

Against the Flow
 Matthew 2:13-23
 Cariboo House Churches
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1. The text
 1. Intro
 1. Does following Jesus feel like walking against the current sometimes? It should.
 2. When God enters, there is a violent counterforce to the natural flow of the world.
 2. Sections
 1. Warning and flight
 2. Herod kills the children and OT fulfillment text — a tyrant protecting his power.
 3. Return from Egypt
 2. Matthew quotes the Jeremiah passage because Rachel weeps for her children which are not dead, but are deported and would eventually return. The context of Jeremiah's passage is consolation and promise of return and rebuilding. So also this text brings a promise of return to the flight of Jesus to Egypt.
 1. A subpoint is that Rachel weeping is fulfilled at this point in that it is simply a OT scripture that speaks of the matriarch of these Bethlehemite children prophetically weeping for them. It had an initial application at the exile, but also a second fulfillment at the time of Herod's massacre.
 2. Like so many other of Matthew's fulfillment texts, it seems to be a reach but is in his mind an appropriate interpretation of the scripture. cf. 2:15 out of Egypt I have called my son.
 3. Matthew 2:13-23 is the result of Herod's violent rejection of God's chosen king, which is an archetype of Israel as a whole rejecting Jesus as king.
 1. See also Saul reject David, Revelation's view of rejection of God, Jews reject Jesus as king.
 2. What happens to those who reject God's rightful king? Cf psalm 2:1-3, 1 Samuel 8:7
3. The application
 1. **The world naturally rejects Jesus as rightful king and the result is violence against Jesus, his rule, and his people**
 1. We will feel the pushback when we proclaim the gospel because that is God entering into the world through us.
 1. When I say gospel, that is just a summary of what it means to live out Christ in the world through what we say and what we do.
 2. Street preacher in Vancouver
 2. **Our flesh rejects Jesus as king and violence rises up within us against his rule and authority in our lives**
 1. We have our own tyrant ruling our hearts, seeking to protect its power to rule us.

1. What is this? It is called “the flesh” by Paul and it means the desire to follow our own desires rather than the will of God.
 2. We will feel the resistance in our own lives as we fight against the flesh and walk after Jesus —this will feel like walking upstream until our hearts become conformed to God’s way over time
 3. **Take home:** If we, like Herod, seek to protect our power rather than acknowledge Jesus a the rightful king of our lives, we will miss God’s redemption and receive his judgement.
2. Conclusion
1. Which way are we walking?
 1. With the current, and not feeling any resistance?
 2. Or against the current and feeling it in the world around us and in our own hearts?
 3. Chances are we will ebb and flow between the two.
 4. If we don’t know what it means to feel like we are walking upstream, against the current of the world and our own hearts, then we need to ask some difficult questions about who is truly king of our being. Whose orders are we following? Our own? Or God’s? Whose ethics do we live by? Whose standards do we live by?
 5. “Do not be overcome by evil but overcome evil with good” Romans 12:21

Questions for Reflection

Read Matthew 2:13-26

1. How does Herod’s reaction to the birth of Jesus relate to the world’s reaction to Jesus?
2. Why is the rule of Jesus a threat to people who do not follow him?
3. Why does following Jesus feel like walking against the current sometimes?
4. How is the Cross a symbol of God’s victory through disaster? And how does God do the same thing in our lives?