



The King and His Kingdom *Matthew 2*

Adding a Name to a Description

In one sense, Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah were descriptions of how to identify the Christ when he actually came on the scene.

In the opening chapters of his Gospel, Matthew does a stunning job of tying Jesus, the son of Mary and the Son of God, to these prophecies. Chapter 2 contains four such prophecy fulfillments noted in the birth and early life of Jesus.

While the Jews were most familiar with these prophecies the Old Testament is pre-incarnation *Christian* scripture. Therefore, prophetic fulfillments are for the use of the entire Church at all times and places.

A King from Bethlehem (2:1-12)

Matthew delays locating the place of Jesus' birth until his account of King Herod's interaction with the so-called wise men from the east who came to Jerusalem seeking a king whose birth was signaled by an unusual star. It is the fulfillment of a prophecy found in Micah 5:2. _____

What did this birth convey about the one who was born? _____

Refer also to Proverbs 8:22-23 and John 1:1. _____

As the fulfillment of Micah's prophecy Jesus is a ruler who is both eternal God and a descendant of David, who has come to restore peace with God (Micah 5:5).

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Jesus Identified (2:13-23)

The Egyptian saga of Jesus' family is so directly reflective of Israel's history that it cannot be overlooked. Matthew states unequivocally that this is the fulfillment of prophecy found in Hosea 11:1. MT 2:15 equates Jesus with the entire people of Israel. *He is Israel, reduced to one.* The significance of this is: _____¹

Jacob's (Israel's) wife Rachel died in childbirth and was buried at Ramah. The prophet (Jer. 31:15) pictured her weeping from the grave as her descendants were exiled in Babylon. Matthew wrote that Herod's attempt to kill the child Jesus by murdering the boys of Bethlehem was the fulfillment of this OT writing. How does this event help to explain the opposition that Jesus faced, and that the Church faces today? _____

Nazareth, where God told Joseph to settle his family, is in Galilee, whose people were despised by the Jews (See John 1:46). "He shall be called a Nazarene" (2:23) - portends the misunderstanding and rejection Jesus experienced from the Jews during his ministry (See Is. 53 also).

Today's text confirms that "God's salvation in his chosen messianic King transpires in unexpected ways—ways that neither the pious nor the wicked can know apart from divine revelation."²

^{1,2} "Jesus' identity as Son of God denotes not only who he is, but also what he has come to do and how he will do it." J. Gibbs, Concordia Commentary, Matthew 1:1-11:1, 2006 CPH, St. Louis, p. 135, 132