

## Matthew 2

### **Evangelism Training Announcement**

So we remember Matthew is writing to the Jewish reader.

All the Gospels have their intended audience, and their intended purpose.

Matthew writing to the Jew; and knew there were certain prophecies that had to be fulfilled.

And in this chapter he connects the dots for the Jews.

There are some seemingly contradictory prophecies as where the Messiah would come from.

Would He come from Bethlehem, or out of Egypt, there are scriptures that say both?

So Matthew here explains for us these 4 prophecies from Old:

(1) He was to be born in Bethlehem (see Mic. 5:2);  
 (2) He was to be called out of Egypt (see Hos. 11:1);  
 (3) There was to be weeping in Ramah (see Jer. 31:15);  
 and (4) He was a root from the stem of Jesse and therefore to be called a Nazarene (see Isa. 11:1). <sup>1</sup>McGee, J. Vernon:

*Thru the Bible Commentary: The Gospels (Matthew 1-13)*. electronic ed. Nashville : Thomas Nelson, 1991 (Thru the Bible Commentary 34), S. 36

So let's look at the arrival of the King of the Jews...

2:1 Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "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."

So we meet some new characters here, King Herod, and these wise men.

So let's get to know this King Herod first...

According to Historians he was a sly, ruthless man, he was so power hungry he killed his own family, out of a paranoia he invented in his head.

For him to hear someone else as referred to as King of the Jews, would put him into full anxiety.

To understand him more clearly we have to go back a little in history...

You see between New and Old Testaments there is a period of silence in scripture, about 400 years.

In this time, Jerusalem, and all of Israel was in a perpetual state of war and turmoil.

They had many empires rule over them...

And during this period of 400 years, as we will see, a series of events brought Herod into power.

Most of us have heard of Chanukah.

Well Chanukah started with one of the vilest rulers in history whose name was Antiochus Epiphanies king of Syria...

He hated the Jews.... And after a military expedition to Egypt, the Jews heard a false rumor that the king was killed, and they celebrated.

But Antiochus had not been killed so when he returned he killed thousands of Jews in a show of revengeful rage.

Antiochus kept this animosity toward the Jews throughout his rule and then a little later in history as he was being defeated by the Romans, he turned his wrath towards the Jews one last time.

And at this time he had his general Apollonius wait until the Sabbath day, and they came against the defenseless city of Jerusalem, because he knew the Jews would be resting.

And he massacred the people, and the worst part of it all, in the Jews eyes, they defiled the temple by sacrificing swine on the alters, and putting the detested animals blood all over the temple, they then turned their place of worship into a temple for Zeus.

At this time the Jews cried out once again to Yahweh, and He sent a leader who was Zealous for the Law of God, and was a military mastermind, he was the son of

Mattathias the High Priest, his name was Judas Maccabeus.

Judas and his followers began a revolt when the Syrian leaders tried to make them introduce Hellenistic Worship into Jewish worship.

Explain [Hellenization](#)-is the historical spread of [ancient Greek culture](#), and language and religious beliefs.

So these Seleucid Greeks tried to convince the Jews introduce this new doctrine and combine it with the Hebrew worship and in turn Mattathias slew the Jew who tried to introduce this pagan ideology into the Jewish culture.

Him and his son Judas fled and gathered a small Jewish army.

A revolt occurred and the little Jewish army began to push back their huge foe.

They regained control of the Temple regained control of their land, and the day they cleansed and rededicated the temple was where the holiday Chanukah came from.

All this is important, because the Jews had made the descendants of the Maccabees there king.

After many power changes, and much corruption, and the Romans conquering, the Romans left leadership to this family.

As corruption, power and greed came into play, the power struggle between family members became a three-way struggle.

They appealed to Rome for Rome to decide.

Rome took too long, and they took matters into their own hands, and the Jews began fighting for power among themselves.

While this was happening Herod's father Antipater who was an Edomite, the Jews enemy since Jacob and Esau were born to Rebekah... you remember the story in....

Gen 25:21-23 Now Isaac pleaded with the Lord for his wife, because she was barren; and the Lord granted his plea, and Rebekah his wife conceived. 22 But the children struggled together within her; and she said, "If all is well, why am I like this?" So she went to inquire of the Lord.

23 And the Lord said to her:

"Two nations are in your womb,

Two peoples shall be separated from your body;

One people shall be stronger than the other,

And the older shall serve the younger.

So we have Antipater who was from Jacob's brother's line Esau, who the people of Edom descended from.

He is an enemy of the Jews by heritage.

Well Antipater was sly, and was buttering up Rome with gifts and smooth words.

With the Jews unable to settle their own disputes, Rome put the Edomite Antipater as procurator of the area, in turn putting his son Herod in charge of Galilee.

There was one more invasion by the Parthian Army, and Herod fled to Rome, who then made him king over Judea, and gave him an army to conquer the Land.

So Herod has weaseled his way into power, in so doing he also married a Maccabean woman to kind of win over the Jewish people.

And Herod declared himself King of the Jews.

He was actually a great builder, and started to complete the Jewish temple, and built up many other areas.

He was a politician to the people, and wanted to be accepted.

So for these mysterious wise men to come from the East looking for the King of the Jews, this would have made him paranoid.

Herod was the self-made King of the Jews.

3 When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Herod was troubled, because he believed he was the king of the Jews.

Would this Child that these men were seeking, gather the people against him?

It says all of Jerusalem with him was troubled. Why would the people be troubled too?

Because they knew this king Herod was ruthless when it came to his power.

He was capable of slaughtering thousands in his fear.

And we will see later they were justified in this thinking.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

So at first he gathers those who know scripture, and asked “where does the scriptures say this Messiah will be born?”

And of course the Jews which should be so ready for deliverance would be studied up at this point in history.

They supposedly have longed for that promised King, whose throne would have no end.

They should have longed for men like Herod, and the Roman Rulers to be put out of the land.

And they tell Herod what scripture says.

5 So they said to him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet:

6 'But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.'"

They quote Mic 5:2 in part, which states.... "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting."

But something interesting to note... the Chief Priests and the scribes never went looking for Him.

They were supposedly ready for deliverance; they knew the scripture... could it be that they themselves didn't want the Messiah to come?

Perhaps they liked the power of the people looking to them for answers, would the Messiah remove them from their places of pomp and prominence among the people?

They are rubbing shoulders with Herod here, the people honor them, and maybe with their words they were expecting this Messiah, but certainly not with their actions.

Remember what Jesus tells these men after the Triumphal entry... and the people are praising Jesus as He comes into Jerusalem on a donkey, and the Pharisees tell Jesus to command His disciples to stop praising Him.

### Luke 19:39-44

39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

40 But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."

41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.

43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."

He is saying this very world you Priests and scribes have been cozying up too is going to destroy you.

You were supposed to be waiting for Me, I am here, but you chose not to see, you chose your earthy comforts and power over Truth.

And this very system they are trusting in is going to turn on them.

And Jesus wept, knowing their fate.

And in AD 70 Jerusalem was destroyed, the temple and all, the Romans massacred multitudes of people, women and children included.

As Titus burned the temple down, the gold melted into the cracks of the stones, so the Romans, knowing part of their pay was the booty from the conquered people, removed every stone to get the gold that was inside.

So as Jesus said would happen not one stone was left upon another.

And here in our text we see they liked the power, the politics, and the prestige.

And the Jews knowing of these prophecies, where Jesus was to be born, and they don't even bother looking for Him when all these things were happening.

They had a kindred heart with Herod; the Messiah's coming meant they would lose their position.

7 Then Herod, when he had secretly called the wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared. 8 And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and search carefully for the young Child, and when you have found Him, bring back word to me, that I may come and worship Him also."

And Herod being the sly fox that he is manipulates the wise men secretly.

He tells them I want to worship the Child too.

And they believe the king, as we will see in a minute.

But he knows if he tells these men he plans on killing the Child they will not return the information.

And if Herod sends his soldiers, the Child might escape.

So he is very scandalous here.

9 When they heard the king, they departed; and behold, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came and stood over where the young Child was. 10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceedingly great joy.

So it seems the mysterious star has reappeared.

There are many theories and ideas of what this star is. But nothing can be said with certainty.

It was in fact a miraculous star that cannot be explained with science or astrology.

We cannot really determine where the Magi or wise men are apart from speculation.

It seems they are from the East of Israel. Possibly Persia.

Some commentators even think they are from the West of Israel perhaps Egypt, and they saw a star in the East and traveled from West to East. But it all gets tiresome to find solid answers.

The Catholic Encyclopedia has some good insight if you are looking for more information.

We call them the kings from the East, but they were not kings or even perhaps not from the east.

They were wise men or Magi, and that is about all we know.

You can see how church tradition kind of confuses things for us...

And there is no reason to believe there were only 3 wise men, there could have been 300, there is never any number given, they give three different gifts as we will see later, but that's it.

But the thing worth mentioning here is that they were into stars, and they were seekers of truth.

And God seems to meet them where they are at.

That is something I love about our God, is He will meet those seeking truth, in the place they are at.

And for these Magi, He gives them a supernatural star that seems to lead them to the promised Messiah.

So we don't know how long the star has been out of sight, but they see it again, and they rejoice.

Now we are about to blow all your ideas of the Nativity out of the water, the shepherds came at the birth of Jesus, and were there in the manger, but in our church plays we always have the wise men there as well.

Not so as we will see.

Some time has gone on, and Mary and Joseph are in a house now in Bethlehem.

Probably because the crowds from the Census ([Luke 2:1-2](#)) have dwindled down, and they couldn't travel with a delicate new born, so they found a temporary home.

And this is where the next part takes place...

11 And when they had come into the house (No Manger or shepherds), they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

These seekers of truth find the Child and mother, and after their incredible journey finally found who they were looking for, the Messiah.

They worship, with a genuine, all out worship.

No religion, No reputation to uphold, not worrying about who is looking at them, but a simple genuine worship.

They are worshipping God incarnate, and notice, not the mother.

The gifts they bring represent the Messiahs life.

They bring Gold to the King, representing His royalty and divine nature.

They bring frankincense used for the ceremonial worship by the priest, the word itself it means pure incense, and points to the Messiah who will also be the High priest, and it represents our prayers and fellowship with God.

The myrrh was pointing to the Messiahs death and burial.

Myrrh was what they used as perfume and preservation during death.

Something else to note Mary and Joseph were poor, we can see by their sacrifice in

## Luke 2:22-24

22 Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons."

Lev 12:8 'And if she is not able to bring a lamb, then she may bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons — one as a burnt offering and the other as a sin offering

So we kind of see they lived humble lives and these gifts from the wise men would have been overwhelming...

But it was for a purpose as we will see in a minute.

The Lord has provided this huge blessing to this poor couple.

Now they could have taken this blessing and settled down, splurged a little, you know take a family vacation - after all they just brought the Messiah into the world- they deserve it!

But they don't, as we will see God had a purpose for this blessing.

There is a good lesson here, when the Lord provides for us to ask Him, what the purpose of this provision is for.

There is no shame in waiting until we hear an answer. But God has a purpose for everything as we will see... So let's move on...

12 Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they (the Magi) should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way.

And again, God meets these men where they are at, they are dreamers, so God meets them in their dreams, and foils Herod's plans.

So now we will see next why it was important that the Lord brought these men with this blessing for the Child.

If you look carefully at this story you can see an exciting chess match with God and Satan.

Satan seems to always be a few steps behind God.

He tries to use Herod as a means to destroy the Son of God.

But God has called these seekers of truth from a distant land, to come to the aid of His Son.

They had no idea their gifts were going to be a means to save the Child's life... but look what happens next.

### The Flight into Egypt

13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

We see those riches came at the right time, because they would have expenses like never before, relocation to another country.

They had to flee from Herod, and Satan's plans to kill the Messiah while still a helpless Child.

Maybe some of you who have read through Revelation remember, how Satan, the Dragon tries to destroy the people of God, and this Child.

Revelation 12 let's turn there. **Rev 12:1-5**

1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

this **woman clothed with the sun** should be identified with Israel, according to Joseph's dream (Genesis 37:9-11). In that dream, the sun represents Jacob, the moon represents Joseph's mother Rachel, and the eleven

stars are the sons of Israel which bow down to Joseph. In this sign with **twelve stars**, Joseph is now “among” the other tribes of Israel. Guzik

2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

So John the Revelator sees this vision, and in this vision we see the overall picture of this battle between God and the Serpent, an overall history of the Messianic line through this nation for which the woman represents the Nation of Israel.

And we see why Satan even to this day hates this nation.

Because they were the ones chosen to bring forth the one who would deliver mankind from Satan’s evil plot.

And we see this picture, again an unseen battle a chess match that God eventually wins.

Satan is using Herod to try and kill the Messiah as we will see in Matthew, as John saw in his vision in Revelation.

So we kind of see the bigger picture of what is happening here.

It is not just a madman worried about his ruling status, but Satan trying to destroy the plan of God, to save the souls of men.

What better time, then when Jesus is a Child, and at His most vulnerable time in life.

I hope you see this picture in your own life.

Sometimes we get preoccupied with this world, and we forget about this unseen battle taking place.

And in your child's life, Satan is trying all that he can to take their souls to hell with him, and God is giving provision, and ways to raise your child to know Him.

Satan attacks when they are young. They say now that kids used to check out of church about high school age, maybe college.

But Satan has now captured them much younger, with the internet, and TV influence, the liberal public school system, guess what they are checking out at 6-10 years old now.

They live in a cyber-false world, of non-reality.

Where they are being bombarded with images, and messages their minds were not meant to handle.

I don't understand when parents say, my kids need their privacy, as a youth pastor, I saw they don't.

They cannot handle the freedoms of this cyber world; their minds were not designed to take in so much information at once.

The influence they are getting from this cyber world will startle you.

I applaud you nosey parents, your kids were entrusted to you by God to protect, and there is too much freedom on their phones and computers...

Listen to this...

Only 9% of Christian youth believe in Absolute Truth  
**repeat!**

That means they believe you can believe what you want, I can believe what I want, and your truth is truth, my truth is truth, and they don't believe there is an actual Absolute established in God's Word.

Only 9% believe this. Ask your kids, allow them to respond honestly to you, and don't assume they have your belief system.

**Listen to these statistics I got from Josh McDowell a Christian researcher—his website is Josh.org**  
**Youth that Hold to “Core Biblical Values”**

- 1927-45 65%
- 1946-64 35%
- 1965-83 15%
- 1984-2002 4%

Something is terribly wrong.

Satan’s plan is working. Somehow we have to see this unseen battle that is taking place.

Listen to this according to Josh McDowell 90% of 8-16 year olds have viewed pornography.

80% 12-17 year olds have been exposed to hard core XXX pornography.

Satan is after our children... And Josh McDowell pointed out something that I see.

Christian parents don’t believe this stuff; they think surely not my kids. And they don’t want to believe it.

I worked with youth for many years, and almost all of the big issues we dealt with stem to the internet and this cyber world we allow the kids to live on unchecked.

Satan is captivating them... NBC news reported that 50% of all internet use is now on a handheld device of some sort.

So even when you keep your household computer safe, their friends at school still have phones, and iPads.

And they are not searching for the latest recipes or sewing techniques, they have hard core XXX porn right at their fingertips.

Your kids don't have internet on their phone; they are texting XXX messages to each other with sexting, and sending pictures of themselves to each other.

I can't tell you how many times a broken hearted father has come and talked to me about catching his teenage daughter sending pictures of themselves to perverted boys.

These kids are inundated with options... They can't handle the freedom the cyber world gives them.

And we are missing it, because of our business in life.

But this is the thing, the kids are checking out of the church in large numbers not because of the internet.

They could, if they believed this Jesus we preach is real, have the power to withstand these temptations.

But they don't, most of the churches kids don't live with the knowledge that Jesus is real, He is a mere idea, when you get down to it. Why?

I will tell you why the reason I see is because they do not see their parent's faith at home.

Not all, but many think this is all just a show, we do it on Sundays and maybe Weds. Nights, but the rest of the week they see their fathers cursing, treating their mothers horribly in front of them, they see fighting, they see back bighting, gossip, they see drinking, and then another Sunday morning show.

The next generation needs a godly example.

The culture is winning because it is their reality, and Christ is just some idea their parents believe in, it is not absolute, because if it was, they would live it out every day.

And at the rate we are going our churches are on the way, rapidly to looking like the dead churches of England, and Europe.

This is the thing, if you drink, your kids are most likely going to drink, and your actions are more impactful than your empty rules.

If you cuss, your kids will cuss, even if you wash their mouths out with soup, they will follow your example, not your commands.

Our kids need a demonstration of Christianity; they have to see obedience to God, even when it's difficult. They need to see your genuine faith lived out daily. Because God is working in ways to win this unseen battle.

But like Mary and Joseph, we have to be obedient; we have to take measures to protect our kids from this Satanic onslaught.

Somehow we have to be aware of this unseen world, where the battle rages for the souls of men.

I can't help but to pray often over my babies, and pray often for wisdom, I could never live with the fact I was responsible for Sofia, Lola or Freedom's little souls not seeing Jesus, and I blew it, because of my own selfishness.

If your kids watch you drink or cuss or look at things you shouldn't, and you won't stop for them you are selfish, plain and simple, and that is why we are losing the next generation to Satan.

Our kids, this next generation of the church depends on our obedience to God's plans.

He provided a way to protect His Own Son from Satan, He is providing a way to protect our children, and we have to be obedient.

Look at Joseph's response to God's command.

14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt,

And Joseph, again being obedient, right away, no questions asked, left.

How many of us would rejoice at our new treasures, and say God surely didn't mean go...?

I like my comfort; I will just settle down and live for me.

I will drink and be merry, I will live for myself, meanwhile your family is suffering because of your selfish choices...

Not Joseph, he obeys, no matter what the cost.

15 and was there (in Egypt, this foreign land) until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."

Hos 11:1 "When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.

So Matthew the writer has now explained how these two prophecies, one saying out of Bethlehem, and one saying from Egypt both came about.

Remember Matthew is writing to his Jewish brethren, and wants them to understand Jesus has fulfilled all

the Old Testament prophecies, He is the promised Messiah.

And when Herod that madman dies, they will come out of Egypt.

Now onto the unfortunate part of the story..... Satan through Herod does the unthinkable.

### Massacre of the Innocents

16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men.

We see Jerusalem had a lot to worry about when the Magi came looking for the King of the Jews.

Herod was evil and seemingly working for the purposes of Satan.

Seeing he was duped by the wise men, he massacres all the male babies 2 years and younger.

Herod was a lunatic, he even killed his wife, many other family members, all the way to his death, as he was paranoid they were conspiring to take him out.

He even built a memorial for his one wife, after feeling remorseful for killing her.

Josephus the historian sums up Herod's life in these words "He was a man of great barbarity toward all men equally, and a slave to his passion"

So this barbaric killing of infants was not out of line for this man.

And some commentators think this massacre was broader than just Bethlehem, because we read in the next verse another prophecy was fulfilled.

17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying:

18 "A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more."

Ramah is north of Jerusalem, about the same distance Bethlehem is south of Jerusalem, so in his madness most likely ordered a broader attack on the children.

And symbolically refers to Jacob's favored wife, who had descendants in the northern Kingdom of Israel and southern kingdom, she pleaded with Jacob give me children!

Gen 30:1 Now when Rachel saw that she bore Jacob no children, Rachel envied her sister, and said to Jacob, "Give me children, or else I die!"

God finally opened her womb, and she had children to Jacob.

And we have a picture in Jeremiah of her watching her beloved children being massacred, and carried off to captivity.

And the same verse is used here to show the Jewish reader that another prophecy was fulfilled at the coming of the Messiah.

Rachael's children were being massacred, and Rachael representing Israel was weeping.

### **The Home in Nazareth(Luke 2:39)**

19 Now when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,

Finally, this monster is dead, he died of undiagnosed diseases.

And Joseph must be a dreamer, because God constantly meets him there in his dreams, and says....

20 saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child's life are dead." 21 Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel.

Joseph again, obedient, and no argument. He is a godly example.

22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee.

Archelaus, Herod's son, inherited Herod's characteristics, so Joseph is told not to go to his region.

After Herod's death he left a will, and broke up his territory between his surviving family.

Archelaus was head of this area.

There was another Herod, Antipas, he got charge of Galilee, we will see him later in Jesus' life when he kills John the Baptist, and has a role in Jesus' death.

We can see 2 more Herod's in scripture. But that is another study.

So Archelaus, he was so wicked that Rome removed him, and put a Roman Governor in his place. Pontius Pilate was one of these Governors.

So God kind of orchestrating all of this out, so every prophecy would come about.

That there would be no doubt that Jesus was indeed the Messiah.

23 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."

Now you will not find any Old Testament scripture that says He will be called a Nazarene.

So you have to go back to the Hebrew language and the Hebrew *Netzer* which is branch—

Now there are many prophecies concerning the branch that shall come out of the root of Jesse and out of the stem of David, the righteous branch--and that's the *Netzer*; and thus the word Nazarene coming from that.  
Chuck Smith

Isa 11:1 There shall come forth a Rod from the stem of Jesse, And a Branch shall grow out of his roots.

So we see this prophecy fulfilled in Jesus the Nazarene.

We know Mary and Joseph were from here originally.

Luke 1:26-27 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David.

After being on this adventure since the Birth was announced, they find themselves right where it all started.

Back in their hometown....

Jesus was raised in Nazareth, at first thought it might be like “big deal”.

It is a big deal though.

Nazareth was a horrible town.

It was known for its lowlifes and mischief.

Jesus was to be rejected, and from childhood, his hometown would be of no reputation. Especially not that of a King.

Look at what they thought of Jesus when it was found out He was from this wrongdoing city: [John 1:43-46](#)

43 The following day Jesus wanted to go to Galilee, and He found Philip and said to him, "Follow Me." 44 Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. 45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote — Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."

46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"

Philip said to him, "Come and see."

You see, it is interesting to me, Jesus being the King of Kings, being brought into the world this way, was from no noble place, had no noble friends, had no army, had

no riches, had not won any physical battles, yet He was the One.

Our God is unique, in that He came to this earth humbly, actually helplessly, and lived a normal humble life. He is a God that can relate to us.

He is a God who has been through it.

Is your family struggling financially, maybe you do not have all the clothes your friends do, maybe you live in a rotten part of town, maybe your reputation is shattered, maybe you live in a small home or apartment, maybe you are alone.

Well thing is, is our King, Our God, Creator of all things, knows that feeling. He can sympathize with your pain.

And He is right there with you, saying “look I went through it too.” “It will be worth it my child, just wait till this is over, you cannot imagine what’s ahead”.

So stick it out Christian, we serve a God who knows, because He experienced it too. That is powerful!

And if you don’t know this Jesus, know Him this morning, today is the day of your salvation.

He is a God who can understand your aches and pains, and that is why Jesus says:

## Matt 11:28-30

28 Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light."

So maybe your burden is great this morning, maybe you have been a failure as a parent, and your children are suffering for it.

Today is the day to make that change, today is the day to come to Jesus...

No more faking it, no more acting let us be real before the Lord this morning.

This is the thing we are losing the battle to Satan, something has to change.

Our kid's souls are at stake... What will it take for us to wake up?

Let today be the day we let Jesus rule in our lives, let Him fill you a fresh today with His Holy Spirit.

Where else are we to turn, Jesus alone has the Words to life, this book alone is the Absolute Truth, let's humble ourselves this morning.

Let our lives be like Joseph's who simply obeyed, he wasn't directed by his feelings, he probably did not feel

like going to Egypt, he probably did not feel like going back to Nazareth, he probably didn't feel like he was capable of raising the Messiah.

But he obeyed, and Satan and his plan were thwarted, and today salvation is offered through this Child that Joseph protected through his simple obedience to God.

Things can change for the church in this country, but it will come from much sacrifice and obedience on our part.

I cannot stress enough; the next generation's souls depend on our obedience.

Amen!

So we are going to close a little differently this morning.

Today I would like to do something... this morning we are going to fall to our knees and plead with the Lord for our country, our kids and our future...

~~Look at this article I read yesterday....~~

There is a rapid culture shift, and the question every Christian is asking is what do we do, Truth is we are losing, God is still on the throne, God still reigns, He still is in control, so if things are going wrong in our country it is our fault, it is time for us to fall on our knees and cry out to God Almighty to

forgive our laziness, our disobedience, our wrong examples, it is time to know His grace, and move forward bearing fruits of repentance.

And as long as God reigns, as Long as this is the Ultimate Authority in the Universe, there is still hope.

So let us cry out to the only One who can turn things around this morning.

He has not left us, nor forsaken us... He is here listening... Let's get right this morning, the worship team will come up after a few minutes and close us out with worship, may we sing this last song, with hope, with joy, with a new awareness of Our Savior.

Amen?