

The Journey to Nazareth

Matthew 2:13-23

Shadows of a prophecy to be fulfilled:

³⁴ "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed ³⁵ (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

(Luke 2:34-35)

The Threat is _____. (v. 13-15)

This is a genuine _____. If Herod succeeds in his monstrous plan, the child born King dies.

This is not a morality tale or fable. This is a faith-inspiring account of God's _____ to save and His _____ to carry it out.

Herod's evil was _____. (v. 16)

But as horrific as his evil was, it sprung from a far more malevolent source:

Rev. 12 reminds us that Herod was merely continuing a _____ that had raged since the beginning:

The dragon sweeps one-third of the stars from the sky (12:4).

Satan storms heaven and Michael, the archangel and protector of Israel, fights him and defeats him, retaining most of the angels, and hurling Satan down (Rev. 12:7-9).

The Christ child, now safe, shepherds the nations. He eventually ascends to heaven. The woman is in the desert, protected by the eagle (12:14-16). The Father preserves both the child and the woman.

And Satan is defeated again and again.

God's comfort is _____. (v. 17-18)

How do you comfort a weeping mother who has lost her toddler child? What hope can you offer "Rachel" who weeps inconsolably?

The answer is in the passage that Matthew knowingly quotes: Jeremiah 31.

Jeremiah 31 presents the reality of great pain, surrounded by the greater reality of great _____:

In 31:3, we are told of God's _____ and _____ towards His own.

Our circumstances do not _____ God nor _____ His love for us.

He _____ His love definitively in Christ! (Rom. 5:8)

And our great _____ – even as profound as what took place in Bethlehen – will ultimately be answered and displaced by His greater _____ (Jer. 31:31-34; Rom. 8:18)

God's Sovereignty is _____. (v. 19-23)

God graciously speaks to Joseph through a direct message and messenger: an _____.

Joseph faithfully _____ what he hears. He then exercises appropriate caution and wisdom by not returning to Judea, and instead settles in Nazareth.

In all Joseph's actions and responses (secondary causes), God is working _____ (primary cause) in both the _____ (His warnings and Joseph's compliance) as well as the _____ – carrying out His glorious act of _____.

In God's hands, Jesus was _____.

Jesus will be called a _____. (v. 23)

Ultimately, the family's move to Nazareth is another _____ that Jesus is the promised Messiah of the Old Testament. (Matt. 4:13-16; Isa. 9:1-2)

That Jesus was from Nazareth would be a cause of future _____ and derision (John 1:46).

But his growing up and beginning his ministry there would be another example of fulfilled prophecy (Isaiah 53:3) as one who was "despised, rejected, and not esteemed".

From a strictly human perspective, Jesus was an unlikely savior. Yet He was, is, and will ever be the hope of the world!

My Grateful Response ...