Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – January 26, 2020

**Let’s read Matthew!**

***Clash of Kingdoms***

Matthew 2

**What’s happening in the book?**  Jesus is honored, then hunted.

 In chapter one, Matthew has shown us that Jesus is indeed the promised Messiah, heir to David’s throne, and fulfillment of God’s promise to Abraham. Here, Matthew teaches us that Jesus entered our world at the right time and at the right places, all three of them!

**What would we like to ask Matthew?**

 Who are these gentile “magi,” and who told them of a Messiah?

 How did the Magi know this “star” signaled Messiah’s birth?

 Why might they have been looking for a sign at just that time?

 Why aren’t the religious leaders also looking and checking the story?

 Why is Messiah identified with not just one, but three places?

 Hmmm. Where else in the Bible have I read about a major conflict between a Jewish

deliverer and a King?

 Was Herod really that bad? And desperate? And paranoid?

**What do we need to know about this story?**

❑ The only other place in the Bible where “magi” are mentioned is in the book of Daniel (2:2, 10) which also says (v. 48) that Daniel (during the exile in Babylon) became head of all the wise men of Babylon. Matt. 1:17

❑ Daniel (ch. 9) is told in prophetic imagery that it would be about 490 years from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah would be “cut off,” or killed. That matches well the time of Jesus’ crucifixion. So if the Magi knew about Daniel’s prophecy, and then saw “his star,” they put two and two together and headed for Jerusalem. For the other time God’s people are led by a moving light, see Exodus 13:20-22; Deut. 1:32.

❑ Not only is Jesus “on time,” but in the right place, first Bethlehem, then Egypt. Balaam’s oracles (Numbers 23:22; 24:7-9) have both Israel and Israel’s king-son called “out of Egypt.” Hosea 11:1 is quoted, but the parallel is to Israel being led out of Egypt by a deliverer, Moses.

❑ Herod’s violence here turns out to be typical for one who had his own sons and wife murdered. And it foreshadows the national rejection of Jesus as Matthew’s story unfolds. On the other hand, notice how God sovereignly guides not only the Magi but the Holy Family to safety.

❑ Matthew does not cite a given prophet who associates Jesus with Nazareth. But Nazareth, as a despised place of low reputation, fits well with the prophetic tradition of Messiah’s disgrace and humble origins (Isaiah 49:7; 53:1-3). This is Matthew’s parallel to Luke’s manger scene. John 1:44-46; 7:40-52 illustrate both the disdain for Galilee and the ignorance of Jesus’ birthplace / lineage. Also see Matthew 13:53-58.

**What’s the big idea (main point) of the story?**

***While King Jesus is joyfully worshiped by gentiles who believe the Messianic prophecies, official Israel responds with indifference and violence from which God protects Him.***

***So how does knowing these things fuel our faith today?***

 Prophecy: Jesus’ life is predicted in our Old Testament. Isaiah 53

 Protection: God sovereignly orchestrated Messiah’s life. Psalm 16

 Patterns: The Bible beautifully repeats redemption patterns which reflect God’s love and

sacrifice for His people. Gen. 22; Ex. 12