

Louis X was the king of France and an avid tennis player. After an especially grueling game, he drank a lot of wine and died. Some suspected him of being poisoned. His wife was pregnant and it was unclear who would be king. The king's brother Philip was appointed regent for several months while they waited to see what the child would be. If it was a girl, Philip would likely be king, but if it was a boy then he would reign. A boy was born and named John the 1st, but he ruled only four days being dying. And his uncle ruled.

The birth of the king's heir always leads to a response. There is political jockeying for power and the discussion of who will be the next king. We see this happen throughout history and today we will see it happen in the gospel of Matthew.

We are looking at how each of the gospels presents the story of Christmas. They each discuss the story differently, and Matthew will present Jesus as the king. And because the King is born, it will demand a response.

### **I. Jesus was born as the rightful and saving King (1:1-25).**

This is really the big idea that Matthew presents.

And you'll actually see it throughout his entire gospel not just here.

But it especially comes out in the way that Matthew describes Jesus's birth. He is laser-focused on trying to help us understand that Jesus was born as a king.

This is why Matthew's gospel begins with this long genealogy

Look at verse one, **"The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham."**

Matthew doesn't just say this is the gospel he actually says this entire book is the genealogy of Jesus.

It is as if he is saying this whole book is me proving that Jesus is the Christ and Jesus is the king.

And so the gospel begin begins with a genealogy.

Mark and John don't have genealogies cause they're not trying to make the same point with Jesus's birth as Matthew is.

Luke has a genealogy but it doesn't come first.  
It comes much later in the story.  
Matthew begins right away with this genealogy to say Jesus is the king.

I noticed the names that are mentioned first.  
He mentioned Abraham and David.  
And he gives these names to you and to us because these are the names that the rightful king of Israel must be connected to.  
If someone is gonna be the king of the Jews, if someone is going to be the Messiah, they must be a son of David.  
And they certainly must be a son of Abraham.  
And so before Matthew lists out the rest of the names, he let us know upfront. Jesus is the son of David and he is the son of Abraham.

Now I'm not gonna go through the rest of all of these names, though I do think it's worth your time.

But notice again, he begins with Abraham.  
And kings need to have a genealogy.  
It's important if you were going to claim to be the rightful king to establish clearly why you are the king.  
Because if your ancestors are not kings, if your father was not a king, if you cannot trace your descendants through the line of kings, then you will not be a king.  
And so Matthew right away shows Jesus's credentials, his résumé, his family lineage, all to demonstrate that he is the king.

And it begins with Abraham to show that Jesus is truly a Jew.  
And he isn't just a part of the people of God because his father was or his grandfather Or because several generations back a gentile joined.  
Jesus can take his line all the way back to Abraham.

And then we also the other name that he points out is that he is the son of David.

This one would arguably be the most important one.

Because he needed to establish that he is the son of David.  
Because the Messiah and the true king of Israel must come from David's family.  
It's nice if you can go to Abraham, but you have to get to David.  
And Matthew shows that Jesus is the son of David and he is the rightful king.

And every name that is listed as meant to show that he's the king.  
There are also hints in the genealogy that Jesus is a different kind of king.  
This genealogy mentions the names of several women.  
Normally, women are not included or listed here.  
The fact that Matthew does is important.  
And he also mentions these women who would be the exact kind of woman that would normally get ignored or swept under the rug.  
Because Tamar and Bathsheba and Ruth and Mary, the mother of Jesus, all have sexual scandals around their names.

I won't go into each of these things this morning.  
I did this many years ago for our advent series in 2020.  
If you want you can go back and look at those sermons you can.  
But part of why I think Matthew puts them here's to show Jesus isn't just the rightful king Jesus is one of us.  
He doesn't come from a perfect family, but he comes through people who are broken and hated and mistreated.

We also see that Jesus is born to be the saving king.  
skip ahead to 17, **"So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations."**

Here it mentions the number of generations between Abraham and David  
And it mentions that there is 14.  
When are things that you saying they took 14 generations from Abraham until we got to the rightful king David who is promised.

And then there's 14 between David, and when the kingdom of God has disappeared.

And now it's been 14 generations. We've been again waiting for a king and here he is.

This is less a point about the exactness of the generations and is more about the fact that Jesus is coming and entering back into Israel's history as a saving king.

Verse 18, **"Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit."**

We get the beginning of the birth of Jesus.

But it's interesting in Matthew's gospel is that we don't hear from Mary directly we get Joseph's perspective.

And the reason we get Joseph's perspective is again because Matthew is trying to say he's the rightful king through Joseph's line.

Verse 19, **"And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly."**

Joseph, a righteous man he wants to do the right thing he's not trying to stone Mary. He also doesn't want to shame her so he's trying to think about how to quietly get out of this.

And 20, **"But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit."**

This is when the angel appears to tell him no marry her anyway

I chose you specifically for this to happen to.

God wanted it to happen.

And God lets Joseph know this is God's

Verse 21, **"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."**

This is the other side where we get.

The idea of Jesus is the king who saves.

The angel tells him she's gonna have a son named Jesus why because he is the one who will save his people.

Jesus was not born just to rule.

Jesus was not born just to be in charge.

Jesus was born to save his people

Now Joseph here says he's gonna be ecstatic.

Any Jew at this point would be thrilled to know that the Messiah is born the Christ is here.

The one who will save Israel has finally come.

The one who will overthrow the Romans, hilarious establish their government who will reestablish their nation and their flag, and will save the people from the tyranny of Rome and the tyranny of the Gentiles.

But wait a minute, the angel said he will save them from their sins.

Because the people need saving, but not from what they think.

Their biggest problem is not that they live under an oppressive government.

Their biggest problem is not that they don't have freedom or liberty.

Their biggest problem is that they are sinners in need of a savior.

And Jesus has come to save them not what they want to be saved from but from what they need to be saved from.

And they need to be saved from their sin

This is why Jesus came. This is why Jesus is the best kind of king.

He is the king who came to save us from our sinfulness.

He came to save us from death. He came to save us from hell.

And that's the kind of king that we need.

Verse 22, **"All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: <sup>23</sup> 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel'"**

Remind that this is why Jesus came, he came to fulfill the scripture. He came to live out exactly with the profits thousands of years ago, said what happened.

And he quotes the prophet Isaiah 7:14

The virgin will give birth and Jesus name is Immanuel, which means God with us.

Jesus is the one who can save us because he is not just man. He has God. And God is not just up in heaven, looking down at us laughing at the ants he has come to be born as one of us.

He has come to live alongside us.

He has come to be with us.

And he is not up in the ivory tower. He is not way up in a palace somewhere he comes to be born to an ordinary couple.

This is the main thing that Matthew wants us to understand.

We must get that he is the righteous and saving king.

Jesus was born to die.

Jesus came to save us.

Jesus is the only one who came.

All throughout history, there have been endless amounts of kings and those who would be kings and those who wish that they are kings.

They've all argued about their right to rule

Plenty of stolen elections or argued that the only reason they're not the king is because somebody else cheated them.

Jesus is the only one who is rightly and truly the king.

Jesus is the only one who should be king.

Jesus is the only one who can actually save us from our sins

Jesus is the only king who can save us what we need to be saved from.

Jesus is the only king who offers us new life.

Jesus is the true and rightful king.

And He came not to rule over us and be in charge.

Jesus came to be a king to save.

## II. **Jesus deserves to be worshipped as King (2:1-18).**

We see here that if Jesus really is the king that demands a response from us.

It is the kind of claim that cannot be ignored.

If Jesus is King, we can either act like He is king or we can ignore Him.

Jesus is claiming to be the rightful king, and he claims to be the one who can save us from our sins.

We have to respond somehow.

There is no neutral way to respond to this.

We have to either accept the claims of Jesus and bow down to Jesus or we must reject Jesus.

But there's not an in between.

And this is actually the point of the story we get in chapter 2.

The wise men and Herod are two opposites.

And they showed to us two different ways that we can respond to Jesus

We can either accept Jesus and accept what Jesus has said we can reject Jesus.

But there is no in-between.

Let's look at these two different ways to respond 2:1, **"Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem,"**

Again, it mentions Jesus is the king but there's another king.

Herod is someone who is on the throne now.

So the question is, how will he respond?

And we have these other wise men or Magi or sometimes we also call them kings.

They appear.

Verse two, "saying, **"Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose and have come to worship him."**

They come and ask, where is the king of the Jews?

Because they've come to worship they've come to throw their selves down at his feet

And I feel almost certain Herod would've been confused at first.

Because he would've wanted to say I'm the king of the Jews.

And they would have to come and say oh no, sorry this king actually was born very recently

And he would be troubled.

We see this in verse three, **"When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him"**

Because he thinks that he is the king he is the rightful king.

Someone is saying that there is a challenger to his throne.

The main thing I want you to see in this passage is the different ways that Herod responds to Jesus and the wisemen respond to Jesus.

Because the Wise mwn respond to the declaration of the birth of Jesus as the rightful and saving king rightly, and they accept him.

And Herod responds wrongly. And he rejects him.

First just noticed there proximity to Jesus.

The wisemen have come from far far away

We don't even know the country we don't even know where it's just somewhere far off in the east.

And Herod is right here.

It is in his own backyard. He does not have to go far. He doesn't have to travel for years. He doesn't have to set everything aside he could just go take a quick stroll and find Jesus.

And yet it is the people who were far off who responded to Jesus and that's the one who's close as he rejected him.

It's kind of foreshadows a lot what will happen in Jesus's life and ministry.

We also see the wisemen they come why because they saw a star in verse two

They just so happen to look in the sky and see that something is different. Something is significant and somehow from that leave everything to come and find Jesus.

It does not seem like they have a lot to go on.

They just look up into the skies and see a star and God calls them and they go.

Herod has more resources at his disposal

When we see him in verse four, **"and assembling all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born."**

He gets the high priest together

He gets all of the scribes and all of the religious leaders and everybody who could possibly know anything about Jesus.

He is able to get all of the experts in the world about Jesus immediately

they come to him and they don't just give him some stars they say oh yes, we know exactly the prophets

Micah 5:2 that tells us exactly where the king will be born. It's gonna be in Bethlehem.

Herod has the word of God, he has all of the experts and all the people who should be the most excited about the Messiah around him, and yet he does not accept or worship.

So we see in verse 8 he asked the wise men to come to him.

And he wants them to go and look.

He tells them to go find them Messiah and then let me know about it so I can come worship.

Herod says the right things and his professing faith and his professing that he accepts the king in his heart he has not.

And that should already be obvious before we get to the rest of the chapter because he won't leave.

The Magi have left behind their entire life, their country, their language, their people, all that they have to go and find Jesus.

Herod instead is like the rich young ruler who doesn't want to give up what he has in order to follow Jesus.

He doesn't even want to leave his house for a few days.

This is the difference between those who accept Jesus and those who do not.

There are plenty who profess they want to worship the king.

They accept Jesus they want to be called Christians.

But they want other people to do the work.

They're happy to have other people go do missions, but they don't wanna go.

They're happy that other people go to church, but they don't wanna go.

Verse 9, **"After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was."**

Wise men continue and they follow the star until it leads them to exactly where Jesus is.

I don't think we need to understand or get into the physics or how this exactly happened or worked.

Seems to be very clear that God honored the faith of these people who were looking and seeking for Jesus and he was happy to use even the very stars to lead them to the right place.

Listen to me, if you seek out, Jesus in faith and love, God will lead you to the right place.

If you were looking for Jesus, truly, you will find him, and God can use stars and dreams and all manner of miraculous things to get you to Jesus.

But there are those who have been given everything who are raised in a Christian home live in a Christian place go to a Christian school here the Christian gospel proclaimed and yet rejected Jesus and Don don't want him to be king.

Because at the end of the day, it takes faith.  
At the end of the day, it takes a decision.

Verse 10, **"When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy."**

They see the star and they rejoice exceedingly with great joy.  
Their response to the birth of Jesus is one of joy and not one of being greatly troubled.

When they come to Jesus, they find the answer to all they have been looking for.

When they see Jesus, they believe that all the sacrifices they have made were beyond worth it.

They believe that all of the sleepless nights all of the day spent away from their family, and their people cannot come close to compare to the joy of getting to be in the presence of the king.

Accepting Jesus means going to him joyfully, even if he demands a lot from us.

Verse 11, **"And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh."**

As only when they find Jesus and they see him, they fall down and they worship.

They prostrate themselves they fall on the ground.

And the ground of the house of Jesus, I guarantee he was much dirtier than the ground in the house of Harriet.

But they were happy to lay on the dirt and to cry to worship and to praise that this is the king.

What are they? Also, do they give gifts.

We know it well it's one of the most famous things about them other than the star that they give treasures to Jesus.

We know it's so well. We need to understand how remarkable it is.

Because they didn't have to do this.

They have already sacrificed and given so much just to end up at Jesus's door.

Their journey would've taken at the very least months if not years.

That is a lot of time that they are spending not making any money and instead of spending much of what they have.

That is all the time they are sacrificing away from their family away from their country away from their people.

They have no guarantee that they would've survived and lived to get to this point and there is no guarantee that they will live and get back home.

Even if they do survive and are able to get back home, their entire lives may be gone by the time they get there.

They could just show up at the defeat of Jesus and instead of Jesus we have sacrifice and given so much to see you, but you're worth it. Thank you. We worship you.

But they also give.

They give even more they give their treasures they give the best things that they have.

I'm somebody who likes to hoard and likes to save.

I'm always worried we need an emergency fund. We need to think about when the car is definitely gonna break down or think about when the roof needs replaced or think about this stuff.

They could've said hey we need to think about we could get robbed on the way back so we need to make sure we have extra money saved or food or things that aside to survive.

They're not worried about that. They just give and give abundantly to Jesus.

They don't say well already tithe I don't know if I'm gonna give more they give.

So a part of what it looks like if you're gonna follow Jesus as king is, it looks like you give to him.

An angel warns them don't go back to Herod's trap until they go ahead and head back home.

And in verse 13, God warns Joseph to flee.

Because Herod is going to try and kill all of them.

Not only will Herod not worship Jesus, he will try to kill him.

In his rage he will kill every boy under 2 in the city.

Desperate to stop Jesus from becoming king.

The irony is that his wicked plan can't stop Jesus.

It will only fulfill the prophecy God made long ago.

Herod's reaction seems extreme and it is certainly deeply wicked.

But all of us have resisted Christ's rule.

There are plenty of us who do not want Jesus to be king of our lives.

Maybe we will let Him be king.

But we only want Him to be king in name.

Like a lame duck president or the king of England.

Someone more ceremonial than with real power.

And all of us have sinned greatly trying to hold onto our own thrones.

But this is not how it should be.

We need to be like the wise men.

We should respond to Jesus with worship.

Worship with our lives.

With our gifts, with everything that we have.

And we should let Jesus be king.

Matthew wants us to see that Jesus was born as the rightful and saving king.

And we should respond to him with worship.

Let us know, worship king Jesus.

As He deserves.