

sermon study guide

Speaker: Pastor Ashwin Ramani

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Sermon Title: Revealing Jesus: Man of Sorrows – Matthew Series: Part 3

IN - PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. What is your favourite Christmas tradition?
2. In your life, have you moved around or lived in the same place? What stimulation, stress, or security encourages you to either move around or stay in one place?

UP - PURSUE GOD

Read Matthew 2:13-18

3. How did God use dreams and circumstances to guide Joseph and Mary during this time in their life? From Joseph's responsiveness, what can we learn about our own faith and obedience?

Read Hosea 11:1 and Jeremiah 31:15-17

4. How are these prophecies relevant to Joseph, Mary, and Jesus' situation in Matthew chapter 2? How are they relevant to our situation today as Christians?

OUT - PURSUE MISSION

5. How can people experiencing pain, grief and sorrow draw out meaning and encouragement from this part of the Christmas story?
6. What is our responsibility to invite and comfort those who are going through difficult times? What is the responsibility of those who grieve?

For Personal Reflection/Prayer:

Reflect on the following Scriptures:

*"Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows." (Isa 53:4 [ESV])*

*"Weeping may stay for the night,
but rejoicing comes in the morning." (Psalm 30:5b [NIV])*

Pastor Ashwin said, "God has not forgotten you – He is not leaving you alone in your sorrow – but He promises to restore you, to renew you, heal your hurts and fill you with fresh new hope." In this season, what are you celebrating? What are you grieving? How can you present your joys and sorrows to Jesus, knowing that he experienced great joy as well as deep sorrow and pain in his life?

THE WORD (NIV)

Matthew 2:13-18

¹³ When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him."

¹⁴ So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and left for Egypt, ¹⁵ where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son."

¹⁶ When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. ¹⁷ Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸ "A voice is heard in Ramah,
weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children
and refusing to be comforted,
because they are no more."

Isaiah 53:3-4

³ He was despised and rejected by mankind,
a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.
Like one from whom people hide their faces
he was despised, and we held him in low esteem.

⁴ Surely he took up our pain
and bore our suffering,
yet we considered him punished by God,
stricken by him, and afflicted.

Hosea 11:1

"When Israel was a child, I loved him,
and out of Egypt I called my son.

Jeremiah 31:15-17

This week's writers: Sandi Somers, Edi Dygert, Jared Harrison

sermon study summary

Revealing Jesus: Man of Sorrows

Matthew 2:13-18

Pastor Ashwin Ramani

Christmas is a time of festive moods, happy songs, joy and family time. But for some people, sorrow and pain can be dominant—death of a loved one, divorce, financial worries, or loneliness.

In an often-overlooked part of the Christmas story, Matthew highlights a ray of hope to those who are suffering. God is entering a dark world of sorrow and brokenness.

In a dream, the angel told Joseph to flee immediately with the baby Jesus and his mother into Egypt to save Jesus' life. Everything changed drastically for the holy family, as they became refugees. Doing so confirms Hosea 11:1, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." This was not a predictive prophecy such as the Virgin birth or Jesus birth in Bethlehem. Instead, it was a typology or symbolic prophecy. God called the Israelites out of Egypt—a powerful symbol of salvation and deliverance. When Jesus came out of Egypt, God points to the new Exodus, the ultimate deliverance for us.

But then came the second symbolic prophecy, and the reason for the young family's flight to Egypt: Herod, the diabolical and ruthless king, had a history of killing anyone he thought might be a competitor to his throne, including members of his own family. After the Magi asked Herod about a newborn baby (Jesus), who was to be born in Bethlehem as King of the Jews, he ordered his soldiers to kill all of Bethlehem's baby boys two years and under. Imagine the sorrow. Imagine the weeping of all the mothers and fathers! This incident was prophesied in Jeremiah 31:15: Rachel, representative of all weeping mothers, weeping for her lost children at Ramah. At Ramah several centuries earlier, people were rounded up and sent into exile in Babylon. Family members were torn apart, causing heart-wrenching agony, weeping and groaning.

However, Jeremiah continues with words of hope. Rachel was comforted because God was going to bring back the people who went into exile (Jeremiah 31:16-17). Now, through Jesus' coming, we are brought back from our exile from God. Our sin is forgiven and our dark night is turned to light.

But how could the death of all those babies be fair while Jesus escaped? The child Jesus was spared, because God had an appointed moment and purpose thirty-three years later when he would not be: Jesus was crucified. Then, Jesus received no divine intervention. Isaiah prophesied 800 years earlier that when Jesus died, he identified with those who suffer. He made our griefs and sorrows his own (Isaiah 53:3-5). He conquered and won the final victory.

To those who are grieving this Christmas, sadness does not mean you are struggling in your faith. Tears are powerful, God-given releases. Jesus brought solace, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted, (Matthew 5:4). God notices and will, one day, wipe away all tears (Revelation 21:4).

If you are struggling, don't be afraid of raw emotion. Don't bury it. Share your grief with others and allow people to walk with you in your sadness. Jesus continues to identify with sorrows, and one of the ways he does this is through his body, the Church. If you know a person in pain, invite them to talk with you. Include a hurting person in your Christmas celebrations. Let's not turn a blind eye to those who are hurting, but like Jesus, enter into other people's pain so we in turn can bring healing and restoration.