

## What the Baby in the Manger Didn't Do

Matthew 2:13-23

I want to look at two things that the babe in the manger didn't do.

1. The baby in the manger didn't stop bad things from happening.
  - King Herod proved that evil was alive and well even after Jesus was born. Verse 16. "When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi."
  - In the same chapter we have the innocence of Jesus and the corruption of Herod. The salvation of God and the slaughter of innocent babies.
  - His birth didn't eliminate suffering either. Verse 17, 18 "Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: 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."
    - Most Biblical scholars believe that between 20 and 30 babies were murdered in Bethlehem that day. We live in an evil world. Why is the world full of evil? Because it is full of people. Example:
  - The old hymn "Come Thou Fount" was written by Robert Robinson when he was just 23 years old. The third verse contains a phrase, "Prone to wonder, Lord I feel it, Prone to leave the Lord I love." This phrase was prophetic for him. In later life, he lapsed into sin. While riding a stagecoach, Robinson heard a woman humming his hymn. She later engaged him in conversation and asked what he thought of the hymn. Overcome with emotion, he said, "Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who wrote that song many years ago,

and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had back then.” We are all prone to wonder.

- Bad things happen even though Jesus was born, but I do have some good news.
  - The babe in the manger didn’t let bad things off the hook.
- Jesus was born that evil might be destroyed. John 3:8 “For this purpose the Son of God was manifest or born, that He might destroy the works of the devil.”
- Let me illustrate this point for you. How many of you remember the deadly shooting at Columbine High School on April 20, 1999? Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold stormed the school and gunned down 12 students and one teacher before taking their own life. Cassie Bernall was the brave young girl who took a bullet because of her faith in Christ. One of the gun men had yelled, “Anyone here believe in God?” Cassie stood to her feet and said Yes, I believe in God. I belong to the Lord Jesus.” The young gunman said “Why?” but before she could give an answer he shot her dead. This radiant teenager died a martyr, but just a few years prior Cassie could have been an accomplice to such a massacre. When she was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade her parents became concerned about her behavior. They had discovered that she was interested in witchcraft and began to drink and do drugs. Her parents also found letters that Cassie had wrote that talked about her desire to harm her parents and other people. Her parents enrolled her in another school and cut all ties to old friends and got her involved in their churches youth program where Cassie gave her life to Christ. She discovered the joy of Salvation that she carried to her early grave. She once said, “You really can’t live without Christ. It’s like impossible to really have a really true life without him.”
- So you may ask; “How is Jesus destroying evil?” One life at a time!!!!

- Christ didn't eliminate suffering, but because he was born, one day there will be no more suffering for those who call him Lord!!! Revelation 21:3,4 says, "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away."
- When we see the suffering of the world we ask God, "Why?" We all see the lowest of element of human existence, guilty of heinous crimes of depravity so gruesome and brutal that it turns the stomach of any person with a conscience and you say "God, why?" But that is the wrong question. The right question is "When?" When will you finish what you started in the manger?
- Christians know that such a day is coming. Dr. James Dobson of Focus on the Family told a story of a 5 year old boy who was dying of lung cancer. His mother had strong faith in the Lord and stayed by her son to the end. She would cradle him in her lap, instinctively getting her son ready for the end. His nurse entered the room one day as death was approaching and heard the boy talking about hearing bells. "The bells are ringing Mommy" he said. "I can hear them." The nurse thought he was hallucinating because he was slipping away. She left and returned a short while later to the young boy talking about the bells that were ringing. The nurse said to the mother, "I'm sure you know your boy is hearing things that aren't there." The mother smiled and pulled her boy closer to her chest and said, "No ma'am. He is not hallucinating. I told him when he is frightened, when he couldn't breathe, if he would listen carefully, he could hear the bells of heaven ringing for him. That precious child died on his mother's lap later that day.
- Isn't it great to know that once this life that is lived in a world of evil and suffering is over, were going to a place where the bells of heaven are ringing, a place Jesus prepared for us where there will be no suffering or pain. The birth of Jesus gives us hope and that hope gives us something to hold on to!!!!