

A note from Kathy

Israel had been promised, through the words of the prophets, that a Savior would come. This week we will look at Matthew 1-2 and see the details of Jesus' birth. Please pray and ask God to meet with you as you dig into his word.

Observation

1. On a separate sheet of paper make a list of the genealogy listed in Matthew 1: 1-17. Begin with Abraham, ending with Jesus. Add to this list any women mentioned, along with their husbands.
2. Were there names on this list that you recognized? Were there names you were not familiar with? Highlight any names you know something about, even if it is only one detail. Jot down a few facts beside the names you recognize. What was their occupation? Were they men of good character? Did they make wise choices or bad choices?
3. Highlight the women listed with a pink highlighter. Jot down any facts you know about these women.
4. Now looking back over this list, what do you see concerning the family Jesus was born into?
5. What did you learn about Mary in verse 18?
6. An engagement back then was much different than today. When a woman was promised in an engagement, it was a binding agreement. It would take a writing of divorce to end it. The man would be taking this time to make all the arrangements for

Matthew 1-2

them as a married couple, but they would not live together. What shocking news did Joseph find out?

7. What was Joseph's response? What event happened that changed his plan? What instructions was he given?
8. Highlight the key phrase in verse 22. We will see this phrase 9 times in the book of Matthew (1:22, 2:15, 2:23, 4:14, 8:17, 12:17, 13:35, 21:4, 27:35). You may want to highlight all of them right now so you don't overlook them.
9. Verse 23 is a quote from Isaiah 7:14. What important detail was prophesied?
10. Verse 24 says Joseph took Mary home as his wife. How was their marital relationship different from the normal beginning of a marriage? What does this say about their character?

Matthew 2

11. After Jesus was born, who do we see had arrived in Jerusalem looking for him?
12. What question did they ask?
13. King Herod was suspicious because of his many enemies and the fact that Jerusalem was so far from Rome. If there was an uprising, it might be very difficult to control. The news of a baby born King of the Jews would not be good news to him. How did he respond to this news?
14. According to verse 3, what was the reaction of the people when the Magi asked for directions to see the baby who had been born?
15. Who did King Herod turn to for some answers (vs. 4)?
16. King Herod called the Magi in and asked them questions. He then gave them an assignment. What were they to do?

17. Many beautiful Christmas cards today bear the words, "Wise Men Still Seek Him."
The scripture tells us the men who traveled from so far away to bring gifts to Jesus were Magi. We do not know where they were from or really anything about them. We do know that they had heard the scriptures at some time and believed. The Magi continued to follow the star to the very place where Jesus lived with his mother, Mary. He was no longer in the manger; he may have been 1 or 2 years old. According to Matthew 2:2, what did the Magi do when they found Jesus, King of the Jews?
18. The gifts they brought were worthy of a king. What gifts had they brought?
19. Verse 12 says the Magi did not return to King Herod as they had been instructed. Why?
20. An angel appeared to Joseph and gave him instructions. What was he to do?
21. Joseph wasted no time following the orders given. According to verse 15, this was foretold by the prophet Hosea. How did Herod take the news that he had been tricked by the Magi and that they were not coming back? What orders did he give his soldiers?
22. In verse 19, we see that King Herod had died, and that Joseph was visited by the angel and was told to return to the land of Israel. What word would be used to describe Joseph?
23. Since Archelaus, King Herod's son, was reigning in Judea, Joseph took his family and moved to _____.

Application

1. The list of names you wrote down earlier, from Matthew 1:1-17, is made up of heroes of the faith and some with a shady past. There were those who would be considered ordinary and those of royalty (some good and some bad), and there were Israelites and foreigners. God will use all kinds of people to carry out his plan. Did looking over this genealogy help you put your family tree in a different light?

Matthew 1-2

2. In verse 1, Jesus is called “Jesus Christ.” In Hebrew *Jeshua* means “the Lord is Salvation.” *Christos* means “anointed one” or “Messiah.” The Jews had been waiting for their Messiah, and this genealogy would be very important to them as proof. The nation of Israel was under Roman rule at the time of Jesus’ birth. How do you suppose this affected their idea of what their “deliverer” would be like?
3. Have you ever been in a difficult situation that went on for a long time? Did it affect what you imagined God would do in answer to your prayers?
4. Considering the situation in Matthew 1:18-25, what do you see about Joseph’s character?
5. What lessons can we learn from Joseph and Mary?
6. Think back on the last time something very important did not work out as you had envisioned it would. People often say that hindsight is 20/20. Can you think back to a situation that did not work out as you planned, yet now you can see very clearly your plan was not God’s plan? What was your response?

Matthew 2

7. It is easy to understand why King Herod might have been upset to hear of another king being born. But why do you suppose all of Jerusalem was disturbed and troubled at this news?
8. Put yourself in Mary and Joseph’s shoes for a moment. Make a list of the fears and anxieties you might be struggling with? Did they need to worry? How does knowing their story help you?
9. Have you ever been in a conversation when the mere mention of Jesus’ name disturbed people? How did you handle it? Were you surprised? Phil. 2:9 says it is a name above all names. It divides; you cannot remain neutral. One must decide where he will stand with Jesus.