

- and under. We note that the word “*children*” is masculine.
- 4) He based the age of the boys on the information he received from the wise men.

**b. The fulfillment of prophecy (v.17-18)**

- 1) Once again, Matthew finds in this a fulfillment of a prophecy spoken years earlier by Jeremiah.
- 2) He refers to (Jeremiah 31:15) "*Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not.*"
- 3) Jeremiah was not speaking directly about Christ, yet it was applied to Christ as a dual prophecy.
- 4) Since Bethlehem was a small village and those villages around Bethlehem would not have been large, the number of baby boys that were killed was probably not huge. At the same time, we can only imagine the pain and sorrow of each home when soldiers came and snatched each baby boy and killed him.

📖 *We live in a wicked world ruled by many godless people. The day may come when we too will face merciless persecution for our faith in Christ. When that time comes, we must take comfort in God's promises like the promise found in (James 1:12) "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation [or trials]: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*

**Conclusion:** What have we learned from this portion of the Christmas Story? Well, we learned that Joseph was a man of godly character and that we too need godly character. We learned that when God speaks to our hearts we ought to obey without hesitation and trust Him to meet our needs. We learned that though we may face persecution God will care for us.

**Song:** God Owns the Cattle

# Christmas Story (pt 9) Egypt

25 December 2016 PM – Matthew 2:13-18 – Christmas16 – Scott Childs

**Introduction:** Preparing for a long trip is always stressful. Thankful it is rare that we must take such a trip with just a minutes' notice. That is exactly what happened with Joseph and Mary.

**Transition:** In this section of the Christmas Story we learn about a sudden move and a sickening murder, yet even in this we can find practical principles for our lives.

## 1. The Angelic Warning (v.13)

### a. The Magi departed.

- 1) The word Matthew uses to describe this departure means to withdraw as one does when he leaves a room.
- 2) We do not know how long the Magi stayed with Joseph and Mary, but it must not have been very long.
  - a) It was not long enough for curious people in Jerusalem to find them.
  - b) It was not long enough for jealous Herod to suspect anything and send soldiers to investigate.

### b. The angel of the Lord appeared.

- 1) Evidently the night after the wise men left, Joseph had a dream and in it an angel spoke to him.
- 2) The angel's first word to Joseph was "*arise*". He was to get right up and act. He must not hesitate. Within minutes of awaking after his dream, Joseph awakened Mary and they hastily gathered their few belongings and baby Jesus and left town without telling a soul.
- 3) Joseph was to take the young child and His mother and flee into Egypt.
  - a) We have previously established that baby Jesus must have been between 40 days old and 2 years old.
  - b) Note that the angel did not call Jesus Joseph's son but the son of Mary.
  - c) They must *flee*. This word means to seek safety by flight. This is not an airplane flight but to hurry away.
  - d) The angel told them to flee to Egypt. In his book *The*

*Christ of the Gospels*, J. W. Shepard states, "The nearest place of safety to which Joseph could flee with his family was Egypt, to the nearest borders of which was a distance of seventy-five miles [125 km]. Tradition says they penetrated more than a hundred miles [166 km] within the country and abode for a year in a Jewish colony, in the village of Motorea near Leviantapolis, the site of a great Jewish Temple built in 150 B. C. There were more than a million Jews in Egypt at this time, and the colony was highly respectable and influential in the country." P. 40

- 4) The angel also told Joseph that King Herod would seek to destroy the young child.

✚ *Joseph must have been a man of godly strong character. He was sensitive to God's leading his life. He kept a level head and did not panic. He shouldered the responsibility with courage. Obviously, he developed that godly character in his youth. This is a challenge to parents to earnestly seek to develop biblical godly character in the lives of your children. It is also a challenge to young people to strive to develop that kind of character. Biblical godly character never develops accidentally.*

## 2. The Departure for Egypt (v.14-15)

### a. No time was wasted (v.14)

- 1) Note the phrase "*when he arose*". The grammar indicates that he was awakened after the dream and got right up.
- 2) He immediately took baby Jesus and Mary while it was still *night* and departed into Egypt.
- 3) God has not recorded for us any details about their trip to Egypt. Just to reach the border would involve 3-5 days of walking. If they went far into Egypt, it would have been much longer.

### b. Joseph set up temporary house in Egypt (v.15)

- 1) They arrived in Egypt and remained there until King Herod died. Shepard states, "*Herod died of a loathsome disease in 4 B. C., a short time after the perpetration of this terrible crime [i.e., killing the babies].*" *Ibid.* p. 42

- 2) Isn't it wonderful the way the Lord had just prepared Joseph for this long trip and stay in Egypt? Joseph was about as poor as a slave, yet the Magi had just given them gold, frankincense and myrrh. These valuable items could be sold to pay for their expenses. God is never short of resources. (Psalms 50:10-12) "*For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills.*" (11) "*I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine.*" (12) "*If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.*"

- 3) Matthew points out that their trip to Egypt fulfilled an Old Testament prophecy by Hosea. (Hosea 11:1) "*When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*" On this **Dwight Pentecost** comments, "*Matthew saw Israel's history as a type of God's future dealing with His people. An Old Testament type is a prophecy, and Matthew used the historical incident as a prophetic type of what God would do in returning His exiled Son to the Land of Promise.*" *The Words & Works of Jesus Christ*, p. 70

✚ *Again we find the principle that when God speaks to our hearts about a needed action, we must not hesitate. We must obey right away. When we do God's will, He will always meet our needs.*

## 3. Herod Murdered the Babies (v.16-18)

### a. His wicked act (v.16)

- 1) Herod was a wicked and cruel man. Shepard reports, "*This wily Idumean King, now decrepit with seventy years of age and thirty-seven of cruel reign, had bathed his hands in the blood of three of his sons, his own wife, and many other kinsmen even, who happened to raise his suspicion and jealousy. He would spare no effort to destroy the infant JESUS.*" Shepard, p. 40
- 2) When he discovered that the wise men mocked him, he became exceedingly angry. The Magi had dared to obey God rather than man.
- 3) He ordered to put to death all the boy children in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas, from two years old