

GOOD TIDINGS FROM 4 GOSPELS
“Jesus Christ, the King”
Gospel of Matthew

Big Idea – Jesus wants to reign as King of my life

Intro: Four weeks ago I told you the four Gospel writers presented four different views of Jesus Christ. John – Son of God, Luke – Son of Man, Mark – Servant, and today Matthew. Notice with me the variety of ways Matthew presents Jesus Christ as the King.

1. The King by Genealogy 1:1-1

Matthew 1:1 1 The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:

Jesus Christ. The Hebrew “Yeshua,; or Joshua means “the Lord is Salvation.” “*Christos*” means “anointed one” –it is the exact equivalent of the Hebrew word for “Messiah” (Dan. 9:25).

Son of David. A messianic title used in only the synoptic gospels.

Son of Abraham. Takes His royal lineage all the way back to the nation’s birth in the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1–3).

Matthew’s genealogy moves forward, from Abraham to Joseph. Luke’s moves backward, from Jesus to Adam; Luke’s entire section from Joseph to David differs starkly from that given by Matthew. The two genealogies are easily reconciled if Luke’s is seen as Mary’s genealogy, and Matthew’s version represents Joseph’s. The royal line is passed through Jesus’ legal father, and His physical descent from David is established by Mary’s lineage.

1:3 Tamar. Unusual for women to be named in genealogies. Matthew names 5: “Tamar” was a Canaanite woman who posed as a prostitute to seduce Judah (Gen. 38:13–30). “Rahab” (v. 5) was a Gentile and a prostitute (Josh. 2:1). “Ruth” (v. 5) was a Moabite woman (Ruth 1:3) and thus her offspring were forbidden to enter the assembly of the Lord for 10 generations (Deut. 23:3). “Bathsheba” (“Uriah’s wife,” v. 6) committed adultery with David (2 Sam. 11). And “Mary” (v. 16) bore the stigma of pregnancy outside of wedlock. Each of these women is an object lesson about the workings of divine grace.

Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus. This is the only entry in the entire genealogy where the word “begot” is not used—including those where whole generations were skipped. The pronoun “whom” is sing., referring to Mary alone. The unusual way in which this final entry is phrased underscores the fact that Jesus was not Joseph’s literal offspring.

The genealogy nonetheless establishes His claim to the throne of David as Joseph’s legal heir. He was Joseph’s child legally, because if you were adopted into a family, you legally had all the rights and privileges that a natural child had. So, in every way possible Jesus had the right to rule as King: his father was the one who granted Him the royal line and his mother was the one who granted Him the royal blood.

2. The King by Birth 1: 18-25

Matthew 1:18-25 18 This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit.

19 Joseph, her fiancé, was a good man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

20 As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit.

21 And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

22 All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet:

23 “Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means ‘God is with us.’”

24 When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded and took Mary as his wife.

25 But he did not have sexual relations with her until her son was born. And Joseph named him Jesus.

(quote p. 18 of notes)

3. The King by Worship Matt. 2:1,2

Matthew 2:1 Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking,

2 "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him."

(quote p. 43 of notes)

4. The King by the Hatred of Jealousy 2:3

Matthew 2:3 King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.

The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem was not a joyous occasion for Herod the Great. He was the Christmas story's "Grinch." Even more tragic is the reality of his jealousy and murderous treachery which emerged from his insecurity as king.

Herod the Great did not inherit his throne, rather he was appointed to it by the Roman Empire. He was a non-Jew who was ruling over the Jews of Judea. He had the title but not the respect of his subjects. His legacy is one of monumental building programs mixed with the habitual murdering of enemies and even his own family members. His architectural achievements included theaters, fortresses and this royal rogue was the catalyst for the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem, which began in 19 B.C. and was finished posthumously. But his hit list encompassed his wife, her mother, his three sons, his brother-in-law and his most infamous project remains the massacre of the male babies of Bethlehem.

The Magi from the East had followed the special star which had been hung over Jesus' birthplace. They made their journey to King Herod and then, with what seems to be blatant audacity, asked him this question: "Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?"

(Matthew 2:2). In other words, they confronted the King with the question, "Where is the king?" The Magi's inquiry was dangerously close to treason. They gained an audience with the King of the Jews and then requested that the pseudo-king direct them to the real King.

Herod moved to answer their question. He consulted with the chief priests and teachers of the law and they informed him that Bethlehem had been prophesied by the prophet Micah. He then lied to them about his motives, "Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him"

(Matthew 2:8). Herod did not desire to worship Jesus; he aimed to terminate this threat to the throne.

It seems that a monarch would not be threatened by a tiny child, but Herod's awareness of his illegitimacy as the King of Judea and the dark side of his personality led him to react with violence and inhumanity when the Magi didn't report back to him with the location of this future king.

Herod could have been a hero. Instead, he chose to be one of history's largest heels. He could have worshiped Jesus, but he chose to conspire against Him. Herod assumes Satan's attitude from Milton's *Paradise Lost*, "Better to reign in hell than serve in heaven" (1. 262).

The Magi were highly regarded in their society but they chose to bow down and worship Jesus. Herod was also draped in prestige and affluence, but he selected a different road. He would not worship Jesus Christ and proceeded to discover that when you fight against God's plans, you lose royally. Each Christmas men and women choose their response to Jesus Christ. What will your choice be? Will you bow down and bless Him or will you stand up and curse Him?

5. The King by Fulfillment of Prophecy 2;5,15,17,23

The birth at Bethlehem – Micah 5:2

A small village on the southern outskirts of Jerusalem. Hebrew scholars in Jesus' day clearly expected Bethlehem to be the birthplace of the Messiah (cf. Mic. 5:2; John 7:42).

The exodus to Egypt – Hosea 11:1

Out of Egypt. This quotation is from Hos. 11:1, which speaks of God's leading Israel out of Egypt in the Exodus. Matthew suggests that Israel's sojourn in Egypt was a typical prophecy, rather than a specific verbal one such as v. 6; cf. 1:23. These are called "types" and all are always fulfilled in Christ, and identified clearly by the NT writers.

The ravaging of Ramah – Jeremiah 31:15

Again, this prophecy is in the form of a type. Verse 18 quotes Jer. 31:15), which speaks of all Israel's mourning at the time of the Babylonian captivity (ca. 586 b.c.). That wailing prefigured the wailing over Herod's massacre.

The monster of Christmas ordered that all male babies in Bethlehem and its hinterlands who were two years old or younger were to be slain in an attempt to eradicate a potential competitor for the throne. Demographers estimate that this area had a population around 2,000, which meant that approximately twenty-five babies would comprise his death list.

Women wept bitterly, babies bled profusely but Herod failed to extinguish the flame of the new King.

The name of Nazareth – vs. 23

“He shall be called a Nazarene.” Nazareth, an obscure town 55 mi. N of Jerusalem, was a place of lowly reputation, and nowhere mentioned in the OT. Some have suggested that “Nazarene” is a reference to the Heb. word for branch in Is. 11:1. Others point out that Matthew’s statement that “prophets” had made this prediction may be a reference to verbal prophecies nowhere recorded in the OT. A still more likely explanation is that Matthew is using “Nazarene” as a synonym for someone who is despised or detestable—for that was how people from the region were often characterized (cf. John 1:46). If that is the case, the prophecies Matthew has in mind would include Ps. 22:6–8; Is. 49:7; **53:3**.

Remember, I told you there were 333 prophecies about Jesus Christ, the King’s first coming to the earth?

David Peterson, former pastor at the First Presbyterian Church in Spokane, Washington, told about a time when he was preparing his sermon. His little daughter came in and said, "Daddy, can we play?"

He answered, "I'm awfully sorry, Sweetheart, but I'm right in the middle of preparing this sermon. In about an hour I can play." She said, "Okay, when you're finished, Daddy, I am going to give you a great big hug."

He said, "Thank you very much." She went to the door and (these are his words) "Then she did a U-turn and came back and gave me a chiropractic, bone-breaking hug." David said to her, "Darling, you said you were *going* to give me a hug *after* I finished."

She answered, "Daddy, I just wanted you to know what you have to look forward to!"

One meaning of Christmas is that God wants us to know, through this First Coming, how much we have to look forward to in the great Second Coming.