

## He That Was Spoken Of

### **Matthew 2:12 – 3:9**

=====

~ Myriad unusual and seemingly contradictory prophecies are what we considered in our last report; and we're going to continue examining others in this report. We saw Jesus born in Bethlehem and how that took place purely eschatologically. We realized that we needed to learn more about the weeping in Ramah. We also saw how the root out of Jesse fulfilled the prophecy that Jesus was to be called a Nazarene. Now, the prophecy of Jesus coming out of Egypt is what we will deal with in this section of Scripture; and it's pretty important to understand properly, correctly and completely, friends. Here, we pick up as the wise men have visited the baby Jesus and they're leaving Bethlehem. Remember, Herod had wanted the wise men to come back by Jerusalem and tell him where the baby Jesus was so he could come and worship Jesus, too - with a Sicilian necktie as the gift!

Also, in our last report, we saw some supremely enlightening spiritual applications; such as the myrrh that spoke of Jesus death. Remember, when the wise men brought the gold and frankincense and myrrh they fell down and worshipped HIM – not them – not Mary! The gifts were presented unto HIM. The gold speaks of HIS birth. Frankincense speaks of the lovely fragrance of HIS life! We saw a most thrilling passage in Isaiah's prophecy about the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ; and they don't bring Myrrh - because Jesus isn't going to die again. Christ is coming next time to reign – not die. If you haven't read our last report and, indeed, all four previous safari reports from Matthew, then I can only suggest you go back and do so. Open your Bible. Pray for wisdom, judgment and spiritual discernment. Read the text in your own Bible – and then read this report. I pray you will find peace and joy in our Savior and Lord Christ Jesus....

## II

***12 And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.***

***13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.***

~ The wise men were wise men because they listened to and trusted God. They have no other credentials as “wise men.” When they were in Jerusalem I think they could have mistaken Herod as sincere; so, God makes sure these men are guided in their thinking. When we talk about dreams from here on out, let’s understand it’s God directing their thinking. Does God direct our thinking in dreams today? No, absolutely not – God directs our thinking in His Word! These men didn’t have a Bible. You do. Well, God told these men that if they go back by Herod’s place he’s going to come and kill the child. So, they went a different direction – south to Hebron to be specific - where they could cross over Jordan south of the Dead Sea; which would put them out of range of Herod altogether. The Angel of the Lord also spoke to Joseph and told him it was time to go....

***14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt:***

***15 And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.***

~ This is a marvelous, historical prophecy we find from Hosea chapter eleven verse one. Out of Egypt the son that was called is a nation; out of Egypt the son that was called is a Person. The subject of Hosea’s prophecy, necessarily, had to be both. Joseph took Jesus and Mary and went down to Egypt and stayed. As we move on through the rest of this report, let me say that supposition is always sensational - and it’s a huge part of what I am going to suggest about how this relates to the weeping in Ramah situation. I present it sensationally because the Word of God presents it sensationally; and because this truly bothers me, my beloved. The balance of my argument is based on good solid facts: the wise men came later, and the shepherds arrived first. In the church Christmas pageant the shepherds and

the wise men may come down different isles; but, in reality, they didn't even get that close together....

***16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.***

~ Alright, the wise men "came into the house" is what the Bible said in our last report. Jesus was out of the manger and into the house by this time. When Herod inquired about when the star had appeared, it is a reasonable conclusion that at least a year had passed. There were quite a few men coming across that desert looking for Jesus; and that was the one thing that disturbed Herod! Those men who were traveling to find Jesus had left everything behind to come to Him. A trip across the Arabian Desert was no picnic and people just didn't do it for the fun of it. It was treacherous, dangerous and ultra-slow going, so, they didn't arrive until much later. My supposition is that by the time Herod slays the children of two years of age and under in Ramah he is completely mad in his mind, literally; his anger is consuming him as he sees he has been duped by the wise men. Herod discovered he wasn't as clever as he thought he was when he dealt with these simpletons. So, Herod just doubled the possible time frame it could have been - and started killing....

***17 Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying,***

***18 In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.***

~ Jeremiah didn't say a voice would be heard in Bethlehem. While I do think there was a voice heard in Bethlehem, Jeremiah said "in Ramah" - which is up in his part of the country - and, Ramah was just about as far north of Jerusalem as Bethlehem is south of Jerusalem. I think the captain asked Herod where to begin the murdering of the children and Herod just drew a big circle around Bethlehem on a map and went from there. That's a

standard military tactic and it is highly likely. This represents about twenty-five miles in circumference across the region. So, my hypothesis is more than highly likely; this literal fulfillment of prophecy happened exactly this way....

***19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt,***

~ I wouldn't have you miss this for the world, friends: when the Angel of the Lord appeared to Jacob He specifically called Himself "THE" Angel of the Lord; here, He is called "AN" Angel of the Lord. Okay, stay with me here: "THE" Angel of the Lord is the pre-incarnate Christ; but at this point in our Spiritual Safari, He is gone down into Egypt – so He can't be both right now! The most important reason for Jesus to get back to Israel is that He was born in strict accord under the Mosaic System of Levitical Law - and He is to live under the Mosaic Law. Jesus is the only One Who could have kept the Mosaic Law - and He did – from day one! That's why He never offered a sacrifice, by the way. God will bring His Son out from under the influence of Egypt. Jesus wasn't to be raised down there as Moses was and as Israel became a nation down there. Jesus is wholly, entirely and completely separate from sinners, my friend. This is what prophecy is about. The Lord Jesus Christ is the only subject of eschatology in Christendom. If you're not prophesying of Him – you're a false prophet. You might want to write that down....

***20 Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life.***

***21 And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.***

***22 But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee:***

***23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.***

~ The root for this is Isaiah chapter eleven verse one, Isaiah chapter fifty-three verse two, and Psalm twenty-two verse six; where we have the term Nazarene. Of course, Jesus is not only brought up from the root of Jesse and out of Egypt, He is also from Nazareth. That fulfills all of our prophecies concerning the Messiah spoken of by the prophets. All four prophecies that we necessarily needed fulfilled in order to move on through Matthew – including the strangest of them – has now come to pass; and in a very normal and natural way – or, perhaps I should say SUPER-natural! It's a very sane, sobering, startling and rational reality to begin living in the comprehension and truth of these Bible facts....

### III

***1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,***

***2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.***

~ John the Baptist comes before us now as the forerunner of the King; announcing the Kingdom of Heaven and he baptizes Jesus, the King. We're going to talk a lot about the Kingdom of Heaven in this Gospel record. John the Baptist walks out onto our page of Scripture in our safari and if this is all we had we would have to ask, "....where did he come from and what is his background?" Matthew doesn't bother with introductions specifically because Malachi already had. Malachi said a messenger would be sent - and that messenger was John the Baptist. See, when the mailman drops off your letters, you don't care if his ancestors came over to America on the Mayflower. You don't care about the background of the postman at all. What you are concerned with is the information in the envelopes – your message. The message concerning you is all that is important. That's what we're searching for here.

Now, this section of Scripture seems to be where more well-meaning Christians get side-tracked and carried away than in any other part of the Bible. All three of these phrases, "repent ye," and, the "Kingdom of Heaven," and, "is at hand," are all just about as abused and misused today

as they can possibly be. When they are not understood properly, completely and correctly they cannot be manifest in our theology properly, correctly and completely, rendering them abjectly meaningless, friends. Let's be very careful to understand them with the leading of the Holy Spirit right now. "Repent" is an instruction that has ALWAYS been given EXCLUSIVELY to God's people and it means "...turn around." It can mean to change your mind, too; as in: you're traveling one direction and you turn and go another direction. Repentance is for God's people in any age; but it isn't for unbelievers. If unbelievers could repent on their own volition then they wouldn't even need Jesus. If we are to have revival we cannot have cold and indifferent Christians, my beloved; they are going to have to turn to Jesus Christ and manifest His love through them – and that is the message to the seven churches in Asia – as we shall see when we get to them again.

The ONLY meaning of repentance to a lost person is to turn away from unbelief and towards belief in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's what it means to turn to Christ, friends – seems simple enough; and yet – it's just that complicated in the practice of our lives. The Philippian jailer that asked Paul what he must do to be saved really needed to do some repenting; except he was the only one in the world that didn't know it. He had no intention of repenting of anything; he was simply doing his job - but he could believe! See, in faith there is repentance. Faith means we turn to Christ and if we do that; we have to turn away from something; and if you don't turn from something then you aren't turning to Him, I promise you that! Repentance and belief are one in the same; but do not tell a lost person to repent because they will never – ever – never – again accept your testimony after that! Tell the lost to believe – because they are ONLY to believe!

When John the Baptist says the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand he means the Kingdom of Heaven is present in the Person of the King! There is a present reality of the Kingdom of Heaven for those who come to Christ as their Savior and acknowledge Him and who are translated into the Kingdom of Heaven as a result. Those in that group are His genuine children; they belong to Him now, forever. We can have a more intimate relationship than that of a subject to a King today, though. Scripture paints that picture in the

form of a bride and her husband. By definition, in this case, that creates a queen. Most people think we are to carry out His commands – and we are, that is true – but it's higher than that; we do all of that only because we love Him, and we love Him only because He first loved us. Remember, Jesus said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments." I know He would also say, "...if you don't love Me – forget it!"

The Kingdom of Heaven as the ruler over this earth is NOT in existence today, my well-meaning Christian friends. If you are "building a kingdom" then your thinking is entirely wrong because it doesn't fit Scripture. It would take a total ignorance of the world we live in to say Heaven rules over the earth. Christ is not reigning over the earth today in any form, fashion or fame. It is only within the hearts of those who love and accept Christ as Savior and as God that He rules and reigns. As we know, Christ will return to establish His Kingdom on the earth one day and, when He does, the Word of God says He will put down the rebellion against Him. I should also add that He doesn't need your help, my beloved. When Christ was on earth the Kingdom of Heaven was present in the Person of the King. It is simply a must that you understand, internalize and remember this truth – because anyone who is not agreeable with the statements in this report – if you are even still reading - this is where we part ways....

***3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias; Isaiah chapter forty three, saying , The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.***

***4 And the same unusual John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.***

***5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,***

~ John the Baptist made no claim whatsoever about who he was except to say he was a voice crying in the wilderness. This John is a strange individual to me. If you need a Biblical example of following a strict diet and dressing very unusually then John Baptist is your man. Interestingly, they came to him. John didn't rent a stadium, or an auditorium and John didn't have a

church with a committee to report to. In fact, no one invited him to speak anywhere; and he never came to anyone's town. If you wanted to hear John, you went out where he was preaching. It was usually in a very bad place – hard to get to – as the Spirit of God moved upon John in his heart's mind and in his mind's eye – all hopped up on honey and bugs and God only knows what else. I wouldn't have you miss this wild honey; it's a little bit bitter ....

***6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.***

***7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?***

~ Those that came to that place had a profoundly noticeable change in their hearts and lives, too. They were identified with the Lord Jesus Christ by baptism. Baptism means: identified with. They left their old lives and were now turning to a new life! Suppose your preacher started out his sermon like John starts his in verse seven next Sunday morning. I will assure you the deacons will be looking for another preacher that day! We're going out of this leg in our Spiritual Safari taking some potent medicine - and with John spewing some intentionally BITING sarcasm. John the Baptist was not elected 'man of the year' by any magazines in Judaea; but he is talking to these very dignified religious rulers – the Pharisees and Sadducees. John challenges them to demonstrate their life. See, this isn't about going through an act and saying the right things the right way. There's going to have to be a change in your heart and thinking – or you're not saved. You may become VERY religious – but if this doesn't make a profound impact on every fiber of your being then something is radically wrong. You MUST present fruit in your life, my beloved. Make a note....

***8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:***

***9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.***



=====