Dependence on God's Direction
Matthew 2:13-23; Luke 2:39

The Warning of God
Matthew 2:13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. **14** When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: **15** And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.

Listen for the Voice of God
- Soon after the wise men departed, Joseph received a warning from the angel of the Lord about the danger coming to his family. – Consider God's warnings immediately and intentionally.
- God knows all things, and His warnings consider the evil thoughts and hearts of others.
    - Hebrews 4:13 – Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things *are* naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.
    - Psalm 147:5 – Great *is* our Lord, and of great power: His understanding *is* infinite.
- The command of God required urgency.
- Flee means to escape. Therefore, the Lord, not convenience, determines the pace we move at.
- Egypt served as a place for Joseph to represent God, not his long-term residence.
    - 2 Corinthians 5:20 – Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech *you* by us: we pray *you* in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.
- Faithfulness is required to follow God's will and wait on God's next steps.

Leave with the Vehicle of God
- The family's night travel emphasizes that Joseph did not waste time obeying the command.
- Joseph had to lead his family faithfully, and the family had to trust his call to leave in the middle of the night with no sign of danger.
    - Psalm 115:11 – Ye that fear the Lord, trust in the Lord: He *is* their help and their shield.
    - Proverbs 3:5 – Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding.
- Notice the family was faithful to travel by night and wait until Herod's death.
- The constant changes the young family was facing left them with a few ways to view their situation.

Long for the Victory of God
- <u>This is the first of three</u> times God uses Herod's evil to fulfill prophecy in this passage.
    - Psalm 76:10 – Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: The remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.
    - Hosea 11:1 – When Israel *was* a child, then I loved him, And called my son out of Egypt.

The Wickedness without God

Matthew 2:16 Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Beth-lehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men. **17** Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, **18** In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping *for* her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not.

Pride Produces Anger

- Obedience to God mocks evil intentions.
- The evil heart that Herod operated from comes in many forms.
    - Galatians 5:19-21 – **19** Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are *these*; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, **20** Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, **21** Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told *you* in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.
- Filthy attitudes toward Christ result in corrupt actions toward Christ.
- Anger that stems from evil has an obvious beginning but lacks a clear end.
- The persecution of Christ began when He was young, and that persecution has trickled down to His followers.
    - Philippians 1:29 – For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;
    - 2 Timothy 3:12 – Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.
    - 1 Peter 4:12-13 – **12** Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: **13** But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Position Provides Access

- After the wise men claimed the King of the Jews was born (Matthew 2:2), Herod tried to determine the child's approximate age (Matthew 2:8) to gather information about a potential threat to his pride.
- Herod had roughly twenty to thirty male children killed in an attempt to eliminate the threat to his throne.

Prophets Predict Agony

- This is the second of the three prophecies fulfilled through Herod's rage.
    - 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.
- Rama was near Bethlehem and is associated with Samuel. (1 Samuel 19:18, 25:1)
- The intense mourning here is compared to the sorrow Rachel experienced when she died during childbirth.
    - Genesis 35:18 – And it came to pass, as her soul was in departing, (for she died) that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.

The Waiting on God

Matthew 2:19 But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, **20** Saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel: for they are dead which sought the young child's life. **21** And he arose, and took the young child and his mother, and came into the land of Israel. **22** But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judaea in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither: notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee: **23** And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene.

Luke 2:39 And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own city Nazareth.

Fervent in Prayer

- After Joseph, Mary, and Jesus had been in Egypt for six years, Herod died.
- God's enemies may seem powerful, but God will ultimately prevail!
- Waiting on the Lord is limitless, but the angel's message did not fail (Matthew 2:13).
    - Psalm 27:14 – Wait on the Lord: Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord.
    - Isaiah 40:31 – But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew *their* strength; They shall mount up with wings as eagles; They shall run, and not be weary; *And* they shall walk, and not faint.
- Joseph had the privilege of receiving the angel's message, but that came with the responsibility to obey those directions.

Forthright in Prayer

- Joseph again got his family and began to travel as God led.
- God led them each step of the way to keep them close to God, faithful to God, and encouraged by only seeing what God intended. – Many times, discouragement comes when we have too much information without knowledge of how to apply those things to our lives.
    - Proverbs 3:5-6 – **5** Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; And lean not unto thine own understanding. **6** In all thy ways acknowledge him, And he shall direct thy paths.
    - Isaiah 30:21 – And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This *is* the way, walk ye in it, When ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.
- Therefore, God leads each step of the way to ensure clear instruction for each trial we face.
    - Psalm 34:19 – Many *are* the afflictions of the righteous: But the Lord delivereth him out of them all.

Faithfulness in Prayer

- Mark 1:9 – And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.
- John 1:45-46 – **45** Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph. **46** And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.