

Journey

Matthew 2:1,4-6,13-15,20-21, 22-23

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I. Inconvenient Trip - Bethlehem of Judea Matthew v. 1;4-6 Luke 2:4-5

- a. Travel
 - i. Register as a Census
 - 1. In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world
- b. Bethlehem of Judea v.1- Micah 5:2
 - i. Bethlehem is only about five miles from Jerusalem. ‘Of Judea’ prepares for ‘in the land of Judah’ in v. 6
 - 1. was a Judean village located about five or six miles south-southwest of Jerusalem. Its importance in the OT, where it is usually called ‘the city of David’, derives principally from its association with King David.
 - ii. The close link between Bethlehem and Davidic sonship can be seen from Jn 7:42: ‘Does not the Scripture say that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was’
 - 1. Bethlehem is the place of David’s origin, so it would not be unnatural to imagine this ‘son of David’ as permanently domiciled there (cf. vv. 21–22).
 - 2. *Bê(-)lehem*, where David was brought up and anointed king of Israel (1 Sam 16:1–13; cf. 17:12, 15, 58; 20:6, 28),
 - 3. It emphasizes the connection between Jesus and the patriarch Judah (cf. 1:2–3)—so important because the Davidic Messiah was expected to come from the tribe of Judah (Rev 5:5; cf. Gen 49:9–10)
- c. Prophecy Fulfilled
 - i. Chief Priest
 - 1. Chief priests’ is used of the upper echelon of the priestly order: the chief priest (and his predecessors), the captain of the temple, those who headed the twenty-four courses into which the priesthood was divided for service in the temple, the priest who had charge of the treasury, and other high-ranking priests. The scribes were the antecedents of the later Jewish rabbis. They functioned both as scholars of the law and as teachers, and they also had a role in the administration of justice, which in Jerusalem included a part in the highest levels of the Jewish political power structure
 - 2. Their inactivity in comparison to that of the Magi may imply criticism, and their later hostility to Jesus may be seen as that much

more reprehensible in the light of the evident scriptural knowledge of this grouping and their participation in events which pointed to the significance of the birth of Jesus

- ii. Written by Prophet
 1. Bethlehem, Land of Judah
 - a. The form of Matthew's citation of Mic 5:2 is distinctive,
 - b. in Bethlehem of Judea," is the first indication of a place name in Matthew's narrative; its theological importance can be seen in the way it anticipates the quotation of Mic 5:1 in v 6 (cf. also vv 5, 8), despite the slight difference between τῆς Ἰουδαίας and the γῆ Ἰούδα of the quotation.
 2. Ruler- The language borrowed from 2 Sa. 5:2 for the final line expresses the conviction of 'all the tribes of Israel' that David is destined to be king

II. On the Run - Flee to Egypt v. 13-15

- a. Egypt - Almost as soon as he is born, the Son of man, who like Moses will grow up in Egypt, has no place to lay his head (cf. 8:20).
 - i. Egypt was the traditional refuge for Palestinian Jews seeking asylum. See, for example, 1 Kgs 11:40 (Jeroboam); 2 Kgs 25:26 and Jer 41:16–18
- b. Joseph-
 - i. Got up Still Night - By night' reflects the nighttime occurrence of dreams, but also the immediacy of obedience in response to the urgency implied in the angelic directive. Night travel offers fewer witnesses.
- c. Remained until death of Herod
 - i. **Timeline ????**
- d. Prophecy Fulfilled
 - i. Matthew was presumably the first to connect Hos 11:1 with the story of Jesus. He was in all likelihood led to it via Num 24:8,
 - ii. He was not naïvely oblivious of the switch in referents when he applied Hos 11:1 to Jesus, not to the people. We think this in part because, in the second place, Christian tradition before Matthew had portrayed Jesus as repeating or recapitulating certain experiences of Israel
 - iii. **Hosea is, of course, alluding to the historical exodus and not making a prophecy about the future. How then can Matthew say that the quotation is "fulfilled" (πληρωθῆ)? What we have here is a matter of typological correspondence—that is, a substantial similarity is seen to exist between two moments of redemptive history, and therefore the two are regarded as interconnected, forming one larger continuity; the earlier is thus seen to foreshadow or anticipate the latter, which then becomes a kind of realization or fulfillment of the former.**

III. Free to Go - Go to Israel v.19-21

- a. Herod is dead - Herod, whose long reign began in 37 B.C. died in 4 B.C. His death signaled the possibility of return, not only of the holy family (cf. v 15)
- b. Threat is gone - A strong echo of language links the words of the angel here and in v. 13. But now the directive is to 'go to the land of Israel', and the reason this time is the death of Herod, not the threat of his action. The tie between Jesus and Moses is further underlined here by the echo of the language of Ex. 4:19–20

IV. On the Run Again – Go to Nazareth v. 22-23

- a. Archeleus Reigning-
 - i. Archeleus- After Herod's death his territory was divided. Archelaus was made Tetrarch of Judea and was a true son of his father. [Another son of Herod, Antipas, ruled in Galilee, and both John and Jesus were to have dealings with him at a later stage.](#)
 1. It was God's will that they go to Galilee. To be sure, another son of Herod, Herod Antipas, ruled as ethnarch over Galilee and Perea. But he was a more tolerant ruler, and Galilee in his day became known for revolutionary sentiments that would never have been tolerated by his father
 - ii. Joseph's fear of Archelaus appears to have been well grounded, as the son of Herod tended to follow the ways of his father. His subjects managed eventually to have him deposed by the Romans in A.D. 6.
 - iii. He was reputed to be the worst of the three brothers. His short reign was marked by scandal, by brutality, by tyranny. Matters got so bad that complaints lodged against him in Rome by a deputation of Jews and Samaritans succeeded in having him deposed and sent into exile in Gaul in A.D. 6.
- b. Went to Region of Galilee
 - i. Nazareth- **2:23** Fifteen miles to the west of the southern end of the Sea of Galilee, Nazareth was a quite insignificant town in biblical times and is never mentioned in the OT. Projections from archaeological evidence suggest a maximum population of no more than 500
 - ii. κατόκησεν εἰς πόλιν λεγομένην Ναζαρέτ, "he dwelt in a city called Nazareth." The "city" is unknown from the OT or any sources earlier than the NT documents. Popular opinion in the metropolis of Jerusalem concerning this northern town may well be summarized by the question put by Nathaniel in John 1:46: "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"
 - a. It is in Galilee that he inaugurates his ministry in fulfillment of Isa 9:1
 - b. Galilee's large population of Gentiles symbolizes the universal significance Matthew sees in Jesus.

iii. Fulfill Prophecy

1. He shall be call a Nazarene
2. The key to understanding what he says lies in the similarity between Ναζαρέτ, “Nazareth,” and Ναζωραῖος, “Nazarene.” The difficulty lies in discerning his intent behind Ναζωραῖος; and this is further compounded by the serious uncertainty about the spelling of Nazareth.
 - a. This seems too close to Matthew’s line to be coincidence. We should probably conclude that before us is an involved word play. ‘He will be called a Nazarene’ depends upon (a) the equation of ‘Nazarite’ and ‘holy’ one of God’; (b) the substitution of ‘Nazarite’ for ‘holy’ in Isa 4:3 and (c) the substitution of ‘Nazarene’ for ‘Nazarite’.
 - i. It is important to note that this conclusion suggests that the context addressed by Matthew was at least somewhat multilingual. An awareness that Ναζιρ(αῖος) could function as an equivalent to ἅγιος was possible to a Greek speaker on the basis of Greek OT variants, but an awareness that the root *nšr* was used in Is. 11:1 and 42:6 (and its range of meanings) depends on access to Hebrew.
 - b. The main text linked with the *nšr* root is Is. 11:1: ‘There will come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a sprout (*nēšer*) will blossom’. This is clearly a messianic text. If this were to be the text Matthew had in mind, it would take us back to the Davidic categories which were especially evident in 1:18–25 and 2:1–11
 - i. The most likely play on words in Matthew’s mind is in the similarity between the Hebrew word for “branch,” *nēšer*, and Nazareth. This view (Black, *Aramaic Approach*; Stendahl, *School*; Luz; Davies-Allison, but as a “secondary allusion”) traces Matthew’s “quotation” back to Isa 11:1: “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse and a branch