

Matthew 2:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

Analysis

Herod's consultation with chief priests and scribes—the religious experts—demonstrates that biblical knowledge alone does not produce saving faith. These men could quote Scripture accurately but remained hostile to the Messiah Scripture proclaimed. This illustrates the Reformed doctrine that saving faith requires divine illumination of the heart, not merely intellectual comprehension.

Historical Context

The Sanhedrin was the Jewish ruling council composed of chief priests (Sadducees) and scribes (mostly Pharisees). They could accurately identify Bethlehem as Messiah's birthplace from Micah 5:2, yet rejected Jesus when He came.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. How can someone have extensive Bible knowledge yet lack saving faith in Christ?
2. What is the difference between intellectual assent to biblical truth and heart transformation by the Holy Spirit?

Interlinear Text

καὶ συναγαγὼν πάντας τοὺς ἀρχιερεῖς καὶ γραμματεῖς
And together all the chief priests And scribes
G2532 G4863 G3956 G3588 G749 G2532 G1122

τοῦ λαοῦ ἐπινθάνετο παρ' αὐτῶν ποῦ ὁ Χριστὸς
of the people he demanded of them where Christ
G3588 G2992 G4441 G3844 G846 G4226 G3588 G5547

γεννᾶται
should be born
G1080

Additional Cross-References

Acts 6:12 (Parallel theme): And they stirred up the people, and the elders, and the scribes, and came upon him, and caught him, and brought him to the council,

Acts 23:9 (Parallel theme): And there arose a great cry: and the scribes that were of the Pharisees' part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.