

Redeemer, Refugee, IDP

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2 Baby Dedication. *Giavanna Christine Caporrino*. Parents: Joseph & Deanna.
- B. Slide3 Children at Risk - Part of helping “children at risk” is by trying to prevent them from becoming “at risk”. Sunday the 20th, from 3-5pm. *Jennifer O’Farrel, the regional executive director of Big Brother Big Sisters of the Inland Empire*, will be sharing. She will share about their mentoring program. Come and hear what’s going on **in our valley, the difference mentoring can make** in the life of a child, **and how you can be involved, whether or not** you can actually be a mentor yourself.
- C. Slide4 All men are invited to attend our next breakfast Sat Oct.3rd. 7:30-9am. Pastor Mike Ramsey sharing. \$5 suggested donation.

II. Intro:

- A. Slide5 There’s only 96 more shopping days till X-mas, **but** as I had mentioned, it may be better to learn about the X-mas story **w/o all the distractions**.
- B. Slide6 Lil different angle of the Christmas story, you might pick up *by my outline*:
 1. THE KING OF THE JEWS *HUNTED BY THE KING OF THE JEWS* (1-12)
 2. THE REDEEMER BECOMES A REFUGEE (13-15)
 3. JESUS, A TARGET OF GENOCIDE (16-18)
 4. FROM REFUGEE TO IDP (19-23) Title: *Redeemer, Refugee, IDP*

III. Slide7 THE KING OF THE JEWS *HUNTED BY THE KING OF THE JEWS* (1-12)

- A. Slide8 (1) Wise men/Magoi/Magi - priestly cast of Medes. Possible Daniel planted seeds in Babylon, then Medes/Persian wise men. Maybe shared Numb.24:17 about a star rising out of Jacob/Israel?
- B. Slide9a Herod The Great - at 4’4” he was a short man *who wanted to be tall*.
- C. He was a builder: Built...Palaces, Fortresses, Entire Cities, Masada, Aqueducts **& esp.** known for the remodeling of the Temple.
- D. He was Cruel & Vicious

1. Herod was not Jewish, was hated by the Jews but tried to win them over. He married a Jewish woman (Hasmonean) **built** them a Temple. Antipater, his dad, did a favor for *Julius Caesar*, so he gave him an army & allowed Antipater the title of **King of the Jews**. When **Herod** took over he loved that title & in his paranoia killed anyone he thought would attempt to take it from him [vs2 make more sense?]
 2. **Slide9b** 1 night killed his wife, then his 2 sons later that eve. **Next day felt bad, so built a tower, dedicated it to them.** It was said, *“It is safer to be Herod’s pig than his son.”*
 3. **In his 70’s**, realizing none would mourn his death, he arrested 100 leaders in Jerusalem & ordered that when he died, they would instantly be killed also, thinking *If the city won’t mourn for me, let them mourn for those who die w/me.*¹
- E. **Slide10** (2) The Wise Men weren’t content w/just **seeing the Star**. *They Must see Him. And not only see Him, but Worship Him.* [Note: 2 years later in a house (11) not manger scene]
- F. (4-6) Some religious people may become well instructed in their Bibles, & yet be all the worse for what they have discovered. [*Jews wouldn’t come but Gentiles did. i.e. wisemen*]
1. **May it never be charged against us** that we were a genius in *Scriptural Geography, Prophecy & Theology* & yet miss **Him** of whom the Scripture speaks.
 2. **Slide11** *“Never be inoculated with a mild form of Christianity so as to be rendered immune from the real thing.”*
- G. (6) **Bethlehem** - One survey showed the 10 biggest disappointments in Tourism. Listed #3 was Bethlehem. *It’s a dirty little city. The shepherds field was neat, but the city’s a dive.*
1. **Yet** it’s still one of the best known spots in the world today for only one reason, *Jesus was born there.*
- H. (8) **What a Wretch... WORSHIP HIM?** insert *Christmas Carol Do you hear what I hear?...here.*
- I. **Every church has its posers:** *Yah, I’m a Christian...so are there many single women at your church? Yah, I’m a Christian...do you have a bulletin board for my business cards?*
 - J. **Is your worship really to worship Him?** or have you perfected the art of singing w/o worshipping? or have you perfected the art of christian lingo & lip service? (vs. the *life*)
 - K. **Slide12** (9,10) See how **the Star’s above** as well as **the Men below** pay their obeisance to the new-born King. *“Praise Him all you stars of light.”*

¹ Joseph. antiq.xvii 6.5

1. Know exactly what this *star* was? Some have said, it was Jupiter. Others, alignment of Jupiter & Saturn. Others, a meteor or comet. Still others, said it was not real but it was their “*inner star*” leading them along the way. :)

a) But this *star* stopped & pointed out a specific house.

L. (9) It came & stood over where the young child was. *No heart should rest till it finds the Christ*

M. Slide13a The gifts - Gold for a mighty King. Frankincense for a Priest (who would offer it w/the meal offering). Myrrh (sap used as an embalming fluid) used for a Prophets Burial.

1. Frankincense is crystalized & doesn't give off an aroma until it is crushed.

2. So what did they do w/the gold? Possibly it financed their trip to Egypt. We say where God guides He provides.

N. Maybe another lesson we learn from the wise men: *Those who look for Jesus will see Him. Those who see Him will Worship Him. Those who Worship Him will consecrate their substance to Him.*

1. We note, the word order in ancient writings were never this way...it would always be the adult listed 1st. But here the Child. (11,13,20)

a) This speaks to the centrality of Christ.

2. We note, they worship Him not Mary or Joseph. They give their gifts to Him not Mary or Joseph.

3. We also note they didn't come to get but to meet & give...their worship & gifts.

a) Slide13b Come to Christ to Give Him...*your worship, your substance, & your-self.*

IV. Slide14 THE REDEEMER BECOMES A REFUGEE (13-15)

A. Here starts the other side of the X-mas story. *Refugees & Holocaust Victims.*

1. Slide15 refugee - a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. [aka Asylum Seekers]

2. Migrants? Really? Refugees are forced to flee their homes and seek safety in another country, often times without warning. Migrants are people who make a conscious decision to leave their countries to seek a better life elsewhere.

a) One moves to better there life, the other to save their life.

3. **Slide16a** Statistics: 51.2 million today. If they were a country they'd be the 26th largest country in the world. 1/3 of Syria is displaced. There are 42,500 # of individuals forced to flee their homes per day due to conflict & persecution (How fast is it growing? an increase of 4-fold in 4 years)

a) **Picture this:** It's in 6 days *every man, women & child*, in Temecula, Murrieta, & Lake Elsinore walking down our freeway fleeing our valley.

B. **Slide16b** (13) Take the young child & His mother, flee to Egypt...for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him. How would you respond?

1. Lord, enough is enough! *Why don't you bless Herod with an **aneurism**, or a **heart attack**? Haven't we been through enough?*

C. (14) Joseph, as guardian of this child *left his home, business, friends, city, & even his country, crossed the Negev desert, all for **this toddler**.*

1. *Who said following the Lord would be easy? Are you having an Egyptian experience? Being called **away** for a time? Go & stay put, till He brings you word.*

2. **Slide17** It's about 75 miles down from Bethlehem to the border of Egypt. 150 miles from Bethlehem to **Alexandria**. Some commentators *guess* that this is where they ended up, because there was an assembly of *Jewish expats* that were given protection by Alexander the Great there. *There was about a million Jews there w/synagogues & schools.*

D. Remember the promise, *You will be called out of Egypt.* Numb.24:8

1. *This was God's plan then all along.* Just like His children 1500 years earlier coming out of Egypt.

V. **Slide18 JESUS, A TARGET OF GENOCIDE (16-18)** *1st Holocaust victims*

A. (16) *What ends will you go to for your selfishness?*

B. **Slide19** (18) **Ramah** - *Where is Ramah?* Bethlehem was about 5 miles **South** of Jerusalem. **Ramah** was about 5 miles **North** of Jerusalem.

1. It's like Herod took a pencil & drew a circle around Jerusalem, probably 10 miles N/S of Jerusalem, and said *"Kill every boy under 2 years of age."*

2. When the Babylonians invaded Judah in 586 bc, & carried the Jews captive into Babylon, Jer.40 tells us that the **deportation headquarters** were in **Ramah**. *Obvious it was a place of weeping.*

a) So **once again** there was *weeping in Rama*. The full fulfillment of this Prophecy.

3. Herod hopes that in this **1st Jewish Holocaust** he would **kill** the Christ child.

C. **Slide20a** Life is precious from a baby in the womb to the elderly on their death bed. Because **life** is a priceless gift given to each of us by God. *The Lord gives it & it's only His to take it away.*

1. Dr. Les, a practicing Hospice Physician sent me this info...regarding a **recent passage of a bill to legalize physician assisted suicide** in the State of Ca. It has received very little publicity but has passed the house and senate and now sits on the desk of Governor Brown awaiting signature or veto by Oct11th. If passed, it will make **California** the 5th state to legalize physician assisted suicide. [the End-of-Life Option Act (Senate Bill 128)]

D. **Slide20b** Oddny Gumaer (Partners R/D) did a blog called *Thoughts on the Holocaust*

1. She explained that **Holocaust memorial day was yesterday** (Jan.27). She asked, **Why don't we stop the world on January 27th?...Why don't we all take some time off and reflect? Why did it happen? Why didn't anybody stop the massacres? Why weren't there more people who spoke up and who overcame their fear? Why did so many innocent people have to die in the most gruesome way? How can we stop it from happening again? Is it happening?**

2. The attitude the Nazis had towards their own race, and towards the Jews we can see clearly in the attitude **the Burma government** and **religious leaders** have towards their own population, **the Rohingya people**. **Some of the same things the Nazis said about the Jews, the Burma government and religious leaders say about the Rohingya.** Like: They are a **virus** that we need to get rid of. Like: We need to either **send them** all out of our country, **or** we need to **fence** them all in. Like: We can **withhold food** and **medicine** from them for as long as we find it necessary.

3. One of the 300 survivors of the Auschwitz concentration camp, **Roman Kent** (85) had tears in his eyes when he recalled the horror he had survived. And his plea to the world, **Let us add 1 more command to the 10 commandments: You shall not be a bystander.**

4. Are we going to remember the death of thousands of innocent victims 70 years from now and ask ourselves: **Why did the world let this happen? Or are we going to change history by starting to protest what is happening to the Rohingya?**

E. **Slide21a But Wait!** The Jews knew their O.T. And knew that ch.'s 30-33 were *unique* to Jeremiah, in that they were the chapters of **Hope**. **Read** 31:15-17

1. The same w/this *lamentation, weeping & mourning*. **Today** there's **suffering yet soon** to be **salvation**.
2. The mothers of Bethlehem *like* Rachael, could only weep because of their present situation, **but** like Rachael the tears were **not in vain & not forever**.

F. **Slide21b** (18) **Because they are no more** - Oh yes they **Are...**

1. Their children **Are**. They **Are** w/Him. **And believing mom's** can expect to see them again. [Abortions, Still Births, SIDS, Early death]

G. **They refused to be comforted** - They would have been more, if they knew though their lil one's were slain, *The Children's Friend* had escaped, & still lived to be **the Savior** of all who died before committing Actual Transgression.

1. "These children died that He might live, so He could die that they might live."

H. **Are these babies just collateral damage** in the progress of redemptive history?

1. **No...**they're a blessed part of God's plan too. **I believe** God took them immediately into His presence, and they will be in heaven as part of the worshipers saved by **God's grace alone**. **I believe** they were taken directly from their mother's arms and into the arms of God.
2. **But** for those parents who lost their children, **weeping and wailing** went up from the streets of Bethlehem in Ramah. **Even for godly pilgrims on this side of eternity, loss of this earthly life** seems like the greatest loss possible. **But it isn't**. The greatest loss is **to live a long life here** while **neglecting the life to come**.
3. For Christians, physical death is **a defeated foe** because of Jesus. **But it's still an enemy**. **Yet** death, like all other enemies of God's people, is still under Christ's control, for He alone holds the keys. **So death** does God's bidding even as **human wrath** unconsciously serves to execute His will.

VI. Slide22 FROM REFUGEE TO IDP (19-23)

- A. Slide23a An (IDP) *internally displaced person* is someone who is forced to flee his or her home but who remains within his or her country's borders.
- B. Slide23b A few days before his death Herod had named *Antipas* as his successor, but in his last moments he named *Archelaus*.
- C. (19) When Herod was dead - *Obedience conquers the Sword*. (Joseph vs. Herod)
- D. (19b) Boy this Joseph sure has the gift of sleep (4x's in 2 chapters)
- E. (22) The blessed King's days were not spent in a royal court, but w/the common peoples of the melting pot of Galilee. Today Lord, meet us in our humble Galilee's.
- F. God even uses wicked rulers to steer us. (vs.22)
- G. (23) Nazareth - Not the *Monte Carlo* of Israel. Tour guide, we can go if you want to.
- H. Slide24 LESSONS:
- I. Believers aren't exempt from trials.
1. The wise men weren't from Herod.
 2. Mary & Joseph had to flee for their lives.
 3. Multiple innocent babies killed by a mad puppet king.
- J. The safest place to be is where God leads you.
1. Wise men follow a star - led to Christ-child.
 2. Wise men follow God's instruction in a dream - escape Herod's wrath.
 3. Joseph follows the Angel's instruction in a dream - escapes to Egypt.
 4. Joseph follows the God's instruction in a dream - escapes wrath of Archelaus.
- K. God is in charge.
1. Everything that happened in the Christmas story was planned out by God.