



St. James Presbyterian Church

12.12.2021



We are open for in-person worship at
240 Leland Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94134
Tel. 415-921-9291 | www.stjamespcsf.org

Life Lessons from Christmas #2: HOPE

Opposites / Contrasting Characters

- *Herod*
- *The Wise Men*

Matthew 2



Matthew 2, NIV

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him.

When he had called together all the people’s chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Messiah was to be born. “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written: “But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.””



Matthew 2, NIV

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search carefully for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.” After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen when it rose went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.



Matthew 2, NIV

When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:



Matthew 2, NIV

**“A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more.”**

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”



Matthew 2, NIV

After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets, that he would be called a Nazarene.

Herod:

- Disturbed/jealous by the coming King of the Jews
- Deceived the 3 Wise Men
- I too will worship Him! *NOT TRUE!*
- Furious because he was outwitted by the 3 Wise Men
- Ordered killing all 2-year old boys
- Died angry he was not able to kill Jesus



The 3 Wise Men/Magi:

- They knew the prophecy about the coming Messiah
- Wanted to find and worship Him
- Overjoyed and worshiped Jesus!
- They came prepared with valued gifts proper for a King
- Were wise to understand that Herod wanted to kill Jesus
- Warned in a dream, they escaped Herod's evil plans



Lessons from Herod and the Wise Men:

Hope in Christ overcomes fear, anger, jealousy, deception, and yes... sadness

Hope in Christ brings joy to worship and life itself

Hope in Christ leads to good life decisions

Hope in Christ makes you a real and honest influencer for Christ



***But I sometimes think and act like Herod.
But then I also want to become more like
the Wise Men.***

***Can I still turn my life around?
How?***



Romans 15:13, NIV

May the God of HOPE fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with HOPE by the power of the Holy Spirit.

2 Thessalonians 2:16-17, NIV

May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father, who loved us and by his grace gave us eternal encouragement and good HOPE, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word.



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SEE YOU
NEXT WEEK

God Bless You

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