

The King Fulfills Prophecy, Part 1

Scripture: Matthew 2:13–15

Code: 2185

INTRODUCTION

As we continue through chapter 2 of Matthew, we find again that Matthew is emphasizing that Jesus is King, and he has done it in two ways so far:

A. The Adoration of the Magi

We have seen the first way in verses 1-12 where the Magi, who are the official recognizers of kings in the Oriental world, come and recognize Christ as King. In other words, it is Matthew's way of saying that He was a King because that's what the world said, as represented by these Persian king-makers. Nobody was a king in that part of the world unless they had been recognized by the Magi and had been trained in their law. Matthew shows how the Persian king-makers acknowledged Christ as a King by worshiping Him and giving Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And, of course, the first of those gifts was especially suited for a King.

But there's a second way that Matthew shows us in this chapter that Christ is a King, and that is by...

B. The Antagonism of Herod

If He wasn't a King and didn't have the right to reign, then why was Herod so upset? It's a back-door approach on Matthew's part, but nonetheless, he makes the point. So, not only by virtue of homage is Christ a King, but also by virtue of hatred. The false king, Herod, had essentially usurped the throne, because he had no right to reign in Israel. As an Edomite, Herod was threatened seriously by the existence of the One that he feared really had the right to be the King of Israel.

So both by homage and by hatred, Matthew is pointing to the royalty of Jesus Christ, whose kingship was a cause for worship and a cause for fear. But there is a third thread that weaves its way through the chapter by which Matthew presents the royalty of Jesus Christ, and it shows the fulfillment of Messianic prophecies as...

C. The Affirmation of God

In the Old Testament, God laid down some prophecies regarding the coming King. Matthew selected four of these prophecies as further evidence that this is indeed the King. He is a King because He was born a King through the virgin birth; He is a King because He has the genealogy of a King; He is a King because the Persian king-makers saw Him as one; He is a King as evidenced by Herod's fear of His taking his throne; and He is a King because He fulfills the royal prophecies, which spoke of this One who was to come. And so Matthew continues then, to reinforce the kingship of Jesus Christ through the unfolding of these four prophecies in which the coming King is presented.

1. THE UNIQUENESS OF THE PROPHECIES

Somewhere around 332 Old Testament prophecies are made concerning Jesus Christ. From those Matthew selects four that are so unique and complex that there is literally no way they could have happened by accident. The chance of just these four being fulfilled is so infinitesimal it couldn't be reduced to numbers. And when you consider that there are 332 prophecies altogether, it absolutely boggles the mind.

2. THE UNITY OF THE PROPHECIES

The style and structure of these four prophecies indicate to me that they constitute a literary unit purposely authored by Matthew. Each one of them is attached to a geographical location and each one focuses on Jesus Christ. The four locations that he deals with are Bethlehem, Egypt, Ramah,

and Nazareth, and all have significance to the birth of Christ. Now, that in itself is amazing, because most people are associated with only one location at their birth. But Jesus, the Messiah (Heb. Mashiah = "the anointed"), the Christ (Christos, the Greek equivalent), was the King, who was to come and be associated with all four locations. Such a "coincidence" was clearly the plan of God, and therefore becomes one of the greatest evidences in all of the Gospel of Matthew to the royalty of Jesus Christ. Now let's look at each of these prophecies, which are so specific that they would eliminate any usurper, and, at the same time, confirm the real claimant to the throne, the Lord Himself. Let's begin with the first one, which we will call...

I. THE BIRTH AT BETHLEHEM (vv. 4-6)

A. The Consultation of Herod (v. 4)

You will remember from our last lessons that Herod was upset when the Magi arrived in Jerusalem looking for the King that had been born. Having seen His star in the East, the Magi knew the awaited King had arrived in Israel, and so they set out with an entourage of Persian soldiers mounted on steeds. The presence of these king-makers in Jerusalem greatly troubled Herod. Therefore, he determined to know where this King was to be born so that he could kill this One who was a threat to his power and position: "And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where the Christ should be born."

Isn't it interesting that Herod equated this King of the Jews that the Magi talked about, with the Christ? He knew that and so did they. Thus he was fearful, having been familiar with Jewish prophecy through his exposure to Judaism.

B. The Confirmation of the Priests and Scribes (v. 5)

Knowing that this Messiah that the Jews anticipated must be eliminated, Herod called a high-level meeting of the chief priests, who were the politicians, and the scribes, who were the theologians, and learned of the location where He was to be born: "And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet." Now Micah was the prophet who wrote that prophecy, which is recorded in Micah 5:2.

C. The Clarification by Matthew (v. 6)

1. THE PROPHECY OF MICAH

Let me tell you a little about Micah. Micah was a prophet who thundered judgment against the false prophets, the false rulers, and the false teachers of his day. His message was one of...a.

Condemnation In Micah 2 we read: "Woe to them that devise iniquity, and work evil upon their beds! When the morning is light, they practice it, because it is in the power of their hand. And they covet fields, and take them by violence, and houses, and take them away; so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage. Therefore, thus saith the LORD: Behold, against this family do I devise an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks, neither shall ye go haughtily; for this time is evil" (vv. 1-3). In other words, God looked at the leaders of Israel and Judah, who were usurping lands and taking homes in the style of a dictator, and said He would judge them. Chapter 3 continues God's condemnation: "And I said, Hear, I pray you, O heads of Jacob, and ye princes of the house of Israel, Is it not for you to know justice? Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from them, and their flesh from their bones; who also eat the flesh of My people, and flay their skin from them; and they break their bones, and chop them in pieces, as for the pot, and like flesh within the caldron....Hear this, I pray you, ye heads of the house of Jacob, and princes of the house of Israel, that abhor justice, and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity. Her heads judge for reward [bribery], and her priests teach for hire, and her prophets divine for money; yet will they lean upon the LORD, and say, Is not the LORD among us? No evil can come upon us. Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest" (vv. 1-3, 9-12). Having proclaimed God's judgments against the false teachers, Micah's message turns to one of...b.

Consolation Micah also speaks of an era in the future when there will come a true Teacher and a true

King, who will reign with goodness and justice. Beginning in chapter 4, he speaks of the last days, when this great and glorious One is to come. Then in chapter 5 verse 2, the prophet identifies the coming King's birthplace: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." It was there the eternal King, who is the Son of God, the eternal Second Person of the Trinity, was to be born among the thousands of Judean cities and villages. And so as Micah looks down through the centuries he sees the birth of the King, which occurred at an obscure place.

2. THE PURPOSE OF MATTHEW

Now, I don't think that the chief priests and the scribes really quoted the prophecy, but merely said, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for thus it is written by the prophet" (Mt. 2:5). I believe Matthew added verse 6: "And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah; for out of thee shall come a Governor that shall rule [shepherd] My people, Israel." And taking a little license of inspiration since the Holy Spirit has inspired him as equally as Micah, Matthew makes an addition to Micah's prophecy which further describes the manner in which the King would rule. So, in fulfillment of that prophecy, Jesus was born in the little, insignificant town of Bethlehem, from which no one would normally expect a great monarch. But that was precisely where the King was to come from. Nobody throughout all the history of God's dealing with Israel could ever claim to be the Messiah unless he had been born in Bethlehem. Having already discussed this prophecy in great depth, let's move to the second prophecy with which Matthew deals in chapter 2:

II. THE EXODUS TO EGYPT (vv. 13-15)

Because this is sometimes called "the flight into Egypt," I am reminded about a picture a little kid drew in his Sunday School class of a 727 jet with four people in the cockpit. Looking at the little kid aghast, the teacher asked, "What is this, and who are these people?" "This is the flight into Egypt," he replied, "and that's Joseph, Mary, and baby Jesus." "But who's this fourth person?" queried the teacher. "Oh, him," explained the boy, "that's Pontius the pilot." Needless to say, this was not exactly the biblical flight into Egypt. What really happened in the exodus to Egypt? Let's begin with the consideration of the events which led up to this fascinating fulfillment of prophecy.

When the Magi finally got to Bethlehem, it must have been a time of great joy and comfort for Joseph and Mary, who had received little confirmation of that great message they had heard from the angel. They had been told by God through the angel that this Child was to be the Son of God, Immanuel (God with us). But it was probably not until the Magi came and affirmed that fact, that Joseph and Mary confidently experienced the joyful reality of parenting the Savior. With anticipating hearts, they must have remembered the wonderful words spoken by the angel to Joseph, by Gabriel to Mary, by Elisabeth to Mary, by the shepherds to Joseph and Mary, and by Simeon, and thought, "What was spoken as a promise is now confirmed with these men." And after the Wise Men had arrived, it wasn't long until the confirmation of the rest of Simeon's words came regarding a sword that would pierce Mary's soul. We immediately find the sword beginning to pierce in an event recorded in verse 13.

A. The Dream (v. 13)

1. THE INSTRUMENT OF DIVINE REVELATION (v. 13b)

"...behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying..." This was not a dream like we normally think of dreams, which are pure fantasy; this was a semiconscious state where there was an actual confrontation with an angel. This type of dream was something unique to the periods of biblical revelation, and was experienced by such men as Peter, Daniel, Abimelech, Jacob, Joseph, the butler and the baker who Joseph met in jail, and even Pharaoh. And around the time of the birth of Christ, God communicated several times with this special kind of dream.

2. THE IMPLICATION OF DANGER (v. 13a)

"And when they [the Wise Men] were departed..." Now the Wise Men had departed, according to the

beginning of verse 13, and because they were "warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way" (v. 12). One can see how the devices of men can never thwart the plans of God, just as Pharaoh was prevented by God from destroying the Israelites by His divine intervention. So Joseph was divinely warned to escape like the Wise Men had been warned, as God intervened to protect His Son. The place where he was told to go was the land of Egypt, which having once been a place of bondage and oppression, now became a haven of refuge for the little family escaping from imminent danger. The word "departed" (Gk. *anachoreo*), implies danger and is used elsewhere in the Gospel of Matthew twice, both times meaning "to run away from danger." An example of the danger that is implied is seen in the word's use in Matthew 4:12: "Now when Jesus had heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee." In other words, Jesus knew that when John had been thrown into prison, He was in danger and so moved away. Similarly, the Wise Men knew the danger and they fled to their country another way. And once they had gone, the angel came again and gave Joseph...

3. THE INSTRUCTION TO DEPART (v. 13c)

"...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." The command Joseph received was to take the Child and flee. The word "flee" comes from the Greek term *pheugo*, from which we get fugitive, and it is used in the present imperative tense, depicting continuous action. The word also implies that the process of fleeing involved a long trip. In specific terms, it was seventy-five miles to the border of Egypt and at least one hundred miles further into the heart of the land. Such a trip would take days and weeks, because they couldn't move very fast with a baby. a. The Place of Protection Let me set the scene in Egypt so you can better understand why they were sent in that direction. Egypt was a natural asylum for the Jews, especially from the time of the Maccabean revolt. Between the Old Testament and the New Testament, there had been a period of rule in Israel by the Greek government, which preceded the Roman rule of the New Testament, and which followed the powers Babylon and Medo-Persia in the Old. During the Greek period there was a revolution led by some people named the Maccabees, a patriotic Jewish family. And from the time of that Maccabean revolution in the intertestamental period, many Jews began to flee into Egypt. Even prior to that, Alexander the Great had established the city of Alexandria as a place of refuge for the Jews. In fact, many historians believe that the Qumran community of monastic scribes that was located on the edge of the Dead Sea, was also forced to flee to Egypt and didn't return until Herod was dead. So, as long as Herod was ruling over Israel, more and more Jews were fleeing into Egypt. The immigration had started in the Maccabean period, decreasing afterwards, only to increase again under the reign of Herod. As a result, Egypt had become filled with Jewish residents. I might also add that the Jews lived with equal privileges that had been granted them by Alexander. In fact, around 150 B.C., the Jews were even given their own temple in Egypt so that they could prosper as a community. And prosper they did, because by A.D. 40, Philo, the historian, says that there were at least one million Jews living in Egypt. b. The Presents of Provision So, Egypt became rather highly populated with Jews, serving as a place of refuge and security where Joseph and Mary wouldn't have to fear anything. And I personally believe that the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh were God's provision for the little family so that they could dwell in Egypt. Because those gifts were very valuable, they no doubt could be sold or traded for things the family needed to live on, until Joseph could find some work for the months in which he was there. c. The Purpose of the Prophecy But the main reason they were directed there was not because it was a nice place for Jews to live, or because one could escape the oppression of Herod. The main reason they went there was simply because that is exactly where the Old Testament said the Messiah had to go. Now I'm not sure they knew that, because of the obscurity of the Old Testament text. But God knew it and He was working out the plan. d. The Plan of Persecution Though Herod wanted to kill the Christ-child, he was merely a pawn, for behind him was Satan, the ultimate murderer. When you read Revelation 12, you find the

whole story of how the devil continues in his desire to murder Christ. He is represented by the dragon that chases the child in an attempt to kill Him. But to avoid Herod's plot, the family was sent into Egypt: "...be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him." God knew Herod's mind. Herod couldn't fool God at all. So, He sent an angel to tell Joseph to stay in Egypt until he received further word. It was a promise that the angel would return. What do we know about Jesus' infancy in Egypt? It is absolutely incredible what some people have come up with about what went on in Egypt. But the only thing we know about His life there is recorded in verses 13-15. Joseph was told to flee with his family and to stay in Egypt until he was told to return...and that's exactly what he did. In spite of the limited history on the subject, there are literally volumes written in speculation about what supposedly went on in Egypt. In fact, there is a book called *The Gospel of the Infancy of Our Lord*, which discusses His life in Egypt. Clearly a spurious work, this fantasy says that wherever the little Child walked idols automatically fell apart. Another story in the book says that when Jesus was in Egypt, He encountered an Egyptian priest who had a three-year-old possessed by demons. Taking a piece of His swaddling clothes, Jesus supposedly put it on the head of the child, who was then instantly delivered. And wherever He or Mary went, those who looked at them were healed from all manner of diseases. Not only that, at the presence of Jesus, robbers fled into the desert. Now, all of that is pure fiction. There is no historical verification for any of that. Celsus is quoted by Origen, the early church father, as asserting that Jesus had been brought up as an illegitimate child, having served for hire in Egypt. Coming to the knowledge of certain miraculous powers in Egypt, Jesus then returned to His own country and by means of those powers proclaimed Himself God. The Jewish Talmud says, "Ten measures of sorcery descended into the world; Egypt received nine, the rest of the world, one." Some Jewish rabbis in the Talmud believed that Egypt was the center of sorcery, and one of them also believed that Jesus went into Egypt when He was young, and learned sorcery to con the world into believing that He was the Messiah. Such teaching about Jesus Christ has to come from the white spaces in verse 13. All that we really know about Jesus' infancy is that He went into Egypt and stayed there temporarily. But believe me, He didn't learn sorcery and come out to con the world by His magic. He went to Egypt because that was a fulfillment of a prophecy.

B. The Departure (v. 14)

Joseph obeyed the angel: "When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night, and departed into Egypt." Escaping in the darkness by night, I am sure they didn't tell anybody, because if the word had gotten out, Herod's soldiers would have been hot on their trail, soon overtaking the family that was traveling at such a slow pace. So I'm sure they just stole away at night and never told a soul. And by the way, you will notice that Matthew omits the details because he's not concerned with them, he's concerned with the prophecy.

C. The Duration (v. 15a)

We do have a general idea about how long Jesus and His parents resided in Egypt: "And was there until the death of Herod...." The three of them stayed until Herod had died, which I don't believe was very long. Herod died shortly before the Passover in March or April of 4 B.C., which would make the stay in Egypt maybe a couple of months. It's hard to be sure but that might be a fair guess. Verse 19, marking the end of their stay, says, "But when Herod was dead, behold, an angel of the Lord appeareth in a dream to Joseph in Egypt." When Herod had died, the angel came back, instructing the family to return.

D. The Declaration (v. 15b-c)

1. OF GOD'S PURPOSE (v. 15b)

What was the ultimate purpose of the family going to Egypt? The prophecy recorded in verse 15 does not say they went there that they might be saved--God could have done that any way He wanted. What God really wanted to do was verify the credentials of the Messiah with respect to prophetic fulfillment. Therefore, it says that the family went to Egypt "that it might be fulfilled which

was spoken by the Lord through the prophet..." That is one of the most important statements you will find anywhere in the Bible, because it tells you that the prophets, who wrote the pages of the Word of God, were inspired by God Himself. In this case, the Old Testament prophet was saying that the Son, namely the Messiah [Heb. Mashiah], would come out of Egypt. Now how could the Child come out of Bethlehem and out of Egypt unless God worked some marvelous circumstances? God had set it all up long ago with Alexander the Great by preparing Egypt for Christ's stay there as a child. You can see how God runs history, and how all things come together in His plan.

2. OF GOD'S PROPHET (v. 15c)

The prophecy in this verse, "...Out of Egypt have I called My son," comes from Hosea 11:1. To help us understand the meaning of its fulfillment in Christ, let us examine...a. The Context of Hosea Hosea 11:1 says, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt." Now notice something very interesting there. To whom does He refer in Hosea 11:1? Who is the son there? It's Israel! Who is the son in Matthew? It's Christ. How can that be? Some people have said, "Well now, wait a minute. When the prophecy was given it was given in reference to a historical statement about Israel, which is not even a prophecy there. It's merely a record of a past event. And any Bible scholar who studies the book of Hosea will simply tell you God is reflecting upon the time when He called Israel out of bondage in Egypt. So how does this 'prophecy' relate to the return of Jesus to Israel?" In answering this question, let me first give you the message of Hosea: The message of Hosea is one of failure, decadence, and tragedy in Israel. Hosea condemned Israel for being disobedient and unfaithful, comparing their sinfulness to harlotry. They had committed spiritual adultery and were in the worst condition ever when Hosea wrote this. Consequently, he was pouring out judgments against Israel: "You are nothing more than a prostitute because you have been unfaithful to God, who betrothed you, by racing after false gods who have become your lovers!" God even had Hosea illustrate this message dramatically with his own life. He allowed Hosea to marry a woman named Gomer, who became "a wife of whoredom" (Hos. 1:2). She ran off after so many lovers that I'm sure Hosea lost count. She even conceived children by them. But in spite of this, dear Hosea's heart was so filled with love for her, that he patiently waited and took all that abuse. He loved her so much that instead of rejecting her, he sought her out, buying her for himself with fifteen pieces of silver and a homer and a half of barley, and then restored her to the place of honor as his wife, again giving to her all the love that she had spurned. This personal experience of Hosea's enabled him to vividly illustrate to Israel how God's heart had been broken by their spiritual idolatry. He could truly empathize with God's feelings. Just as Hosea had married and loved Gomer, God had loved Israel and become her husband. Just as Gomer was unfaithful to Hosea and enslaved by her lovers, so was Israel unfaithful to God and enslaved by her idolatrous idols. And just as Hosea's tender love reached out and bought back his wife, so Jehovah reached out in love and took back the remnant that was willing to come back. That's the message of Hosea. It was only when Hosea's heart had been broken, having seen the ideal of his dreams wrecked before his eyes, and having suffered the worst agony that a human being could ever know, that God then said, "Hosea, now that you know how I feel, you can be My preacher. Make Israel understand what's in My heart." God wanted Israel and Hosea to know how much He loved Israel, so He said in 11:1, "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My son out of Egypt." God's love for adulterous Israel went all the way back to when Israel was a child. Israel wasn't the last lover in a long line, but rather the first and only one that God loved when they were yet but a child. In other words, this passage emphasizes the incredible love that God has always had for Israel from the time Israel was not even a nation, held in bondage in Egypt under the power of Pharaoh. It was then that God set His love on them and sought to redeem them as His people. Deuteronomy 32:9-10 says, "For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and...kept him as the apple of His eye." In Exodus 4:22 God said, "...Israel is My son, even My first-born." Now, let's go to Matthew and see...b. The Connection with Hosea 1) A Type Defined When Matthew quotes Hosea, and applies it to

Christ, he sees the son that was called out of Egypt as fulfilled in Christ. Thus we are introduced to one of the most fascinating kinds of prophecy in all the Bible, which is called a type. Whereas a prophecy is a verbal prediction of a future event, a type is a nonverbal prediction. There are texts in the Old Testament that tell us God was going to send a Savior who would die, while at the same time there are other texts that present the sacrifice of a lamb, which was simply a nonverbal picture of Jesus Christ. Types, however, are no less potent and powerful, and no less direct than verbal prophecies. One of my favorite studies was on this fascinating topic of types. After my reading in this area, I have come to the conservative conclusion that the only legitimate types are those stated in the New Testament to be such. Otherwise, I feel we would abuse the meaning of the Old Testament if we made every hair on somebody's head a picture of something about Christ. So I believe that types are ultimately fulfilled only in the New Testament writer's definition.²) The Type Depicted

So then, Israel is a type because Matthew, inspired by the Spirit of God, sees Israel as a picture of Christ. God calling His beloved son Israel out of Egypt thus becomes a picture of Him calling His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, out of Egypt. By the way, Christ and Israel are often closely identified in prophetic passages. For example:

a) In Isaiah Sometimes it's hard to tell whether the servant in Isaiah is Israel or the Messiah, because both of them are called the servant of the Lord (e.g., 44:1; 49:3; 52:13). Israel is God's child and God's firstborn, and so is Christ.

b) In Genesis Joseph was a type of Christ because Stephen's explanation of history to the Sanhedrin makes that clear (Ac. 7:9-14).

c) In Jonah Did you know that even Jonah was a type of Christ? The New Testament says that "as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so shall the Son of man be..." (Mt. 12:40a). Jonah pictured the death of Christ.

Dr. Gaebelstein says, "Israel's history beginning with Egypt, has been a history of sin, disobedience, apostasy and shame. Therefore the true One had to come, the true Servant of the Lord in obedience--obedience unto death. He had to go through the history of His people." I like that. Jesus actually went back through the history of His people to fulfill the type. And just as Pharaoh, that cruel king, had tried to destroy Israel, so another cruel king by the name of Herod, was attempting to kill the Son of God. Just as God protected His son, Israel, in Egypt and delivered them, so God protected His Son, Christ, in Egypt and delivered Him.

There's a sense in which Israel is even more than a type of Christ because of the close bond between the two. There is a bond that's almost indivisible due to the fact that Christ was in the loins of Israel. If Israel had never been brought out of Egypt, Christ would never have been born, so He was really there in a sense. Had Israel been destroyed, the Messianic prophecy could never have been fulfilled at all. So when Israel was called out, Christ came out then with them, didn't He? The message of Hosea was disregarded and the time of degeneration went on even to Jesus' day. The days of Israel's whoredom and prostitution were still going on. Then finally the prophecy of Hosea came back like a bolt of lightning out of the sky-- "...Out of Egypt have I called My son" (Mt. 2:15). As when God loved Israel when he was a child and brought him out of Egypt, so now His love centered on the Messiah as He brought Him out of Egypt. In fact, the great prototype of salvation in the Old Testament is the act of God delivering Israel from Egypt.

When the Lord Jesus returns in righteousness to reign over the earth as "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" (Rev. 19:16b), the prophets tell us that one of the nations that is going to be given a special place of blessing in the Millennial Kingdom is Egypt (Isa. 19:21-25; Zeph. 3:9-10; Ps. 68:31). You say, "Do you mean the Egypt that held them in bondage, oppressed them, and forced them to make bricks without straw? That rotten, idolatrous nation? Why in the world would Egypt ever have a place in the Millennium? They've been so hostile to Israel!" Could it just be that the blessing of Egypt in the Millennium is a token of divine gratitude for a country that granted sanctuary to the Son of God when He was a baby? Maybe so.

Focusing on the Facts

1. What are the three ways that Matthew emphasizes that Jesus is King in chapter 2?
2. What are two similarities contained in each of the four prophecies that Matthew selected?
3. What are the four locations that were associated with the infancy of Jesus?

4. Against whom was Micah's condemnation directed?
5. Why was Matthew legitimately able to add to Micah's prophecy?
6. What served as a confirmation of the promises made to Joseph and Mary concerning Jesus?
7. Describe why the dream that Joseph had was not a normal kind of dream.
8. What is the implication of the word departed?
9. What were two reasons that Jews had fled to Egypt?
10. What is the main reason that Joseph and his family were directed to Egypt?
11. Who was the real murderer behind Herod?
12. What do we know about Jesus' life in Egypt?
13. What was Joseph's response to the instruction of the angel?
14. What did God want to verify by having Jesus go to Egypt and return from there?
15. Who is the son identified by Hosea? Who does Matthew identify as the son?
16. Describe the event in Hosea's life that served to illustrate God's love for Israel.
17. Compare a prophecy with a type.
18. Who are Israel and Christ both identified as in Isaiah?
19. In what way was Jonah a type of Christ?
20. What is the great prototype of salvation in the Old Testament?

Pondering the Principles

1. Maybe you have thought how nice it would be to have the same kind of direct verbal guidance that so many biblical personalities received. When you are faced with a crisis or any situation that demands action, how do you determine that what you plan to do is actually God's will? Seeing that we don't have angels who visually and audibly guide us as they did Joseph and so many others, what must we do to confirm our direction as being from the Lord? Look up the following passages and try to develop a theology about how God guides us today: Psalm 19:7-11; 119:9-16; Proverbs 3:5-7; 11:14; 12:15; John 16:13-15; Acts 6:1-5; 14:27; 20:22-24; Romans 8:14; 2 Corinthians 2:12-13; Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 John 2:27.
2. It is certainly reassuring to know that God has ultimate control of history, especially when current events may lead one to conclude otherwise. Reestablish your confidence in God's sovereignty by taking a moment to read Isaiah 40. What specific statements about God in that chapter would have been an encouragement to Israel, who had been told that they were headed for destruction and captivity through foreign powers? Identify those promises which would be applicable to all believers, as you praise God that He is our Creator and Redeemer.
3. Do you manifest the tender, patient, and forgiving love that Hosea did toward his wife? When you continue to give but don't receive back, do you quit giving? Are you familiar with non-Christians who seem to be more loving than some believers you know? Is there anything different about the love you express than the love of those who have not been born again? Meditate upon Luke 6:32-37 and pray that God would pour His love through you into the lives of others, in spite of their responses to you. Let there be something truly unique about the depth of your love so that others will take notice of a life that has been transformed by Christ.

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