

A Wonderful King Is Given to Us —— Matthew 1:1-17 and Selected Verses

Introduction, Text, Outline

- **The origin of Christmas:** No one knows the exact birthdate of Jesus. December 25th was chosen by the church in the 4th century to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Reasons: 1) the meaning of incarnation is like the arrival of spring, therefore, the beginning of Mary's pregnancy is set to March 25th, the beginning of spring, with a 9-month pregnancy period; 2) December 25th is Roman's winter solstice, the day with the shortest daylight, and the birth of Jesus brought light so the day becomes longer and longer; 3) Challenging the worldly culture: December 25th is the pagan holiday in Rome as "the unconquerable Sun's birthday", Judaism also celebrates Hanukkah (festival of light) at the end of December, but they did not receive the true light of Jesus. In this cultural background, the church stepped up. What's sun god? What's Hanukkah? Jesus Christ is the true light! We will celebrate the birth of Jesus, and will let the world know who is the true Light! (John 8:12)
- **Today:** The church again faces the cultural challenge. The central figure of Christmas has become a white-beard old man dressed in red, who descends from the sky on a sly, and will reward or punish each child according to their performance throughout the year. "You better watch out, better not cry, better not pout, I'm telling you why: Santa Claus is coming to town! He's making a list, and checking it twice, gonna find out who's naughty or nice. Santa Claus is coming to town....." Against this cultural current, the church today continues to proclaim the truth to the world about who this child born more than 2000 years ago is, and what is his significance to our lives!
- **Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 9:6-7; Matthew 1:1-17.
- **Thesis:** **Our Savior and Lord Jesus, whom God has sent, is a wonderful King!**
- **Outline:**
 - Title: A Wonderful King Is Given to Us
 - 1. People need the King (selected verses)
 - 1a. God's perfect will when He created mankind
 - 1b. Man's miserable condition when they refuse God as their King
 - 2. God promised the King (v. 1. selected verses)
 - 2a. The Son of Abraham
 - 2b. The Son of David
 - 3. The King of grace (vv. 2-15)
 - 3a. Four unworthy women
 - 3b. Many unworthy men
 - 4. The King of wisdom (v. 16)
 - 4a. Virgin birth fulfilled the prophecy
 - 4b. Virgin birth bypassed the curse
 - 5. The King of convent-keeping faithfulness (v. 17)
 - 4a. No hope from a human perspective
 - 4b. God's faithfulness beyond our imagination

People Need the King (selected verses)

- **“King David”** (Matthew 1:6): The Genealogy in Matthew clearly demonstrates the theme of kingship and this is the important theological theme of the book of Matthew —— Jesus is the King whom the OT promised to come.

a. God's perfect will when He created mankind

- **“Make man in our image”** (Genesis 1:26) In ancient Near East culture where Moses wrote Genesis, the kings would make their own images and put them on the regions ruled by them, especially in some remote areas where the kings cannot visit often. These images remind the residents there that they are under the king's rule and must be loyal to the king. God made man in their image to “let them *rule over* the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.” God commended man on v28 “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and *subdue* it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” What these words express is the reign of the King's power. Since man is the image of God, he represents God's kingship on earth, so only in full submission to God's Kingship can man serve as the appropriate image of God. (And that's exactly what it's like before the fall of Adam and Eve).

b. Man's miserable condition when they refuse God as their King

- **“took from its fruit and ate”** (Genesis 3:6): This is saying I don't want God to be my King, I want to be my own King! Then God cursed the ground (3:17) it is not easy to grow produce anymore. Nature is no longer at peace with man. Famine, disease, flood, earthquake, all resulted from man's original sin. Mankind doesn't want God to be king, but they want to be their own king. Every natural disaster is a reminder to us of the consequence of man's refusal of God's kingship. But God gave **hope** even in the punishment of Adam and Eve. He said that **women's seed shall bruise the serpent's head** (3:15), i.e., completely defeat the enemy Satan —— This is the earliest prophecy of the Messiah, Savior and King.
- **“every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually”** (Genesis 6:5): The result is the judgement of the flood.
- **“let us build for ourselves a city, and a tower whose top will reach into heaven, and let us make for ourselves a name”** (Genesis 11:4): The result is that the Lord confused their language and scattered them abroad over the face of the whole earth to their shame.
- **“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes”** (Judges 21:25, cf. 17:6; 18:1; 19:1): The stories of extreme corruption in the last few chapters of Judges show people the importance of king. But Israel is not without a king, God is their King and gave them the Law through Moses, but they don't want God to be their king and refuse the reign of God, and it gets worse and worse.
- **“Now appoint a king for us to judge us like all the nations.”** (1 Samuel 8:5): They thought the solution was to find a man as their king, like all the nations without God. But God says, “they have rejected Me from being king over them.....they have forsaken Me and served other gods” (8:7). Their kingdom history later proved that man as king cannot solve the problem.

God Promised the King (v.1. selected verses)

a. *The Son of Abraham*

- “**the son of David, the son of Abraham**” (Matthew 1:1): Two crucial men in God’s promise of His redemption plan. Two ancestors, who received God’s promises, are both looking forward to a decedent, who is Jesus Christ.
- “**My covenant is with you.....make nations of you, and kings will come forth from you**” (Genesis 17:4-8): Here imply that the final King will come forth from *the decedents of Abraham*.
- “**A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel.....One from Jacob shall have dominion**” (Numbers 24:17-19) The prophecy God spoke through Balaam refers to the future king, who will be from the *descendants of Jacob*.
- “**The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh [literally “to whom it belongs”] comes, and to him shall be the obedience of the peoples**” (Genesis 49:10): That King will be from the *decedents of Judah*, and all people will be obedient to Him!

b. *The Son of David*

- “**The Lord has sought out for Himself a man after His own heart, and the Lord has appointed him as ruler over His people**” (1 Samuel 13:14): *David*, the first King out of the tribe of Judah, is the King who God chose “after His own heart”.
- “**I will raise up your descendant after you.....I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever**” (2 Samuel 7:12-13): Although there was a series of kings from the descendants of David, but *the Son of David* will reign forever!

Psalms 110:1-2 “The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at My right hand Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”² The Lord will stretch forth Your strong scepter from Zion, *saying*, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.”

The King of Grace (vv.2-15)

a. *Four unworthy women*

- “**Tamar**” (Matthew 1:3): The daughter-in-law of Judah. She disguised herself as a prostitute and successfully seduced Judah, her father in-law, to commit adultery with her (Genesis 38). Although Judah wronged Tamar first, this still is an incest scandal between father- and daughter-in-law. The entire chapter of Genesis 38 is full of sin and lust and immorality. But God made this family to be the ancestor of the Messiah King. This is totally by God’s gracious election.
- “**Rahab**” (Matthew 1:5): If Tamar could be excused for playing the harlot, Rahab, on the other hand, is a shameless professional harlot. (Joshua 2:1) The only reason she survived the destruction of her city is because she feared the Israelites and their God and she hid the spies sent by Israel, so as a favor in return, the Israelites protected her family when they destroyed the city of Jericho. Out of the entire evil

city, God specifically preserved this harlot and even included her in the genealogy of Lord Jesus. Sometimes the grace of God can make you speechless.

- “**Ruth**” (Matthew 1:5): A Moabite, a people that originated from Lot’s incest with his own daughters when they got him drunk (Genesis 19:30-38). “No Ammonite or Moabite shall enter the assembly of the Lord; none of their *descendants*, even to the tenth generation” (Deut. 23:3). However, God included this Moabite woman in the genealogy of Jesus.
- “**the wife of Uriah**” (Matthew 1:6): Didn’t even mention her name. It highlights the biggest stigma of David’s life: he committed adultery with his soldier’s wife, and then killed the faithful Uriah with a plot. “the wife of Uriah” really just sticks out in the genealogy of the King.....

b. Many unworthy men

- “**Rehoboam...Manasseh...Jeconiah...**” (Matthew 1:7-15): These are some notoriously evil kings in the OT. How did they get into the genealogy of Jesus? Even those who were considered good kings are also sinners and there’s none without sin.

“The Genealogy of Jesus Christ ... is a beautiful testimony to God’s grace and to the ministry of His Son, Jesus Christ, the friend of sinners, who ‘did not come to call the righteous, but sinners’ (Matt 9:13). If He has called sinners by grace to be His forefathers, should we be surprised when He calls them by grace to be His descendants? The King presented here is truly the King of grace.”

The King of Wisdom (v. 16)

- “**Mary, by whom Jesus was born**” (Matthew 1:16): The repeated formula “father of” is deliberately avoided here, which indicates that the birth of Jesus has no direct relationship with Joseph. He was born of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit (vv 18-25).

a. Virgin birth fulfilled the prophecy

- “**Immanuel**” (Matthew 1:23): It fulfills the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14, meaning “*God is with us*”. Through the conception by the Holy Spirit, Jesus is fully God and fully man. He is the perfect fulfillment of “God is with man”.

b. Virgin birth bypassed the curse

- “**Jeconiah**” (Matthew 1:17): He is the king cursed by God, also named Copiah. “For no man of his descendants will prosper sitting on the throne of David or ruling again in Judah.” (Jeremiah 22:30). Only the royal line of David can sit on the throne of David, but that line was cursed at Jeconiah by God. No descendant after him will ever be king. How then will the Davidic covenant ever be fulfilled? The conception by the Holy Spirit solved this dilemma: By birthright, Jesus is from the royal line, but by blood, Jesus is not the descendant of Jeconiah and thus not under the curse.

The King of Convent-keeping Faithfulness (v. 17)

a. No hope from a human perspective

- **“fourteen generations...fourteen generations...fourteen generations”** (Matthew 1:17): The focus in these three segments of history is the expectation of this King. From Abraham to David, the promise of a King gets clearer and clearer; From David to the deportation to Babylon, the promise gets dimmer and dimmer; From the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, the promise leaves no trace to be found...

b. God's faithfulness beyond our imagination

However, the faithful covenant-keeping God did not forget His promises. He is still orchestrating human history behind the scene, directing the lives of everyone, their marriage, their childbearing, until finally Joseph and Mary met and God said, alright, it's time now. So He took on human flesh through the miraculous conception in the womb of the virgin Mary by the Holy Spirit, became the Son of David, and came to fulfill all the promises about the King. One day, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus is Lord. Those in Christ saved by God's grace, will be restored to the perfect image of God, and will, with perfect obedience, proclaim to the world: who is the true Lord of lords and King of kings!

Friends, is Jesus the King of your life?