

Theme: The great expectation that our deep sense of alienation and exile from our true home would one day be removed is fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

## I. Intro – Home for Christmas

- A. The Homecoming: A Christmas Story - popular in 70's
- B. I'll Be Home for Christmas - popular Christmas song
- C. Holidays in general, but especially Christmas
- D. Why do we long for home?
- E. What does Christmas have to do with coming home?
- F. How does Christ bring us home?

## II. Exiled From Home

- A. Isaiah is prophesying to people in exile
  - 1. Isaiah 36-39 - deliverance; failure
  - 2. Isaiah 39:5-7 - exile to Babylon
  - 3. God speaks to these people in chapters 40-66
  - 4. v1-2 - comfort them; speak tenderly - exile is hard
  - 5. v1-2 - hard service/warfare; sin; double = exile
- B. Exile - a major motif in Scripture
  - 1. Genesis 3:23 - banished from the Garden
  - 2. Genesis 12:1 - Abram has to leave his homeland
  - 3. Same is true of Isaac and Jacob - wandering
  - 4. Israel exiled in Egypt 400 years
  - 5. Israel's time in Babylon

- 6. This helps explain Israel's attachment to the land

## C. Our own age of exile

- 1. Our age experiences more "exile" than any other
- 2. Fewer people are born, live, and die at "home"
- 3. Zygmunt Bauman - world of tourists & vagabonds
- 4. This has led to a crisis of place & restlessness

## III. Jesus - Exiled In Our Place

### A. Exile and the coming of Christ

- 1. The prophets looked for One Who would end exile
- 2. Mark 1:1-3 - Beginning of Gospel - Isaiah text!
- 3. Malachi 3:1 - first part - then the Lord comes!
- 4. The Lord comes to bring us out of exile!
- 5. Isa 40:4-5 - When He comes we see His glory
- 6. Mark continues this theme with baptism/wilderness
- 7. But today we will look at infancy narratives

### B. Jesus - the exile

- 1. Luke 2:4-5 - exiled because of census
- 2. Luke 2:6-7 - no room in the inn
- 3. Matt 2:13-15 - exiled to Egypt - as the True Israel
- 4. Matt 2:16-18 - Herod kills the children; exile text
- 5. Jeremiah 31:15-17 - weeping; but exile is ending!

## IV. Christmas - We Will Return Home!

### A. Our deepest exile

1. Many of us experience a sense of exile
2. Jesus too experienced physical exile
3. But all of this points to a deeper, spiritual exile
4. We know something is wrong - and long for home

### B. The roots of our exile

1. Our exile began when we fell in the Garden
2. This was physically symbolized in exile from Eden
3. Since then we have longed for a true home
4. We know something is wrong - and long for home

### C. Our futile attempts to end our exile

1. To relieve this, many try to create utopia here
2. But we can't do this ourselves - we must be rescued
3. The highway was for God to come to us to take us home
4. There is no utopia - in this time and place

### D. Our true need - to be home with God

1. This is what we truly seek - all else are pointers
2. CS Lewis quote
3. We often try to stay busy and noisy to hide this
4. Hebrews 11:16 - God has fulfilled this longing

5. Christ has come and made the way

6. O Come, O Come Emmanuel

### E. Ending our Advent waiting with joy!

1. Advent is a time of waiting, hoping, longing
2. But it now concludes - with joy!
3. Christ has come - and we are going home!
4. Your deepest longings will be met - and then some!

### F. Response - Joy to the World!

## Great Expectations - We Will Return Home

Isaiah 40:1-5  
December 23, 2012  
Joy To The World!  
Romans 15:13

5 Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the Lord Almighty: 6 The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your fathers have stored up until this day, will be **carried off to Babylon**. Nothing will be left, says the Lord. 7 And some of **your descendants**, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, **will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.**” Isaiah 39:5–7

So **the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden** to work the ground from which he had been taken. Genesis 3:23

1 The **beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ**, the Son of God. 2 **It is written in Isaiah the prophet**: “I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way” — 3 **“a voice of one calling in the desert, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”** Mark 1:1–3

“See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come,” says the Lord Almighty. Malachi 3:1

4 So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. 5 He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. Luke 2:4–5

6 While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, 7 and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and **placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.** Luke 2:6–7

13 When they had gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. “Get up,” he said, **“take the child and his mother and escape to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you,** for Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.” 14 So he got up, took the child and his mother during the night and **left for Egypt, 15 where he stayed until the death of Herod. And so was fulfilled what the Lord had said through the prophet: “Out of Egypt I called my son.”** Matthew 2:13–15

16 When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi. 17 Then what was said through the prophet Jeremiah was fulfilled: 18 “A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.” Matthew 2:16–18

15 This is what the Lord says: “A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more.” 16 This is what the Lord says: “Restrain your voice from weeping and your eyes from tears, for your work will be rewarded,” declares the Lord. “They will return from the land of the enemy. 17 So there is hope for your future,” declares the Lord. “Your children will return to their own land. Jeremiah 31:15–17

“If we find ourselves with a desire that nothing in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that we were made for another world.” - CS Lewis

Instead, they were longing for a better country — a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them. Hebrews 11:16

O come, O come, Emmanuel	And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here	Until the Son of God appear
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel	Shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Thou Key of David, come,	And open wide our heavenly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high,	And close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel	Shall come to thee, O Israel.