

Salvation In Suffering
Christmas 2023
Pastor Tim Allen

Key Truth: The Christmas Story is the Good News that in the backdrop of Suffering God shows us his Salvation.

We know all too well the sadness of the season, but do we recognize that our suffering can be redemptive? It can lead us to our Savior. If we accept that God brings salvation through suffering, then we can show the world that the gospel is more than just a heartwarming story with a happy ending; it's also about finding salvation in the midst of pain, and looking forward to a glorious Day when God delivers us from all sin and pain in the new heaven and new earth; where He will be with us as our God.

DISCUSS

Read **Matthew 2:16-23** and discuss with the group a statement or concept that stood out to you or impacted you in the sermon entitled “Salvation In Suffering.”

DIG IN

1. A Story of Suffering. (Matthew 2:16-18)

Recount the events leading up to Herod's realization (v. 16a). Had he really been “tricked” by the wise men? Why or why not?

Describe Herod's reaction (v. 16). Can you think of any episodes in the Old Testament that speak of a similar reaction and tragedy?

Read Jeremiah 31:15: What are some things that God prophesies in Jeremiah, particularly chapter 31 that hint at what God would be doing in the narrative of Jesus' birth?

In what ways does Jeremiah's prophecy concerning a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:31) provide hope in the midst of suffering?

While we don't know all the reasons why God allows his people to experience tragic loss and suffering, what are some reasons that we know of (see Isaiah 9:2; Hosea 6:1-2; 13:14; 1 Corinthians 15:55)?

2. A Story of Salvation. (Matthew 2:19-23)

In what ways might it be comforting to know that Herod died (v. 19a)?

In what ways is it comforting to know that the child Jesus lived and was protected in his childhood?

In what ways did Jesus fulfill prophecy by moving to Nazareth (see Isaiah 11:1, The word “Branch” is the Hebrew word *nētzter*, from which Nazareth comes)?

DO

What lessons do you learn from these verses that you will take with you throughout the coming week?