be like the scribes and Pharisees, knowing the word but not being changed by the word. O Lord, please help me to study Your word not just for information, but for transformation. I definitely don't want to be like Herod, feeling threatened by Jesus rather than seeing the beauty of relationship with Him. Finally, I pray that I will be sensitive to the Lord's leading as Joseph and Mary were. Rather than questioning the chaos, please help me to see that all You walk me through is for a purpose. You have a plan, and Your plan is always good.