

07-31-16 – Behold Your King

Matthew 16:15-16

We have ended our journey through the O.T. – Yea! Today we begin our new journey through the N.T. This will take 27 sermons for the 27 books of the N.T. We're about 2/3 the way through the entire Bible.

There were 400 years between the testaments. 400 years of God's apparent silence. This caused the people of God to get edgy! Even though they often disregarded God's word through the prophets, at least, they heard something they chose to ignore – Now? 400 years of nothing – Multiple generations sat in silence – They heard the promises of Messiah at their temple services when prophecy was read aloud, but there was no fulfillment for them or into the future that they could see.

During this 400-year period, people started writing spiritual books. They were starving for God and for His promise to be revealed. So, several books were written during this time period. Were they on target spiritually? This was the question that St. Jerome asked. He read and studied these books while putting together the Latin Vulgate translation. He questioned their inspiration, but the leaders of the Roman and Eastern churches overrode him. So they are included to this day in those denominations. The reformers, who started the Protestant group, rejected these writings. These writings were never included in the Hebrew O.T. by the way. They are a great read if you have time, but never accepted as Scripture (inspired by God).

Some are whole books, while some of these writings are add-ons to existing O.T. books like Daniel.

As we have been preaching through the O.T. we have seen Jesus – Even though not mentioned by name. Each book of the Bible, O.T. and N.T., is all about Jesus – the Messiah! Christ! In the N.T. we get to encounter Him in the flesh. God with us!

Over the 400-year gap, the people in general reverted to doing their own thing. The Messiah thing just wasn't happening for them. When Jesus arrived on the scene, a new era began. Slowly many came to believe in Jesus as Messiah, the promised King of Israel. That meant everything had to be re-centered, re-focused. *"They told stories of Jesus and arranged his teachings in memorable form. They wrote letters. They sang songs. They prayed. One of them wrote an extraordinary poem based on holy visions."* It seemed haphazard and unorganized. There was no one putting this together – so they thought. Actually the Holy Spirit was on the scene organizing every word. Over ~50 years, these writings were compiled and later became the New Testament. *"It was made up of: eyewitness accounts, personal letters, and a poem. Five stories, twenty-one letters, and one poem."* This makes up the 27 books of the N.T.

All these writings were done in the common or street language of the Greek, not the formal language. All N.T. writings were written so the normal, regular people could relate. It is a way of inclusion. No one is left out of God's plan or understanding what was written. The Message is NOT just for the elite or the specially chosen; it's for everyone, everywhere. *"For God so loved the WORLD that he sent His Only Son..."* (Jn. 3:16). So He inspired the writers to use down-to-earth language so everyone can understand and relate at the street level, the common level, the backyard level." (EP).

Enter the N.T. - Enter the Gospels to kick things off. Why four gospels? Each presents Christ in a unique way! Three "synoptic" gospels – Matthew, Mark and Luke – All similar in their story and John all off by itself. John devotes his writing to the deity of Jesus – God the Son.

Today we are up to Matthew - the first of the four Gospels and the first N.T. book. When we were expecting our third child, we were sure it would be a girl – completely sure – room preparation and everything. We didn't even consider a boy's name in the mix. We prayed, we believed, we claimed it – all the Christian things we knew and were taught. Then the day of the scheduled "C" section came. In the hospital, the nurse checked the baby's heart beat and said, "132, a little slow, guess you're having a boy. Do you have a name picked out yet?" We looked at each other, and I took a N.T. out of my back pocket and opened to Matthew's gospel. "How about Matthew?" That's how our third son got his name. Matthew means, "gift of God." He is our gift even if we thought we could sway God ☺

Matthew, the gospel writer, was a Jew from the tribe of Levi and a tax collector by trade – despised by all the local people. God doesn't see what people see in us. Jesus said to him, "Follow Me." He left all and followed Him. Because of his background, when he came to Jesus, Matthew had a passion to reach the Jewish people with this message of Jesus as Messiah. His gospel is laced with O.T. quotes and prophecies to appeal to the Jews. This was his emphasis in telling his version of the Jesus story. He quotes the great prophets about Messiah... Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Zechariah – speaking of the coming King. Matthew's gospel is the Gospel of the King!

As we will see in the coming weeks, Mark focuses on Jesus as the suffering Servant – His is the Gospel of the Servant. Luke focuses on Jesus coming as a man – His is the Gospel of the Son of Man. John focuses on Jesus' deity – Messiah of God – His is the Gospel of the Son of God.

All O.T. prophecies of Messiah can be grouped into these four categories... King, Servant, Human, God.

Zech. 9:9 – "Behold your King comes..."

Is. 42:1 – "Behold My Servant." Not YOUR servant, but MINE – GOD's

Zech. 6:12 – "Behold the man..."

Is. 40:9 – "Say to the cities of Judah, Behold your God!"

Matthew – the Gospel of the King – Many evidences of His kingship. Even though writing to the Jews, he is consciously writing for all people and includes this in his gospel. The book starts with the genealogy of Jesus, tracing His royal line back to David and then to Abraham, the father of the nation of Israel. Included in this genealogy are women from other nations and professions. In the gospel, Matthew refers to Jesus speaking with kingly authority throughout. To the Jews, Moses was the ultimate authority, so for Jesus to supersede Moses' authority would mean He must be KING! He condemned the religious leaders and teachers of the Law of Moses calling them Hypocrites. He ends with the command to make disciples of ALL nations. He will be with us even to the end of the age. A fully inclusive gospel with a Jewish emphasis – quite remarkable.

Matthew uses the phrase, "the kingdom of heaven" repeatedly. It occurs 32 times in this gospel alone. Matthew says Jesus was born King of the Jews – and at His crucifixion the plaque read King of the Jews. He is the King of Israel – the Messiah – the One to come!

Matt. 16:13-16 - *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets." Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

Nearly a century ago, an Englishman named Green was walking through the woods when he came upon a stranger in the path. He was startled when the stranger smiled and waved at him. "Oh, Hello, Mr. Green!" said the stranger. Obviously this "stranger" wasn't a stranger at all – but for the life of him, Mr. Green could not place him. Embarrassed, but unwilling to admit to a poor memory for names and faces, Mr. Green offered his hand. "Ah, yes! Hello! Good to see you, old boy! How long has it been?" "Well," said the other man, "It was at Lady Asquith's reception last October, wasn't it? Nearly a year, then."

Mr. Green remembered Lady Asquith's reception and tried to recall all the people he had met. This gentleman's face looked familiar, but he just couldn't place it. Still groping for clues to this fellow's identity, Greene decided to ask a few questions. "And how is your wife?"

"Quite well," said the other man. "And You? Still in the same business, I presume?"

"Oh yes," said the other man, with a merry twinkle in his eye. "I'm still the king of England."

Mr. Greene – Behold Your King!

Tim Keller said, **"The only person who can wake up a king at 3:00 AM to ask for a drink of water is a child."**

That's the relationship we have with our King. He wants us to come to Him for everything we need. It's never and inconvenience to our God!

God is the same now and forever – He spoke through the Scriptures that Someone was coming. He spoke in the shadows, types, symbols and prophecies – Someone was coming! The Messiah – King was coming! The gospels provide for us the eye witness accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus on earth. He may not always be what we think or would like Him to be, but it is Jesus – He is startling! He is awesome! If you are a believer, then all that He is, you have because you belong to Him!

Matthew had such a burden for the Jewish people that his original gospel may have been written in Hebrew. He reflects back on O.T. prophecies and quotes more than any other N.T. writer.

The gospel is divided into three major divisions with distinguishing wording...

Intro: The coming of the King (1-4) – Div. 2: "From that time on..." 4-17 (near). Div. 3: "From that time on..." (16-21) (his death).

There are sub-divisions marked by four phrases" ... **"Jesus had finished"**

1 – (7:28-29) – "When Jesus had finished saying these things..."

2 – (11:1) – "After Jesus had finished instructing his twelve disciples..."

3 – (13:53-54) – "When Jesus had finished these parables..."

4 – (19:1-2) – "When Jesus had finished saying these things..."

Jerusalem - Preparation of the King - - - Palm Sunday – the triumphal entry.

Zech. 9:9 – "Rejoice, O people of Zion! Shout in triumph, O people of Jerusalem! Look, your King is coming to you. He is righteous and victorious, yet He is humble, riding on a donkey – riding on a donkey's colt." Fulfilled by Jesus at the triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

Zechariah prophesied this 500 years before Jesus was born. How could he have known so precisely what was going to happen with such detail? I think God was involved! That is what our Bible is made of. God speaks to us in various ways, through various people and means, to tell us about Jesus, our King!

To present Jesus as King, Matthew opens with a genealogy of the King. A king's right of Kingship is based on his royal lineage! Joseph, Jesus' earthly father was in the line of King David. Mary, also was of the line of King David. Therefore, both from a human and a blood line perspective, Jesus was the son of David.

Ch. 1-2 – establish Jesus' earthly connection to royalty.

Ch. 3 – At His baptism – the heavens opened and God Himself establishes Jesus' spiritual connection to God – His Father. The Father declares Jesus to be His Beloved Son. Jesus is King – in every sense! All confirmed in Scripture!

Ch. 4 – We see the testing of the King in the wilderness by none other than Satan himself! He took his best shots at Jesus, but our King came out triumphant! He took our place then. Humans are made up of body, soul and spirit. Jesus' trial took all three of these aspects into the battle. Jesus' body, mind/soul, and spirit were tempted and He maintained His integrity showing we, too, can withstand these kinds of attacks if we are in Him! He took our place at His own temptation, and He took our place at His own death, so we would not have to experience spiritual death, ever.

MT. 4:1-4 – Body - He was hungry – temptation to turn rocks into bread to satisfy the body.

MT. 4:5-7 – Soul, Mind – Jump off the cliff – the angels will rescue you – plays on his mind and ego.

MT. 4:8-11 – Spirit - Gain all the kingdoms of the world – just worship me – spiritual. Jesus would be in charge of the kingdom of heaven. The world is temporary. No contest.

Jesus – God's King – came into this world – offered Himself as King of Israel. First on the level of the physical, then on the level of the soul/mind. He was rejected on both these levels. Next, He took it to the cross – spiritual level.

The nation of Israel, as well as us today, are being tested in the same way.

The beginning of this gospel reveals Jesus as King right from his birth...

Mt. 2:1-3 - 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, "Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him." King Herod was deeply disturbed when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.

Israel was under Roman rule at this time, but they allowed the Jews to have their own king, as long as he played by their rules. Herod was the "King of the Jews" at this time. You can see the threat he sensed when these gentile wise men came looking for the new King of the Jews. He was incensed. We know the horrible things he did to try to rid the earth of Jesus – the new born King.

At the end of this gospel, our King was crucified for our forgiveness. He paid the penalty for our sin. Matthew is very deliberate to include ALL people. Even though he was writing to Jews about their promised King, Messiah, Jesus, he also included all humanity – Jew and gentile alike. A sign was nailed to the cross above Jesus' head that read, "**THIS IS JESUS – KING OF THE JEWS.**" This was ordered by Pilate. That was his crime... That was the charge against Him. It was written in all the common languages of that time and location – Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic. Everyone could read this charge – This is Jesus – the King of the Jews. And he was and is still King of the Jews and King of kings. His kingdom will have no end. It is the kingdom of Heaven. God gave Him the throne of Heaven because of what He did for us. He is God. He is Messiah. He is Lord. He is King. He is JESUS. There is no other. **From beginning to end – Matthew writes about the King of Israel and the world. Behold Your King! Behold Jesus!**