

Jesus. the Hope of Israel. Matthew 2.13-23

1. **Quotation:** *When different scenes from different stories shed light on each other, you get a clearer view of reality.* Do you agree? Share some of your favourite movies/books/TV shows that you think tell you something about us as humans, or the character of God. **Helpful hint:** "I like the *Vicar of Dibley*, because although the characters are flawed, they teach me about community."

2. **Joseph and Herod in contrast.** It's easy to identify with Joseph and tell ourselves we're nothing like Herod. Instead, ask yourselves how you react when your personal freedom is threatened. Then, discuss why it is that self-obsession is so damaging.

3. **Prophecy.** When we read of the fulfilment of prophecy, what does that teach us about God? Read Romans 11. We're told in Romans that we're "grafted into Israel." God was faithful and patient with his people. In what ways is God faithful and patient with you?

4. **No longer will a man** teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," Jeremiah 31.34a. To what extent has this prophecy been fulfilled? What remains of it to be fulfilled?

5. **Hope.** If hope is confidence in the ultimate triumph of God, how do you respond to that definition? How important is hope to you as you live your Christian life?