

# ADVENT

## ADVENT WEEK 3: MATTHEW 2:13-23

### Community Group Study Guide - Week of December 20

This week we wrapped up our Advent series by looking at the conclusion to Matthew's account of the Christmas story. Again, we see Jesus' birth and the events surrounding it as the fulfillment of ancient prophetic expectations.

Matthew 2:13-23 is the darkest chapter of the Christmas story. After being tricked by the wise men, King Herod flies into a rage and orders the slaughter of Bethlehems children. All the boys under the age of two are put to death by the hands of this wicked King. Joseph, however, is warned in a dream and their family flee to sojourn in Egypt until after Herod's death.

This brutal and horrific story is strange to us, but the Holy Spirit revealed to Matthew that these events all fulfilled what He had written by the Prophets long ago. Matthew points out three prophetic fulfillments in this passage. Each of these three affirm Jesus' identity as the Messiah, while also revealing part of His purpose. When the context of these prophetic expectations is examined they make it clear that Jesus had come to lead a new and better Exodus, to establish a new and better covenant, and to be a new and better king.

God had delivered Israel from Egypt and established a covenant with them, but it was a covenant they continuously failed to keep. As a reproof they fell under the curse of the covenant and were sent into exile. Jesus was preparing to lead a new exodus. His exodus would not deliver His people from Pharaoh, Babylon, or Rome, but from Satan, Sin, and Death. He was also preparing to establish a new covenant. Not a covenant in stone that they would fail to keep, but a covenant in His blood that would keep them. He would write His law upon their hearts and put His Spirit within them. Jesus had also come to be their true king. Not a king like Herod who would cling to his power and wield his authority to serve himself, even when that meant killing the innocent. Jesus would be a King who was willing to set aside His power, and wield His authority to serve His subject, even when that meant dying for the guilty, which he did for His church. This is good news for all those who are waiting in Advent. Like Rachel, our mourning will turn to joy because we know we will never truly face exile again, and God as our Good Shepherd will not fail to lead us safely back to our true home with Him for all of eternity.

### DISCUSSION GOALS

#### Head

To know that Jesus came to establish a new and better exodus, covenant, and kingship.

#### Heart

To trust that in Christ we will never experience true exile again, and that we are being guided by the Good Shepherd the rest of our lives.

#### Hands

To constantly remind ourselves of the grace that God extended to us by enlivening our hearts to love Jesus Christ while we were slaves to our sin.

### ANNOUNCEMENTS

#### In-Person Worship Services

THIS Sunday, December 27 at 9:30AM and 11:30AM.

**Please go to <https://brookline.mosaicboston.com/> to sign up to serve on the Mini Mo or Usher Team.**

We will hold **Christmas Eve Service** on **December 24 at 5PM**. This is open to the public.

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

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## **Read Matthew 2:13-23**

1. What stood out to you about the text or sermon this week? Did you find anything particularly challenging, encouraging, convicting, or compelling?
2. What longings or desires point us to the need for deliverance, freedom, or an exodus?
3. In what ways did Israel's exodus foreshadow the true Exodus that Jesus would accomplish?
4. What are some practical ways that you've experienced freedom in Christ that you did not have before Jesus saved you?
5. **Read Jeremiah 31:10-17 and 31-34.** What stands out as you read these passages? How do they deepen our understanding of Matthew 2:17-19?
6. Why is it important for Christmas to have assurance of their salvation? How can we have assurance of our salvation?
7. How does Jesus satisfy our longing for a good and powerful king? How does his rule inform the way we steward the leadership he gives us?
8. What stands out to you about the different ways people in Matthew's Gospel have responded to Jesus' identity? Why does it make sense that Jesus' identity would evoke very passionate responses?
9. How has Matthew's Gospel most connected with you this advent season, what has God been teaching you this Christmas, or what are some areas you are hoping to grow in this coming year?