

“Selected Studies in the Gospels”
The Flight to Egypt and the Return to Nazareth

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Matthew 2:13-15

¹³When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. "Get up," he said, "take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt ... ¹⁵where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: "Out of Egypt I called my son." (Hosea 11:1).

1. "There is no doubt that Matthew regards Israel as a type of the Messiah. (Yeshua) is often presented in the New Testament as the antitype of Israel ... Thus, Matthew is thinking along the lines of corporate solidarity. He is not citing Hosea 11:1 as a direct 'proof-text' of (Yeshua) coming out of Egypt, but ... making the point that (those things) which (were) vital in Israel's corporate and redemptive experience finds its ultimate and intended focus in the person of (Yeshua) the Messiah."¹
 - a. Other Examples of "Corporate Solidarity" —Prov. 19:17; Mt. 25:31-46; Acts 9:1-6; Rom. 5:17-19; 1Cor. 15:20-22
2. When Matthew quotes Hos. 11:1 and applies it to (Messiah), it is evident that he regards Israel as a type of the Messiah ... Just as Pharaoh, that cruel king, had tried to destroy Israel, so another king, namely Herod ...was attempting to destroy (Messiah).²
3. "The verb 'to fulfill' has broader significance than mere one-to-one prediction. Not only in Matthew but elsewhere in the (NT), the history and laws of the (OT) are perceived to have prophetic significance ... 'Fulfillment' must be understood against the background of these interlocking themes and their typological connections."³

Matthew 2:16-18

¹⁶Herod ... gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under ... ¹⁷Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled:

¹⁸"A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more." (Jer. 31:15).

1. The model for this act of Herod is the Pharaoh of the enslavement (Exod. 1:16). The comparison is strengthened when rabbinic sources are examined⁴—B. Sota 12a; Exodus Rabba 1:18.
2. Jeremiah 31:15 occurs in a setting of hope. Despite the tears, God says, the exiles will return ... despite the tears of the Bethlehem mothers, there is hope because Messiah has escaped Herod and will ultimately reign ... ⁵
3. The three ... *Bethlehem*, the city of David, *Egypt*, the land of the Exodus, and *Ramah*, the mourning place of the Exile, offer a theological history of Israel in geographical miniature. Just as (Yeshua) sums up the history of the people named in his genealogy, so his early career sums up the history of these prophetically significant places.⁶

Comparison of the “Infancy Narrative” Events in the Four Gospels

Gospel Event	Matt.	Mark	Luke	John
Introduction^{Lk}			1:1-4	
Yochanan' birth foretold			1:5-25	
Yeshua's birth foretold			1:26-38	
Miriam visits Elisheva			1:39-45	
Miriam's song			1:46-56	
Yochanan's birth			1:57-66	
Z'char-yah's song			1:67-80	
Yeshua's genealogy^{Mt}	1:1-17		3:23-38	
Yeshua's birth^{Jn}	1:18-25		2:1-7	1:1-18
The shepherds and the angels			2:8-20	
Yeshua presented in the Temple			2:21-38	
The visit of the Magi	2:1-12			
The escape to Egypt	2:13-18			
The return to Nazareth	2:19-23		2:39-40	
Yeshua (as a boy) at the Temple			2:41-52	
Yochanan prepares the way^{Mk}	3:1-12	1:1-8	3:1-19	1:19-28
Yeshua's immersion	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-22	1:29-34
Yeshua's temptation	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13	

¹ Erkel, Martin Darryl, *Difficult Texts in the New Testament*, p. 32 who cites Longenecker, Richard N., *Biblical Exegesis in the Apostolic Period*, (Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1975), p. 145.

² Hendriksen, William, *New Testament Commentary: Exposition of the Gospel According to Matthew* (Baker Book House, 1984), pp. 178-179.

³ Carson, D.A., *Matthew, Expositor's Bible Commentary, Volume 8*, (Zondervan, 1984), p. 92.

⁴ Samuel Tobias Lachs, *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament* (KTAV Publishing House, Inc./Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, 1987), p. 12.

⁵ Frank E. Gaebelin, Ed., *The Expositors Bible Commentary, Vol. 8, Matthew-Luke* (Regency Reference Library, Zondervan Publishing House, 1978), pp. 94-95.

⁶ Raymond E. Brown, S. S., *The Birth of the Messiah, A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in Gospels of Matthew and Luke* (Doubleday, 1993), pp. 216-217.