

The Forgotten Jesus Podcast

S3E29

What Is Jesus Doing In Egypt? - (Matthew 2:17-18)

Description – Why did Joseph, Mary and Jesus flee to Egypt? Why not flee to the lands in the North like Syria, or to Asia Minor? Today we'll examine this and what Lament looks like in the Bible.

Today we're continuing on looking at the comparisons between Moses and Jesus in Egypt.

Remember, one of the key themes in Matthew is that Jesus is the new/better/superior Moses. A deliverer for God's people.

Last time we talked about evil King Herod who put to death all the sons 2 and under, scholars estimate it could have been at least 20 boys killed.

Matthew 2:17-18

¹⁷ Then what was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet was fulfilled: ¹⁸ A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children; and she refused to be consoled, because they are no more.

This is a direct quote from Jeremiah 31:15

It's a figurative picture of Rachel weeping over the people who in Jeremiah's day were going off to exile in Babylon. Matthew quotes it here to show that Jesus and his family are being driven from the land, from their people, into exile in Egypt.

Matthew and Luke have different accounts of the birth of Jesus. Why is that? Matthew's audience that he's writing to is a Jewish / Hebrew audience. They know the story of the Exodus, the violence, the weeping, the lament.

Luke's audience is a Greek / Roman audience. They don't know the Jewish backstory, the history of Israel.

What is lamenting? It's Israel's way of dealing with silence from God. It's the people crying out to God. It's more than grumbling and complaining, it's brokenness and honesty. It's when you share your heart with God over your situation and circumstances where it appears that God has abandoned you or forgotten you, but you still trust God.

Examples of Lament: Psalm 88, Psalm 22

In order to understand the Jeremiah connection, you have to understand the context of Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 31:15-17

¹⁵ This is what the LORD says: A voice was heard in Ramah, a lament with bitter weeping— Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted for her children because they are no more. ¹⁶ This is what the LORD says: Keep your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for the reward for your work will come— this is the LORD's declaration— and your children will return from the enemy's land. ¹⁷ There is hope for your future— this is the LORD's declaration— and your children will return to their own territory.

Matthew is trying to point out that Jesus, who is Israel's Messiah, is leaving the land, leaving the people, BUT, look at what happens after the guy lament. God responds. The Lord speaks and says there is hope for your future.

So Matthew is comforting the people. Just like Moses will come out of Egypt with the people and the nation, so too will Jesus come up out of Egypt with Joseph his father.

He's also fulfilling Hosea 11:1 - When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.

So what about the innocent boys who died in Bethlehem? How does God in his sovereignty allow them to die? These are the kind of questions that we don't have a quick, easy answer for. We all know someone who has been cut down early in life, or unexpectedly. But we know that when we grieve, we join with all of humanity and creation in grieving and weeping and longing for the establishment of Jesus and His Kingdom; where there will be no more grief, weeping, pain or tears; and everything will be made right.

Psalms 23:1-6

The centerpiece of this Psalm, whether you're in the green pastures or the darkest valley is that "God will be with me."

Remember, that's what Matthew bookends his Gospel with; that Jesus will be with us.

Matthew 1:22-23

²² Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ See, the virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, and they will name him Immanuel, which is translated "God is with us."