



With hope that this page will bring glory to God and attention to His Word, you are invited to check this page every day for a piece of scripture, thoughts on the verse(s) and a prayer. May the ideas presented here bring you fulfillment as you continue your journey with Christ.

Thursday January 4, 2024

Today's Scripture:

In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage." When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet: 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; for from you shall come a ruler who is to shepherd my people Israel.'" ~ Matthew 2: 1-6

Thoughts on Today's Verse(s):

Isn't it amazing how a Little Child could instill such fear and angst in the heart of a powerful king and even among his subjects? That is the power of The Messiah, Jesus Christ, The Holy Son of God, The King of kings. To this day He still invokes fear and frustration in the hearts of people across the globe, even if they won't admit it or realize it. Mention the name "*Jesus*" to many folks and they immediately begin to squirm. Why? Because He is perceived as a threat to the way they want to live. He is a threat to their power to control their own lives. He is a threat to their very existence.

Such was the case for Herod. The Child born in Bethlehem was so large a threat to him that he worked to kill him - and he almost got it done. Thanks to the 3 Wise Men, his plans were thwarted. And thanks to God Himself as He omnisciently knew what was truly in the heart of an evil king, hence His dream warning to The Magi.

Here's a tough question: *Is Jesus a threat to even the people of His church?* Ouch! That one might hurt and/or incite extreme anger that I would even suggest such a thing ... but there it is. Well, if Herod's fear and anxiety could promote the fear of Christ among his people, can not the fear of some individuals in the church spread it to others? It's just that that fear manifests itself in different ways. Obviously, there is no plot to kill Jesus but, is there an unwitting strategy to pull people from Him and to their own ideas and schemes?

We in the church must be wary of those in our midst who have *their* best interests at heart and that of others. Too many times people conclude that they know what is best while ignoring scripture and ignoring The Child's will. The result is turmoil, anger, frustration and discord in the church. Friends, we must constantly and continually ask God what is *His will*, not ours. If we don't, we can far too easily fall into the trap of following ourselves instead of The Lord.

Prayer:

Lord God, help us and protect us; protect Your church. Don't let us fall into the trap of the enemy who convinces us to follow our own will and not Yours. May we devote 2024 to seeking and conducting Your will at every turn. May we set aside fear in the place of trust and devotion to You. Through Christ our Lord we pray, Amen.

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