

## The Real World

*In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning,  
Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.—  
Matthew 2:18*

Often Christmas pageants include the visit of the wise men. This verse presents a part of the story that is seldom included. For the ruler of land where Christ was born was an evil sovereign.

The magi were not religious leaders looking for a savior. They were astrologers attending to their work. They were watching the stars, when they saw a very unusual star: a star that signaled a unique and momentous birth.

The wise men followed the star to Jerusalem looking for the baby born King of the Jews. When the luxurious caravan arrived in town, the wise men sought the logical place for the infant king. They went to the palace and there encountered Herod.

They probably had no idea that Herod was a madman who had even put to death his own family members. The people of Jerusalem had suffered much under his rule and were frightened at the mention of his name.

Herod directed the magi to Bethlehem so that they could locate the child and return to him that he might eliminate this threat to his rule. After worshiping the Lord, the wise men realized Herod's plot and left by another route.

When Herod realized he had been tricked he reacted violently and "slew all the children that were in Bethlehem and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under (Matt. 2:16)."

We joyfully remember how the wise men outsmarted Herod and how Jesus and his family escaped to safety in a foreign land. But even in the joyous story of Christ's birth, Satan is working to bring excruciating sorrow to mankind.

The story of Christ's birth marks his entrance into the world we know too well; the world of humanity's despair and destructive ways. Christ came into a world marked by painful suffering—a world in need to the Savior.