



The Good and True King who Came to Save God's People

3 Prophecies Jesus Furthered and Fulfilled
in the Perilous Christmas Story

Matthew 2:13-23

Aaron Lee | Youth Worship | December 18, 2022



Epigraph

Christ was born as the King of Israel's suffering, for He will suffer to deliver Israel and the Nations from the greatest enemy.

— Hanley Liu

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Introduction

At the end of the year, have you found yourself weary and worn out by the world? Death and war loom large over our lives. COVID is still a cause for concern. The demands of school are always a struggle. Your high school career will quickly come to a close, with college and young adulthood on the horizon. Maybe your relationships need work, and you've found yourself fighting with family and friends. Maybe there's trouble at home. Brokenness in your family. You've lost a sense of belonging. Maybe you're tired of running the Christian race. Your spiritual life has grown stale. I don't mean to be a downer, but there is a certain weariness that comes at the end of the year and with the winter season. Where can we find hope?

Context

Three Prophecies from the Old Testament

Please turn with me now to Matthew 2:13-23. Matthew is writing to a primarily Jewish Christian audience. These are people who would have known the Old Testament. These are people who were already anticipating a Messiah — God's promised deliverer. God's chosen one would be a king who would save Israel and be a blessing to the nations. And they, like us, are looking for hope. Matthew is going to show how Jesus furthers and fulfills three Old Testament prophecies. These prophecies confirm Jesus' kingship. Prophecies can mean different things. On a basic level, a prophecy is just a message from God. But what we really mean about prophecy, and we'll find it to be true of these texts, is that it means revealing the future. Notice that I did not say "predicting the future." The reason I choose not to use the word "predict" is because it carries the notion of guessing, or estimating what could or might happen. But "revealing" carries the idea of foretelling, and informing. These prophecies reveal God's plan and confirm Jesus' kingship — a ruler who will come to make things right and give real rest.

The Good and True King who Came to Save God's People

These prophecies confirm Jesus for who he really is: the King of Heaven and Earth. It's necessary to know that the Old Testament writers could not clearly see Jesus. They had hints, but the big picture was not fully realized. Today, we can read and see how prophecies that apply to God's people, Israel, also apply

to the person of Jesus. When I say that Jesus furthers these prophecies, I mean that he not only references and repeats certain aspects of Israel's history, but he also broadens and expands the meaning behind the prophecies. And when I say Jesus fulfills the prophecies, I mean that he not only accomplishes the prophecy but he fully realizes it for all that it's worth. He is the point of these prophecies. God is going to protect his son as he furthers and fulfills these prophecies. Nothing will stop God's plan for salvation.

God is sovereign over the perilous Christmas story. Perilous, meaning having been placed in danger. At this point, Jesus, the little Jewish baby, had already been born. Word has spread that this infant king has arrived. But the current king Herod is not happy about this. He feels threatened, and seeks to literally kill the competition. We're going to see that Jesus' family is always on the run. They're always in some sort of danger. We often leave out this part of the Christmas story. We think that it stops at the birth of Christ. But the narrative continues, and it's filled with fright and dark with danger. Suffering is all over this Christmas story. Mary and Joseph are worn out and weary, but they have hope. We're going to read and see three prophecies Jesus furthers and fulfills to confirm his kingship, giving hope that God has come to make things right and give real rest. He is the good and true king who came to save God's people.



1. Called Out of Egypt

Our first prophecy that Jesus furthers and fulfills is that he is called out of Egypt.

*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.**” (Matthew 2:13-14)*

An angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. This would have been a surprise, but it wouldn't necessarily be new. God had spoken to Joseph before — when he was first told to take Mary as his wife, and that she would give birth to baby Jesus. So Joseph pays attention, and he hears that he's in danger. Herod the Great, the Roman-appointed ruler of Judea, has heard the news — and he's on a mission to search and destroy the newborn king. Joseph must flee to Egypt, and remain there. So Joseph gets up and takes Mary and Jesus on a journey to Egypt by night. Egypt was about 90 miles from Bethlehem (ESVSB). They would be safe from Herod as they would be outside of his jurisdiction (ESVSB). When Joseph and his young family fled to Egypt, it was already a haven and a refuge for the Jews. The Bible says that they did remain there, staying safe until the death of Herod. Matthew is clear about the entire purpose of it all. He says it was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken. He cites Hosea 11:1:

*When Israel was a child, I loved him, and **out of Egypt I called my son.**
(Hosea 11:1)*

This passage in Hosea is beautiful. This is God talking, and he likens himself as a father to the nation of Israel. They were God's people, and God loved them. This is endearing, affectionate language. God loved his people when they were young, small, weak, and insignificant. Israel had always been an underdog.

Do you remember the Exodus story? Back in the Old Testament, Israel had been enslaved in Egypt, and Pharaoh was a cruel king. God delivered his people from danger, leading them through the Red Sea and settling beneath Mount Sinai. God called Israel out of captivity, and it's interesting because he calls Israel his son. In this way, Israel is a “type” of Jesus. This prophecy is a “type” prophecy. It's called a “typological” prophecy. You can see how Jesus furthers and fulfills this prophecy, being both a son of Israel and the son of God. It's purposeful and planned for God to show that Jesus is the Savior King.

Application

Let's consider the character of Joseph. Imagine yourself in his situation. He's a new father. He wasn't really planning on being a father — he adopted Jesus because God told him to. Jesus is his first child, so he has no experience with taking care of a baby. He's anxious about raising his family, dealing with the fallout of Mary supposedly being pregnant by the Holy Spirit. And now he's told in a dream that his life is in jeopardy. His family is in serious trouble. They need to flee and become fugitives. This is after having already traveled to Bethlehem. They need to get up and go again, and they need to do it with haste. There is no time to ask questions, there is no time to draw up a plan. This is a life-or-death decision. Joseph has God's word, and that is enough. He just needs to trust and obey.

The Gift of God's Word

Do you cherish the word of God? We have the Bible. God's Word, breathed out, and written down. It's readable. It's understandable. It's better than bread. It's more precious than gold. It's sweeter than honey. I want to challenge you to read the Bible during your winter break. You can even increase the amount of quiet time you have with God. Find wisdom in Proverbs. Study the Psalms. Go through one of the Gospels. Look through Paul's letters. Before you know it, the new year will be here, and you'll have no excuse for not spending time in Scripture. Don't drift your days away. Push forward in your faith by reading the Bible. God's word is a gift. And it was a generous gift to Joseph the night he fled to Egypt.

The Obedient Heart of Joseph

Do you have the obedient heart of Joseph? When God makes something clear, do you follow his commands? Or do you say no and ask questions? Do you say no and question his motives? Do you say no and make excuses? Let me give you some clear commands from Scripture: Honor your father and mother. Do good to those who hate you. Abstain and flee from sexual immorality. Love your enemies. You might get tired from trying to obey these commands. Obeying them might make your life difficult. God never said that his people would be safe in this world. He did say, however, that we are not to fear. He is with us. He will sustain us. We can look to the trusting tenacity of Jesus, who prayed for the bitter cup to be taken from him, but nevertheless said, in perfect obedience, not my will but yours be done:

*“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. **Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.**” (Luke 22-42)*

Our first prophecy that Jesus furthers and fulfills is that he is called out of Egypt. The son of Israel is the Son of God. This is proof that he is the good and true king who came to save God’s people.



2. Children Killed by Herod

Our second prophecy that Jesus fulfills and furthers is that he is born in the midst of murder. Children are being killed by Herod.

*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.” (Matthew 2:16-18)*

Herod the Great was the Roman-appointed ruler of Judea. Can you recall Kevin’s sermon from last week? Before the wise men went to Jesus, they had first met with Herod. Herod wanted them to return from their trip, to tell him where Jesus could be found. But the wise men refused to return to Herod, keeping the child safe from his reach. What Herod does in response to this is ridiculous. He becomes furious, and he’s out of control. In jealous, paranoid rage, he orders all the male children in Bethlehem and in all that region who were two years or younger to be killed. To be slayed. To be slaughtered. This is a mass killing across the land. It’s a tragedy. And what this does is fulfill and further a prophecy:

*Thus says the LORD: “A voice is heard in **Ramah**, lamentation and bitter weeping. **Rachel** is weeping for her children; she refuses to be comforted for her children, because they are no more.” (Jeremiah 31:15)*

Ramah is a town 5 miles north of Jerusalem. This town would have special significance for the Jewish people. What’s important about this town is that it would have been one of the first cities passed during the Jewish exile (NAC). Do you remember how I said Israel had always been an underdog? In Israel’s history, after having already escaped Egypt in Exodus, they were overtaken and forced out of their own land. Israel had split into the northern and southern kingdoms. Ramah was a town right in the middle. During this exile, the people had to travel and meet in this middle town for their deportation. The northern kingdom would be deported to Assyria, and the southern kingdom would be deported to Babylon. So we hear lamentation and bitter weeping coming out of this dark, depressing town of Ramah — and it’s said to be from Rachel who is weeping for her children. Who is Rachel? If you remember the Old Testament story, Rachel is the wife of Jacob. Jacob loved Rachel more than her sister, Leah. He worked for 14 years

in order to marry Rachel. Rachel would eventually give birth to Joseph who is associated with the northern kingdom, and Benjamin who is associated with the southern kingdom.

The point is that Rachel is likened to being the mother over all of Israel — and she is crying because her children, both from the north and the south, from all over Israel, are suffering and dying during the exile. Think of the pain that would come from being pulled out of your homes. Think of the conditions that the children would have to endure. There would have been death all around. Broken homes. Broken families. Ramah was a warzone. There is a place in Bethlehem where Rachel is said to be buried. It's Rachel's tomb. And so in the same city where Herod slaughtered the children, Rachel is buried there, and again she can be said to be crying for her children. This is called a "double fulfillment" prophecy, or a "near and far" prophecy. There are different meanings that you can get from this prophecy, and they occur in different spaces and times in history. You can see how Jesus furthers and fulfills this prophecy, being born during this hauntingly similar historical event where Jewish babies are being killed. Jesus is born in the midst of murder. Israel would not stay in exile forever. This dark period in Israel's history still had hope. In the same way, Jesus came to end our spiritual exile. Our dark hearts of sin can find hope in the light of Christ. He came to bring us back to God. It's purposeful and planned for God to show that Jesus is the Savior King.

Application

Let's consider the character of Herod. He was a man fueled by jealousy — committing mass murder to keep his position of power. He was arrogant and insecure. Herod was also known to be called the King of the Jews. He was a king, and he wanted to keep things that way. He was called Herod the Great. He wanted to be great in the eyes of man. He was stubborn and stiff-necked. He was a man marked by pride.

The Jealous Heart of Herod

Do you have the jealous, prideful heart of Herod? Do you refuse to give up the throne of your life and your heart to the true and rightful King Jesus? While you might claim to be a Christian, maybe you've made yourself an idol — putting yourself before God. Are there areas in your life that you refuse to give over to God? Is there something in your life that is causing you to sin? Is there a relationship in your life that needs to be reconciled? If you think about our passage today — Jesus didn't do anything yet. He's just a baby.

He's just a child. But Herod is threatened because of who Jesus is. Jesus is God, and he is the rightful King over your life. Do not wait to submit to him. Don't think that "Jesus doesn't do anything for me, so I don't need to do anything for him." God is being patient with you. He has shown you mercy. He will return — not as a baby, but as a conquering King. Humble yourself and come to him now.

The Gentle Heart of Jesus

Maybe you're okay with God — but your pride is pointed at other people. Can you rejoice when others get recognition? Do you feel threatened when others are doing well? The world will tell you that you always have to be winning. The truth is that you don't have to live your life in constant competition. You don't have to keep comparing. The world tells you to work relentlessly, clawing at others and climbing up ladders for position and power. Even in the church, you'll ask who gets to sit at the right hand of Jesus. You want to see yourself in positions of power. God never said that his people would be powerful in the world. You can look at the gracious and gentle heart of Jesus. Find your rest and stand still upon the solid rock:

*Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for **I am gentle and lowly in heart**, and you will find rest for your souls. (Matthew 11:29)*

Our second prophecy that Jesus furthers and fulfills is that he is born in the midst of children being killed. The light of Jesus shines in the darkness of sin, and the darkness has not overcome it (John 1:5). This is proof that he is the true King who will save God's people.



3. Christ Jesus of Nazareth

Our third and final prophecy today that Jesus furthers and fulfills is that he would be called a Nazarene.

*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 2:19-23)*

Like all men do, Herod the Great would eventually die. Jesus and his family are hiding in Egypt, and the angel of the Lord appears again in a dream to the young father Joseph. The angel tells him to go back to the land of Israel. But Joseph later hears that Archelaus was reigning over Judea. Archelaus was Herod’s son, and you can bet that Herod would have told him about this upcoming king Jesus. Joseph is warned in a dream to withdraw to the district of Galilee, and he settles in the city of Nazareth.

What’s significant about the city of Nazareth is simply that it’s not significant. It’s insignificant. Nazareth was considered random. It was somewhat obscure. You would think that the king would come from Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom of Israel. Or from Jerusalem, the capital of southern Israel and where you would find the temple. It would have been a better fit for Jesus to have been associated with his actual birth town of Bethlehem, also known as the City of David — Israel’s most famous king. Nazareth was despised, rejected, and regarded with low-esteem. “Can anything good come out of Nazareth?” It was held in contempt. Now listen closely: There is actually no single, specific prophecy that correlates Jesus with Nazareth. But if you have ears to hear, you can find evidence that makes reference to it, that refers to it, that speaks to it in a general sense even though it is not recorded word-for-word:

***He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces, he was despised, and we esteemed him not.** (Isaiah 53:3)*

These are prophecies that are widely known but not wholly recorded. Their footprints are found throughout the Bible. You can see how Jesus furthers and fulfills this prophecy, that the Savior would find his childhood home in the insignificant city of Nazareth. It's purposeful and planned for God to show that Jesus is the Savior King.

Application

Let's consider the character of Jesus. We'll just start at the beginning. Jesus is God. He was with God before time began. Somewhere in eternity past, the Holy Trinity decides to create the world. They make mankind, fully knowing that man will fall. And they know what it will take to redeem mankind. They know that it will require the blood of Jesus. But God doesn't shed blood, so Jesus is going to have to become a man. He's going to take on flesh to ransom rebels — to save sinners. This is unprecedented, and incredibly demeaning. Words can't express how horrible it is that the Son of God would do this.

Our Arrogance and Entitlement

Do you realize that Jesus didn't have to do this? We often wonder at the incarnation because of how incredible it is that God could become a human being, but we must also wonder at how humble it was for God to become a man. God, clothed in glory — became man, made of dust. Do you have the humble heart of Jesus? We spend our lives earning degrees and accumulating titles. We think that they will give us respect. We compare ourselves in numbers of likes, followers, and subscribers. We place our identities in our accomplishments as students, athletes, and musicians. When I graduated high school, I didn't feel a sense of accomplishment. Instead, I felt a sense of dread and emptiness. I knew I wanted more. It wasn't good enough for me to graduate high school. I couldn't enjoy it because it wasn't enough. You will find in your life that you'll never have enough. There's always room for more. Whether it's respect or honor, accolades or wealth — Jesus is the only Savior who can satisfy. He dares you to disclaim your titles. Lay down your arrogant attitudes. "Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." (Romans 12:10). Instead of climbing higher in the world, dig deeper into Jesus. He did not have to prove himself to anyone. No matter what the world thought about him, his will was to please his Father.

The Humble Heart of Jesus

Jesus did not need respect or honor, accolades or wealth in his life on earth. Think about the incredible amount of disrespect that occurred and honestly still happens every day, every hour, every second to Jesus. It's not right. It's messed up. But he doesn't call down legions to destroy us. He gives us grace. God never said that his people would be respected in the world. We can look at the humble and loving heart of Jesus. God is the good that comes out of Nazareth. I want to give you some encouragement this morning for those of you who consider yourself a Christian: continue to disregard and ignore any derision or shame that comes from believing the Bible and following Christ. Christians will always look foolish in the eyes of the world. But like the apostles of the early church, you can rejoice when you are counted worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Jesus (Acts 5:41) — whether it comes from the world, your family, or your friends. We know who Jesus really is. We need to help others see:

*Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, **despising the shame**, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:1-2)*

Our third prophecy that Jesus furthers and fulfills is that he would be called a Nazarene. All peoples from every nation would be blessed by a “nobody” from this “nowhere” town. In God's special way of using fools to shame the wise, and the weak to shame the strong — this is proof that Jesus is the true King who will save God's people.



Big Idea

Matthew gives us three prophecies furthered and fulfilled in the perilous Christmas story. We see the Son who is called out of Egypt. The son of Israel is the Son of God. We see the children who are killed by Herod. The light of Jesus shines in the darkness of sin, and the darkness has not overcome it (John 1:5). We see Christ Jesus comes from his hometown of Nazareth. In God's special way of using fools to shame the wise, and the weak to shame the strong, all peoples from every nation would be blessed by a "nobody" from this "nowhere" town. Three prophecies, furthered and fulfilled in the perilous Christmas story, proving and confirming that Jesus is the good and true king who came to save God's people.

When you stop to think about it, the scope of these prophecies is outstanding. These three prophecies are three different categories of prophecies. The first is typological, the second is double fulfillment, the third is widely known but not wholly recorded. Even more, these prophecies tie Jesus to the very different locations of Egypt, Ramah, and Nazareth. They are broad and wide in location and time. God was writing an amazing and incredible story.

The evidence is overwhelming. These are not coincidences. Jesus is the King. He is the Messiah, the chosen one of God, who has come to save his people. God had purposed and planned that Jesus would further and fulfill these three prophecies, proving that he is the good and true king who came to save God's people. Danger and death were all around, and God showed that he was still in control. Here is our big idea for today: **God is sovereign over suffering, and nothing can stop his plan for salvation through Jesus the King.**

Gospel

Does it seem strange to you that the Son of God would experience danger, pain, and suffering from the moment of his birth? Does it concern you that even his parents would experience persecution for being connected to him? The gospel is not that you will have health and wealth in this life. The gospel is not that you will be safe and prosperous. The gospel is that your soul can be saved. Sin condemns us to Hell. We deserve God's wrath and punishment. But God sent his Son, born as a baby, to live a sinless and perfect life, so that we can claim it as our own. Our guilt and shame was nailed to Christ on the cross. Our debt has been paid. Our curse has been canceled. And when Jesus resurrected, when he came back to life — we reap his rewards. Our salvation is secure. Heaven becomes our eternal home. I call you now to die to yourself and come alive in Christ. It's time to wake up and come out of the grave. If you believe all of this, if you trust in Jesus to forgive you of your sins, you will be saved. The things of this earth will grow strangely dim in the light of the glorious grace of the gospel. We can count them all as loss. Refer to them as rubbish. And when suffering comes, we share in it because we are becoming like Christ:

*I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith— that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may **share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death**, that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead. (Philippians 3:8)*

Continue in the faith — through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God (Acts 14:22). And when trouble comes, we can remind ourselves: “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? ... No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:35-39) The love of God is strong. Nothing can separate our Heavenly Father from his children. Please come talk to me if you want to trust Jesus today, or if God has moved your heart.



Applications

If you've been following along, I've already made several applications throughout our sermon. Let's keep looking at this big idea — especially the fact that God is sovereign over suffering — and we'll make five quick applications from this angle. See which ones apply to you, and resolve to work them into your life.

Reject the idea that the Christian life is easy.

Realize that we're in a spiritual war. The Devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking to devour you. Satan wants to sift you like wheat. Sin is always crouching at your doorstep, seeking to take you down. The world will hate and persecute you — just like it did to Jesus. Understand that sanctification is a strenuous process all by itself. We are to go to extremes to eliminate sin in our lives. We are to be constantly dying to ourselves. Reject the idea that the Christian life is easy.

Remember and trust the promises of God.

Listen to these promises: "If you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you will be blessed" (1 Peter 3:14). God sees you in your suffering, for "when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God" (1 Peter 2:20). You remain in God's will even when you suffer, "For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil" (1 Peter 3:17). And you can place your trust in God, saying "Therefore let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful Creator while doing good" (1 Peter 4:19).

Rejoice in suffering.

God cares when children are killed. God cares about the pain in this world. God cares about your suffering. We don't always know the purposes and plans that God has through suffering, but we do know that suffering is for showing his glory. The Bible says that "If we are children of God, then we are also his heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him." (Romans 8:17). The link between suffering and glory means that we can rejoice in it. We can live in this world as sojourners who are sorrowful, yet always rejoicing (2 Corinthians 6:10).

Readily share the Gospel.

We don't just sit still in our suffering. We use it as a reason to readily share the Gospel. "In your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15). "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

Root your hope with God Heaven.

If you're experiencing brokenness in your family or in your homes this holiday, root your hope with God in Heaven. If sickness and death have cast a dark shadow this season, root your hope with God in Heaven. God loves you. Jesus cares for you. The Holy Spirit is with you. The Church is here to help you. And when we are home in Heaven, he will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away (Revelation 21:4).



Conclusion

At the end of the year, have you found yourself weary and worn out by the world? There is hope and we have seen him in the Christmas story. It's remarkable that Jesus' name was never explicitly mentioned in our passage today. He's referred to as "the child," but nowhere in our passage today have we heard him called Jesus. But as Joseph and Mary carried him along on their journeys, weary and worn out by the world, I believe that they knew his name and found it to be a constant reminder of their hope in God:

*"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for **he will save his people from their sins.**" (Matthew 1:21)*

The name Jesus means that the LORD is salvation. It means God saves. And when we look at Jesus, we get a glimpse of hope. God never said that we would be free from danger. He never said that we would be free from the weariness of this world. But he did promise that we would be free from the shackles of our sin and free from the despondency of death. When you look in the infant eyes of Jesus, with glowing hearts, you see hope. The King of Kings laying in a lowly manger. In all our trials, he was born to be our friend. And as you see him grow, and you gaze at his same eyes on the cross — you see the love that God has for you. His law is love and His gospel is peace. God is sovereign over suffering, and nothing can stop his plan for salvation through Jesus the King. We will see the resurrected King face to face one day. You will fall on your knees in adoration and praise. I know that your life is not easy. Even youths grow tired and weary. But those who hope in the Lord, who put their faith in Jesus, will renew their strength. You can be strong and courageous. My brothers and sisters, my friends: The season of spring is on the horizon. A thrill of hope. All oppression shall cease. In a grateful chorus we'll raise sweet hymns of joy. Let our lives and all within us praise His holy name. The weary world rejoices.



Sovereign Over Suffering

When we're feeling tired
From running in this race
You are sovereign over suffering
And God will give us grace.

When we're feeling tempted
Sin is knocking down the door
You are sovereign over suffering
And Christ keeps us secure.

When we're feeling lonely
As strangers in this land
You are sovereign over suffering
And we will trust your plans.

When we're feeling frightened
From evil and from death
You are sovereign over suffering
And you will give us rest.

When we're feeling anxious
And worried with our needs
You are sovereign over suffering
And God will grant us peace.

When we're feeling hopeless
And cannot see the light
You are sovereign over suffering
And Christ will make things right.

When we're feeling helpless
And drowning in the dark
You are sovereign over suffering
And we will not lose heart.

When we're feeling weary
And weeping what was lost
You are sovereign over suffering
And joy comes with the dawn.

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