

– Matthew 2.12-23 –
4th Sunday of Advent, Dec 23, 2018
Joseph and Family Flee Herod

Matthew 2.12 Then, being divinely warned in a dream that they [i.e., the Magi] should not return to Herod, they departed for their own country another way. 13 Now when the Magi had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him.” 14 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, 15 and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, “Out of Egypt I called My Son.” 16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was deceived by the wise men, was exceedingly angry; and he sent forth and put to death all the male children who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the wise men. 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying: 18 “A voice was heard in Ramah, Lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, Refusing to be comforted, Because they are no more.” 19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, 20 saying, “Arise, take the young Child and His mother, and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the young Child’s life are dead.” 21 Then he arose, took the young Child and His mother, and came into the land of Israel. 22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea instead of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. And being warned by God in a dream, he turned aside into the region of Galilee. 23 And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, “He shall be called a Nazarene.”

* **Why** does Herod want the Magi to report back the identity and location of the born-king of the Jews? (vs 16).

* **How** does God protect his Son, Jesus? (vs 13-15, 19-23)

* **The** fact that Jesus is fully God doesn’t change the fact that he is fully _____, and thus came into the world as a _____ baby, who is completely dependent on _____ to care for and protect it. The story of the baby Jesus is mostly the story of the _____ who must care for the baby. Apart from their story, the baby really has no _____. None of this helplessness and humility was too low for God to _____ on our behalf. God could have sent _____ to protect Jesus and stop Herod, but he didn’t. He used _____ people, just like _____. We should never take for granted the _____, for there is where God does his most amazing work.

* **What** does God tell Joseph to do in the dream? (vs 13)

* **What** does Joseph do? (vs 14-15)

* **How** does Joseph show himself to be a great man? How is he like Joseph of the OT, and how is he different?

* **How** do we see this same pattern with John the Baptist and Elijah?

Mal 4.5 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

Lk 1.17 [The angel to Zacharias:] “He will also go before Him in the spirit and power of Elijah, ‘to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children,’ and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”

Mt 11.14 “And if you are willing to accept it, John himself is Elijah who was to come.”

Jn 10.41 ... “While John performed no sign, yet everything John said about this man was true.”

* **Why** do we tend not to take Joseph and John as seriously as we should?

Mt 11.11 “Assuredly, I say to you, among those born of women there has not risen one greater the John the Baptist ...”

* **Egyptian** territory was _____ miles south of Bethlehem, which was _____ days journey, and Alexandria, where there was a sizable Jewish population, was _____ miles south, or a _____ week journey.

* **They** stay in Egypt anywhere from a _____ or two up to a _____.

* **Why** is Joseph afraid to go back to Judea, and why is Galilee considered a better option? (vs 22)

* **Nazareth** was about ____ miles north of Bethlehem, around ____ miles north of Egyptian territory, or ____ miles north of Alexandria, so Joseph and family traveled a minimum of ____ days, and perhaps as much as ____ days.

* **Why** was Galilee looked down upon by the Jews?

1Kings 9.10 Now ... when Solomon had built ... the house of the LORD and the king's house 11 (Hiram the king of Tyre had supplied Solomon with cedar and cypress and gold, as much as he desired), that King Solomon then gave Hiram twenty cities in the land of Galilee. 12 Then Hiram went from Tyre to see the cities which Solomon had given him, but they did not please him. 13 So he said, "What kind of cities are these which you have given me, my brother?" And he called them the land of Cabul [i.e., good for nothing], as they are to this day.

* **Galilee** was the first region of Israel taken into Assyrian _____ (2Kings 15.29), and the Assyrians re-seeded the area with _____ (2Kings 17). So the Jews regarded the area as a _____ water, filled with _____ water, from where nothing good was likely to come.

* **Nazareth** was a village of less than _____ people. It was smaller than even Bethlehem. Further, it had no pedigree; it didn't even _____ in OT times.

* **To** call someone a Nazarene was an _____, even by Galilean standards.

John 1.45 Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph." 46 And Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

* **How** do we see this prophetic theme in Isaiah 53.1-3?

– Vs 1: "Who has believed our message? And to whom has the arm of the LORD been revealed?"

– Vs 2: "For he grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground."

– Vs 2-3: ... "He has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon him, nor appearance that we should be attracted to him. 3 He was despised and forsaken of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and like one from whom men hide their face, he was despised, and we did not esteem him."

* **By** sending his Son up into the backwater, Nazareth of Galilee, God was _____ his Son, allowing him to grow up _____, away from the attention of the Jewish and Roman authorities in Jerusalem. And God was also ensuring that anyone who believed in his Son, would not do so because it was the _____ thing to do, but because the Holy Spirit was working _____ in their hearts, making them willing to count the cost and lose their life for Christ's sake.

* **How** do we see God doing something similar with Israel when they first went down into Egypt?

Gen 46.33 So it shall be, when Pharaoh calls you and says, 'What is your occupation?' 34 that you shall say, 'Your servants' occupation has been with livestock from our youth even till now, both we and also our fathers,' that you may dwell in the land of Goshen; for every shepherd is an abomination to the Egyptians." ... 47.3 Then Pharaoh said to his brothers, "What is your occupation?" And they said to Pharaoh, "Your servants are shepherds, both we and also our fathers." ... 5 Then Pharaoh spoke to Joseph, saying, ... 6 "[H]ave your father and brothers dwell in the best of the land ... in the land of Goshen. And if you know any competent men among them, then make them chief herdsmen over my livestock." 7 Then Joseph brought in his father Jacob and set him before Pharaoh; and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.