



## The Sadness of Christmas

Lesson 2

**Second Sunday of Advent: Light the Preparation Candle!**

**For Many People Christmas Is Far from Merry and Bright.**

The holidays can be a time when *barrenness, sadness, and loneliness* are acutely felt.

A “Blue Christmas” brings a sense of *helplessness* and *hopelessness*. But with the Advent of Jesus Christ *there's hope of reversals that are humanly impossible!*

### The Sadness of Christmas

Is there *sadness* in your life this Christmas?

*Matthew 2:16-18*

#### 1. The **HISTORY** of Rachel – Genesis 29:1–33:7

- Her Life: Barrenness to **FRUITFULNESS** with the Birth of Joseph. *Genesis 30:2, 22ff.*
- Her Death: Fruitfulness to **SADNESS** with the Birth of Benjamin. *Genesis 35:16-21*
- Her Lineage: Rachel’s grandson **EPHRAIM** and son **BENJAMIN** represent Israel. *Genesis 35:24-25; 46:19-25*

#### 2. The **MEMORY** of Rachel – Genesis 48:7; Ruth 4:11-21; 1 Samuel 10:2

- Jacob’s Memory: **SADNESS** over her death. *Genesis 48:7*  
*“Now as for me, when I came from Paddan, Rachel died, to my sorrow, in the land of Canaan on the journey, when there was still some distance to go to Ephrath; and I buried her there on the way to Ephrath (that is, Bethlehem).”*
- Bethlehem’s Memory: **FRUITFULNESS** of her life. *Ruth 4:11-21; 1 Samuel 10:2*  
*“May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your home like Rachel and Leah, both of whom built the house of Israel; and may you achieve wealth in Ephrathah and become famous in Bethlehem.”*

**Here Is Hope for a Reversal from Sadness to Joyfulness!**

#### 3. The **PROPHECY** of Rachel Weeping Over Her Children – Jeremiah 31:10-20

- Jeremiah the “Weeping Prophet” laments over the exile of both Israel (Ephraim) and Judah (with Benjamin)  
*“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*

### Where is Ramah?

A Benjamite city on the border of Judah near Bethlehem!

### What Is Rachel Is Weeping Over?

Her “children” Israel who are in exile, especially Judah and Benjamin!

### But There’s Hope of a Reversal from Sadness to Joyfulness!

The Promise of Yahweh’s New Covenant is wrapped around Rachel’s inconsolable sadness!

*Jeremiah 31:10-20*

### Yahweh’s Promise to Israel as a Nation at the Advent of Her King

*Repentance > Regeneration > Restoration (North & South) > Revelation to the Gentiles!*

## 4. The **REVERSAL** of Rachel’s Weeping Over Her Children – Matthew 2:12-23

- King Herod “the Great” was **NEITHER** great nor the true “King of the Jews.” (2:1-11)
- The LORD **WARNS** the wisemen and Joseph of Herod’s murderous plot. (2:12-15)
- Herod **BUTCHERS** Bethlehem’s baby boys, so Rachel once again weeps for her children. (2:12-16-18)

### Christ’s Advents Bring Hope for a Reversal from Sadness to Joyfulness!

- Jesus was **BORN** to be the “Man of Sorrows” who carried our sadness to the Cross.
  - “**Jesus wept.**” Over Lazarus’ *death* due to the curse of sin. *John 11:35*
  - Over Jerusalem’s *rejection* of Him. *Luke 19:41–44; 13:34*
  - Over sin’s *sinfulness* and God’s just wrath in Gethsemane. *Hebrews 5:7*
- Jesus was **RAISED** to reign as the King of Joy. *Hebrews 12:1-2; 1:8-9; John 17:13*

### The Advent of Jesus Christ Our Lord Is Good News for the Sad!

- **LEARN** to lament in your sadness especially at Christmas.
  - Listen to a sermon on lament: “*The Lost Art of Lament*” *Scan the QR.*
  - Leverage the psalms of lament: *Pray them back to God.*
  - Learn to the lost art of lamenting: *See the “I CRY!” Handout.*
- **LOOK** to the Man of Sorrows whose Advents will reverse sadness into joyfulness.
  - Christ’s **First Advent** brought sadness due to the sinfulness of sin and the hardness of hearts.
  - Christ’s **Second Advent** will bring the joyfulness of righteousness and changed hearts.
  - We live in the “**Now-Not Yet**” of these Advents lamenting with great joy in Him.

*“The King shall come when morning dawns and light triumphant breaks, when beauty gilds the eastern hills and life to joy awakes— not as of old a little child to bear, and fight, and die, but crowned with glory like the sun that lights the morning sky.”*  
–John Brownlie

