

Study of Matthew Matthew 2:16 – 23

March 20, 2022

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Even if in a hostile environment are you in or moving to God's determined position?

TODAY: Matthew 2:16 – 23

1. Childish Response (vs. 16a, b)

In vs. 16, Herod saw that he was mocked...

There is no indication that the Wise Men mocked the King. It is Herod who lied to the Wise Men; he did not want to worship this new King he wanted to kill HIM.

The word mock means to **play like a child**", "**to sport, jest**", and, in every instance in the Gospels, it is used of the "mockery" of Christ in the time of HIS crucifixion. The exception of the word is here implying the sense of **deluding, or deceiving**, of Herod by the wise men.

Herod thinks he has been played like a child. It's not the case but that's what he thinks! Here is the childishness of a tyrant. His pride is that no one can be better...any action of disagreement is seen as mocking.

Herod is a man that is made fun of throughout Judea. Herod was raised as a Jew but hated by the Jews because he was a puppet of the Roman Empire

He was known for his many large building projects, building pagan cities and for his ruthlessness.

A phrase was spoken of Herod, "*It is better to be Herod's hog than his son.*" Jew can't kill a hog but can kill his son

But when compared to God we find, you can't cause God to be childish
Galatian 6:7 "*Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*" [KJV]

Anyone can mock God. It doesn't say you can't mock HIM. Rather you can't deceive him. You can't insult him to the point that HE childishly pushes back. You can't impose on HIM actions or reactions based on your mocking. HE will never become childish in HIS reactions. HE has already set the laws in motion, and you just reap what you sow... HE's not setting up there waiting to do the childish playground game of tit for tat

2. Children at Risk (vs. 16c – 18)

The childish anger of Herod moved him to kill all the children under two in Bethlehem and in the region. (Number of children may not be large just due to population at the time but one is too many).

When men become childish, selfish and refuse to take their responsibility as protector and provider it is the women and children that are the first to be abused.

Think about all the things in our culture today that are putting our children at risk. If you go to the root of these issues, you will find some childish, mental deranged individual that are out to destroy children and steal their innocence.

Abortion... how many great leaders have been aborted under the childish action of my body my choice; how many great individuals that would have contributed to society, snuffed out due to the childish attitude of it's just a group of cells. Like Herod, in today's culture you are better to be an abortion minded individual's hog or dog than their child.

Last week I mentioned an Educational System that wants to condition our children. I want to be clear again, I do not see that in Randolph County but when I speak of the system, I am speaking of a group of people at the top in Washington and Raleigh that are pushing their perverted ideas on others.

And many think these people will not put our children at risk.

Let me go a little deeper...this pain was prophesied! Here we find another prophecy being fulfilled. **Jeremiah 31:15**: a voice of lamentation or a voice of great mourning...

Just like in Jesus' childhood, the destruction of family happens when people do not follow God. God has spoken it and whatever we sow we reap. What is being reaped around us is the actions of individuals that are hostile to God and to the divine order that God has created in the earth.

But there is a better way!

3. Right Conditions (vs. 19 – 22)

Joseph is still in position...he will get two more dreams.

- One that says the conditions are right to go back to Israel.
- Another dream that says, another bad man is still in Judea, turn and go into Galilee. His journey with family is probably at least two months of walking.

Just because the conditions around us change does not mean that our work is over. We can't get complacent when things get better. We still have to be in position to hear what God is saying!

Ps 25:12-14 "Where is the man who fears the Lord? God will teach him how to choose the best. 13 He shall live within God's circle of blessing, and his children shall inherit the earth. 14 Friendship with God is reserved for those who reverence him. With them alone he shares the secrets of his promises." [TLB]

4. Revealed Circumstances / Determined Position (vs. 23)

This part of the story reminds us that there is hope beyond the tragedy. The Savior though in Egypt is coming back! HE is coming back to fulfill the Father's plan. Yes, we, like Jesus, live in a hostile environment. But God has a determined position for us to be in to make a difference in the earth! Even though there is prophesied pain in the process

Romans 8:18 "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us." [ESV]