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# **Christ has come to rescue us from all our miseries!**

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Sermon | Matthew 2:13-18 | Jeremiah 31:15-17 |  
Holy Innocents-Christmas 1



**DECEMBER 27, 2025**  
IMMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
89, Mountainview Rd. S. Georgetown

**Christ has come to rescue us from all our miseries!**

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Well of true and eternal Life and the true Light that came into this world, grace, mercy, and peace be with you all. Amen.

This morning's sermon focusses on the readings from Jeremiah and the Gospel according to Saint Matthew. Let us pray:

May the words of my mouth and the meditation of our hearts be pleasing to You, O Lord, my God and my Redeemer. **Amen.**

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Today, let's picture the story of Jesus' birth.

I invite you to visualize this with me.

**Here comes scene one:** We see that Jesus is born in Bethlehem, and a multitude of heavenly host appears and joins the angel who announced His birth to the shepherds.

Next, you hear the hymn of the angels: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased.” (Luke 2)

The joy of the heavenly host is shared by a few humble men on earth.

**And here is scene two:** Three Magi travel from afar and arrive at King Herod’s palace. They ask for the whereabouts of the infant born king of the Jews as they are carrying gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh with them.

But the joy of Bethlehem is soon overshadowed by fear. While the Magi rejoice, Herod trembles.

**Here is scene three now:** King Herod paces up and down in his court. He is deeply troubled. Herod seems to be insecure about his kingship.

He has just heard from the Magi and got it confirmed from his chief priests and scribes about the birth of Christ. They tell him that the infant is born in Bethlehem. And another striking detail in this scene is that the entire Jerusalem is troubled with him.

The people of Jerusalem are concerned because they have witnessed his cruelty. They fear that Herod in his paranoia may react brutally. They are afraid of what he might do next.

And here is now the story takes a darker turn.

**And comes the final scene:** We see Herod is furious and mad at the Magi. They have not returned to him, though they had promised to report the child's location.

In a murderous frenzy, Herod orders a blood bath, a massacre. He commands his soldiers to kill all the male children in Bethlehem and in the surrounding region, who are two years old and under.

And you begin to hear loud wailings, and laments of all the mothers whose infants were taken from them. But strikingly, you have heard such inconsolable cries before. Your ears are not strangers to such weeping and sorrow. You think of someone battling cancer, shedding tears in isolation. You remember a mother who lost her child to a terrible disease.

You recall the heart-wrenching cries of those who endure bullying, trauma, violence, murders—including those of unborn children. You think of harmful neglect, of wounding words, of all the hidden suffering that rarely comes to light—until Herod's brutality in that final scene brings it all to the surface.

Very quietly, a question sneaks into your mind: “*Why would God allow this pain?*”

In today’s reading from Jeremiah, the prophet speaks of Rachel—Jacob’s beloved wife—weeping for her children. Jeremiah weaves poetry into his prophecy. Rachel had been dead for centuries by the time Jeremiah appeared and wrote, nearly eleven hundred years.

Yet she is remembered as a chief ancestress of the ancient Israel. Jeremiah uses Rachel’s weeping symbolically, as though the “*mother of the ancient Israel*” mourns for her descendants who were then carried away into Babylonian exile.

Jeremiah writes: “*A voice is heard in Ramah, lamentation and weeping. Rachel in weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.*”

Ramah was a town where Jewish captives were gathered before being marched off to Babylon. As exiles were forced away, the twelve tribes of Israel, the entire town of Ramah wept. Jeremiah poetically summons Rachel to join in the weeping of her children.

You and I are also summoned to join the mourning and sorrow of those who lament around us. As Scripture summons us too, "*Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.*" (Romans 12:15).

We mourn with the one battling cancer. We mourn with the mother who has lost her child to a deadly disease. We mourn with those who endure bullying, trauma, violence, murders, and including those of unborn children.

We mourn the pain others have inflicted in our lives and seek healing from our gracious God.

We lament and repent of the pain that we have inflicted in the lives of others, seeking forgiveness from our merciful God.

And we know that God is good. He doesn't cause evil nor does He delight in pain and suffering.

As the ancient Israelites were carried away by the Babylonian King Nebuchadnezzar, God permitted this to happen as a loving discipline, calling His people back to Himself.

But when King Herod ordered the massacre of infants in and around Bethlehem, God allowed it in His mysterious providence, not as discipline, but as the darkness into which His Son entered. It shows that the Saviour of the world came into it when it was already soaked in suffering. And no cruelty of man could thwart His saving purpose.

This is why the Apostle Matthew writes in the Gospel, confessing what the prophet Jeremiah had spoken poetically. Matthew says, "*Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah.*" The word '*fulfilled*' is Matthew's confession that God's saving purpose in Christ has now broken into the world.

The Redeemer of all has come to rescue them from their miseries, even into a world marked by deep sorrow.

Dear friends of Immanuel, sorrow, grief, and mourning have gripped this world as the after-effects of the sin and disobedience of the first Adam.

Yet the coming of the second Adam, the true-man and the true-God, Jesus Christ has fulfilled God's promise to deliver us from sin, death and damnation. This little Child, born in Bethlehem took upon Himself the way of the cross to give us eternal life.

Sin and death can no longer hold us captive forever,  
because Jesus has defeated them all.

You and I may mourn and weep over the after-effects of  
sin as it continues to trouble this broken world, but now  
Christ mourns with us. He takes our mourning and  
weeping and transform them into joy.

And He gives us the faith that looks forward to  
everlasting joy. Jesus continues to pray for us before the  
Father, who takes away our miseries, forgives our sins,  
and leads us toward our heavenly home.

And dear brothers and sisters in Christ, who entered this  
world of sorrow, who bore our griefs and carried our  
sorrows, now comes to you in the Sacrament of His body  
and blood. The Child who once lay in a manger, the Lord  
who once hung upon the cross, is the very One who  
places Himself into your hands today.

In this Holy Supper, He gives you the forgiveness He won, the life He secured, and the salvation He accomplished.

Here at this altar, Christ meets you in your mourning. He binds up the broken-hearted. He strengthens the weary.

He assures you that your sins are forgiven, your death is defeated, and your future is held in His nail-pierced hands. In this Meal, He gives you a foretaste of that everlasting joy where every tear will be wiped away.

As we leave His holy Altar today, we do not walk out alone. Jesus walks with you. He walks with me.

The Child who was born in humility, the Man who carried the cross, the Lord who rose from the grave—He is your refuge and strength. He has come to rescue you from all your miseries.

And because He lives, your mourning will not have the final word.

Your tears are seen.

Your grief is held.

And your future is secure. In Christ, there is hope for your future, because He has come to take away all your miseries.

Now, may the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Him. Amen.

Vijay Samuel