

**Conditions in Matthew chapter two were TERRIBLE because...**

Describing &amp; Discussing

*Mark the lines below as correct (C), incorrect (X), or partly correct (▲). Most, but not all, are correct.***( ) things were not like in Luke chapter two?**

- ( ) there is much more joy in Luke chapter two?
- ( ) there are more godly people in Luke chapter two?
- ( ) there is more about salvation in Luke chapter two?

**( ) Herod the Great was terrible?**

- ( ) Herod tried to kill Jesus?
- ( ) Herod's was brutal (2:16-18)?
- ( ) Herod was selfish and defensive?
- ( ) Herod was a religious hypocrite (2:4-8)?
- ( ) Herod's son, Archelaus, was terrible as well?
- ( ) God allowed Herod to do whatever evil he wished?
- ( ) God allowed Herod to do many terrible things?
- ( ) Herod was like evil world leaders today?
- ( ) Herod was controlled by the devil (4:9)?

**( ) Jesus was not yet reigning?**

- ( ) Jesus was in exile in Egypt?
- ( ) Jesus' ministry had not yet begun?
- ( ) Jesus was just a lowly Nazarene (2:23)?

**applications**

Doing

**Dr. Ed** (on Matthew chapter two being very dark)

Aside from chapter 27 which is about the Crucifixion, I think chapter two is the darkest chapter in Matthew. Many terrible things were done. So many worksheet lines are about why this was the case. One of the main points is that it was because **Herod the Great was terrible**. Let's talk about him and other factors.

**Rex** (on Herod the Great's great wickedness)

King Herod the Great was a monster for sure, but I still find him fascinating. So I quickly marked nearly every line about him as correct. **He was selfish, brutal, hypocritical, and much like evil world leaders today**, especially the dictators. Yet history tells us that his son, Archelaus, may have been even more brutal. The Romans quickly removed Archelaus and things improved somewhat under various Roman governors. **Leadership makes a difference!**

**Frank** (on the need for godly people)

Really?! Then why do we **always** seem to have bad leaders? Was Pilate far better than the various Herods? I don't think so. Frankly, I believe we have bad leaders because people are bad. Look at the cities today which have the most crime. The leaders **and** the people are both bad. Luke chapter two is much better than Matthew chapter two, because **there are far more godly people in Luke two**. **Godly people make a difference!**

**Socie** (on social differences in Matthew and Luke)

The godly people in Luke chapters one and two were lower or middle class, but the ungodly in Matthew chapter two were in the upper class. The corrupt elite and the pious common people were in the same city at the same time, but the two Gospels show that the situation was very different in their respective circles. As a result, Matthew chapter two is terrible, but Luke chapter two is terrific. **Social status often makes a difference.**

**Dr. Ed** (on why evil appears earlier in Matthew)

Let's not forget that the wise men were upper class but still godly. Besides, there is another key factor involved. Matthew focused on Jesus as the true King more than Luke did. So the violent nature of the opposition appears earlier in Matthew. **There is more about salvation and joy in the early chapters of Luke**, and **it is salvation which makes the greatest difference.**

**Theo** (on God allowing evil to continue)

The most interesting worksheet lines to me are those about what the Lord allowed Herod to do. It is wrong theologically to say that God allowed the king to do whatever evil he wished, but it is correct to say that **the Lord allowed Herod to do many terrible things**. There were and continue to be limits, but it is difficult to understand why so much evil exists. The brutal murder of innocent children continues to this day. **People do not seem to be much different.**

“. . .and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.”

Isa. 9:6

**Dr. Ed** (on the ending of evil when Christ returns)

When the Lord returns and reigns, most evil will end. That day is not yet with us. So the terrible governmental conditions on display in Matthew chapter two are **not** unusual. The true King has come, but he was rejected. So even the best of governments are far from perfect because **Jesus is not yet reigning on earth** (6:10).

**Rex** (on evil leaders and the devil's control)

That's for sure, but does this mean that the devil controls world leaders? He seemed to claim to do so in Mat. 4:9. Personally, I marked the worksheet line about his control as only partly correct.

**Dr. Ed** (on the Holy Spirit's work as Restrainer)

During the present age, the Holy Spirit restrains the work of the evil one. So things are not as terrible as they would be otherwise. **The gospel makes a difference!** So the devil works overtime, including through evil leaders like Herod, to try to keep people from hearing it. That's why Paul asked for prayer in 2 Thes. 3:1-2.

“For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains will do so until He is taken out of the way.”

2 Thes. 2:7