

C. When we become a part of God's people Israel, we too join in the hope, but also in the exile.

i. 1 Peter 1:17 ESV...*conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile.*

ii. Because of Christ, though the Proverb is still true that, "Even in laughter the heart may ache, and rejoicing may end in grief," there is a new truth: "Even in sorrow the heart will find peace, and grief will end in joy."

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- How do you react to Proverbs 14:13 and the idea that even in our great joys there is often a reminder of sorrow? What is the cause of this? How have you experienced this?
- Can you think of ways that grief can be caused by the experience of loss? What are some of the losses that cause grief?
- What are some of the ways in which grief is a significant part of the Bible's storyline? Why do you think this is?
- How do Jeremiah 29:11 and 31:15 relate to each other?
- How do the events of Jeremiah 31:15 and Matthew 2:13-18 relate to each other?
- In what ways did Jesus experience exile and grief? In what ways are we both freed from grief and yet join in the experience of the exile of God's people?
- How does Christ make it possible that "Even in sorrow the heart will find peace, and grief will end in joy."

God Remembers

What the Story of Christmas Teaches Us about Grief

Jerry Cisar — December 21, 2014

Text: Matthew 2:16-18

Introduction: Grief Affects All of Us

- A. Not all have experiences like these families in Bethlehem's surrounding districts, but we all experience grief.
- B. All of us are affected by grief and we are affected more often than we realize.
 - i. Proverbs 14:13

Keil & Delitzsch: *"Every human heart carries the feeling of disquiet and of separation from its true home...there is a many a secret sorrow in everyone which grows out of his own...life, and from his relation to other men. And this sorrow...which more and more deepens and diversifies itself in the course of life, makes itself perceptible even in the midst of laughter...without being able to be suppressed or expelled from the soul, returning always the more intensely, the more violently we may have for a time kept it under...."*

- ii. *Grief* is something we prefer to ignore or hide, until we can't. Then it can come bursting in like a flood.

I. Causes of Grief

- A. Grief is triggered by the experience of loss.
 - i. Ecclesiastes 3:11
 - ii. Job 3:20-24

B. Grief is caused by consciousness of death's inevitability.

i. Ecclesiastes 7:2-3

ii. 1 Corinthians 15:26

a) Isaiah 25:8

b) In order for grief to do anything but drive us to utter despair we must have this hope.

II. Grief in the Biblical Storyline

A. Grief and hope are both a vital part of the Bible's storyline.

i. Psalm 30:5

ii. Jeremiah 29:11

B. Jeremiah 31:15-17

i. Who is Rachel? Where is Ramah?

a) Rachel: *the representative mother of Israel*

b) Ramah

➤ Jeremiah 40:1

➤ Jeremiah 31:15 prophesies the event that begins the long exile.

c) This is a promise that one day that long night would turn to morning.

ii. The New covenant. Jeremiah 31:31-34.

III. What Christmas Teaches Us About Grief (Matthew 2:13-18)

A. Matthew 2:18 and its relation to Jeremiah 31:15

i. Jeremiah 31:15 prophesies the event that begins the long exile; Matthew 2:18 comes at the event that will end the long exile!

ii. Jesus came to take on the grief and loss of the exile.

D A Carson: *"The tears of the Exile are now being 'fulfilled'—the tears of Jeremiah's day are climaxed and ended by the tears of the mothers of Bethlehem. The heir to David's throne has come, the Exile is over, the true Son of God has arrived, and he will introduce the new covenant promised by Jeremiah."*

B. Because Christ joined us in our exile, suffered grief and loss, was raised from the dead, we have hope... real hope... a guarantee of eternal life.

i. Isaiah 35:10

ii. Isaiah 65:19

iii. Revelation 7:17; 21:4