

THE BIRTH OF THE KING

TEXT: *Matthew 2:2: Where is He Who is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His Star in the east, and are come to worship Him.*

Matthew's Gospel is the Gospel of the Kingdom.

The four Gospels are not four different editions of the life of Christ, but four pictures of Christ from different stand points. Each presents a distinct aspect – and together they form a complete whole. Thus, the evangelists give us different views of our Lord Jesus; and out of the four comes the complete conception of His character, life, and work.

In the ancient Tabernacle and Temple stood the figure of the Cherubim. There were four faces: a lion, ox, man and eagle. The lion represents Jesus as our King; the ox is the toiling suffering Christ; the man represents the human Christ; the eagle represents the divine character.



The ancient fathers justly applied these symbols to the four Gospels. Matthew – the Gospel of the King; Mark, the Gospel of Service; Luke, the Son of Man; John, the son of God.

The very first picture in Matthew is Jesus as King of the Jews; and the last is the Supreme Lord to Whom all power is given — both in Heaven and on earth — sending forth His ambassadors to the nations, claiming their obedience and loyalty.

When we turn to Mark, we find the story of deeds, not words. The toiling Christ has gotten almost halfway thru His ministry before the end of the first chapter.

Luke is the revelation of His human heart, and a series of the most touching manifestations of His sympathy, tenderness, and love. The first picture takes us to the cradle and the Babe; and the last picture is the walk to Emmaus. There is an unchanged revelation of His human heart, even after the Cross and His resurrection.

When we turn to John, it is indeed the soaring eagle, lifting up to the sublime heights of His Deity and the mystery of His Oneness with the Father.

Yet none of these Gospels attempt to give the complete life story of Jesus. Even the longest presents but a few fragments — the sketch of an occasional day or hour gleaned from much more than has been left unrecorded. So much is left, that the

Apostle John says that if all that He had said and done were written, even the “whole world could not contain the books that should be written”.

Returning to the special Gospel of Matthew, a brief analysis will show that it opens with the birth of the King.

After the briefest reference to His childhood, he passes on to his reformer, and then into His inauguration to His life’s ministry which reached its climax on the Cross, and His place as Mediatorial King, and then returning to claim for Himself the throne of his father, David.



Now at present, our subject calls us back to the first chapter – the Royal birth of Israel’s King. This is preceded by the account of His pedigree. It was necessary that it should be demonstrated to Israel that He was her true King.

The genealogical table is to show that Jesus is the actual, legal heir to David’s throne. Joseph, while not His actual father, was His legal father, and Jesus was heir to the Davidic throne. The table was prepared with great care and accuracy, and establishes without question the title of our Saviour to sit on the throne of David. And when He appears on earth again, there will be no member of the Hebrew nation that can lawfully dispute His title — that He is alive today and the only living heir to David’s throne.

No Bible student is perplexed by the difference between the two genealogical tables written by Matthew and Luke. Luke gives us a long genealogy of Mary, and not of Joseph. Luke has given the human side of Christ. Therefore, it was natural for him to trace His mother’s pedigree. She, also, could trace her lineage back to David by an unbroken line thru Nathan, the son of David, rather than thru Solomon. Joseph was from the line of Solomon.

Matthew’s genealogy contains three groups of names, each group consisting of fourteen (14) generations each. The first contains the patriarchs, from Abraham to David, the second of the kings from David to the captivity; and the third of persons of royal extraction, not kings. Gradually the line descends, until it reaches the Carpenter’s shop at Nazareth. Having proved His pedigree and established His title, the evangelist next gives the story of His birth. Seven witnesses stand out to establish His lofty character and claim.

Joseph was betrothed to Mary, who was found to be with a child of the Holy Ghost. With a rare blending of justice and a gentleman's heart, he made up his mind to put her away so no disgrace might fall upon her. He looked upon her as one of the unfortunates who appear all along the course of human history. The fact that immediately after his determination to put her away, we find him taking her to himself as his wife. Treating her with honor and respect is the strongest evidence that she was virtuous.

We are told what his proof was. An angel appeared from Heaven with a divine message to him:

Matthew 1:20-21:

²⁰ But while he thought on these things, behold, the Angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee

Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

²¹ And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.



The second witness is given in Luke 1:35b:

Luke 1:35b: ...that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

This proved not only the innocence of the woman, but the character of the child.

The third witness was the prophet Isaiah. All this had been precisely in accordance with the announcement which had for centuries been waiting, unfulfilled, in the sacred Bible. The Jews dare not question this Scripture to this day:

Matthew 1:23: Behold, a virgin shall be with Child, and shall bring forth a Son, and they shall call His Name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

Such a thought had never entered human mind – a virgin bringing forth a son, but God had long before announced it. Now it was at last fulfilled. How are we to explain this prophecy and other repetitions of it in Micah, Jeremiah, and Genesis without this New Testament account?

The very heavens themselves are a witness of the Royal Birth. A strange star appeared in the sky. It led from distant lands a company of wise men seeking the King of the Jews — the Saviour of the world. Just as the universe shuddered at the cross of Calvary, so it sent its signals to bear witness at His cradle.

The best of all witnesses to the Holy Babe were the scribes and rulers of Jerusalem — the very men who afterwards condemned and crucified Him. When the wisemen inquired at Jerusalem of the King that should be born, then Herod called a council of ecclesiastical rulers and asked where Christ should be born. They referred to the Hebrew scriptures and replied, “In Bethlehem of Judea”. They quoted:



Micah 5:2: But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me Who is to be Ruler in Israel; Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

Prophecy locates this little village as the birthplace of the King of the Jews. The wise men followed the star and found the Holy Christ exactly where prophecy foretold. So, the Scriptures and the ecclesiastical rulers of the Hebrew nation combined to identify Jesus as the Promised Messiah and Israel’s King.

Herod, the false king of Israel, became unconsciously a witness of the true King by the jealous fear which the advent of the Babe of Bethlehem brought to his troubled mind. The murderous hate with which he pursued Him! How he sought His very life! When Herod heard of His birth, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. This cruel tyrant never rested until he had butchered, in Bethlehem, all the male boys two years of age and under in the hope of exterminating his dreaded rival.



God hid His Son from Herod’s hate and wrath. God is a great hider and plays tricks on the devil. Herod’s jealousy bears witness to the true Kingship of our Lord Jesus Christ.

This story presents a many-sided, remarkable line of titles and names full of instructive meaning — *Emanuel, which being interpreted, is God with us*. This is the first truth of redemption — the incarnation of Jesus — God in human form. God united to our nature, and revealed in our flesh. This is the highest honor possible for humanity . . . to sit on yonder Throne as the very form of Deity.

JESUS

Matthew 1:21: And she shall bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call His Name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins.

This marks the second great truth in Redemption. It stands for the Cross of Calvary and the Blood that cleanses from all sin. Have you received Jesus as your own Saviour?

KING

Where is He that is born King? The Almighty King of Kings and Lord of Lords has come to us in the greatest humility. He is, thereby, accessible to all. The lowly babe — homeless, a wanderer, The crucified of Calvary — is coming back in glorious majesty. Only those who accept Him in His humiliation, with heart faith and repentance of their sins, will be with Him in His Kingdom.



We must begin at the manger and go to the throne, as He did.

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