

## Last Week's Sermon Summary

『Two Kings』 Pastor Takaaki Inoue  
Matthew 2:13-15, 19-23  
Jeremiah 31:10-17

### ❶ [A New Exodus]

As soon as Jesus was born, King Herod tried to kill him. An angel appeared to Joseph in a dream: "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you, For Herod is going to search for the child to kill him." (Matthew 2:13) So Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and fled to Egypt. This event fulfilled the prophecy in the Old Testament book of Hosea 11:1: "Out of Egypt I called my son." Among Jewish teachers, it was believed the Messiah would follow a destiny similar to Moses. Since the Gospel of Matthew was written for Jews, it overlays the life of Moses with the life of Jesus. Therefore, this story represents Jesus' "new Exodus." Jesus is the new leader guiding humanity, and Joseph and Mary, journeying with Him, represent the new Israel. The Bible repeatedly speaks of the Exodus from Egypt and the Exodus from Babylon to teach that the life of faith is a "journey out of this world" with Jesus toward the Promised Land (the Kingdom of God).

### ❷ [Arise and Guard Your Faith]

The story of Herod's persecution teaches us that demonic forces seek to kill nascent faith. Herod still works against you today. He tries to stop you from going to church, from reading the Bible, from praying. If left unchecked, your faith will die. Yet this story also tells us that there were people who desperately guarded Jesus—that is, their faith. Joseph and his mother Mary. How did Joseph protect Jesus? The word "arise" appears four times here. Joseph shows no hesitation regarding the

message in the dream. He acts immediately upon hearing it. 'Arising' symbolizes faith and resurrection, while "sleeping" symbolizes death, laziness, and despair. To protect faith, we must continually listen to God's word.

### ❸ [God rules over all the earth and even controls and uses evil]

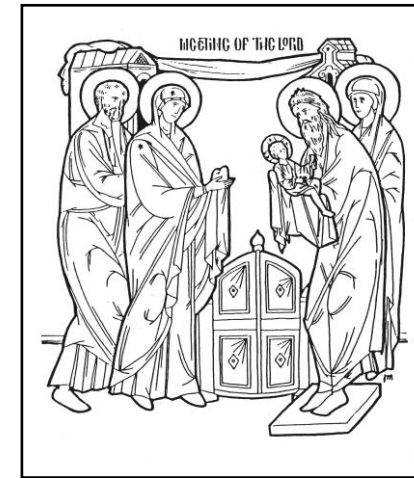
Even when His only Son, Jesus, was persecuted, God the Father did not immediately intervene to destroy Herod. Jesus was fleeing for His life, facing death. Why does God not swiftly destroy evil? The Book of Jeremiah contains these words: "I will give all these nations into the hand of my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and even the beasts of the field I will give him to serve him... But when his kingdom comes to an end... he himself will become a slave." (Jeremiah 27:6-7) God called the Babylonian king who destroyed Israel "my servant." The Babylonian king was also an instrument of God, under God's control, permitted by God to bring trials. Likewise, the wicked kings of this world are under God's control and are merely His servants. When their role ends, they will be judged for the evil they themselves have done. If God were to destroy all evil, He would have to destroy all people, for there is evil within you too. Therefore, God permits the existence of evil and uses it to bring forth good. In this way, our faith is strengthened. Look closely at the Scriptures. It repeatedly states, "He remained there until Herod died" (15), "When Herod died" (19), and "Those who sought the child's life perished" (20)—death, death, death. Herod must die. Evil that opposes God must perish. It is written: "But your enemies, O Lord, will perish; yes, all who hate you will be destroyed." (Psalm 92:10)➤

# Weekly Report

The United Church of Christ in Japan  
Miyakojima Church

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January 11, 2026 No. 1854



《offered at the temple》

## Miyakojima Church's 2025 Mission Policy

**Motto :** "Let's prepare for the construction of the church "

**Scripture :** " The toil of those who build houses is in vain, unless the Lord Himself builds them " ( Psalm 127:1)

### Goals for FY2024

- 1 Observe worship services every week and aim for an average of 27 people to attend services.
- 2 We invite one person to worship in one year.
- 3 We value the fellowship of believers.
- 4 Make concrete preparations for the construction of the church.