

BIBLE READING DAY 3, TUESDAY: MARCH 1

Jesus's Early Life

Matthew 2:1–23; Luke 2:40-52

When Joseph and Mary had performed all things according to the law of the Lord in Jerusalem, they returned to Bethlehem.

After Jesus was born in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? We have seen his star in the East and have come to worship him."

When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And having called together all the chief priests and scribes among the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born.

*"In Bethlehem of Judea," they replied, "for thus it is written by the prophet, '**And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are in no wise least among the principalities of Judah, for out of you shall come forth a ruler who will be a shepherd to my people Israel.**'"*

"There is no indication that God explained to Joseph what He was doing through those many years of heartache or how the pieces would eventually fit together. He had no ways of knowing that he would eventually enjoy a triumphal reunion with his family. He was expected, as you and I are, to live out his life one day at a time in something less than complete understanding.

"What pleased God was Joseph's faithfulness when nothing made sense."

James Dobson,
*Life on the Edge: The Next Generation's
Guide to a Meaningful Future*

Herod then summoned the wise men privately and learned from them what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search carefully for the young child; and when you have found him, bring me word, that I, too, may come and worship him."

When they had heard the king, they went their way. And lo! the star they had seen in the East went before them until it came and stood over the place where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with great joy. And they entered the house and saw the young child with Mary his mother and fell down and worshipped him. And they opened their treasures and presented gifts to him of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And being warned of God in a dream not to return to Herod, they returned to their own country by another way.

When the wise men had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Rise, take the young child and his mother and flee to Egypt and remain there until I tell you; for Herod will search for the child to destroy him."

*Joseph then rose and took the young child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt, and remained there until the death of Herod, in fulfillment of the word spoken by the Lord through the prophet, **Out of Egypt have I called my son.***

Herod, when he saw that he had been disregarded by the wise men, was furious. And he sent and killed all the little boys in Bethlehem and the surrounding countryside who were two years old or under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. Then was fulfilled the word spoken by the prophet Jeremiah,

**A voice was heard in Ramah, wailing and great lamentation—
Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they were no more.**

When Herod was dead, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, “Rise, and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for they who sought the child’s life are dead.”

Joseph rose and took the young child and his mother and went into the land of Israel. He heard that Archelaus reigned in Judea in the place of his father Herod, so he was afraid to go there. Being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into Galilee. He came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that the word of the prophets might be fulfilled,

He shall be called a Nazarene.

The child grew and became strong and full of wisdom, and the favor of God was upon him.

Every year, his parents went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover. When he was twelve years old, they went up at the time of the feast, according to custom. After the days of the feast were ended, when they started home, the boy Jesus remained behind in Jerusalem. Now his parents did not know it, and supposing him to be in the caravan, they traveled a day’s journey, all the while seeking him among their kinsfolk and acquaintances. And when they did not find him, they returned to Jerusalem, anxiously searching for him.

After three days, they found him in the temple sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions. All who heard him were amazed at his understanding and his answers. When Joseph and Mary saw him, they were astonished, and his mother said, “Child, why have you treated us so? Behold, your father and I have been searching for you in sorrow and anguish.”

“Why did you need to search for me?” replied Jesus. “Did you not know that I must be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand the meaning of what he said.

He went with them back to Nazareth and was obedient to them, and his mother treasured all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in the favor of God and men.

Approximate Timeline of Jesus’s Public Ministry														
BEFORE BAPTISM	BAPTISM	FIRST PASSOVER	SUMMER	FIRST BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASSOVER	SUMMER	FIRST BOOTHS	WINTER	SECOND PASSOVER	SUMMER	THIRD BOOTHS	WINTER	FINAL PASSOVER

DEVOTIONAL DAY 3 (TUESDAY MARCH 1)

He Is Who He Has Always Been!

Based on Matthew 2:1-23; Luke 2:40-52

Take a moment and reflect on your childhood. Take note of some core memories. Think about when company came to your house. Think about certain, exciting gifts you received as a child. Think about a moment where the whole room had their attention on you.

What sticks out? The moment where you see your grandparents coming in the door? The moment where on Christmas you opened your gift and got that action figure you hoped for? The moment where you did your school performance to a standing ovation?

For us, our childhoods set in motion the memories and experiences that would define who we would become. For one young boy born in Bethlehem and raised in Nazareth, it was already clear to Him who He was.

First, it was the physical sign: the star (Matthew 2:2)! It could be seen from a very far distance, probably outside of the realms of Judea. The wise men saw it and immediately understood its purpose. They journeyed far from their home to worship the Messiah who at the time was just a young boy.

“Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”

Hebrews 13:8

In my childhood, people would travel far to see me and bring me a gift, but they obviously never worshipped me or brought me kingly gifts. Only the boy Jesus Christ was worthy of the wise men’s adoration and gifts.

Second, it was His declaration: declaring who His Father was (Luke 2:49). As Mary and Joseph searched Jerusalem high and low for their son, they had no idea that he was in a safe place. He was in the temple of the Lord, where He was engaged with discussions. He asked questions and made statements that marveled even the most senior of teachers in the temple.

When questioned about His actions by His earthly parents, the 12-year-old Jesus not only calmed their anxieties, but also declared His identity by stating who His Father was. At that young age, He knew that He was Emmanuel (“God with us.”).

We trust in the signs and declarations from the childhood of Jesus because they continued to be proven true throughout His whole life. He overcame the temptation in the wilderness. He raised the dead. He was the Word by which life happened. He acknowledged this identity even to the cross. Just as He was as a baby lying meek and mild in a manger, Jesus is still the Son of God, and now is seated majestically at God’s right hand.

Lord Jesus, You are who You have always said You have been. Your whole life was filled with confirmations of signs and declarations. You are indeed the Lamb of God who gave His life as a ransom for many. I can trust in You because You are exactly as You say You are. You are God’s Son, and may I remember this all my days. Amen.

--By Robert “Pastor Bud” Olmstead

WRITE DOWN YOUR THOUGHTS IN RESPONSE TO WHAT YOU HAVE READ:

WHAT DID GOD SAY TO ME?

PRAYER: WHAT DID I SAY TO GOD?

ACTS OF PRAYER: ADORATION, CONFESSION, THANKSGIVING, SUPPLICATION (How God Can Supply Needs)

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