

Matthew 2:13-18
God's Purpose Stands

God protects His Son by sending Him to Egypt—2:13

- 1) ¹³ *Now, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared*
 - a) When? *when they* (the Magi) *had departed,*
 - b) How does the angel appear? *in a dream to Joseph,* (cf. 1:20; 2:19)
- 2) What does the angel say? *saying, “Having arisen, [an attendant ptc.; functioning as a “piggy-back” command]*
 - a) What is Joseph commanded to do?
 - i) Companions—*take* [aor. act. impv. παραλαμβάνω] *the child and his mother*
 - (1) The order is significant. The most important is listed first.
 - ii) Destination—*and flee* [pres. act. impv. φεύγω] *to Egypt,*
 - (1) A relatively short trip of about 75 miles to the border (similar to our distance to Marshall, Willmar, Owatonna, etc.).
 - (2) There were approximately 1 million Jews in Egypt at this time.
 - (3) The gifts of the Magi would help finance this journey.
 - iii) Duration—*and stay* [pres. act. impv. εἰμί] *there until I tell you,*
 - (1) Not just until news of Herod's death.
 - b) Why is Joseph to do this?
 - i) *because Herod is going to seek the child to destroy Him.”*
 - ii) Similar to Exodus 1:16
 - iii) Contrary to the teaching of some, it is not always wrong to escape danger.

God lovingly preserves His Son by enabling Joseph to obey His commands—2:14-15

- 1) What does Joseph do? (cf. 2:13) (notice obedience to **all** God told him)
 - a) ¹⁴ *And having risen,*
 - b) *he took the child and his mother by night*
 - c) *and departed to Egypt,*
 - d) ¹⁵ *and he remained there until the end* [τελευτή] *of Herod,* (cf. 2:19)
 - i) Herod died 1-2 years after Jesus' birth.
 - ii) Josephus describes his death as being particularly horrible.
- 2) Theological interpretation (literal prophecy plus type/example)
 - a) Why not go East with the Magi? Or some other direction?
 - b) *in order that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through* [διά] *the prophet, saying “Out of Egypt I called my son.”* (cf. from the Hebrew of Hosea 11:1)
 - c) Parallels:
 - i) In both cases, the trip to Egypt was to escape danger.
 - ii) In both cases, the return was important to the providential history of the nation of Israel.
 - iii) In both cases, the emphasis is on God's preserving love.

Herod responds in anger—2:16-18

- 1) ¹⁶ *Then Herod,*

- a) What precipitated this next event? *having perceived that he was mocked* [aor. pass. ind. ἐμπαίζω] *by the Magi*,
- 2) What is Herod's angry, ruthless response?
 - a) He blames others—*was exceedingly angry* [aor. pass. ind. θυμώω],
 - i) A tyrant views the slightest neglect of his expectations as the greatest of insults.
 - ii) The Magi weren't deceived by him, they didn't help him destroy the child
 - b) He lashes out—*he killed* [aor. act. ind. ἀναίρέω] *all the male children*
 - i) This fulfills the prophecy God revealed through the angel in 2:13.
 - ii) When did Herod do this? *and having sent forth* [aor. act. ptc. ἀποστέλλω],
 - (1) This was government-sanctioned infanticide.
 - iii) In what locations? *who were in Bethlehem and in all its districts*,
 - iv) What age boys? *from two years old and under*,
 - (1) *according to the time he had ascertained* [aor. act. ind. ἀκριβόω] (cf. 2:7) *from the Magi*.
 - v) Approximately how many little boys lost their lives? Lower estimates range from 6 to 12.
 - c) Note the absurdity of refusing to believe. Jesus is God's Messiah, but Herod thinks he can kill him?
- 3) Theological interpretation—2:17-18 (literal prophecy plus application) ¹⁷ *Then was fulfilled what was spoken by [ὑπό] Jeremiah the prophet, saying,* ¹⁸ *“A voice was heard in Ramah, funeral dirge and weeping and great wailing, Rachel weeping for her children, and not wanting to be comforted because they are no more.”* (cf. apparently Matthew's own translation of the Hebrew from Jeremiah 31:15)
 - a) Parallels:
 - i) Rachel, the ultimate symbol of motherhood in Israel, represents the mothers in Bethlehem mourning their sons.
 - (1) The initial prophecy referred to suffering associated with the Babylonian captivity.
 - (2) The tears are for those who are left behind and who are slaughtered.
 - ii) In both cases, sorrow came during a time of Israel's religious apostasy and oppression.
 - iii) But despite the grief, there is hope! (cf. Jeremiah 31:16-17) Hope has come in the person of Jesus Christ!

Take-home truth: God's purpose stands despite the free decisions of sinful people.