

## The Arrival

### Matthew 2:1-14

...When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy. (*Matthew 2:10*)

Matthew brings a different narrative into the story of the birth of Jesus as a mystical event. While Luke and Mark have the angels directly heralding the good news to local shepherds, Matthew has the news reaching afar to people, the magi, who are gentiles. Something mystical has just occurred. The magi were thought to belong to the priestly Zoroastrianism caste, who paid particular attention to the stars. They recognized the rising star that they believed will guide them to this extraordinary and mystical event. It leads them to Jerusalem, a city, where one would expect to find a noble king. Instead, they find King Herod with a bad heart and a sick head. The story suggests this star that guided the magi only appeared to them. King Herod himself could not see the star, nor understand the mystical event that took place.

Christ the King has arrived. One very paranoid person, afraid this King will take his kingdom, attempts to control the situation. When the magi arrive, King Herod asks them to tell him of this King's whereabouts so he can go pay his respect to him. Deceit arises out of his heart and paranoia is steeped in his mind as he seeks to destroy this incredible life, not honor it. Out of paranoia, he creates blood on his hands with the killing of all baby boys under two years old and fear amongst his people.

The magi's arrival creates such a different message to the people in the world. Only Mary and baby Jesus are there in a house. The magi came with adoration and love to honor this chosen one. Believed to have come from afar, the magi represented the Gentiles being welcomed as part of God's kingdom, to be a part of His ever-expanding embrace. They demonstrate how far reaching this baby's kingdom and his arms' embrace really are, for every human being on this earth.

How did Jesus arrive this year for you? Were you a king of your own kingdom, not recognizing him? Did you have any fears? Are you a person who must control things? Any unwillingness to open your heart and allow him into your life? Or, were you like the magi, looking for that mystical event to show love and adoration? To lay your gifts of this world at the new baby's feet. To surrender what you have to him. In honor and in love.

Let Christ's birth bring you to that awe, that unconditional love, to see the world as He does to bring forth that mystical experience into your heart and into the world. In these challenging times, may you be overwhelmed with joy.

Afterall, God's radical grace is wondrous.