

More on the School of Suffering

Scripture Reading — Matthew 2:13-20

Take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt . . . for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him. — Matthew 2:13

In Exodus we see Israel enrolled in the school of suffering, ruthlessly subjected to slavery in Egypt. Many centuries later the people in Bethlehem and the family of Joseph were enrolled in that same school. Likely there wasn't a person left untouched by Herod's despicable decree that all baby boys under the age of two should be killed. Their suffering taught them of the power of evil and led them to long for God to act on behalf of his people.

God was about to do that, of course. The child who was taken to Egypt, the little one named Jesus, would become the Savior of his people. He would be shaped for that role by things that the Father put into his earthly life early on—including the experience of -suffering.

Imagine what Jesus learned as a young child whose family was forced to flee. Imagine what he learned as the news of Herod's massacre of children in Bethlehem reached the community in Egypt. Imagine what Jesus learned as he saw fear on Joseph's face. Imagine his longing to grow into the role his Father was preparing for him—the role of Savior and Deliverer.

Imagine what suffering equips us to do and to be. If accepted with faith, it leads us into humility and into readiness for whatever God has next.

Prayer

Father, you used suffering to shape Israel, Moses, and even Jesus. Lead us to see hardship as part of your curriculum so that we will not resent its lessons. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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