

The Challenger

Ministerial Staff

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Ever wonder why the wise men had to stop and ask King Herod for directions when they had already been successful following a star? The easiest answer is they were being diplomatic. Not knowing King Herod was a murderous psychopath, they were stopping to congratulate him on the miraculous birth of his successor, possibly even thinking the new baby was his son. That would make sense. However, Matthew does give a hint of another possibility: *And [Herod] sent [the wise men] to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I, too, may come and worship him.” After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, **the star that they HAD seen when it rose went before them** until it came to rest over the place where the child was. **When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy.** – Matthew 2:7-8-10.*

Why did the Wise Men rejoice exceedingly when they saw the star after talking to Herod? Wasn't it in the sky the whole time, waiting for them to finish being diplomatic and get back on the trail towards Jesus? Maybe not. Perhaps it had been hidden for a little while, forcing them to stop at King Herod's to ask directions. If that's true, why in the world would God orchestrate the meeting when He knew what King Herod would do with the information?

The Bible doesn't say directly, but Scripture's trend would suggest that God, with His insistence on proving Himself to be the just judge, was giving King Herod and the Jewish establishment in Jerusalem a chance to be on the right side of the Gospel by having the Wise Men stop in and announce the Messiah's birth. Unfortunately, even though King Herod acknowledged the fact that Jesus was supernaturally sent from God (he had the Jewish leaders check the *Scriptures*, not the census rolls, to find out where Jesus was born), he was not willing to submit to Jesus or His mission, thus entrenching himself into the ranks of God's enemies. Tragically, a bunch of innocents died in the temporary because of God's insistence in giving His enemies a chance at the eternal.

Seem wrong somehow? Might seem that way but maybe it's just one of those things that fits into the category of “God's Thoughts Are Higher than Our Thoughts” that we have to deal with because He's doing the same thing today. Why is it that it seems a general rule that so many of the righteous suffer while God remains painfully patient with the wicked as they increase in their power and prosperity at others' expense? Where's a little bit more of His fire and brimstone? He is still insistent on showing Himself as the just judge, being willing to sacrifice the innocents in the temporary for the sake of the wicked having a chance in eternity. We can either resent that or fear that and be miserable or get on board with what He wants and rejoice when He saves some of them like He saved us. Might be a tough lesson but good news! Looks like He's intent on giving us a lot of practice to learn!

In His Grip,
Pastor Fred

First Baptist Church
411 N. Warren Ave.
Winslow, AZ 86047

FOR DECEMBER: Food Box Distribution is on the 2nd & 3rd Thursday. This is a FREE service to anyone who needs it sponsored by
The Most Excellent Way Bible Study



Christmas Eve Service
Wednesday, December 24th
6:00 PM



Saturday, December 25th
Christmas
Community Dinner
Activity Center
12:00PM - 2:00 PM



Young Adults
Ages 20-30
(single & married)
We are in need of an
Activities Coordinator
- Please see Pastor
Fred for details.

Senior Adult
Lunch/Potluck
Friday, December 17th
11:30 AM
Activity Center



**Church Christmas Party
and Potluck**
Sunday 12/19 after morning service

All Church Caroling
Wednesday, 12/22
6PM
Meet at the church
Contact Ted for details



Youth Christmas Party
Sunday, 12/19, 6PM
At the Pate's



Adult Christmas Party Potluck
Friday, Dec. 10th 6PM
Activity Center
(No Childcare Provided)

No Gift Exchange - Requesting donations for Bread Of Life Mission: new men's socks, new men's underwear size L/XL, new men's colored t-shirts size L/XL



Mark your calendar!!

- 12/01 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection - Activity Center
- 12/01 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 12/02 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 12/03 8:30 AM Men's Bible Study
- 12/05 3:30 PM Grief Share - Surviving the Holidays Rm 103A
- 12/05 5:30 PM Bible Study - Sanctuary
- 12/05 5:30 PM Youth University
- 12/06 6:00 PM Men's Potluck
- 12/06 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study
- 12/07 9:00 PM Men's Fellowship
- 12/07 9:30 AM Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 12/07 2:00-5:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 12/08 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection - Activity Center
- 12/08 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 12/09 3:00 PM Food Box Distribution
- 12/09 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 12/10 8:30 AM Men's Bible Study
- 12/10 6:00 PM Adult Christmas Party - Activity Center
- 12/12 3:00 PM Deacon's Meeting
- 12/12 5:30 PM Bible Studies - Sanctuary
- 12/12 5:30 PM Youth University
- 12/13 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study
- 12/14 9:00 PM Men's Fellowship
- 12/14 9:30 AM Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 12/14 2:00-5:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 12/15 6:00 PM Family Bible Connection - Activity Center
- 12/15 7:15 PM Youth Night
- 12/16 3:00 PM Food Box Distribution
- 12/16 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 12/17 8:30 AM Men's Bible Study
- 12/17 11:30 AM Senior Adult Luncheon Potluck
- 12/19 12:00 PM Church Potluck and Christmas Party - Activity Center
- 12/19 6:00 PM Youth Christmas Party
- 12/19 NO Evening Bible Studies
- 12/20-01/03 WUSD Winter Break
- 12/20 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study
- 12/21 9:00 PM Men's Fellowship
- 12/21 9:15 AM NO Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 12/21 2:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 12/22 6:00 PM All Church Caroling
- 12/22 NO Family Bible Connection/Youth
- 12/23 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 12/24-12/25 Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Church Office Closed
- 12/24 6:00 PM Christmas Eve Service
- 12/25 12:00 PM Christmas Community Dinner - Activity Center
- 12/26 5:30 PM NO Twice Fed or Evening Bible Studies
- 12/27 6:00 PM Men's Bible Study
- 12/28 9:00 AM Men's Fellowship
- 12/28 9:30 AM NO Ladies' Bible Study & Fellowship
- 12/28 2:00 PM Hope Pregnancy Center
- 12/29 NO Family Bible Connection/Youth
- 12/30 6:00 PM The Most Excellent Way
- 12/31 New Year's Eve - Church Office Closed
- 12/31 NO Men's Bible Study