

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS - Week of December 26, 2021

### THEME: "The Prophet Hosea" TRIP FROM EGYPT

#### **Sunday .....Read Hosea 11:1-10**

*"When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt."* This prophetic truth substantiates the fact that the Bible is indeed the inspired Word of God! How could Hosea possibly have known that the Son of God would come out of Egypt? It appears to be in conflict with the prophecy of Micah that the promised ruler would come from Bethlehem. Why would two different prophets mention that the Messiah would come from both Bethlehem and Egypt? Well, they were inspired by the Holy Spirit to put these truths into writing. What man does not know, God knows! God knew about Caesar's tax decree when He inspired Micah to write that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem. God knew of King Herod's proclamation about killing babies in Israel. And He inspired Hosea to mention that the Son of God would come out of Egypt, similar to the way He led His Moses from Egypt to the Promised land long before. God can write history before it happens because He is God. Those who have placed their faith in God can know what is going to happen because God, in His Word, has told us all we need to know to prepare for what is coming? What are prophecies in the Bible yet to be fulfilled? Well, the next one is mentioned in I Thessalonians 4:16-17: *"For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.* As we have celebrated the birth of Christ in the manger, let us anticipate His appearing in the air to take true Christians home to heaven.

#### **PROPHECY FULFILLED**

#### **Monday ..... Read Matthew 2:1-10**

*"In Bethlehem in Judea, they said, for this is what the prophet wrote: And you, O Bethlehem in the land of Judah, are not least among the ruling cities of Judah, for a ruler will come from you who will be the shepherd for my people Israel."* Let us give credit to those who responded to the question of the wise men from the East to Jerusalem. They inquired about the "King of the Jews, that they wanted to worship Him. That obviously troubled King Herod, the current king of Israel who would naturally think that his family was the royal line. When King Herod called a meeting of his advisors about the location of the one about whom the wise men inquired, they advised that the ruler of Israel would come from Bethlehem, exactly where Mary and her baby were as a result of Caesar Augustus's tax decree. Give credit to the chief priests and scribes who knew the detail of Micah the prophet speaking of the Messiah coming from Bethlehem! Knowledge of the Bible serves us well, but is only as good as we apply it to our lives. It is important to be doers of the Word and not hearers only.

#### **WISE MEN WORSHIP**

#### **Tuesday ..... Read Matthew 2:11-12**

*"When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him, and when they had opened their treasures, they presented to Him gifts: gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."* What valuable lessons we learn from these wise men about worship. Whether or not they engaged in singing and preaching, we do not know. We do know that they were willing to travel to worship, and we know that they wanted to give an offering. I am reminded of all those today who travel to be part of worship services to honor our Lord. Whether it be a couple of blocks or many miles, we know that our God is honored by worshipers. And those who give of their treasure, as did the wise men, are greatly blessed; and God is honored. We know that God considers our offerings now as laying up treasures in heaven as Jesus later taught in Matthew 6:20: *"Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven."* That God would include this account of the wise men shows us the priority He places on worship!

## TRIP TO EGYPT

**Wednesday ..... Read Matthew 2:13-18**

*"After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother, the angel said."* Again we see that God is omniscient! God knew of King Herod's devious plan. Because he now realized that the royal line of his family was in jeopardy, Herod issued a decree to have all male babies killed to assure his son of being king. His conclusions were all wrong because the one born to be the King of the Jews appeared the first time to be the Lamb of God, not the King of kings. Little did that king know that he was dealing with Almighty God! God truly is the Ruler of nations and cannot be outdone by human leadership. God will accomplish His plans for His earth! A knowledge and commitment to all Biblical truth is helpful! Praise God that Joseph and Mary were obedient servants of God. Despite the inconvenience of traveling such a distance with a child, they obeyed just as they had done from Nazareth to Bethlehem before. They tarried in Egypt until God instructed them to return to their home. God's ways and timing is perfect!

## RETURN TO NAZARETH

**Thursday ..... Read Matthew 2:19-23**

*"Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and go into the land of Israel."* God is truly faithful to all who place their trust in Him and follow His instructions. In the days of Joseph and Mary, God used angels to deliver His message because God had not yet put into writing His New Covenant, that which we now have in the New Testament of the Bible. Believers now have God's completed written Word as their instruction book for living. At the time of Jesus' childhood, Joseph received God's instructions from an angel. Herod was now dead, and it was safe for Joseph to take his wife and the child Jesus home to Nazareth. As we contemplate all the circumstances surrounding the birth of God's Son and the difficulties at the time of Jesus' birth and early childhood, they were anything but perfect. Being a sovereign God, He could have controlled things to make the birth and childhood of His Son ideal. But He did not do that. Maybe He wants us to realize that the life of dedication to do the will of God may not be the easiest. There may be bumps in the road, but following God and His ways are surely the most rewarding from the eternal viewpoint. Faith is the victory!

## DIVINE JUDGMENT

**Friday ..... Read Hosea 9:9-15**

*"They have deeply corrupted themselves, as in the days of Gibeah; therefore He will remember their iniquity, He will visit their sins."* The prophet Hosea spoke of the corruption in God's chosen nation of Israel. The fact that the Israelites from God's chosen nation on His earth through which He would accomplish so many great things and will continue to do that with the return of Jesus in the future shows us the importance of obedience. God honors obedience! And God judges disobedience! As the Father of those who have been born again in our day of the Church Age, God will do what is necessary for His children to be obedient. In the future, God will convene in final judgments: the Judgment Seat of Christ for believers and the Great White Throne Judgment for unbelievers. The Judgment Seat of Christ will be for believers to receive rewards for their faithfulness as servants of God while on earth. Theirs is not a judgment for punishment because God chooses to remember their sins no more because of their Savior's sacrificial death on their behalf. Those who had never accepted God's offer of a pardon by receiving Christ will be sentenced to an eternity in hell at the Great White Throne Judgment! Life's most important decision is to receive Christ!

## DIVINE MERCY

**Saturday ..... Read Hosea 13:9-14**

*"O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me there is hope."* Our loving God is a God of mercy. Despite their experiencing God's blessing for years, as time went on the leaders in Israel became increasingly secularized. Political and material interests seemed far more important than the moral and spiritual. The result was the loss of God's rich blessings.

Unfortunately, our nation parallels that of ancient Israel with so much approved that is in conflict with Biblical teaching. But there is hope! That hope is contingent on doing things God's way, which is obviously the right way. That is a challenge for true Christians to be God's light in this age of darkness! God will extend His mercy, but only on His terms!