

Time Audit Chronicles: God's Sovereignty Over Earthly Kings (Matthew 2:1-12)

Prologue: Who's Really in Charge?

The Presswood living room was unusually lively that evening. Ariel sat at the coffee table, her tablet displaying a chessboard app, where she was soundly defeating her AI opponent. Across the room, Alice was building a fort out of couch cushions, proclaiming herself "Queen of the Fort" and demanding taxes of cookies and juice.

Ryan, sipping tea in his armchair, watched the scene with amusement. "Quite the kingdom you've got there, Alice," he said.

"Yes!" Alice declared, holding Mr. Fluffernutter aloft as her royal advisor. "No one is allowed to take my throne!"

Ariel rolled her eyes. "You're just like King Herod."

Alice frowned. "Who's Herod?"

Ryan chuckled. "Herod was a king during the time of Jesus' birth. He ruled Judea, but he wasn't exactly the kind of king God wanted for His people."

"What do you mean?" Ariel asked, setting her tablet aside.

"Herod thought his throne was the most important thing in the world," Ryan explained. "But God was doing something much bigger—sending the true King, Jesus, into the world. Let's see what happened when Herod's plans clashed with God's sovereignty."

"You mean... we're going back?" Alice gasped.

Ryan grinned. "Time Audit Machine, here we come."

The Journey Begins: The Sovereign King vs. an Earthly Tyrant

In the garage, the Time Audit Machine hummed with anticipation as Ariel set the coordinates.

"Destination: Judea, around 4 BCE. Objective: witness how God's plan unfolded against King Herod's."

With a final press of a button, the familiar swirl of light engulfed them, and moments later, they found themselves on a bustling street in ancient Jerusalem. The air was filled with the mingling scents of spices and livestock, and the sounds of merchants calling out their wares echoed off stone buildings.

"This is Jerusalem," Ryan said, gesturing to the city gates. "The center of Herod's kingdom—and the stage for a showdown between human ambition and divine authority."

"Where's Herod?" Alice asked, looking around.

“Let’s start with the wise men,” Ariel suggested. “They came to find Jesus, right?”

The Arrival of the Magi

As the Presswoods moved through the city, they saw a caravan approaching. Camels carried lavishly robed travelers who sat with regal poise, their eyes scanning the horizon.

“The Magi,” Ryan whispered. “Wise men from the east. Scholars think they were likely astronomers or priests who studied the stars and ancient prophecies.”

The Magi entered the city, their presence stirring curiosity among the people. “Where is He that is born King of the Jews?” one of them called out. “For we have seen His star in the east and have come to worship Him.”

“That’s bold,” Ariel said. “Asking about another king right in Herod’s territory?”

“Exactly,” Ryan replied. “Herod wouldn’t like this at all.”

Meeting Herod: A King in Fear

The Presswoods followed the Magi into Herod’s palace, a grand but imposing structure that reflected the king’s ambition. Inside, Herod greeted the Magi with a forced smile, though his eyes betrayed his unease.

“A King of the Jews, you say?” Herod asked, his tone measured. “When did this star appear?”

The Magi explained their journey, recounting how they had followed the star for weeks, guided by its brilliance.

“Tell me more,” Herod said, leaning forward. “Where is this king supposed to be born?”

The chief priests and scribes, summoned by Herod, answered: “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, ‘And thou Bethlehem... out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.’” (Micah 5:2)

Herod’s smile grew tighter. “Go to Bethlehem and search diligently for the young child,” he told the Magi. “When you have found Him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship Him also.”

“That’s a lie!” Alice whispered fiercely.

Ryan nodded. “Herod wasn’t planning to worship Jesus. He saw Him as a threat to his throne.”

The Sovereignty of God: The Star and the Child

As the Magi departed, the Presswoods followed them into the countryside. The brilliant star that had guided the wise men before now shone even brighter, leading them directly to Bethlehem.

“There it is!” Alice exclaimed, pointing to the star as it rested over a modest house.

Inside, Mary cradled the young Jesus, her face serene as she welcomed the Magi. The travelers knelt before the child, presenting their gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

“What do the gifts mean?” Ariel asked.

“Gold represents Jesus’ kingship,” Ryan explained. “Frankincense symbolizes His divine nature, and myrrh points to His sacrifice.”

As the Magi worshiped, a warmth filled the air, a sense of peace that seemed to flow from the child Himself.

“This is the real King,” Ariel whispered.

Herod’s Defeat: God’s Sovereignty Unfolds

That night, the Magi rested in their tents, but their sleep was interrupted by vivid dreams. An angel appeared to each of them, warning them not to return to Herod. “Depart another way,” the angel instructed.

The Presswoods watched as the Magi packed their belongings at dawn, slipping quietly out of the area without returning to Jerusalem.

“God protected them,” Ryan said. “And by doing so, He thwarted Herod’s plans.”

The Bigger Picture: God’s Authority Over Kings

Back in the Time Audit Machine, the family reflected on what they had witnessed.

“Herod had power, soldiers, and a palace,” Ariel said. “But he couldn’t stop God’s plan.”

“That’s right,” Ryan said. “Earthly kings like Herod can only go so far. God’s authority is absolute, and His plans will always prevail.”

Alice hugged Mr. Fluffernutter tightly. “So Jesus was safe because God was watching over Him?”

“Exactly,” Ryan said. “And not just Jesus—God watches over all of us. He’s in control, even when things seem scary or uncertain.”

Reflection: A King Like No Other

That evening, Ariel read aloud from Matthew 2:

““When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.””

The family sat in thoughtful silence, reflecting on the contrast between Herod’s fear-driven rule and the quiet, humble arrival of Jesus—the King of Kings.

“Herod thought his power was everything,” Ariel said. “But Jesus showed that real power comes from God.”

“And it always will,” Ryan added.

Takeaway: Trusting God’s Sovereignty

The visit of the wise men and Herod’s futile schemes remind us that God’s plans are unstoppable. Earthly kings and powers may try to oppose Him, but His authority reigns supreme. Just as He guided the Magi and protected Jesus, He watches over us, working out His purposes for His glory and our good.