**Hope Has Come – wk 4 –**

**Banner news – the year's biggest stories. What if it was the first several years of the 1st century in The Judean Times / The Jerusalem Headlines**

**Today, we end Matthew 2 – with a story that is rarely preached around Christmas but is a very important event.**

**The tragic Christmas massacre of the innocents.**

**So far - Matthew 1-2**

* **The history of Jesus is established – he actually came**
* **The prophetic fulfillment is established – the messiah**
* **The humanity is established – he is born a son**
* **The divinity is established – he is God**
* **The mission and purpose are established – He came to die**
* **The Lordship and authority are established – he is eternal king!**

**All before a single word of his is spoken, or a miracle performed.**

**The Setup:**

**\*\* Time has passed since his birth – Jesus is between 41 days (Luke 2:22-23) to 2 yrs old (Matt 2:16). Living in Bethlehem (300-2000 people).**

**\*\* Wise men (Magi) - come from the east (Persian) seeking to worship the new king of Judea – the Messiah. They go to the capital of the region to ask the local king, Herod.**

**\*\* Herod the King – A maniacal, insecure, power-hungry, violent leader. He was a powerful king doing immoral things to powerless people.**

**Both clever and cruel, he executed his mother, wife, & 3 of his sons – when he felt his power was threatened. He was about to feel it again.**

**\*\* The scriptures said - the Messiah is to be born in Bethlehem. Herod told them to find him and come tell him so he, too, could worship him. But his plan was to kill Jesus.**

**\*\* The Magi were led to Jesus by His Star - they bowed, worshiped, and gave gifts of God, frankincense, and myrrh. Last wk - only one king!**

**We are going to pick up here at verse 12.**

**This is where we left off last week.**

**Matthew 2:12 And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, (dream, no angel) they departed to their own country by another way. (They disobeyed a king to save The King - putting their life in danger)**

**13 Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream (perhaps Gabriel) and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him.” (an urgent warning - leave now for Egypt) 14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”**

**Egypt would have been the last place a Jewish family would want to go - and the last place Herod would look.**

**Joe rose up immediately, and they left. This was not what Joeor Mary ever expected or planned for their life.**

**16 Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. (Matt 2:7)**

**17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18 “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted because they are no more.” (Even the violence of Herod was foretold and fulfilled)**

**The death of innocent children... because of Jesus? No, Herod. This little child terrified Herod - fear of losing his power.**

**\*\* Jesus' potential age revealed. - V7 asked how long since they had seen the star. It was 2 yrs. If the star appeared at Jesus' birth, it would place Jesus up to 2 yrs old.**

**\*\* How many children were killed?**

**Tradition says thousands, but history places the town at 300 to 2000 people. Estimated that the actual number killed in a town that size is 20-30 babies murdered. Tragic and gruesome.**

**Some contest that it never happened, but it is in keeping with Herod’s actions and attitudes. The death toll in a small insignificant town might not have even made headlines.**

**Insanely jealous and going insane – Herod, the butcher of Bethlehem, orders the slaughter of the innocents. This was how he ruled for 41 years. Convinced he had won. But little did he know…**

**Jesus and family move to Egypt – we are not told where they went. We do not know for how long – 3 months to 3 years.**

**19 But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, (Perhaps Gabriel) 20 saying, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead.” 21 And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel.**

**\*\* This helps us know when Jesus was born**

**14 (they) departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod.**

**19 But when Herod died… 22 Archelaus was reigning over Judea…**

**Herod dies between 4 -1 BC. AD/ BC – and Jesus’ birth**

**The window of time of the census and Herod's death**

**The angel did not tell him where to go.**

**Notice again Joseph’s quick obedience.**

**22 But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee. (this was the 4th dream of Joseph)**

**Arch. was so violent and bad – that Rome eventually pulled him back to Rome for misrule and abuse of authority. Antipus was soon set in. He was there during Jesus' ministry, beheaded John the Baptist, and was king when Jesus was crucified.**

**23 And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene.**

**What can we learn from this passage?**

**Jesus threatens our way of life.**

**The cute Jesus in the manger on a silent night that come to be nice and loving is much more intense. The be in sin and selfish and to hera of Jesus is threatening (Herod). So much that it moved him to murder children.**

**A true encounter with Jesus - sends you in a new direction**

**If anyone be in Christ…**

**Forgetting the past… (verse)**

**The wisdom of the world is deficient.**

**Strives to protect itself – look out fort number one (selfish ambition verses)**

**Worldly wisdom leads to selfish ambition, jealousy, envy, separation, revenge, rage, and ultimately falls short. But the wise men, Mary, and Jospeh – all they knew was what God told them.**

**Like in this passage e- worldly leaders are often in opposition to God’s word and rule. It still happens today. We must be cautious of placing our hope in this world's rulers. They are not the Messiah.**

**Ps 2:1-12**

**John Mayer's song, “Waiting on the WORLD to Change": "Now we see (what’s) wrong with the world and those who lead it. But we just feel like we don't have the means to rise above and beat it." Mayer knows there is a problem, but he doesn’t know the answer, "So we’re waiting, waiting on the worrrrrlllllld to change." But the thing is – it never will. Apart from submission to Jesus – the cycle of pain will only continue.**

**Kill the babies is still the cry**

**This is not a political issue – this is a moral issue. This is a biblical issue.**

**Kill the babies! On the verge of redemption - Moses / On the verge of redemption - Jesus / Today - a generation under attack.**

**There is forgiveness and grace for anyone.**

**You cannot stop the perfect plan of God – even if you try**

**The butcher of Bethlehem.**

**V19 – “Herod died” – his plots and schemes, intentions, and brutality in an attempt to stop Jesus - cannot deter the plans of God.**

**Prophecies fulfilled in Matthew 1-2**

**Conceived and born of a virgin - Matt 1:22-23 (Isaiah 7:14).**

**Jesus was born in Bethlehem - Matt 2:5-6 (Micah 5:2)**

**He would live in Egypt - Matt 2:15 (Hosea 11:1)**

**Children would be killed - Matt 2:16-18 (Jeremiah 31:15)**

**Jesus would be called a Nazarene Matthew 2:23 (Isaiah 11:1)**

**\*\* 300+ Messianic prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus' life in the gospels.**

**The gates of hell will not prevail.**

**Nothing can stop Jesus verse.**

**The plans of God verses – thwarted**

**Humility surpasses power every time.**

**“Out of Nazareth”**

**Jesus was raised in a small insignificant town.**

**Mary’s hometown (possibly Joseph). Nathanael wondered if anything good could come from Nazareth (John 1:46).**

**A poor unimportant region and town. Nazarenes are looked down upon – uncultured and uneducated.**

**Next time Jesus is written about – he is a teen (12) in the temple.**

**Then again, he disappears until he is about 30.**

**What was he doing? He grew – he worked – provided for his family. The infancy accounts of Jesus – are unreliable and fake.**

**1 Peter 5:5-7**

**Pride come before a fall**

**Herod's death - The death of Herod - attempted suicide and death. Racked with convulsions and rotting breath, covered in gangrene sores and lesions filled with maggots, he went delirious/insane. Failing to kill himself he died of kidney disease.**

**Jesus is the only answer to evil and pain**

**The story of Jesus' birth ends in tragic violence and the death of the most innocent of people.**

**He was not born into a fairy tale but into a fallen world of rage and jealousy – filled with sin. His very presence sends the spirit world into chaos. This bears weight to the importance of Jesus' birth – only Jesus can stop it.**

**In the middle of all this, Matthew gives hope and two reminders:**

**#1 - 14 And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt 15 and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”**

**Remember – God brought Israel out of bondage, oppression, and aggression into a land of peace.**

**#2 - 17 Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: 18 “A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more.” (Jer 31:15)**

**After bringing them into the land of peace – they rebelled against God, and God put them in time out. The temple is destroyed, and they are exiled. The Jeremiah quote is a reference to that event.**

**They would have known the very next part of the verse – Jeremiah 31:16 Thus says the Lord: “Keep your voice from weeping, and your eyes from tears, for there is a reward for your work, declares the Lord, and they shall come back from the land of the enemy. 17 There is hope for your future, declares the Lord, and your children shall come back to their own country.**

**That hope was that they would one day return and eventually one day have a Messiah who would restore them to God.**

**Matthew is saying – Jesus is that! He leads us from bondage and sin into peace and hope – and reconciliation with God!**

**Jesus is the only answer to evil and pain**

**Scientism, atheism, agnosticism, naturalism – provide no answers. We are only a product of time and chaos. Everything is meaningless, and then you die. We are only stardust seasoning in and primordial soup.**

**The world brings violence and bloodshed (the massacre), but Jesus brings hope and a future to all who have faith in him.**

**Violence and bloodshed. Death and hatred.**

**He is the king and only one who reverses the curse of sin!**

**Death is swallowed up in victory in Jesus!**

**Rev 21:4 – his second coming!**

**There is hope in no other name.**

**Isaiah – the govt will be upon his shoulders and following the passage of the second coming.**

**Pride**

**The Parable of the treasure and pearl**

**I have ($20) if you have 5 dollars I’ll give it to you after service. But you need to come down here and pay for it now.**

**Matthew 13:44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. 45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. 46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.**