

Matthew's Gospel—Chapter 2

Part 2

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The Return to Nazareth: Matt 2:13-23:

- 1. Who was responsible for the people of Israel being in Egypt and also was a dreamer or an interpreter of dreams? (Hint: read Gen 37:1-11 and Gen 47:11)**

- 2. Key Themes from the Jewish Story:**
 - a. Read Ex 1:22-2:10. Who is this story about? How does this relate to our passage?

 - b. Read Acts 7:17-36. What did God send Moses to the Israelites to do?

 - c. Read Ex 4:18-22. Do you see any other similarities between the Moses story and our story in Matthew? What was Moses going to do when he arrived in Egypt? What might this imply Jesus is going to do as he is sent?

 - d. Look up Deut 18:18-19 and read the surrounding context. Peter quotes this in Acts 3:22-23 and Stephen in Acts 7:37. Read these as well. Look up Jn 7:37-41. The Jews were expecting a prophet like Moses. Is Matthew saying that Jesus is the prophet like Moses that was to come? What do these passages say the Prophet like Moses will do?

- e. Read Ex 12:29-42: This is part of the account of the Exodus. The last Plague was the death of the First Born. Note the language used in Pharaoh's words to Moses and Aaron in verse 31. What verses does it look similar to in Matthew 2?

- f. In the book of Exodus, Moses is saved through the water as an infant. This seems to foreshadow how he will later come to save his people through the water of the Red Sea. How is Jesus' story here in Matthew similar to Moses'?

- g. Does the rest of Matthew's Gospel present Jesus as a Prophet? Look up the word prophet in Matthew's Gospel. The easiest way to do this would be to go to Biblegateway.com. Look up the word prophet and choose to filter it for Matthew. You can also use BibleHub. Your teacher can help you to utilize this program. What do you find?

3. Herod wants to search and to "destroy" Jesus. Is there anyone else that wants to destroy Jesus later in the Gospel?

- a. Go to Biblegateway.com and lookup the word destroy in the RSV Translation. Filter your search with Matthew's Gospel (on the right side of the page). What do you find about who else wants to destroy Jesus?

- b. Matthew 2:20 says “the ones seeking the life of the child are dead.” Was Herod the only one who wanted Jesus dead?

4. “Out of Egypt I have called my son” (Hos 11:1). Read Hos 11:1.

- a. Who is "my son" in this passage? What event in Jewish History is this passage referring to? (Hint: Lookup Exodus 4:22-23; Exodus 12:30-33; Exodus 14:21-31):

- b. Why does Matthew quote this passage here in Chapter 2?

5. What are the first two chapters of Matthew Gospel saying? Is Jesus being identified with the people, Israel or their leader, Moses?

6. Read Deut 34:10-11. What does the book of Hebrews say about Jesus and Moses? Read Hebrews 3:1-7.

7. Matthew applies a quote from Jer 31:15 to the Massacre of the Innocents.

- a. Read all of Jeremiah 31 and summarize the major themes.

- b. Who is Rachel? Read Gen 29:6,28; Gen 30:22-24; Gen 31:34,35 and Gen 35:18,19. The last passage refers to where Rachel was buried. One Biblical interpretation, associates Rachel's tomb with the area of the town of Ramah, North of Jerusalem. Traditionally, since the 4th Century AD, pilgrims have associated Rachel's Tomb with a site South of Jerusalem, close to Bethlehem. In either case, Ramah is in the general area.
- c. Jeremiah 31 was written during the Babylonian Exile when the Jewish Temple was destroyed and most of the Jews were carried off to Babylon. At the time of the Babylonian Exile, Ramah was the place where the prisoners of Judah and Benjamin were gathered before they were exiled to Babylon (Jeremiah 40.1). The Prophet Jeremiah was one of the prisoners, but was set free. As was said above, Rachael's tomb was in/near Ramah. Explain the connection between Rachel and the exiles sent to Babylon.
- d. Is Jeremiah 31 dismal or hopeful?
- e. Why do you think that Matthew associates this passage with the Massacre of the Innocents?
8. **Verse 23 says: "He will be called a Nazarene." Matthew says that this comes from one of the prophets. Scholars don't know for sure which prophet he is referring to.**
- a. One possibility is Judges 13:5. Read this. Who is this describing and what is the context?
- b. One problem is that the Greek word for Nazirite is Naxiraios and the Greek for Nazarene in Matthew is Nazoraios.

- c. Another possibility: Supposedly, the root for the Hebrew word "branch" (*neser*) is similar to "Nazareth." Look up Is 11:1-9. This is a passage about the Messiah, who would be in the line of David.
- 1) Who is Jesse in the passage? (Hint: look up Mat 1:6).

 - 2) Read Rev 22:16. Is this saying that Jesus is a King in the line of David (the offspring of David) or is it saying more?