



Daily Devotionals

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MATTHEW 2:13-23 THE FAMILIAR STORY

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, “take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.”

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.

¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

¹⁹ After Herod died, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt ²⁰ and said, “Get up, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who were trying to take the child’s life are dead.”

²¹ So he got up, took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. ²² But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning in Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there. Having been warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee, ²³ and he went and lived in a town called Nazareth. So was fulfilled what was said through the prophets: “He will be called a Nazarene.”

The history of Israel as God’s son was recapitulated in Jesus the incarnate Son of God. Both were sent by God and provided for in Egypt. Then they were called out of Egypt and brought back into the Promised Land in order to bless the world with the knowledge of God. In the cases of both Jesus and Moses the worldly powers had tried to kill them, but they were spared. Jesus, like Moses was to be the deliverer of God’s people from bondage and slavery. As Moses gave the Law to Israel, Jesus would be the Word of God to the people of God. Jesus was protected by the disdain of the Jews of Judea for Nazareth, just as Moses was protected from the Pharaoh by the Egyptian disdain for shepherds. In addition, both their locations were isolated from the mainstream of national life.

St. Matthew goes to great effort to connect the Old and New Testament stories for us. There is one God with one plan for the salvation of the world. Just as he chose one people to be his subjects and witness to the world, he sent his one and only Son to be the one way to reconciliation with him.

When we see the parallels between God’s acts with regard to Israel and Jesus, we must not stop there. Rather we need to extrapolate that divine pattern to the present in order to realize what God would have us do as the Church. As Christ’s body we are to be the bearers of the Gospel, God’s Word, to the nations. As with Israel, so too with the Church, God’s people are to be witnesses of God’s nature through the testimony of their life of obedience to him. In that way we become the vehicle of the message of redemption of the world from bondage to sin and death and the portal of entry into the Promised Land – the kingdom of Heaven.

Bolster my faith as a member of your Church, O God, so that I might follow you and encourage others to follow you into your kingdom. Give me the strength to withstand the opposition of those who oppose you and the endurance and courage to stand firm in the midst of violence and darkness. Keep me ever mindful of the fact that you are the redeeming and all powerful God whose will cannot be thwarted by any power in creation. Amen.

Chuck+