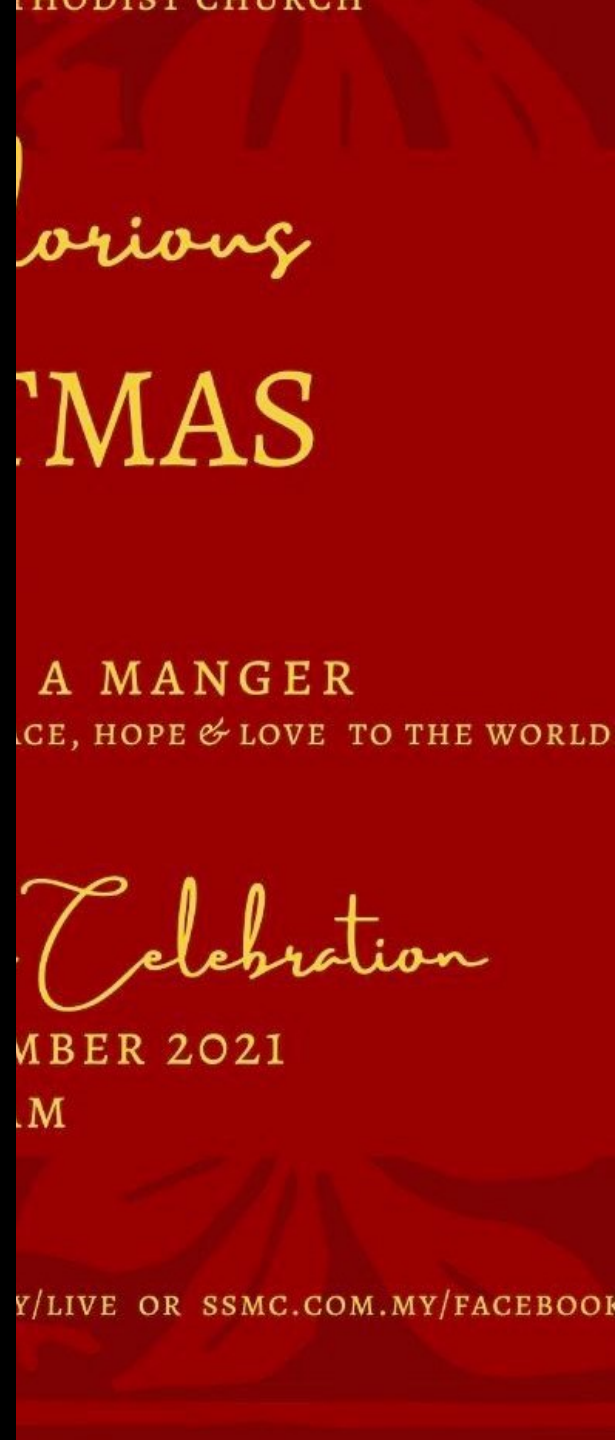


sunday 26<sup>th</sup> dec 2021

ps ng swee ming



# Christmas Narrative



**Luke 1:5-25**



**Luke 1:30-33**



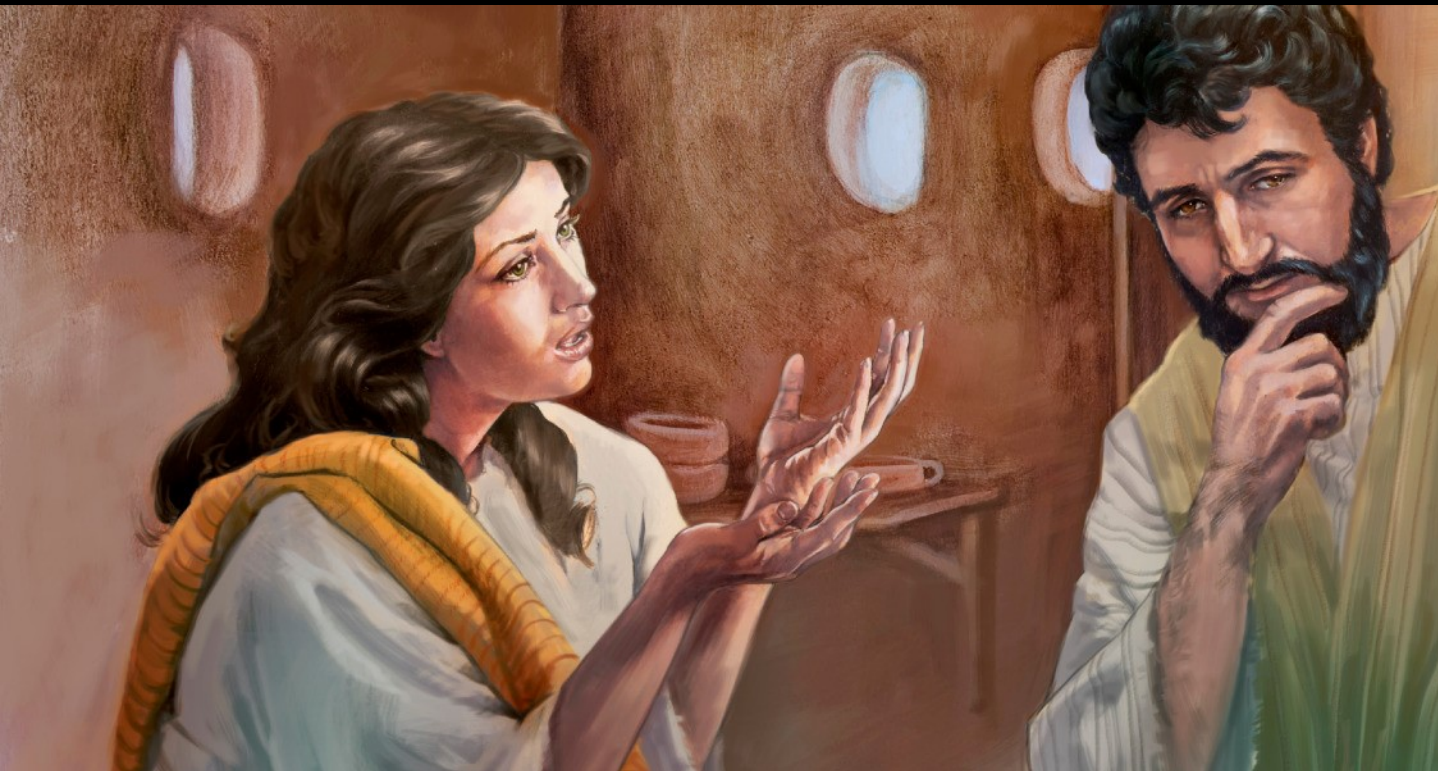
**LUKE 1:34-56**



**LUKE 1:57-79**



**Matt 1:18-19**



**Matt 1:20-24**

# Luke 2:1-5





**Luke 2:6-20**





**Luke 2:21-38**

LESSONS  
from the  
*Magi*

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sunday 26<sup>th</sup> dec 2021

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ODIST CHURCH

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E, HOPE & LOVE TO THE WORLD!

*Celebration*

BER 2021

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# Matt 2:1-2

***<sup>1</sup> After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem***

***<sup>2</sup> and asked, "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him."***



# The Wise Men or Magi

**Q: Who were the MAGI ?**

- Magi were – learned men ...
- In science, mathematics and especially astronomy & astrology ...
- Root word for : Magic ...

⇒ ? Priestly tribe ...

⇒ Powerful men ...

⇒ Advisers to Kings & Rulers ...

⇒ 'Laws of the Medes & Persians'

⇒ 'King-Makers'



# The Wise Men or Magi

**Q: Any Biblical mention of the MAGI ?**

**A: Yes ...**

↪ **Gen & Exo in Egypt ...**

↪ **Daniel ...**

↪ **Dan 2:48; 4:9 & 5:11**

↪ **Daniel was referred to as the  
“Chief of the Magicians (Magi)”**

**Ref: Septuagint Gk OT**



**Q: What's the connection of Magi & the "Star" ?**

- Daniel being Chief must have had an influence ...
- He would have told them about the Jewish writings/prophecies from the Old Testament etc....

↪ *Num 24:17 A star will come out of Jacob;  
a scepter will rise out of Israel...*

↪ *Isa 60:1-6 God's Glory rising up ...  
Nations bearing gifts of gold & incense...*

↪ *Psa 72:10-15 Kings bearing gifts ...  
falling down before Him ...*



# The Wise Men or Magi

**Q: What's the connection of Magi & the "Star" ?**

- **So this non-Jewish wise men ...**
- **Influenced by Daniel & his teachings / legacy ...**
- **700+ years ....**

↳ **Were watching ... thru the centuries ...**

↳ **When they saw this new heavenly 'happening' ...**

↳ **Came Seeking for the promised "Messiah" ...**

↳ **Linking to the OT prophecies ...**



# Q: What was the “STAR” of Bethlehem ...

- Was there a ‘New Star’ ?
- Was there a Special ‘Star’ ?
- Was it even a ‘Star’ ?
- Just visual observation, no telescope ...
- Many and varied theories ...

## CONCLUSION :

- ↪ we cannot know for certain ...
- ↪ But something significant was seen in the sky ...



## The Star of Bethlehem ...

- Something new ...
- Something significant ...
- The Magi saw it and believing ...
  - Started on the long long journey to find the truth about the promised 'Messiah' ...

Q: Do you think the 'Star' was visible to everyone ?

↳ Obviously so ....

Yet no one took notice of it ...

Even the Jews did not seem to have noticed ...

**1. SEEING yet not KNOWING**

# 1. SEEING yet not KNOWING ...

- Many saw the 'Star' but ...
- Isa 6:9 & Mark 4:12 *"...ever seeing  
but never perceiving..."*

This is still happening TODAY

- What is Christmas to you ?
  - ↳ Non-Christian ...
  - ↳ Christian ...
- Same with our everyday life ...
  - ↳ During this Covid Pandemic or Endemic ...
  - ↳ In sickness ....

# 1. SEEING yet not KNOWING ...

- Are we still in danger of  
    *“...ever seeing but never perceiving...”* ?
- We only see with our physical eyes ....  
    But DO NOT perceive with our Spirit
- For Christians must always ask God what is His Will & Purpose for what we are seeing, experiencing ...
- If you are not a Christian, also need to ask ..
  - Christmas - Birthday of God's Son ...
  - BUT Is there even a God ?
  - If there is no God, what are the implications ?

# 1. SEEING yet not KNOWING ...

➤ Seeing with our 'Head' –

↪ Our mind,

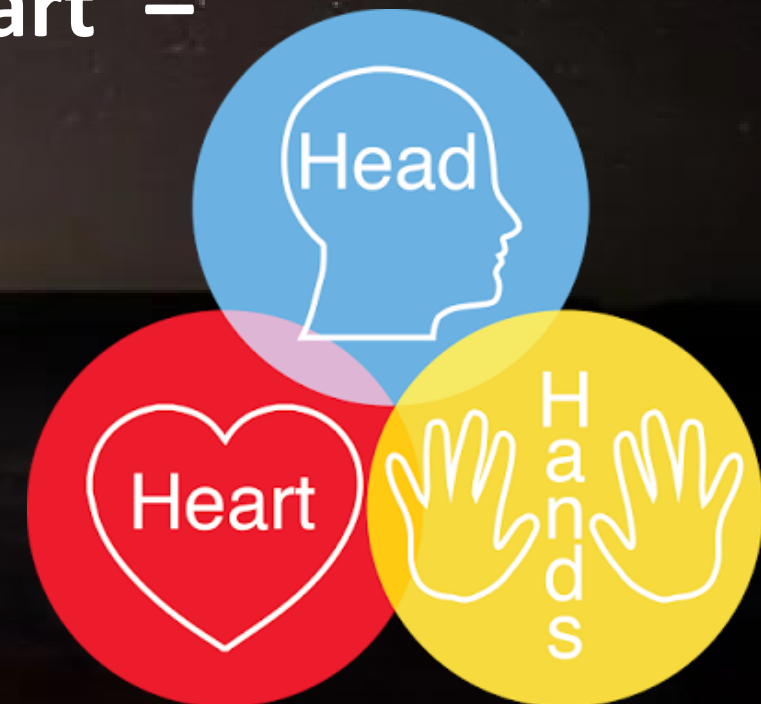
↪ Our intellect ...

➤ Knowing / Perceiving with our 'Heart' –

↪ Feelings ...

↪ Emotions...

↪ Internalising ....



# 1. SEEING yet not KNOWING ...

This Christmas I pray you will ...

**NOT ONLY SEE** the Christ in Christmas in your Head...

**BUT ALSO PERCEIVE & KNOW** in your Heart...

⇒ Who is this Christ ...

⇒ Why did He come ....

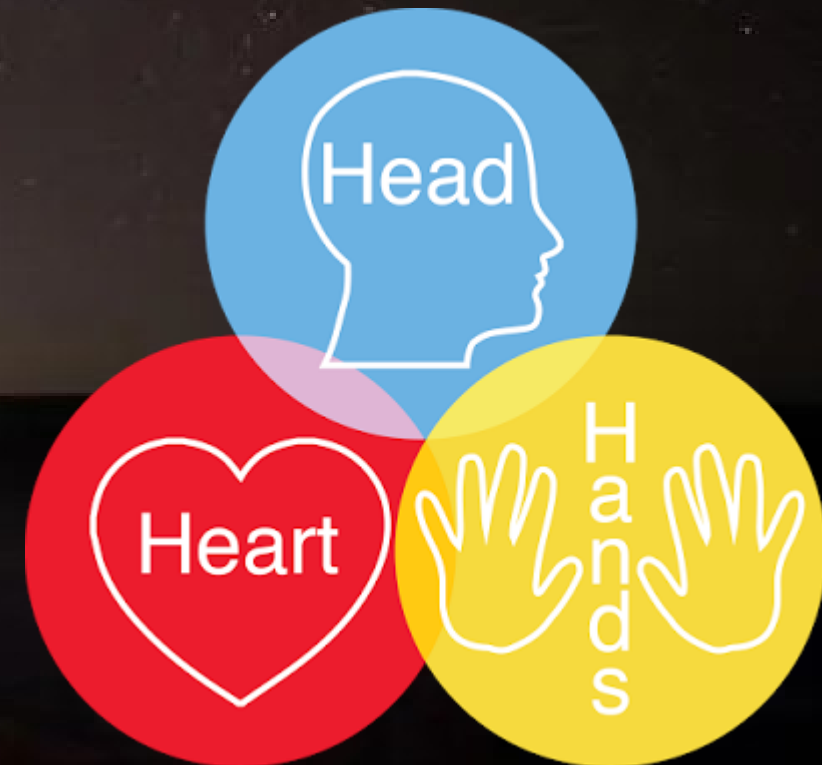
⇒ How do I respond ....

⇒ Who is He in my Life ...

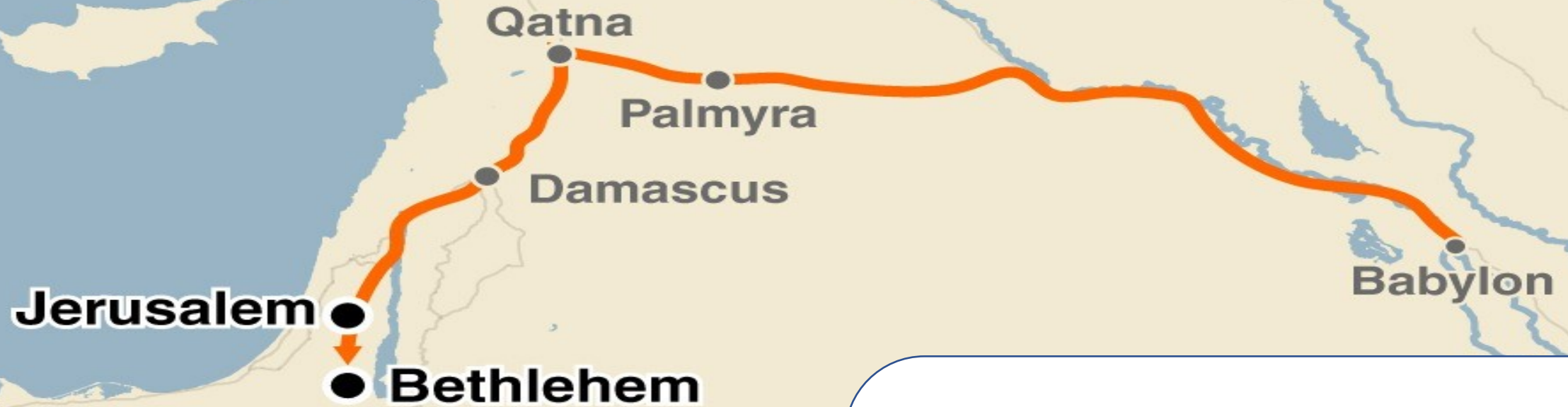
⇒ Where is He in my Life ....

⇒ He says He will come again ....

⇒ What then ???



# The Proposed Route of the Magi



- **About 900 miles**
- **17 to 23 miles/day**
- **About 120 Days**

# Classic depiction of the Magi ...

## Is this Right ?

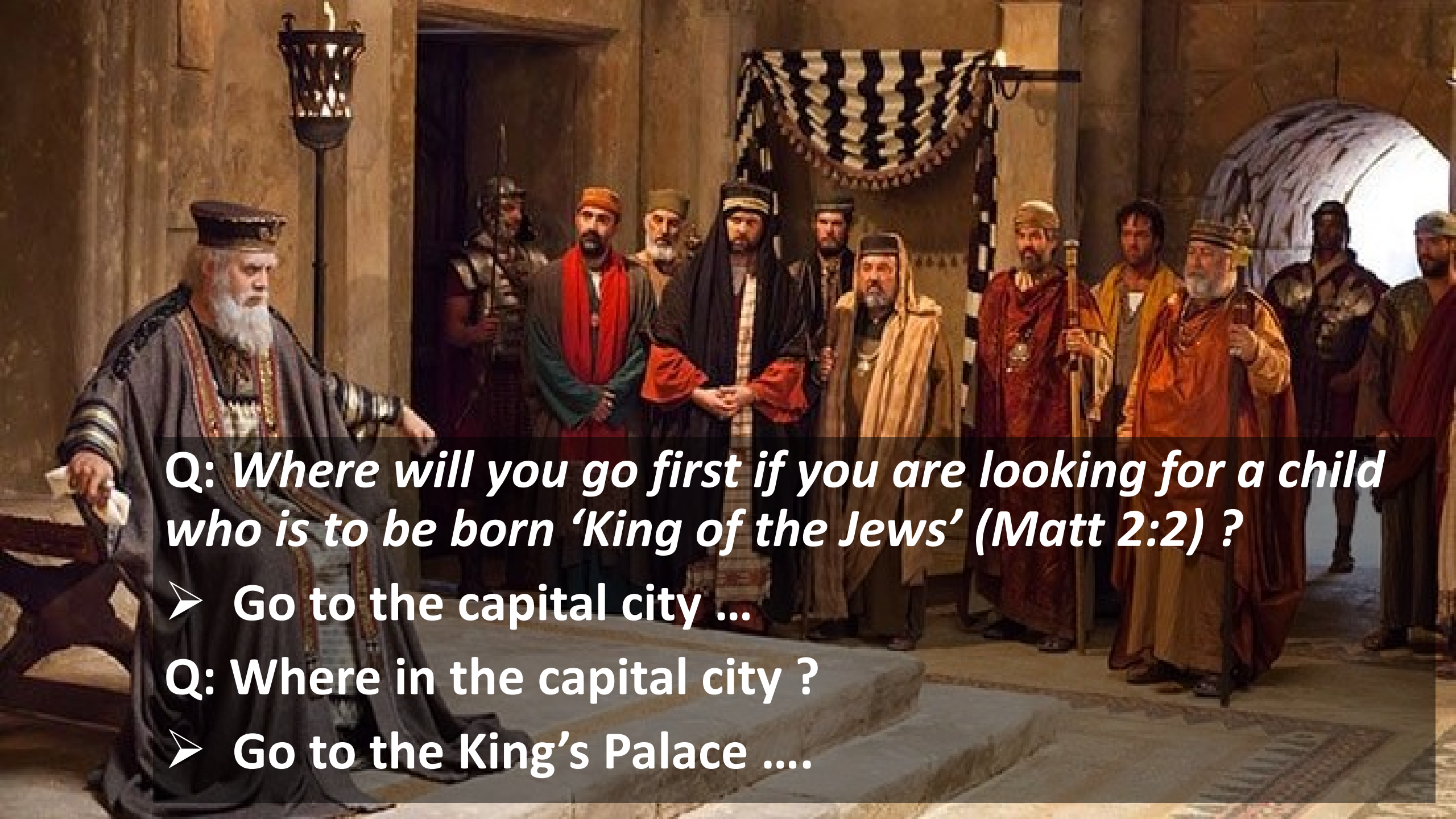
## Is it Accurate ?





The Magi were dignitaries ...  
Travelled with an entourage of servants ...  
and possibly military escort ...  
How large a party ???





**Q: *Where will you go first if you are looking for a child who is to be born 'King of the Jews' (Matt 2:2) ?***

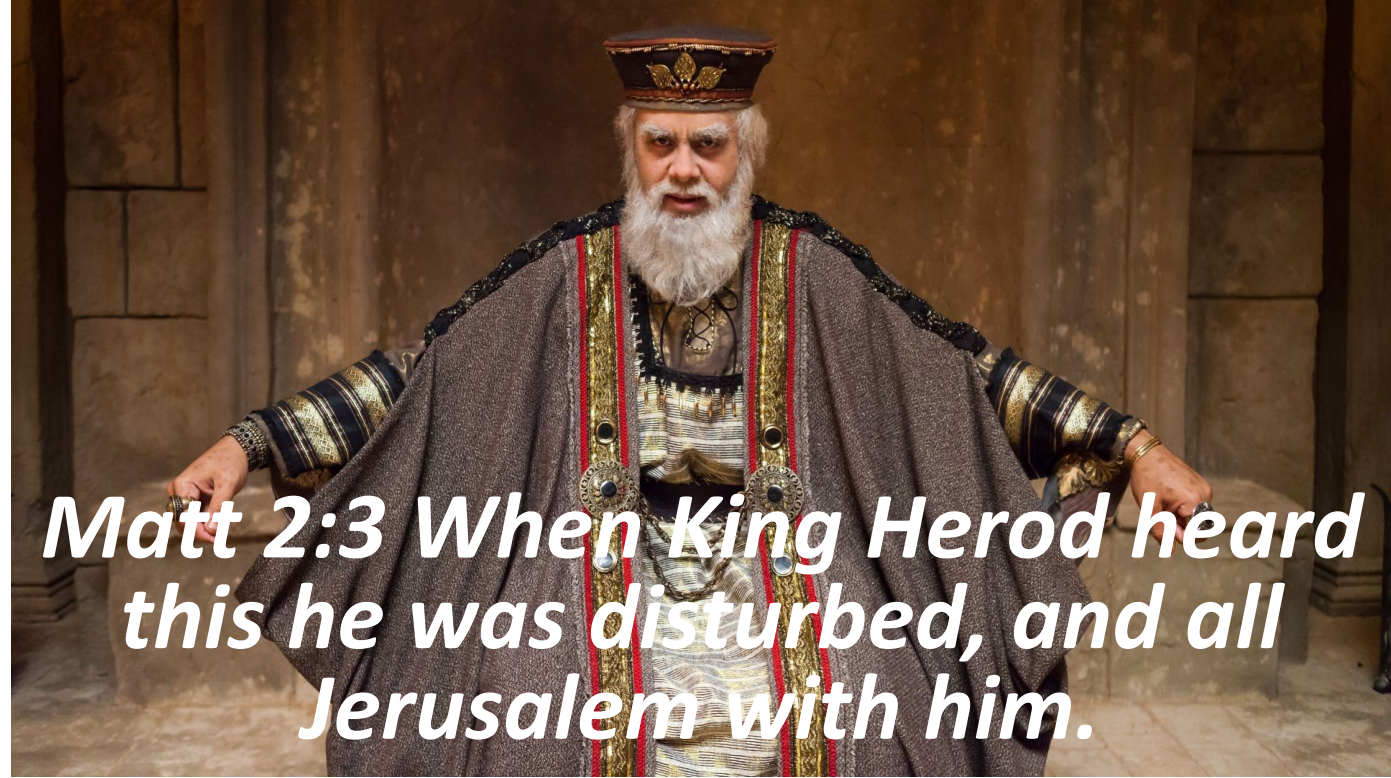
➤ **Go to the capital city ...**

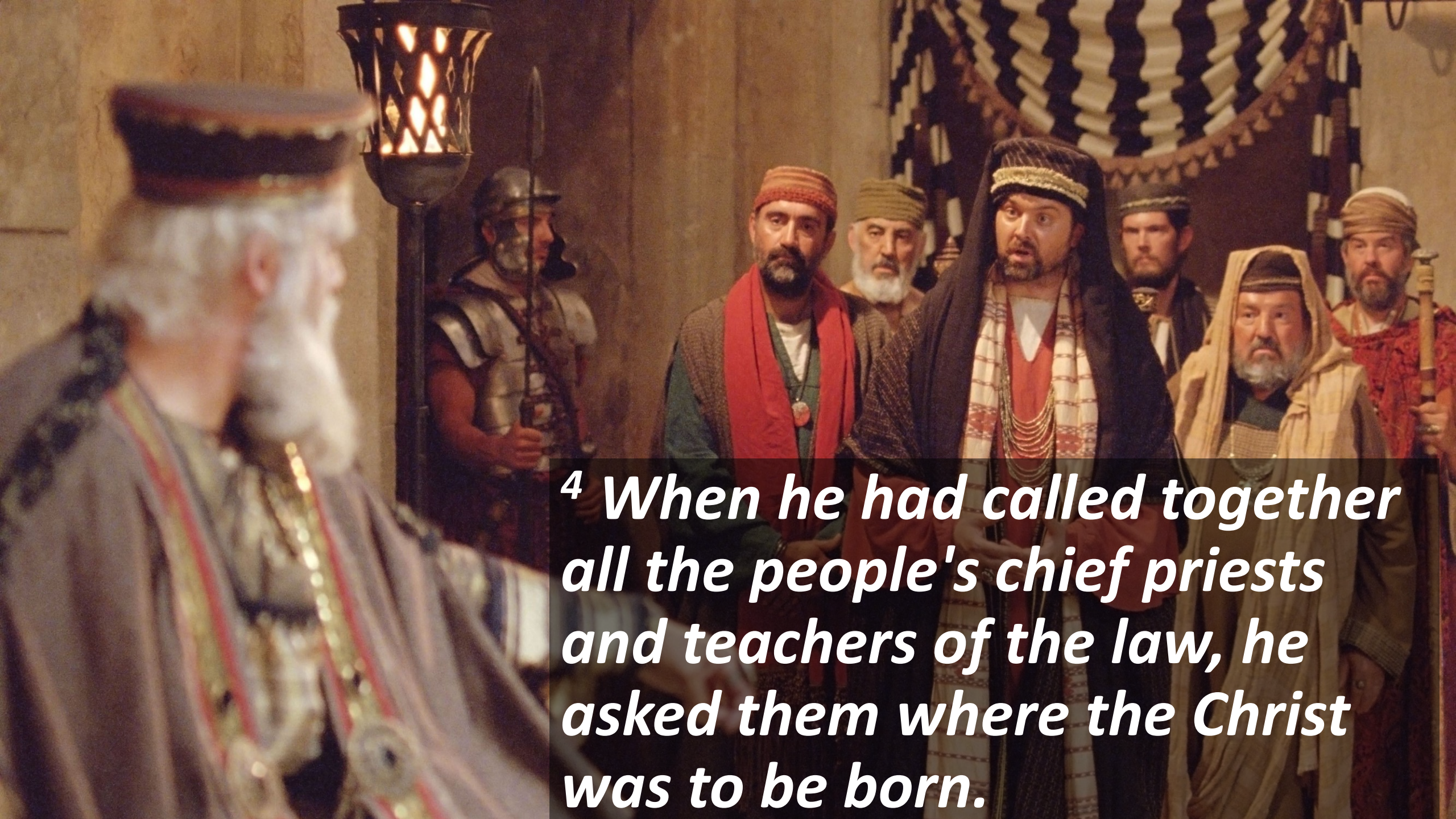
**Q: *Where in the capital city ?***

➤ **Go to the King's Palace ....**

# King Herod the Great...

- Appointed King of Judea by the Romans ...
- An Idumean / Edomite  
Not a true Jew ...
- Was a great builder  
eg Herod's Temple
- Had 9 wives and many children ...
- But extremely fearful and paranoid ....
  - ↳ Ordered the killing of his own wife, two eldest sons
  - ↳ Also ordered the killing of a High Priest ...
  - ↳ His 'death-wish' ....
- Just imagine ....





***4 When he had called together all the people's chief priests and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born.***



***Matt 2:5-6***

***"In Bethlehem in Judea," they replied, "for this is what the prophet has written: "But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for out of you will come a ruler who will be the shepherd of my people Israel."***

***Quoting from MICAH 5:2***

**STOP & THINK**

To a Jew, ... for any Jew ....

Only waiting for that "ONE THING" ...

↳ As a 'chosen' people ...

↳ As a 'special' Nation ...

❖ the MESSIAH – Anointed One, Chosen One ...

➤ Christos (Christ) → Gk for Messiah

➤ Jesus → Yeshua : Deliverer, Savior ...

• Waiting for their MESSIAH ? ....

➤ Having / Knowing all the OT Prophecies ...

➤ What did they do ???

**NOTHING ! ZILCH ! NOUGHT !**

**STOP & THINK**



**The Jewish People ...**

**The Religious Authorities ...**

↪ **All Waiting but not Looking ....**

**Even when the Magi came seeking to find that  
SOMEONE who was to be born 'King of the Jews' ..**

↪ **They knew the answer : In Bethlehem ...**

↪ **5 miles south of Jerusalem ....**

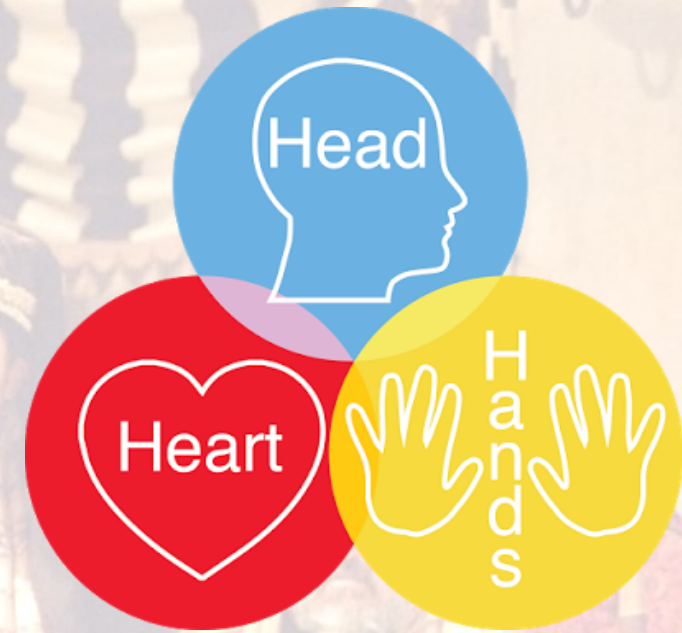
↪ **So near – yet so far ...**

**2. KNOWING yet not DOING**

## 2. KNOWING yet not DOING ...

What about us – you and I ???

- Do you KNOW you are a sinner ?
- Do you KNOW you cannot save yourself ?
- Do you KNOW you need a Savior ?



It's precisely for this very reason  
that Jesus came that 1<sup>st</sup> Christmas ....

***Matt 1:21 "She will give birth to a son,  
and you are to give him the name Jesus,  
because he will save his people from their sins."***

## **2. KNOWING yet not DOING ...**

**So this Christmas ....**

**KNOWING why God sent His Only Son Jesus ...**

**KNOWING that we are all sinners ...**

**KNOWING we cannot save ourselves ...**

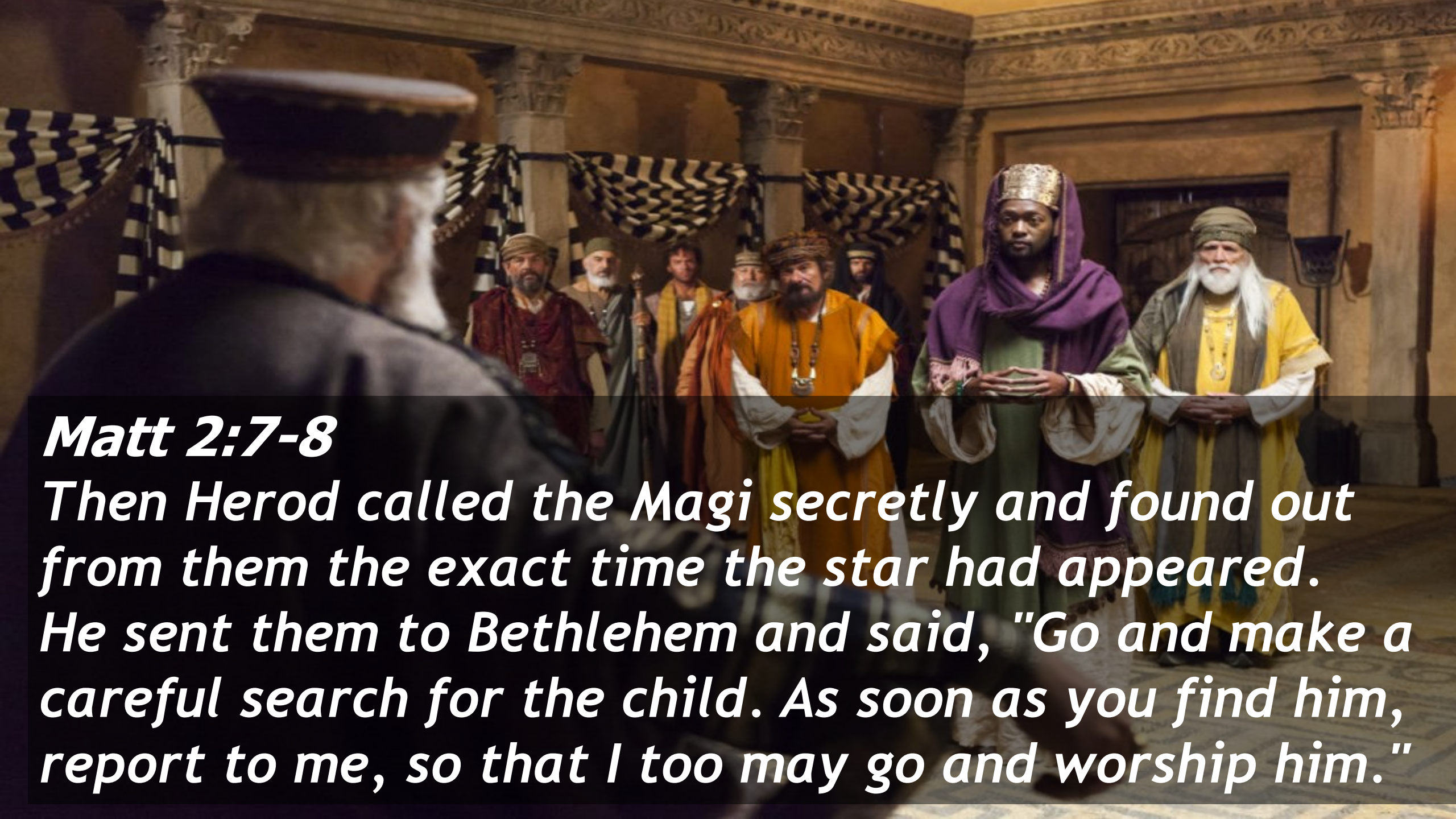
**KNOWING that Jesus came to die in our place ...**

**for our sins ...**

**What Are You DOING About It ??**







***Matt 2:7-8***

***Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him."***

## ***Matt 2:9-10***

***After they had heard the king, they went on their way, and the star they had seen in the east went ahead of them until it stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were overjoyed.***



## ***Matt 2:11a***

***On coming to the house, they saw the child with his mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.***

### **THREE Quick Observations:**

- 1. House**
  - not stable/manger
- 2. Child (GK *paidion*)**
  - not baby (Gk *brephos*)...
- 3. Worshiped 'him'**
  - not 'them'



***Matt 2:11b***

***Then they opened their treasures and presented him with gifts of gold and of incense and of myrrh.***

**Q: What presents do we normally bring for a Baby / Child ?**



# Three Wise Women

Would have asked directions

Arrived on time

Helped deliver the baby

Brought practical gifts

Cleaned the stable

Made a casserole

and there would be

Peace on earth!



A close-up photograph of a large pile of gold nuggets. The nuggets are irregular in shape and size, with a bright, metallic yellow-gold color. They are scattered across a dark, textured surface that appears to be a piece of wood or stone, with some blueish-grey staining. The lighting is dramatic, highlighting the facets and edges of the nuggets.

## **GOLD :**

- **Symbol of Wealth and Position**
- **Usually for King & Rulers**
- **Recognition of His Kingship ..**

# Frankincense



*Sap from the  
Boswellia tree*

- one of the 4 components of the sacred incense burned in the Sanctuary (Ex 30:34)
- Signifies **Worship ...**  
**Divinity**
- Recognition as the coming High Priest.



# Myrrh

## Uses ...

- ↪ Beauty Treatment (Esther 2:12)
- ↪ Perfume (Song of Songs 8x)
- ↪ Analgesic (Mark 15:23)
- ↪ Antiseptic ...
- ↪ Embalming (John 19:39)
- Has a Bitter taste ...
- Recognition of His Sacrificial Death



Sap from the  
commiphora  
tree





# *We Three Kings of Orient are!*

***We three kings of Orient are;  
bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain,  
following yonder star.***

***chorus:***

***O star of wonder, star of light,  
star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding,  
guide us to thy perfect light.***



# *We Three Kings of Orient are'*

- 2: Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,  
gold I bring to crown him again,  
King forever, ceasing never,  
over us all to reign.**
- 3. Frankincense to offer have I;  
incense owns a Deity nigh;  
prayer and praising, voices raising,  
worshiping God on high.**
- 4. Myrrh is mine; its bitter perfume  
breathes a life of gathering gloom;  
sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,  
sealed in the stone-cold tomb.**



# *We Three Kings of Orient are'*

The Magi came on a quest ....  
They brought and presented very  
unusual gifts to him who is born  
'King of the Jews' ...

Question:

*They arrived with the Treasures of  
Earth in their hands*

*BUT did they leave with the Treasures  
of Heaven in their hearts ??*

Best that we know : NO

**3. DOING yet not BELIEVING**



### **3. DOING yet not BELIEVING**

- **Gifts has become part of Christmas celebration ...**
- **Both in Giving and Receiving ...**
- **CHRISTMAS IS GOD'S GIFT TO ALL MANKIND – THE GIFT OF HIS SON.**

**Q: Will you receive God's Gift this Christmas ?**

**Q: What Gift did you bring for Him this Christmas ?**



SUNGAI WAY-SUBANG METHODIST CHURCH

# A Glorious CHRISTMAS



A KING BORN IN A MANGER

BROUGHT GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY, PEACE, HOPE & LOVE TO THE WORLD

**4: Glorious now behold him arise;  
King and God and sacrifice:  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
sounds through the earth and skies.**

*Sunday Christmas Celebration*  
SUNDAY, 26 DECEMBER 2021

10:00 AM

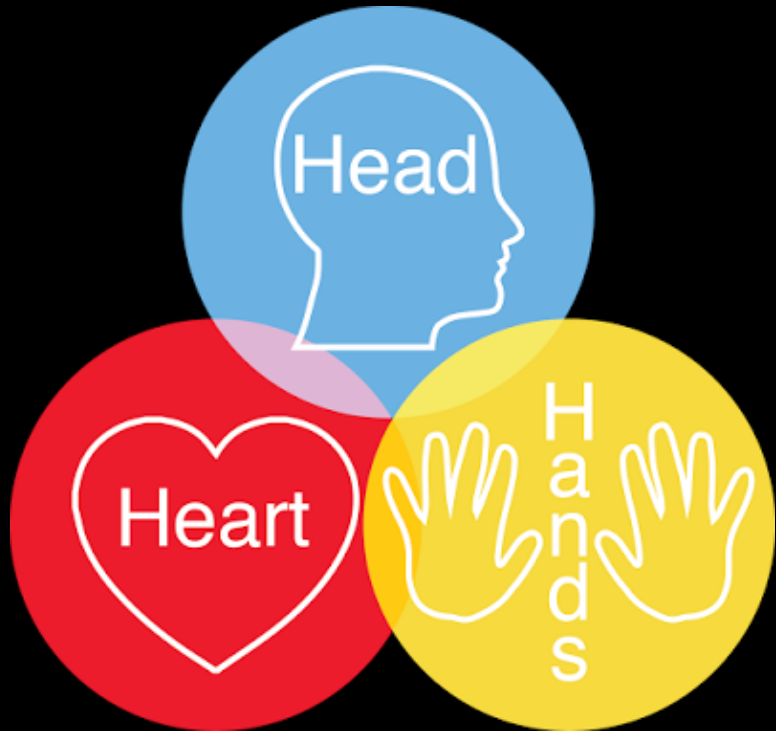
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—  
**SEEING yet not KNOWING**  
**KNOWING yet not DOING**  

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**DOING yet not BELIEVING**



*rious*

MAS

MANGER

HOPE & LOVE TO THE WORLD

*Celebration*

ER 2021