



THE DOWNRIVER DISCIPLES PROJECT

explores what the Bible says about the

MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

The account of the Massacre of the Innocents is recorded in the [Gospel](#) (1) of [Matthew](#) (2) and outlines the efforts of [King Herod](#) (3) to kill the newborn [Messiah](#) (4) in order to retain his power base in Judea.

Herod had previously told the [visiting Magi](#) (5), "Go and search carefully for the Child. As soon as you find Him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship Him" ([Matthew 2:8](#)). The power hungry ruler Herod had no such intention.

Once Herod realized that the Magi had outsmarted him, he broke out into a rage. He gave the order to murder all male boys in Bethlehem who were two years old and under, so as to ensure the newborn King was included in the slaughter.

As the account of [The Holy Family's](#) (6) [Flight into Egypt](#) (7) tells us, Herod's plan to kill the [infant Jesus](#) (8) was thwarted. An [Angel of the Lord](#) (9) appeared to [Joseph](#) (10) in a [dream](#) (11), telling him to take his family and escape into Egypt. They remained there until they were told of Herod's death.

There is no [biblical](#) (12) mention of how many young boys were murdered as a result of Herod's order, but the reference to [Jeremiah 31:15](#) in the account's conclusion infers the mass execution was carried out.

Footnotes appear below. Modifications are welcome at goodnews@downriverdisciples.com.

FOOTNOTES:

- (1) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-four-gospels>
- (2) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/matthew>
- (3) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/herod>
- (4) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/jesus-the-messiah>
- (5) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/magi-visit-the-messiah>
- (6) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-holy-family>
- (7) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/flight-into-egypt>
- (8) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-birth-of-jesus>
- (9) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/angel-of-the-lord>
- (10) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/joseph>
- (11) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/dreams-of-the-bible>
- (12) <https://www.downriverdisciples.com/the-good-news>

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