

When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judaea, for so it is written by the prophet:

"And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel."

Matthew 2:3-6



Remember how we said that Jesus' birth was good news for all people? On the 15th day of Advent we learn that even though the good news is available to all people, not everyone is going to receive the good news. Some people really want to hold on to the things of this world so tightly that they lose sight of the promise God offers after we die.

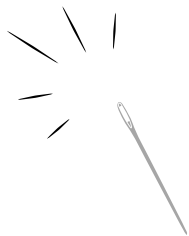
Herod was king at the time Jesus was born. He was called "Herod the Great", not because of his goodness, but more so because of the shocking things he did with his power as king and the terrible things he did to stay in power.

While Herod was king in Jerusalem, the Roman Empire had authority over all the kings and lands at that time. Whenever a new Roman ruler rose to power, Herod was really quick to switch loyalty to make sure he also stayed in power. Even though he was king in Jerusalem, the faithful Jews never really accepted him as king, and this made him constantly anxious. He thought everyone was trying to betray him, and sadly had many of his own family members killed.



So when he found out that the Messiah who was to become the true King of Kings was about to arrive in Bethlehem, he was afraid that too would threaten his position as king.

Jesus tells us that it can be very difficult for rich and powerful people to give up their riches and earthly power. He says it's actually easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God! How can we let go of our love of things like money and power and instead love the things God loves?





Help the wise men ride along the right path to Bethlehem before Herod and his priests and scribes.

