

**THE HEROD IN ME: WHEN I NEED  
TO BE IN CONTROL  
CHRISTMAS AT GRACE  
MATTHEW 2:1-18**

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**Control is an illusion.**

Q: Who was Herod the Great?

A: A brilliant yet insecure ruler. “He left behind a legacy of tyranny, despotism, and oppression. Yet, he was responsible for building some of the greatest architecture the Levant has ever seen.”<sup>1</sup>

“The Roman senate, advised by Antony and Octavian, gave Herod the title ‘king of the Jews’. It took him 3 years of fighting to make his title effective, but when he had done so he governed Judea for 33 years as a loyal ‘friend and ally’ of Rome.” – *The New Bible Dictionary*<sup>2</sup>

Q: Why does Herod matter?

A: Herod is an amplified version of our insecurities and fears of not being in control.

Matthew 2:1-18

*Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, <sup>2</sup> saying, “Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him.” <sup>3</sup> When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him; <sup>4</sup> and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. <sup>5</sup> They told him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: <sup>6</sup> “ ‘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.’ ” <sup>7</sup> Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly and ascertained from them what time the star had appeared. <sup>8</sup> And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, “Go and search diligently for the child, and when you have found him, bring me word, that I too may come and worship him.” <sup>9</sup> After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. <sup>10</sup> When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. <sup>11</sup> And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. <sup>12</sup> And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.*

## ***The Flight to Egypt***

<sup>13</sup> Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." <sup>14</sup> And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt <sup>15</sup> and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

## ***Herod Kills the Children***

<sup>16</sup> Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. <sup>17</sup> Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: <sup>18</sup> "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

## *The Gospel and the Herod in me*

- My insecurities: Jesus Christ can reassure my anxious heart with His great love.

"People who are in love with applause have their spirits starved not only when they are blamed offhand, but even when they fail to be constantly praised." – John Chrysostom

- My fears of not being in control: Jesus Christ's unparalleled power can become my anchor.
- My fears of being replaced: Jesus Christ's Kingdom will never end or be replaced.

"If we fight amongst ourselves, the monster will kill us all." – Din Djarin, *The Mandalorian*

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.deadsea.com/articles-tips/king-herod-the-great-building-projects/>.

<sup>2</sup> F. F. Bruce, "Herod," ed. D. R. W. Wood et al., *New Bible Dictionary* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 469.