

THE END OF THE EQUATION

MATTHEW 2:13-23

INTRO:

THE POWER OF LEARNING THE DETAILS - GOD HAS DESIGNED OUR HEARTS TO BE INSPIRED, SO THE DETAILS BRING THIS STORY THAT OUR HEARTS WERE DESIGNED TO HEAR *TO LIFE*.

I see an equation throughout the whole of MATTHEW chapter 2, but in this PART of the chapter is the *manifest rage of Herod* in his desperate slaughter of infants. This was him seeing the **end of the equation**.

What I hope to argue today to us as the church is that the violence, the desperation, and madness of Herod toward the prophesied Ruler will always follow any culture that sees the end of the equation. And that if we as the church keep setting our focus on seeing the parts of the equation-Christ as He really is-the Kingdom as a real conquering of the world's system-we will see victory. But we will not see it without the rage and madness of the world.

(I thought about "the haters of God " mentioned in Romans while standing in line amongst seemingly "nice" people in H.E.B.-until i realized that their feelings toward Jesus, God, religion, and church are only "fine" in a culture that can silence that issue.)

THE EQUATION:

A FALSE KINGDOM + A PUPPET KING =

A DEFEATED CHURCH

We are going to look at these individually, first in their roles we see in that scriptural period of time, then for the spirit of them in our own time.

A FALSE KINGDOM

- **Rome** is the False Kingdom, not that it is not a real kingdom, but that it is not the true Kingdom.
- The nations under its branches, shaped by its culture, are slowly dying by its poison as it parades as the savior of the known world-the hope of civilization.
- Rome at this point is under Caesar Augustus (born Gaius Octavius Thurinus) (Luke 2:1) in its glory years, the pax Romana of power. It is 27 years into its progress from the Roman republic into the Roman Empire. This is its first emperor.
- **Eclectic**-strategically letting people keep their culture in the midst of slavery in order to maintain control, while they truly are the sole authority. *Client states.
- A cultural chip in the matrix to keep them from realizing they're in slavery.

+ A PUPPET KING

- Herod is the puppet King, a *client King of Rome, after a long episode of fighting. He was throned and dethroned in Judea, being passed around and conquered. Herod is finally re-throned and **elected "KING OF THE JEWS"** by the Roman senate as a political favor.

think about this In Matthew ch.1 we saw the lineage of the kings of Israel, the kings of the Jews.

Abraham bore

Isaac, to Isaac was born

Jacob and to Jacob

Judah and to....

Perez
Zerah
Hezron
Ram
Amminadab
Nashon
Salmon
Boaz
Obed
Jesse
David
Solomon
Rehoboam
Abijah
Asa
Jehoshaphat
Joram
Uzziah.....

This is the royal Davidic line of promise-The **LINEAGE OF ABRAHAM**.

This is everything to the Jews because it represents the faithfulness of their God, their culture, their heritage, it is their story.... It is what makes them them.

Herod is not in that line. Herod is an **Idumaeen**, the descendents of the Edomites, the enemies of Israel, the ones who wouldn't let Israel pass through their land in the exodus from Egypt. These are the sons of Esau, the brother of Jacob, who sold his birthright for food.

This is no small thing. The Edomites had nothing to do with the promise or inheritance of God, yet here one sits, ruling over the people of God. What a disgrace! See the defeated heart of Israel here.

- He is not a Jew by religious desire, but one forced to convert under the Maccabean (John Hyrcanus) conquest of Idumea in 140-130 BC.
- An Edomite elected by Gentiles, by their conquerors, to the position of a puppet King.

This is the leader and current representative of the people, the one who rebuilt the temple for His people.

but here is the core of this point, The PUPPET KING has no interest in advancing the true Kingdom, for he is a happy servant of the false.

He does not truly care for the people; they are his means to a power and a position in the false Kingdom.

He is not leading the people; he is using the people. He is not taking them anywhere; he is using them to elevate his own status.

So where is the Royal line of David?

The true heirs to the throne?

One is fleeing—a common carpenter on his way to Egypt. No mention of prominence. He is discreet. Joseph, the unnoticed carpenter of whom the people speak of later when they ask concerning Jesus, "Is this not the carpenter's son?"

(Matthew 13:33) They speak so casually and in contempt of a descendent of the royal line—a true King of the Jews

while the puppet king walks on marble palace floors, executing power in emotional fits, dining with emperors, dressing in fine clothes. The true line finds no place but a stable for his wife who has just given birth and an animal feeding trough to lay his newborn son.

hence, we have

=A DEFEATED CHURCH

- Israel is the church. They are God's covenant people at this point. (Not all are truly Israel; hence, not all are truly the church.) But they are defeated, led by cowards, weak and content to hold on to their crumbling culture, but without the glory. **"Fighting over the scraps from Longshanks' table."**
- So content with their situation, their religious chip in the matrix, in captivity so long, the words, "We have no King but Caesar!" dare to leave their lips 30 years later while their Messiah is crucified.

HERE IS THE CONTEXT OF THE PLACE WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES IN THIS PASSAGE AND HERE IS WHERE HEROD SEES THE END OF THE EQUATION.

HEROD IS NEARLY 70 YEARS OLD. HE HAS BEEN BUILDING AND FIGHTING FOR HIS LITTLE EMPIRE FOR NEARLY 50 YEARS. THE HERODIAN FAMILY DYNASTY HAS BEGUN AND IS LIVING COMFORTABLY IN THE EQUATION PASSED TO THEM FROM HIS FATHER, ANTIPATER, AND...

..... **HERE COME THE MAGI**, MOST LIKELY ON HORSE BACK, ACCOMPANIED BY A SMALL ARMY AND MANY SERVANTS-LEADERS AND MAGISTRATES FROM THE EAST,

THESE ARE NOT MYSTIC HIPPIE STAR-GAZERS, BUT LEADERS AND COUNSELORS FROM A CULTURE THAT TRUSTED THEM. THEY ARE COUNSELORS OF KINGS, DISPLACERS AND INNAUGURATORS OF KINGS. (WE SEE THIS FROM THE BOOK OF DANIEL) MEDES AND PERSIANS OF A FELLOW-CONQUERED YET PROUD EMPIRE LOOKING TO WORSHIP HIM OF WHOM THEY HAVE HEARD (NO DOUBT FROM DANIEL'S INFLUENCE UPON THE MEDES AND PERSIANS. HE LED THEM, A MAN OF PROMINANCE, AND WENT ON LEADING INTO TWO KINGS, PROPHEYSING THEIR DESTRUCTION.)

THEY WERE COMING TO LOOK FOR THE TRUE KING, NOT THE PUPPET KING. LOOKING FOR ONE THEY COULD FOLLOW AND POSSIBLY ENTHRONE.

- NOTE... THEY ARE NOT AFRAID TO RIDE INTO JERUSALEM, straight to it's King, even with His barbarous reputation.
- NOTE THE WAY THE THEY SPEAK TO HEROD-

THE MAGI EXPOSE HIM AS THE PUPPET KING IN THIS SENTENCE,

"WHERE IS HE WHO HAS BEEN BORN, (NOT ELECTED, NOR HAVING STOLEN THE TITLE BY KILLING ITS PREDECESSOR) BUT HE WHO HAS BEEN **BORN** KING OF THE JEWS?" (SPOKEN OF BY THE PROPHETS OF THE TORAH)

- They have come to worship Him who has done nothing yet. Can you see the heart of this Puppet King's rage? He has become so comfortable as King of the Jews, having made a name for himself through conquering them, that he has convinced himself he is immovable.
- What king did not covet worship? Herod more than any-one who gave an order to have other distinguished men killed at his death, so that there would be the cry of mourning he craved.

Herod's rage was so great because he saw in this inquiry of the Magi, in this prophesy, the end of all he knew- *he saw the **end of the equation coming**, so he set forth to kill that infant in whom the conquering of the world lay, in whom would come and has come the end of the equation.*

- See His rage soar as he hears the words read by the chief priest and scribes of the prophet Micah [5:1-5] that were a stranger to Him...

and you Bethlehem, land of Judah,

are by no means least among the leaders of Judah:

for out of you shall come forth a Ruler ,

who WILL Shepherd my People Israel."

[Matthew abbreviates here a much more threatening prophesy when read in Micah)

Herod's fear was of a Ruler!!!! not of a Galilean white-robed hippie only interested in peace and harmony and fairness and not offending or judging anyone!!!!!!!!!!

- He feared an end to all he knew-the true heir and ruler of the Jews. But even he could not fathom Who he really sought.

the equation to us today is

a false Kingdom,

- a real, earthly, carnal, selfish kingdom built off a false concept of the true.
- a concept, a lie of a purely dualistic Gnostic spiritual kingdom of the ever after with no effect upon the world, no concern for the world.

+ a puppet King....Jesus made over and reinvented to be a peaceful hippie, a Jewish version of the Dalai Lama, the sensitive one every woman wished she had, unconcerned with this world's affairs, calling us to get along and wait for mansions in the clouds, days of endless frolicking.

Rather than see that HE is the reason for the turbulence, it is evil attacking its inevitable end, death fighting against its own futile battle. The pains of the world are from His Kingdom ripping up the equation, reminding the world, reminding evil of its conquering. This is a real live triumphant story with death and gore, tragedy and victory. That is the way the author wrote it, and he will not apologize.

=a defeated church

a church that is too busy apologizing to the world's system, obsessed with escape, mocked and ridiculed that it does nothing but squabble over the "scraps from Longshanks' table" while it misses it's God-given right...and responsibility... to REIGN IN THE EARTH to the glory of the true King.

it became this way because it lost it's lineage, it's culture being slowly stripped from it that it is weak and defeated, like Israel. AN EXAMPLE-

the Scottish Ban after the battle of Culloden

- the difference from the battle of Sterling to after the battle of Culloden

"They lost what made them them, so they left the cultureless land. They lost the spirit of the fight. "

I see the same strategy happening to the church in America-
THE DISASSOCIATION OBSESSION OF AMERICA FROM IT'S TRUE
HISTORY IS A BLATANT ATTACK ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

PSALM 2-"THE NATIONS IN AN UPROAR DEVISING VAIN THINGS."

conclusion:

to the church...

- are we seeking and serving the true Kingdom? are we grasping it's fullness, what it means to reality? is it the focus of our lives in the time we have been given, the driving force of our decisions?
- are we seeking desperately to see Jesus and worship Jesus and be consumed with the greatness of Jesus as the King He truly is?

- do we know what the church is, what it is called to be, what we have been grafted into?

I believe as we set our focus, our agenda, to not just have our religious ears tickled, to not being part of the biggest crowd, not content to see this false perception of the gathering of the church as some simple personal spiritual need only. **But instead, if we see the reality of a Kingdom that was planted in the earth 2000 years ago and its progression, it's inevitable advancing, and the turmoil and uproar that comes with it-as we embrace it-we may come to the end of our time and have lived out our true intention as the church, and lived it out victoriously!**

Historical footnotes:

***use of the term client King**

Client state is one of several terms used to describe the subordination of one state to a more powerful state in international affairs. It is the least specific of these terms and may be treated as a broad category which includes [satellite state](#), [puppet state](#), [neo-colony](#), [protectorate](#), [vassal state](#) and [tributary state](#). (See also [unequal treaty](#).) The idea that there might be a hierarchy of states, some more or less dependent on others, contradicts the doctrine of [Westphalian sovereignty](#) which holds that each state is a distinct, separate and sovereign entity.

Client states have existed for millennia as stronger powers forced their neighbours to become subservient to them as they grew in status and strength. In ancient times states such as [Persia](#) and [Greek city-states](#) would create client states by making the leaders of that state subservient. One of the most prolific users of client states was [Republican Rome](#) which, instead of conquering and then absorbing into an empire, chose to make client states out of those it defeated, a policy which was continued up until the 1st century BC when [imperial power](#) took over. The use of client states continued through the [Middle Ages](#) as the [feudal system](#) began to take hold.

Antipater II the Idumaeen (d. 43 BC) was the founder of the [Herodian Dynasty](#) and father of [Herod the Great](#). Other members of the family with the name Antipater were his father Antipater I, Governor of Idumaea, and grandson [Antipater III](#).

A native of [Idumaea](#), southeast of [Judea](#) between the [Dead Sea](#) and the [Gulf of Aqaba](#), and which during the time of the [Hebrew Bible](#) had been known as the land of [Edom](#), Antipater became a powerful official under the later [Hasmonean](#) kings and subsequently became a client of the [Roman](#) general [Pompey the Great](#) when Pompey conquered Judea in the name of Roman Republic.

When [Julius Caesar](#) defeated [Pompey](#), Antipater aided Caesar in Alexandria, and was made chief minister of Judea, with the right to collect taxes. Antipater eventually made his sons Phasael and Herod the Governors of Jerusalem and [Galilee](#) respectively. After the assassination of Caesar, Antipater was forced to side with [Gaius Cassius Longinus](#) against [Mark Antony](#). The pro-Roman politics of Antipater led to his increasing unpopularity among the devout, non-Hellenized Jews. He died by poison.

The diplomacy and artful politics of Antipater, as well as his insinuation into the Hasmonean court, paved the way for the rise of his son Herod the Great, who used this position to marry the Hasmonean princess [Mariamne](#), endear himself to Rome and become king of Judea under Roman influence.

Tetrarch is a [Greek](#) term meaning "ruler of a quarter" for a holder of [Imperial](#) office under a [Tetrarchy](#). It was applied earlier to rulers of minor principalities owing allegiance to Rome.

It can also mean

- A [provincial governor](#) in a country composed of several smaller parts.
- A subordinate or dependent [prince](#), or petty [sovereign](#). For example, the Tetrarchs of [Roman Palestine](#), such as [Herod Antipas](#), were tributary kings (Matt. 14:9).

Herod ([Hebrew](#): הורדוס *Horodos*, [Greek](#): *Ἡρώδης* *Hērōdēs*), also known as **Herod I** or **Herod the Great** (73 BC – 4 BC in [Jericho](#)), was a [Roman client king](#) of [Judaea](#).^[1] Herod is known for his colossal building projects in Jerusalem and other parts of the ancient world, including the rebuilding of the [Second Temple](#) in [Jerusalem](#), sometimes referred to as [Herod's Temple](#). Some details of his biography can be gleaned from the works of the 1st century AD Roman-Jewish historian [Josephus Flavius](#).

Herod was born around 74 BC. He was the second son of [Antipater the Idumaean](#), a high-ranked official under Ethnarch [Hyrcanus II](#), and [Cypros](#), a [Nabatean](#).^[3] A loyal supporter of Hyrcanus II, Antipater appointed Herod [governor](#) of [Galilee](#) at 25, and his older brother, [Phasael](#), governor of Jerusalem. He enjoyed the backing of Rome but his excessive brutality was condemned by the [Sanhedrin](#).

In 43 BC, following the chaos caused by Antipater offering financial support to Caesar's murderers, Antipater was poisoned. Herod, backed by the Roman Army, executed his father's murderer. Afterwards, [Antigonus](#), Hyrcanus' nephew, tried to take the throne from his uncle. Herod defeated him and then married his teenage niece, [Mariamne](#) (known as Mariamne I), which helped to secure him a claim to the throne and gain some Jewish favor. However, Herod already had a wife, Doris, and a three-year-old son, [Antipater III](#), and chose to banish Doris and her child.

In 42 BC, he convinced [Mark Antony](#) and [Octavian](#) that his father had been forced to help Caesar's murderers. Herod was then named [tetrarch](#) of Galilee by the Romans. However, since Herod's family had converted to Judaism under duress, his Jewishness had come into question by some elements of Judean society.^[citation needed] The [Idumaean](#) family, successors to the [Edomites](#) of the [Hebrew Bible](#), settled in Idumea, formerly known as [Edom](#), in southern [Judea](#). When the [Maccabean John Hyrcanus](#) conquered Idumea in 140–130 BC, he required all Idumaeans to obey Jewish law or to leave; most Idumaeans thus converted to [Judaism](#). While King Herod publicly identified himself as a Jew and was considered as such by some,^[4] this religious identification notwithstanding was undermined by the [Hellenistic](#) cultural affinity of the [Herodians](#), which would have earned them the antipathy of observant Jews.^[5]

In 40 BC Antigonus tried to take the throne again with the help of the [Parthians](#), this time succeeding. Herod fled to Rome to plead with the Romans to restore him to power. There he was elected "[King of the Jews](#)" by the [Roman Senate](#).^[6] In 37 BC the Romans fully secured Judea and executed Antigonus. Herod took the role as sole ruler of Judea and took the title of [basileus](#) (Gr. βασιλευς) for himself, ushering in the [Herodian Dynasty](#) and ending the [Hasmonean Dynasty](#). He ruled for 34 years.

The **Hasmoneans** (/hæzməˈniən/ [Hebrew](#): חַשְׁמוֹנַיִם, *Hashmonaiym*, [Audio](#)) were the ruling dynasty of the **Hasmonean Kingdom** (140–37 BCE),^[1] an [autonomous Jewish state](#) in ancient [Judah](#). The Hasmonean dynasty was established under the leadership of [Simon Maccabaeus](#), two decades after his brother [Judah the Maccabee](#) defeated the [Seleucid](#) army during the [Maccabean Revolt](#) in 165 BCE. The Kingdom was the only independent Jewish state to exist in the four centuries after the [Kingdom of Judah](#) was destroyed by the [Neo-Babylonian Empire](#) in 586 BCE - excluding the vassal state of Judah established by the [Persian](#) emperor [Cyrus the Great](#) later in the 6th century BCE, which lasted until the region's conquest by [Alexander the Great](#) (c. 330 BCE). The Hasmonean Kingdom survived for 103 years before being taken over by the [Herodian Dynasty](#) in 37 BCE, a [client Kingdom](#) of the [Roman Empire](#). Even then, [Herod the Great](#) felt obliged to bolster the legitimacy of his reign by marrying a Hasmonean princess, Mariamne, and then conspired to have the last male Hasmonean heir drowned in his [Jericho](#) palace.

According to historical sources including the books [1 Maccabees](#) and [2 Maccabees](#) and the first book of *The Wars of the Jews* by the Jewish historian [Josephus](#) (37–c. 100 CE),^[2] the Hasmonean Kingdom rose after a successful revolt by the Jews against the Seleucid king [Antiochus IV](#). After Antiochus' successful invasion of [Ptolemaic Egypt](#) was turned back by the intervention of the [Roman Republic](#),^[3] he moved instead to assert strict control over Israel, sacking [Jerusalem](#) and its [Temple](#), suppressing Jewish religious and cultural observances, and [imposing Hellenistic](#) practices.

The ensuing Maccabbee Revolt (167 BCE) began a twenty-five-year period of Jewish independence potentiated by the steady collapse of the Seleucid Empire under attacks from the rising powers of the [Roman Republic](#) and the [Parthian Empire](#). However, the same power vacuum that enabled the Jewish state to be recognized by the [Roman Senate](#) c. 139 BCE was next exploited by the Romans themselves. [Hyrcanus II](#) and [Aristobulus II](#), Simon's great-grandsons, became pawns in a [proxy war](#) between [Julius Caesar](#) and [Pompey the Great](#) that ended with the Kingdom as [Judea Province](#) under the supervision of the Roman governor of Syria (64 BCE). The deaths of Pompey (48 BCE), Caesar (44 BCE), and the related [Roman civil wars](#) relaxed Rome's grip on Israel, allowing a brief Hasmonean resurgence backed by the [Parthian Empire](#). This short independence was rapidly crushed by the Romans under [Mark Antony](#) and [Octavian](#). The installation of [Herod the Great](#) as King of [Judea](#) as a Roman [client state](#) in 37 BCE ended the Hasmonean dynasty. In 44 CE, Rome installed the rule of a [Roman procurator](#) side by side with the rule of the Herodian kings. Jewish independence was briefly re-established during the [Jewish-Roman Wars](#) of the 1st–2nd centuries CE, which ended with Roman victories and the death or [exile](#) of the majority of the Jewish people.

Augustus ([Latin](#): IMPERATOR·CAESAR·DIVI·FILIVS·AVGVSTVS,^[note 1] September 23, 63 BC – August 19, [AD 14](#)), born **Gaius Octavius Thurinus**, was [adopted](#) by his great-uncle [Julius Caesar](#) in 44 BC, and was thenceforth known as **Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus** ([Latin](#): GAIVS·IVLIVS·CAESAR·OCTAVIANVS). After his adoption, he became the first [emperor](#) of the [Roman Empire](#), which he ruled alone from 27 BC until his death in AD 14. The young Octavius came into his inheritance after Caesar's assassination in 44 BC. In 43 BC, Octavianus joined forces with [Mark Antony](#) and [Marcus Aemilius Lepidus](#) in a [military dictatorship](#) known as the [Second Triumvirate](#). As a Triumvir, Octavian ruled Rome and many of its provinces^[note 2] as an [autocrat](#), seizing consular power after the deaths of the consuls [Hirtius](#) and [Pansa](#) and having himself perpetually re-elected. The Triumvirate was eventually torn apart under the competing ambitions of its rulers: Lepidus was driven into exile, and Antony committed suicide following his defeat at the [Battle of Actium](#) by the fleet of Octavian in 31 BC.

After the demise of the Second Triumvirate, Octavian restored the outward facade of the [Roman Republic](#), with governmental power vested in the [Roman Senate](#), but in practice retained his autocratic power. It took several years to work out the exact framework by which a formally republican state could be led by a sole ruler; the result became known as the [Roman Empire](#). The emperorship was never an office like the [Roman dictatorship](#) which Caesar and [Sulla](#) had held before him; indeed, he declined it when the Roman populace "entreated him to take on the dictatorship".^[1] By law, Augustus held a collection of powers granted to him for life by the Senate, including those of [tribune](#) of the plebs and [censor](#). He was [consul](#) until 23 BC.^[2] His substantive power stemmed from financial success and resources gained in conquest, the

building of patronage relationships throughout the Empire, the loyalty of many military soldiers and veterans, the authority of the many honors granted by the Senate,^[3] and the respect of the people. Augustus' control over the majority of Rome's [legions](#) established an armed threat that could be used against the Senate, allowing him to coerce the Senate's decisions. With his ability to eliminate senatorial opposition by means of arms, the Senate became docile towards his paramount position of leadership.

The rule of Augustus initiated an era of relative peace known as the [Pax Romana](#), or *Roman peace*. Despite continuous frontier wars, and one [year-long civil war](#) over the imperial succession, the Mediterranean world remained at peace for more than two centuries. Augustus expanded the Roman Empire, secured its boundaries with [client states](#), and made peace with [Parthia](#) through diplomacy. He reformed the Roman system of taxation, developed [networks of roads](#) with an official [courier](#) system, established a standing army (and a small navy), established the [Praetorian Guard](#), and created official police and fire-fighting forces for Rome. Much of the city was rebuilt under Augustus; and he wrote a record of his own accomplishments, known as the [Res Gestae Divi Augusti](#), which has survived. Upon his death in AD 14, Augustus was declared a god by the Senate, to be worshipped by the Romans.^[4] His names Augustus and Caesar were adopted by every subsequent emperor, and the month of [Sextilis](#) was officially renamed August in his honour. He was succeeded by his stepson and son-in-law, [Tiberius](#).

the Magi

According to [Herodotus](#) i. 101, which lists the names of the six tribes or castes of the [Medes](#), the Magi were a hereditary caste of priests. They were highly influential in Median society until the unification of the Median and [Persian Empires](#) in [550 BC](#), after which their power was curtailed by [Cyrus the Great](#) and by Cyrus' son [Cambyses II](#). The Magi revolted against Cambyses and set up a rival claimant to the throne, one of their own, who took the name of [Smerdis](#). Smerdis and his forces were defeated by the Persians under [Darius I](#). The Magi continued to exist in unified Persia, but their influence was limited after this and other political setbacks, and it was not until the [Sassanid era](#) (AD 226–650) that they would again achieve prominence.

The [Book of Jeremiah](#) ([Jer 39:3](#), [Jer 39:13](#)) gives a title *rab mag* (Master Mage/Magus/רַב־מָגִי) to the head of the Magi, [Nergal Sharezar](#) ([Septuagint](#), [Vulgate](#) and [KJV](#) mistranslate *Rabmag* as a separate character) It's also believed by some Christians that the Jewish prophet Daniel was *rab hartumaya* (master of sacred scribes) and entrusted a Messianic vision (to be announced in due time by a "star") to a secret sect of the Magi for its eventual fulfillment ([Dan 4:9](#); [Dan 5:11](#)). (these two verses show Daniels influence and prominane in the Babyonian and Medeo Persian empire)