

# Matthew 2:16

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men.

## Analysis

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Herod's infanticide reveals the depth of human depravity and the hatred earthly kingdoms have for God's kingdom. This massacre demonstrates how sin, unchecked, leads to monstrous evil—even murdering innocent children to preserve power. Yet God's sovereign purposes prevailed; Christ was preserved. This atrocity also prefigures the world's ongoing hostility to Christ and His people.

## Historical Context

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Bethlehem was a small village, so the number killed (likely 20-30 infants) wasn't massive by ancient standards, explaining why secular historians didn't record it. However, it was characteristic of Herod's paranoid brutality. He died shortly after this atrocity.

## Related Passages

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**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

**Ephesians 2:8** — Salvation by grace through faith

## Study Questions

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1. What does Herod's massacre reveal about the human heart apart from God's restraining grace?
2. How does this passage illustrate the world's ongoing hostility toward Christ and His people?

## Interlinear Text

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Τότε	Ἡρώδης	ἰδὼν	ὅτι	ἐνεπαίχθη	ὑπὸ	τῶν	
Then	Herod	when he saw	that	he was mocked	of		G3588
G5119	G2264	G1492	G3754	G1702	G5259		
μάγων	ἐθυμώθη	λίαν	καὶ	ἀποστείλας	ἀνεῖλεν		
the wise men	wroth	was exceeding	and	sent forth	and slew		
G3097	G2373	G3029	G2532	G649	G337		
πᾶσιν	τοὺς	παῖδας	τοὺς	ἐν	Βηθλεὲμ	καὶ	ἐν
all		the children		in	Bethlehem	and	in
G3956	G3588	G3816	G3588	G1722	G965	G2532	G1722
τοῖς	ὀρίοις	αὐτῆς	ἀπὸ	διετοῦς	καὶ	κατωτέρω	κατὰ
G3588	the coasts	thereof	from	two years old	and	under	according
	G3725	G846	G575	G1332	G2532	G2736	G2596
τὸν	χρόνον	ὃν	ἠκρίβωσεν	παρὰ	τῶν	μάγων	
G3588	to the time	which	he had diligently enquired	of		the wise men	
	G5550	G3739	G198	G3844	G3588	G3097	

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 59:7** (Parallel theme): Their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed innocent blood: their thoughts are thoughts of iniquity; wasting and destruction are in their paths.

**Revelation 17:6** (Parallel theme): And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

**Isaiah 26:21** (Parallel theme): For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain.

**Proverbs 28:15** (Parallel theme): As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; so is a wicked ruler over the poor people.

**Genesis 49:7** (Parallel theme): Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel.

**Hosea 10:14** (Parallel theme): Therefore shall a tumult arise among thy people, and all thy fortresses shall be spoiled, as Shalman spoiled Beth-arbel in the day of battle: the mother was dashed in pieces upon her children.

**2 Kings 8:12** (Parallel theme): And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child.

**Daniel 3:13** (Parallel theme): Then Nebuchadnezzar in his rage and fury commanded to bring Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. Then they brought these men before the king.

**Judges 16:10** (Parallel theme): And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.