

## Scripture Lessons.

### THE INTERNATIONAL LESSON DEPARTMENT.

THIRD QUARTER—STUDIES IN MATTHEW.  
SUNDAY, JULY 6, 1873.

LESSON I.—*The Child Jesus.*—Matt. ii. 1-10.

GOLDEN TEXT, Matt. ii. 10.

Berean Notes on the Lesson.

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#### I. GENERAL STATEMENT.

The birth of Jesus is announced. Wise men from the East seek the infant Saviour. The tyrant Herod, greatly troubled, seeks an interview with the wise men. The star directs the travellers to the place "where the young child was."

#### II. TOPICAL AND EXPOSITORY NOTES.

*Topic:* Rejoicing in the Redeemer of the world.

1. THE NEW-BORN KING, vers. 1, 2. (1) *His name:* JESUS—Greek, "Saviour;" Hebrew, *Jeshua, Joshua*, signifying "whose help is Jehovah," or "Jehovah the salvation." (2) *His birthplace:* BETHLEHEM, signifying "house of bread." A small town six miles south of Jerusalem. OF JUDEA. Not the Bethlehem in Zebulon, seventy or eighty miles further north. (3) *The King that feared Him:* HEROD, called "the Great." A cruel, blood-thirsting tyrant. He was king over Judea (including here all Palestine) for thirty-seven years. During the last year of his reign Jesus was born. (4) *The new-born KING OF THE JEWS.* The Jews were God's chosen people. Prophecy declared that Jesus should be born among the Jews, at Bethlehem; that he should be a babe, a prince, a King. Num. xxiv. 17; Isa. xi. 1; Micah v. 2; Isa. ix. 6; Psa. ii. 6; Zech. ix. 9. (See *Illustration 1.*)

2. THE TROUBLED TYRANT, vers. 3-8. (1) *Who?* HEROD. (2) *Why?* Feared that the new king might seize his throne. (3) *Effects of his terror:* ALL JERUSALEM WITH HIM TROUBLED. Knowing so well his savage

nature, the people fear revolution, kingly fury, or some other evil. (4) *His policy:* He gathered ALL—a large number—THE CHIEF PRIESTS. There was one "high priest;" and there were twenty-four courses of priests, the heads of which were probably "chief priests." SCRIBES. Transcribers of the Mosaic law, lawyers, secretaries, recorders. 2 Sam. viii. 17; 1 Kings iv. 3; 2 Chron. xxvi. 11; Ezra vii. 6. They were also interpreters of law, civil and religious. The council now summoned by Herod was doubtless the celebrated Sanhedrim. This numbered seventy-two members. (Some say seventy or seventy-one.) It was composed of the high priest, a select number of "chief priests," and "elders" of the Jews. (5) *His question:* He DEMANDED .....WHERE CHRIST SHOULD BE BORN. Of course they should know. Mal. ii. 7. Turning to their Scriptures, they found the prophecy plainly recorded, IN BETHLEHEM OF JUDEA. Micah v. 2. Not in the proud capital of Palestine, but in "little," obscure Bethlehem shall God's Son be born. Christ, in Greek, means anointed. *Messiah* in Hebrew has same meaning. PRINCES OF JUDA; in Micah v. 2, THOUSANDS OF JUDAH. The subdivisions of the tribe; the districts or families and their heads. (6) *His commission:* Still greatly troubled, Herod talks again to the Magi, but privately; thinking, perhaps, that if he ascertains WHAT TIME THE STAR APPEARED first, he will know the child's present age. But in this he mistakes. He sends away the Magi with a murderous falsehood in his lips. THAT I MAY.....WORSHIP HIM means that *I may kill him.* (See *Illustration 2.*)

3. THE DILIGENT SEEKERS, vers. 1-9. (1) *Who were they?* WISE MEN. *Magi*; philosophers, sages, or priests of the Magian religion. Their name "comes from a word found in one of the most ancient hymns of the Zendavesta.....They professed to utter the will of God. The order was to Persia what Delphos was to Greece. It was the Persian oracle."—*F. W. Upham, LL.D.* (2) *Their home.* THE EAST. Doubtless Persia; Some say Arabia, Chaldea, or Parthia. (3) *Why did they come?* These noble truth-seekers had journeyed for perhaps about four or five months, from Persia to Jerusalem, over mountains and great rivers, through trackless wastes and wildernesses. The expectation of Messiah had spread from