**SCRIPTURE – EPISODE SIX**

**INDESCRIBABLE COMPASSION**

**MATTHEW 2: 13 – 23**

When they had departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him. Joseph rose and took the child and his mother by night and departed to Egypt. He stayed there until the death of Herod, that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, “Out of Egypt I called my son.”

When Herod realized that he had been deceived by the magi, he became furious. He ordered the massacre of all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity two years and under, in accordance with the time he had ascertained from the magi. Then was fulfilled what had been said through Jeremiah the prophet: “A voice was heard in Ramah, sobbing and loud lamentation; Rachel weeping for her children, and she would not be consoled, since they were no more.”

When Herod had died, behold the angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt and said, “Rise, take the child and his mother and go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child’s life are dead.” He rose, took the child and his mother, and went to the land of Israel. But when he heard that Archelaus was ruling over Judea in place of his father Herod, he was afraid to go back there. And because he had been warned in a dream, he departed for the region of Galilee. He went and dwelt in a town named Nazareth, so that what had been spoken through the prophets might be fulfilled: “He shall be called a Nazorean.”

**LUKE 5: 17 – 26**

One day as Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and teachers of the law were sitting there who had come from every village of Galilee and Judea and Jerusalem, and the power of the Lord was with him for healing. And some men brought on a stretcher a man who was paralyzed; they were trying to bring him in and set him in Jesus’ presence. But not finding a way to bring him in because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on the stretcher through the tiles into the middle in front of Jesus. When he saw their faith, he said, “As for you, your sins are forgiven.” Then the scribes and Pharisees began to ask themselves, “Who is this who speaks blasphemies? Who but God alone can forgive sins?” Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them in reply, “What are you thinking in your hearts? Which is easier to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven, or to say, ‘Rise and walk’? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins – he said to the man who was paralyzed, “I say to you, rise, pick up your stretcher, and go home.” He stood up immediately before them, picked up what he had been lying on, and went home, glorifying God. Then astonishment seized them all and they glorified God, and, struck with awe, they said, “We have seen incredible things today.”

**LUKE 5: 12 – 16**

Now there was a man full of leprosy in one of the towns where he was, and when he saw Jesus, he fell prostrate, pleaded with him, and said, “Lord, if you wish, you can make me clean.” Jesus stretched out his hand, touched him, and said, “I do will it. Be made clean.” And the leprosy left him immediately. Then he ordered him not to tell anyone, but “Go, show yourself to the priest and officer for your cleansing what Moses prescribed; that will be proof for them.” The report about him spread all the more, and great crowds assembled to listen to him and to be cured of their ailments, but he would withdraw to deserted places to pray.

**PSALM 103: 6 – 18**

The Lord does righteous deeds, brings justice to the oppressed. God’s ways were reveled to Moses. Mighty deeds to the people of Israel.

Merciful and gracious is the Lord, slow to anger, abounding in kindness.

God does not always rebuke, nurses no lasting anger, has not dealt with us as our sins merit, nor requited us as our deeds deserve.

As the heavens tower over the earth, so God’s love towers over the faithful.

As far as the east is from the west, so far have our sins been removed from us.

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on the faithful.

For God knows how we are formed, remembers that we are dust. Our days are like the grass; like flowers in the field, we blossom.

The wind sweeps over us, and we are gone; our place knows us no more.

But the Lord’s kindness is forever, toward the faithful from age to age.

God favours the children’s children of those who keep God’s covenant, who take care to fulfill its precepts.

**ISAIAH 40: 3 – 5**

A voice cries out: in the desert prepare the way of the Lord! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God! Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill shall be made low. The rugged land shall be made a plain, the rough country, a broad valley. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all shall see it together for the mouth of the Lord has spoken.