

I'll Be Home For Christmas – Egypt **Matthew 2:13-18**

In this series we've been talking about what it may have been like to be home for Christmas in the towns/countries surrounding the place where Jesus was born... grew up... and carried out His earthly ministry!

We have looked at "Jerusalem"... **The city that did not recognize Him for who He was... & the city that would reject Him once they knew who He claimed to be!**

We all probably have family & friends like this... But as Jesus approached this city, filled with such people, Scripture tells us that His heart broke for them **(Luke 19:41-42)**... Do our hearts break for those who refuse/cant' see Jesus?

We have also looked at the Magi who came from "the East"... **Who intellectually discovered Jesus' true identity before their hearts could catch up and bring them before this King and Savior, to bow down & worship Him!**

We probably all have family & friends like this also... who would object to Jesus being the Savior & King, until they could rationally make sense of it all!

Don't give up hope... If God can bring the Magi to bow before Jesus, He can also overcome any barriers that exist in the lives of our family/friends as well

Today we are talking about "Egypt", **the place where Mary and Joseph would flee to, with their son, to protect him from Herod and his murderous intent!**

Can you imagine what it must've been like for Mary & Joseph, to have to flee to this destination with Jesus? Now under the immediate circumstances Egypt makes perfect sense due to it's geographical & political context.

But the significance of this location goes deeper than that... What do we know about Egypt, from what the Scriptures declare about this place?

- **Egypt was once a place of refuge!** Remember the story of Joseph?
- **Egypt was also a place of bondage & slavery!** Remember what happened after the days of Joseph?
- **Egypt was also a place of deliverance!** Remember Moses & the Exodus?
- **Egypt was a place of temptation!** Remember the desert wandering years? God's delivered people declared *"If we could only go back to Egypt..."*
- **Egypt would also be the place of fulfilled prophecy! Vs. 15 – "Out of Egypt I called my son" (Hosea 11:1).** Like God's children of old, who He

called out of slavery... He now calls His only begotten Son, Jesus, out of Egypt as well... And Jesus would prove to be God's true & obedient Son!

What a mixing bowl of experiences and emotions, when it comes to Egypt! **A place of blessing & burden... salvation & slavery... fulfillment & failure...**

You see, sometimes the places where we feel most safe... can also be the places where we feel most vulnerable and afraid as well!

And sometimes the places we naturally run to... are also the places we sometimes want/need to run away from!

Sometimes the places where we find the most help... can also become a place that is filled with our greatest temptations!

Are the homes we go to for the holidays a little bit like this... like Egypt? If so, then we can relate to what Mary & Joseph must have experienced! But what was most important for them, & for us too, **is that Jesus be with us!**

Our lives, our families, our Christmas gatherings will all have remnants of sin & salvation in them... The question is which will it more closely resemble?

In our Egypt's... **Jesus is present when He is present in us!** The hope, the joy, the peace, the eternal perspective that can exist in any family, any location, comes when the presence and power of Jesus is unleashed there through us!

So in your/my "Egypt", in our homes wherever they are this Christmas, may we be the presence of Jesus there that makes all the difference by choosing:

- **To be a source of blessing, rather than a source of burden!** May our hearts be open doors... & not prison cells due to our hardness of heart!
- **To be a voice of refuge/salvation, rather than a voice of sinful temptation!**
- **To be a Christ-like presence that emerges out of this holiday season, rather than succumbing to the cycle of returning to our old sinful ways!**

When we are home for Christmas this year, what kind of Egypt will we be for our loved ones...? It may be at the same place... with the same people... as in years past... but will it be different this year **because Jesus, the Prince of Peace, was present there through us?**

Jesus wasn't in Egypt for very long... He wasn't here on earth for very long either... But His presence here made an eternal impact! And the same can be true today as well, **if Jesus' presence takes precedent in our lives!**