

Born a King
Matthew 2:2

December 26, 2010

A. Introduction

1. King Herod, called 'the Great'

2. the Magi, or, 'wise men'^A

3. 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him.'^B

B. Where Is He who has been born King in our Church?

1. the church is not a business^C

2. Christ is the King (Head) of the church^D

C. Where is He who has been born King in our Lives?

1. things usurping His kingship^E

2. cost of being a citizen in His kingdom^F

D. Where is He who has been born King in our Expectations?

1. expectations of gifts at Christmas

2. expectations from God^G

E. Conclusion – how do I answer the question, 'Where is He who has been born King?'

^A Luke 2:22ff, Numbers 24:17, Matthew 2:12

^B Micah 5:2

^C Acts 8:9-24

^D Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 1:22, Acts 15:28

^E Luke 8:14, 2 Timothy 4:10

^F Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5-7, for example 5:20-22, 5:48; John 6:66-68

^G Isaiah 40:31, Psalm 22:4-5, 1 Corinthians 2:9, Romans 10:9-11

A. Introduction

1. we read in our Scripture reading today, Matthew 2,
 - a. of the coming of the wise men to worship Jesus
 - b. of the flight of Mary, Joseph and Jesus into Egypt
 - c. of the slaughter of the innocents by King Herod

2. we know a great deal about this King Herod, called, the Great
 - a. his father Antipater, was an Idumean, a latter day Edomite; who became the first Roman procurator of Judaea, ca 47BC
 - b. in 40BC Herod was elected King of Jews by Roman Senate
 - c. to curry Jewish favour, Herod banished his wife and young son and married a Jewish Hasmonean princess, Mariamne
 - d. in 29BC out of jealousy he tried and executed Mariamne, then executed her mother, Alexandra, for treason
 - e. in 20BC he began rebuilding the 2nd temple proper, which took 1½ years, followed by 80 years of refinements
 - f. in 7BC he had Mariamne's sons tried and executed
 - g. he had other relatives executed, moved by jealousy, including another son, Antipater, just before his death
 - h. in 4BC he died
 - i. Note: in 525AD, when Dionysius Exiguus introduced our current year numbering system, he made a 5-6 year error

3. however, we know very little about the Magi; the wise men
 - a. we do not know how many they were: because there were three different gifts, the number three was assumed
 - b. we do not know their names: tradition has given the names of Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar
 - c. we do not know their origin, other than that it was in the east; probably Babylon, Media or Persia

- d. we do not know exactly when they arrived: except it was
 - (A) after Mary and Joseph had relocated out of the stable into a house
 - (B) probably after they had gone to the temple to present Jesus to the Lord as their first-born child, Luke 2:22ff.
 - (C) Note: Luke, writing for Gentiles skips over this part of Jesus' history; Matthew, writing for Jews of Jesus as King and fulfilment of prophecy, includes it
 - e. Magi were not strictly kings but priests of a pagan, eastern religion, being both astronomers and astrologers
 - f. we do not know how they knew this star was related to the King of the Jews, unless they had some record of Daniel or had heard of Balaam's words in Numbers 24:17, 'I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A sceptre shall rise from Israel'
 - g. but we know they were led by God, Matthew 2:12, 'And having been warned by God in a dream not to return to Herod, the magi left for their own country by another way.'
 - h. and that they came from a great distance, with precious gifts, to the courts in Jerusalem to ask this question:
4. 'Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? ...'
- a. how did various people answer the question of the Magi?
 - b. we read how the people of Jerusalem answered;
 - (A) the King, Herod, was troubled; and,
 - (B) when Herod was troubled, everybody was troubled!
 - (C) and that is sum of it; they took no further interest
 - c. we read how the chief priests and scribes answered;
 - (A) as experts in the Scriptures, they found Micah 5: 2, 'But as for you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Too little to be among the clans of Judah, From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, From the days of eternity.'
 - (B) then, like good little school-boys, they piped up with their answer to king Herod
 - (C) they left the matter there: they took no further interest
 - d. we read how King Herod, secretly in his heart, answered;
 - (A) he was jealous, as he had been of his wife & own sons

- (1) he had not been born king
- (2) he killed some of his sons lest they take his place
- (3) and he did not want any Jew to be born a king
- (B) so his answer was devious, conniving, cruel – ‘find this new born King for me, that I may worship Him’
- (C) worship Him? ... no, but to slay Him as he had others

5. ‘Where is he who has been born King...?’

- a. let us fix our thoughts on the on answering this question
- b. bringing the question a little closer to home
- c. what is our answer to this question?
 - (A) in our church
 - (B) in our lives
 - (C) in our expectations

B. Where Is He who has been born King in our Church?

- 1. the church of Jesus Christ is not a business
 - a. the conducting of the affairs of a local body of that church should be done in a proper and orderly manner, but never should it be run as some commercial enterprise
 - b. I have been reading a book written in about 1700 by Richard Gough, called ‘The History of Myddle’
 - (A) Myddle is a small town in Shropshire, England
 - (B) Gough recounts the history of the people living in the district, going back several centuries, by using the record of who owned the various pews in the church
 - (C) as a rule, the pews went along with the ownership of a specific property in the district and usually required paying a ‘leawen’ to the church annually
 - (D) but what conniving, squabbles, church councils and law suits took place on the privilege of sitting in a pew! – it bore no relation to a person’s service or morality, but rather to their wealth or political power
 - (E) it merely seemed to be a business
 - c. or, take the case of Simon the Magus (sorcerer), in Acts 8

- (A) who believed the gospel and received Jesus Christ
- (B) but when he saw Peter laying hands on believers, so that they received the Holy Spirit, he offered money that he might have that same authority
- (C) he saw it simply as a business, like his previous one
- d. these ways of thinking have entered many churches and pastors, elders, deacons, and people are not immune
- e. every pastor should ever remember that he is but an under-shepherd responsible to the Chief Shepherd, Christ

2. for Jesus Christ is the King of His Church

- a. it is He who rules; it is He who is its Head
 - (A) 'He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.' (Colossians 1:18)
 - (B) 'And He (i.e. the Father) put all things in subjection under His (i.e. the Son's) feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church' (Ephesians 1:22)
- b. it is my firm belief, based on the teaching in the epistles as well as the examples in the book of Acts
 - (A) that the decisions of the church should be made
 - (B) by each member of the congregation seeking the will of God in prayer respecting an issue
 - (C) by their waiting for the leading of the Holy Spirit
 - (D) then showing a unity in the result as was evidenced by James' words in Acts 15:28, 'For it seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us ..'
- c. let us pray and labour that this may be so in this church

C. Where Is He who has been born King in our Lives?

1. How easily we sing some hymn!

- a. 'King of my life I crown Thee now –
Thine shall the glory be'
- b. how difficult to follow what we sing, so the author added
- c. 'Lest I forget Thy thorn-crowned brow,
Lead me to Calvary'^{2}.

2. How many things usurp Jesus Christ's rightful position
 - a. as the King in the life of the believer
 - b. Jesus warned us about some of them in His soil parable of those that '[...as they go on their way they are choked with worries and riches and pleasures of this life, ...](#)' (Luke 8:14)
 - c. Scripture gives a sad example: Paul, writing his final letter from prison, tells of a man who had been a part of his team of missionaries for years, saying, '[For Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me...](#)' (2 Timothy 4:10)

3. Jesus never minimized the cost of being a citizen of His kingdom – consider the Sermon on the mount, Matthew 5-7:
 - a. repeatedly through this message He spoke of the perceived norms for godly behaviour, the popular rules of the day,
 - b. introducing them with '[you have here that it was said](#)' about some aspect of the Law of Moses and Pharisaical rules
 - c. but then He continued, '[but I say to you,](#)' showing that the God's requirement for godliness far such rules
 - d. making this point in Matthew 5:20, '[For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.](#)'
 - e. then in Matthew 5:48 He gives God's standard: '[Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.](#)'

4. Later, the opposition began to mount against His ministry
 - a. casual followers found His teachings more & more difficult to accept; they began grumbling at Jesus words
 - b. so we read in John 6:66-68, '[As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, "You do not want to go away also, do you?" Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have words of eternal life."](#)'
 - c. and that is the key that took Peter, despite failing Jesus on occasion, that took him through his life with Jesus as King
 - d. the key enabling us to make Jesus the King of our lives

D. Where Is He who has been born King in our Expectations?

1. When we had the church family supper at the Cornelisse's

a. we had a time of singing

b. it included both Christmas songs and traditional carols

c. one song in the book put out by the local newspaper that appealed to some of us – we didn't sing it, just read it – was called 'Nuttin' for Christmas' – some of the words:

I broke my bat on Johnny's head;

somebody snitched on me.

I hid a frog in sister's bed;

somebody snitched on me.

Spilled some ink on Mommy's rug,

I made Tommy eat a bug;

Bought some gum with a penny slug;

somebody snitched on me.

Oh, I'm gettin' nuttin' for Christmas;

Mommy and Daddy are mad;

I'm gettin' nuttin' for Christmas,

Cause I ain't been nuttin' but bad.^{-(3)}}

d. have you ever heard this warning around this time of year: 'Somebody's getting a piece of coal!'

e. some people – and not just children – have much too high expectations at Christmas, and they will be disappointed

2. 'Yet those who wait for the Lord Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.' (Isaiah 40:31)

a. if Jesus Christ is the expectation of our lives

(A) if the hope of His return moves all our being

(B) then there will be no lump of coal in our stocking

(C) for the Lord is faithful and keeps His promises

- b. it has ever been so
 - (A) David declares in Psalm 22: 4-5, 'In You our fathers trusted; They trusted and You delivered them. To You they cried out and were delivered; In You they trusted and were not disappointed.'
 - (B) and Paul repeats this message, concerning Jesus Christ in Romans 10: 11, 'For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed."'
- c. God has wonderful things planned for His people
 - (A) 'but just as it is written, "things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him."' (1 Corinthians 2: 9)
 - (B) this child, born King, has a rightful place at the head and chief of our every expectation

E. Conclusion; the question, 'Where is he who has been born King...?'

- 1. ultimately has to be answered personally by each one of us
 - a. God has appointed this same Jesus
 - (A) who was born in Bethlehem
 - (B) yet was born a King
 - (C) to be both Lord and Christ (Messiah; Acts 2: 36)
 - b. God has appointed this same Jesus as the beginning, the centre and end of salvation: 'that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved' (Romans 10:9)
- 2. will you not ensure that this same Jesus
 - a. born so long ago on that special, holy night
 - b. is in fact King of your heart this morning?

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2. *Lead Me to Calvary*, by Jennie Evelyn Hussey (1874-1958), © 1921, renewal 1949 by Hope Publishing Co.
3. *Nuttin' for Christmas* – by Sid Tepper and Roy C. Bennett, ca 1955