

A Father Cares for His Son, Part 2*Two Fathers – continued*

- FCS – that was focus of sermon 1 wk ago, on Sun before Xmas. I told you: you have 2 frs, earthly & Fr in hvn. J also has 2 frs. Remem from last wk: Fr in hvn saw to it that J raised in the loving household of Joe/Mary; and J's earthly fr Joe was the righteous man who trusted God, married Mary, and raised J as his own Son. J had 2 frs, both of whom cared for their Son.
- Now, there's been lot of fr/son language coming from this pulpit this week. On Xmas Eve, I preached on the Is 9 psg that calls J "Everlasting Fr" – which unusual name bec nowhere else in Bible J called a fr; he's always called Son of God. Yet J is indeed fatherly toward us. As a fr/shep loves/protects/cares for his children/sheep, so J loves/protects/cares for us, even laying down his life us, to save us. So the Son of God is also fatherly toward us; he's our Everlasting Fr.
- But today, on Sun after Xmas, we return to our focus from wk ago: FCS, pt 2 – bec again today see how both J's earthly & hvnly fr cared for their Son. Today's Gospel begins at Mt 2:13. But what happens in vs 1-12: acct of Magi. Remem how Wise Men: see star, travel Jerslm, get directed to Beth; there they worship J; then warned in dream not go back to Herod, so take diff road home. That's what haps right before today's Gospel.

Heavenly Father

- Which begins at **vs. 13**. So notice again: FCS. God Fr wanted his Son J protected from Herod. So sent another angel to Joe in dream. And: if I were Joe, I think I'd be afraid go bed night. Joe gets these dreams from God all the time! By my count, there are 4x when God sends angel to Joe in dream, 3 of which in this lesson. 1st: last wk; Joe, marry Mary; miraculous virgin concepn; raise her Son as your own. 2nd: get up, go Egypt; Herod's out to kill J. 3rd: safe go back Israel now. 4th: settle in Naz. Eventually Joe must thought: well, wonder if I'll hear from God again tonight. But God commncting with Joe in this very direct way bec wanted protect J. Kind like God was Joe's GPS: Joe, go here, turn there. God was navigating events in J's life to keep him safe. FCS.
- But could ask: what re babies in Beth? If FCS, why didn't God protect those incnt children? Remem: **vs. 16ab**. Could be talking few dozen baby boys! Herod sends in soldiers/swords; sickening. We can hardly fathom such atrocity. As dad, I think re parents: their heartache/helplessness, anger/tears. **Vs. 18**. How ever comforted if one those babies your own son!? And how not ask: God, don't you care?
- This brings up bigger quest: why does God allow atrocities like this happen? Why doesn't stop them? We all know: all evil is result of fall into sin; sin has ruined God's perf creation; in hvn, everything made perf again. But still: soldiers knifing babies? God, don't you care? How do we reconcile a God of love in a world of evil? And there's just not an easy answer. And when tragedy strikes your life, and you come me, say, Pr, why would God allow this happen to me – I often have to say, I just don't know. Don't know why God let this tragedy invade your life; why God let these babies died, either.
- All I can tell you is this (2 things). 1) God hates this tragedy as much you do; he weeps with you, weeps with Rachel; hates how sin has shattered his world. And 2) This tragedy does not mean God doesn't love you. Amid all your pain, God still loves you. And if you want proof of that, just look at cross; just look at Xp suff/dying on cross for you and see how much God 1) hates sin, and 2) loves you. He's so serious re sin that punishes it severely; and loves you so much that he punished someone else – his own Son. When you look at cross, look like FCS? Maybe not in that moment, but that's how God was caring for you, bec he loves you; and loves those babies in Beth, too. There's no easy answer to why God allowed them be killed, or why allows any tragedies hap, to you or anyone else. But remem this: J endured cross for you. So, when you have take up your cross, suffer tragedy, you can be assured: your cross-bearing Savior will be right there with you, to help you bear your crosses.