

Advent: Week 4 Study Guide

4. Out of Egypt — Matthew 2:13-23

The final part of Matthew’s opening narrative mirrors Israel’s own story of deliverance. When Joseph is warned to flee to Egypt, it may seem like chaos — a family running for their lives in the night. Yet Matthew assures his readers that even this fulfills prophecy: “*Out of Egypt I called my son*” (Hosea 11:1).

In Hosea, those words recalled Israel’s exodus, when God led His people out of slavery and into freedom. But Matthew sees a deeper layer of meaning: **Jesus is the true and greater Israel**, the obedient Son who relives and redeems Israel’s story. Just as Israel once went down into Egypt and was brought out again by God’s power, so now the Christ child is led there for refuge — not by accident, but by divine design.

Matthew’s narrative deliberately echoes the early chapters of Exodus. In that story, Pharaoh’s fear led him to slaughter the Hebrew baby boys, yet God preserved one child — **Moses** — who would later lead His people to freedom. Centuries later, **Herod’s fear** drives him to the same cruelty, ordering the death of Bethlehem’s infants. But again, God intervenes. He spares His chosen Deliverer, sending Him safely into Egypt until the time of danger has passed. What began as tragedy becomes a story of divine protection and promise fulfilled.

Matthew continues to layer these prophetic connections: the lament of *Rachel weeping for her children* (Jeremiah 31:15) captures Israel’s long sorrow, while the family’s return to Nazareth (possibly alluding to Isaiah 11:1’s “Branch” prophecy) marks a new beginning. Through it all, God’s peace unfolds not through the absence of pain, but through His steadfast presence in the midst of it.

Matthew closes this opening section quietly — the Messiah returns home, the promises of God unbroken. The Prince of Peace has come, not to avoid suffering, but to enter into it and redeem it. True peace, Matthew reminds us, is not found in safety or ease, but in the abiding presence of Emmanuel — God with us.

Cross-References for Matthew 2:13-23

Prophetic Foundations and Historical Parallels

- Hosea 11:1 — “Out of Egypt I called my son.”
- Exodus 14:13–31 — The original Exodus: God delivers Israel through the Red Sea.
- Deuteronomy 18:15–18 — The promise of a greater prophet like Moses.
- Jeremiah 31:15–17 — Rachel weeping for her children; hope for restoration.
- Isaiah 9:6–7 — The Prince of Peace whose government will never end.
- Isaiah 11:1–9 — The Branch from Jesse’s root who brings peace and righteousness.
- Isaiah 52:7 — “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news.”
- Micah 5:4–5 — The Shepherd who will be our peace.

New Testament Connections

- Luke 2:25–32 — Simeon’s song of peace: “My eyes have seen your salvation.”
- John 14:27 — “Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.”
- Ephesians 2:14–17 — Christ Himself is our peace, breaking down dividing walls.
- Colossians 1:19–20 — Through the cross, God reconciles all things and makes peace.
- Revelation 21:3–4 — God dwelling with His people; every tear wiped away.

Study Focus: Jesus as the New Moses

Matthew's Gospel intentionally presents Jesus as the *new and greater Moses*—the true Deliverer who leads God's people into freedom, not from Pharaoh's Egypt, but from the bondage of sin and death. To a Jewish audience steeped in the Torah, these parallels would have been unmistakable.

Moses

Pharaoh feared losing power and ordered the death of Hebrew baby boys (Exodus 1:15–22).

God spared Moses' life, sending him out of Egypt to later return as Israel's deliverer.

Moses led Israel out of slavery through the waters of the Red Sea.

Moses received the Law on Mount Sinai.

Moses interceded for the people, standing between God and Israel.

Jesus

Herod feared losing his throne and ordered the death of Bethlehem's boys (Matthew 2:16–18).

God spared Jesus' life, sending Him into Egypt and later calling Him back as the world's Redeemer.

Jesus leads believers out of sin and death through the waters of baptism.

Jesus proclaims the new covenant and delivers His *Sermon on the Mount* (Matthew 5–7).

Jesus becomes the final Mediator—fully God and fully man—reconciling humanity to the Father.

Moses

Moses could not enter the promised land because of sin.

Jesus

Jesus, the sinless One, opens the way into the eternal kingdom of God.

Through these patterns, Matthew reveals that **Jesus doesn't just continue Israel's story—He completes it.** Every moment of the Exodus now finds its ultimate meaning in Christ. He is the Deliverer who brings a new covenant, a new freedom, and a new people formed by His Spirit rather than the law.

Reflection Question:

Where do you see God “calling you out of Egypt”—leading you out of places of fear, bondage, or old ways of living—into the freedom and peace of His Son?