

## Where Are the Kings and Wise Men Today? – Matt 2:1-12

**Introduction** – Epiphany recalls the day that the Gentile nobles followed the Star of Bethlehem and found the Christ Child where they worshipped and gave gifts, paying tribute to the King of kings. In the midst of this story, another king, Herod, tries to find the baby as well, only to attempt to have Him slaughtered (vv16-18). The church today scratches its head that Herod, a civil ruler, should feel at all threatened by the story of Christmas and the coming of Jesus, because, after all, we believe in the separation of church and state. And so, where are the kings or noblemen today who bow the knee to Jesus as their King of kings and Lord of lords – not simply over their own personal hearts but over their powers of dominion? Isaiah prophesied, and the wise men echoed, that “*Gentiles shall come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your coming*” (Isaiah 60:1-3). The kings of the earth are still to bring their glory and honor into the church (Rev 21:24) and they will; but the church today no longer tells the kings and wise men to do so. And so the church remains in a self-imposed exile of irrelevance and impotence.

**Who Is Head of State?** – There is such a thing as spheres of sovereignty and there is truth in the idea of a separation of the sovereign spheres of church and state (and family). But that does not mean there is a separation of God and state.

**King of kings** – Jesus is the King of the nations of this earth. It was declared in His resurrection and ascension (Rev 11:15). It was prophesied in the Psalms (Psalm 2:8) that the Father offered the nations to the Son. In His Great Commission to the church, Jesus told us that we were to disciple the nations because they are His now (Matt 28:18). The church must repent, for the church does not believe or declare this.

**Sovereign King** – “*The king’s hearts is in the hand of the Lord, like the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes*” (Prov 21:1). The issue is not whether we will make Jesus Lord, but whether He Lordship will be for our blessing or the undoing of our nation. Our nation is in the miserable shape that it is because Jesus wants it that way. And the message should be clear to the church: you are getting a taste of what you preach. We must repent of our “wringing-his-hands-with-wonder-god” who only wishes He could do something about the affairs of men.

**Sovereign Qualifications** (Deut 17:18-19) – We have refused to require that our leaders find their source of righteous law in one place alone – in the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the only final source of wisdom for righteous and good governance. The church must repent of her belief in religious-neutral law in politics. Of course, this assumes that we are Bible-readers and that we believe God’s Word is authoritative, two more items of repentance.

**The Centrality of Worship and the Enlightenment Air We Breathe** – There is a demon in all of these errors; an idol we worship without fully knowing. There is a stench in the air we breathe, but we are accustomed to it and so we do not notice. Historians will write about it though, the generations trapped in the Enlightenment. Is man the measure of all things? Are you the center of your universe? When we do not join with the shepherds in humbly coming to the Lord in worship at His summons, why are we surprised when the kings of our day refuse to join with the magi? We must repent of our autonomous individualism and our splintered view of self, the church, the family, and the state.

**Conclusions** – There is so much blood on the hands of our nation because there is so much blood on the hands of the church; we cannot simply blame “them” for federal funding for abortions. Rampant homosexuality throughout our country is the fruit of rampant homosexual (and heterosexual) sin accepted and approved in the church. Our country is filled with broken families because our churches encourage families to break up, refusing to teach men to be husbands and fathers with a backbone who love their wives like Christ and serve sacrificially, and refusing to teach women to respect, submit to, and honor their husbands while embracing their roles as helpmeet. Our country refuses, from the President to the congress to the Supreme Court, to listen to the voice of God and refuses to bow the knee to the Lord Jesus Christ because the church tells the state that she has no prophetic voice to speak to them.

**Bow the Knee** (Phil 2:9-11) – Our present administration and congress may soon implode in its left-wing demented policies and declining popularity (or not). But the worst thing for the church to do is what she is currently doing – hoping for more of the same except from right-wing, demented policy-makers. But until we bow the knee in this and every regard, Washington will never bow the knee. Judgment begins in the household of God and that means that every individual application the Lord brings to mind is part of the answer.

The antithesis is not between the conservatives and the liberals. It is between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent. The real antithesis is between those who will live as Jesus commanded and those who will not, both as individuals and as societies, be it family, church, or civil. All of these must repent, but the church must lead the way.