

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus,

You are our refuge and strength. We acknowledge You as the One who came to rescue us, offering eternal hope and peace. We surrender our lives to You and ask for Your guidance in how we live and serve others. Help us to be Your hands and feet, showing love to those who are displaced and vulnerable. Use us to bring Your light and truth to the world. We commit to following Your example, laying down our lives in service to You and others.

In Jesus' name, amen.

NOTES



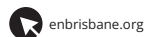
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WEEK 3 | HOME and AWAY - Jesus the Refugee

PRAYER

Heavenly Father,

We come before You in awe of Your protection and care. Thank You for being our refuge and strength, as Your Word says in Psalm 91. You are our shelter in times of trouble, and we celebrate Your gift of security and peace. As we reflect on Jesus' life, remind us of Your heart for those who are displaced and vulnerable. We ask for Your presence to guide our discussion tonight.

In Jesus' name, amen.

OPENING QUESTION (OPTIONAL)

"If you could get lost anywhere for a day without any way to contact anyone, where would it be and why?"

WORD

"And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh. And being warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed to their own country by another way.

Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Rise, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, to destroy him." And he rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became furious, and he sent and killed all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years old or under, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men.

Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping and loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more."

But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead."

And he rose and took the child and his mother and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was reigning over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go there, and being warned in a dream, he withdrew to the district of Galilee.

And he went and lived in a city called Nazareth, so that what was spoken by the prophets might be fulfilled, that he would be called a Nazarene."

[Matthew 2:11-23 \(ESV\)](#)

Reflections

Jesus' story began in humility. Born in a manger (Matthew 8:20), He entered the world in conditions far removed from the majesty of His heavenly throne. His birth highlights how He "came down" to be with us, identifying with the lowest and most vulnerable.

Soon after His birth, Jesus became a refugee. His family fled to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath, experiencing the displacement and uncertainty that many refugees face today. As D. Glenn Butner points out in *Jesus the Refugee: Ancient Injustice and Modern Solidarity*, Jesus' early life aligns Him with those who are marginalized and displaced. His experience brings divine empathy to those in similar situations - he knows this well because he was born into this world of vulnerability and turmoil.

The Bible consistently calls God's people to "love the stranger" (Deuteronomy 10:19). C.A. Strine, in *Love the Stranger*, reminds us that Jesus' own journey challenges us to show compassion and justice toward migrants and refugees.

Jesus would want us, His followers, to reflect His heart for the displaced. He calls us to be His hands and feet, offering both practical support and spiritual hope. This means not only meeting immediate needs but also advocating for dignity and justice.

In this season, as we reflect on His birth and flight to Egypt, we are reminded that our response should be one of love and action. How can we, as a community, extend refuge and hospitality to those around us?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. "How does Jesus' early life as a refugee shape our understanding of His compassion and mission?"
2. "What does the Bible teach us about loving and caring for those who are displaced or vulnerable?"
3. "Have you ever met someone who was displaced or seeking refuge? How did that encounter shape your perspective?"
4. "What practical steps can we take as a community to support migrants and refugees in our city?"
5. "How can we share the gospel with those we meet that are completely unchurched, not only through words but through acts of kindness and service?"