



Matthew 2
1-12
New International Version

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem ² 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.”

³ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. ⁴ 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. ⁵ “In Bethlehem in Judea,” they replied, “for this is what the prophet has written:

⁶ “‘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.’”

⁷ Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. ⁸ 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.”

⁹ 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. ¹⁰ When they saw the star, they were overjoyed. ¹¹ 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. ¹² And having been warned in a dream not to go back to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Appointments to be kept. Tight schedules to maintain. Routines established. That’s how most of us try to live our lives. But what happens when life is interrupted with something totally unexpected? What happens when God steps in to redirect our priorities and focus?



Sermon Notes

What happens when God steps in to redirect our priorities, plans and perspective?

Detours are often...

Inconvenient, Challenging and Confusing

“The best discoveries always happened to the people who weren't looking for them.”

Detours have VALUE

None of us get through life without detours. The Wise Men’s detour wasn’t expected but it had tremendous value: it saved Jesus’ life.

Detours require FAITH

None of us have all the answers to all of life’s questions. The Wise Men’s were warned, but they trusted God more than their own **experience**.

“Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest IF we do not give up.” Galatians 6:9

Detours create ADVENTURE

Don’t look for the predictable path, the road of convenience, or the highway of fast paced careers. You are to travel a different path, a path of curiosity, a path of discovery and path of calling and mission.

I think there are lots of things still to be discovered. You just have to be willing to go looking.



“Then Joseph said to his brothers, ‘I am about to die. But God will surely come to your aid and take you up out of this land to the land he promised on oath to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.’ And Joseph made the sons of Israel swear an oath and said, ‘God will surely come to your aid, and then you must carry my bones up from this place.’” - Genesis 50:24-25

Think about the last time you were hurt by jealousy, abuse, neglect, abandonment, injustice, lies and/or alienation. Remember how long it took to move past that betrayal? Maybe you’re still working through the consequences today.

Like most of us, Joseph endured a lot of pain in his life. His brothers hatefully envied him, verbally and physically abused him, left him beaten in a pit, and sold him into slavery. Then, with his new owner in Egypt, he was falsely accused, unfairly imprisoned, and was later completely unrecognized by the brothers who had betrayed him so many years earlier.

It’s probably a safe bet that Joseph spent many of his 110 years dealing with the questions and consequences. Even so, at his approaching death, he was still so confident in God’s promise to return him and his family to their homeland (what God calls the Promised Land), that he directed his family to vow to take his buried bones with them out of Egypt and back to their Promised Land when God delivered them. Joseph’s confidence inspires us to believe in God’s love and faithfulness!

Just as God was faithful to Joseph through all of life’s detours, God is faithful to you and to me. Like Joseph, we can endure the detours of life by trusting in God’s love and in His promise to fulfill His plans for us-- abundant life here on earth and eternity with Him in heaven.

Reflect: What life detours are you currently trying to navigate? How can Joseph’s steadfast trust and God’s faithfulness to Joseph inspire you to carry on in your faith?

We don’t know HOW MANY there were. Tradition tells us there were three – we believe this because of the number of gifts that were presented. We at least know that the accompanying caravan was of a magnitude that when they arrived in Jerusalem they made quite an impression: not only was King Herod disturbed, but also...

...all Jerusalem with him.-Matthew 2:3

We don’t know from where they CAME other than the rather vague description...

Magi from the east...-Matthew 2:1

Tradition tells us that they originated from Persia – modern day Iran – and that their names were Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar.¹

We don’t know to where they RETURNED accept that they returned to their one country of origin *by another route* (Matthew 2:12).

We don’t know what BECAME of them accept tradition tells us that they were later found by the Apostle Thomas as he traveled east, received baptism from him and themselves became evangelists. Marco Polo stumbled upon their graves in his travels. Chapter 11 (Of the province of Persia) his book published in 1298 - *The Travels; The Description of the world*² - contains this description:

In Persia there is a city which is called Saba, from whence were the three magi who came to adore Christ in Bethlehem; and the three are buried in that city in a fair sepulcher...

You’ve just heard more history than you bargained for; there are lots of things that we don’t know for sure about the Wise Men... but this we do know.