

The King Has Come

Matthew

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Amen. What a blessing this morning's children's choir and the orchestra. Fantastic. Neat observation, too, about the angels, if they sing, the verse in Job maybe does say they might do that occasionally. It's not much so at least we outweigh their singing somehow in God's mind, and I think it's definitely a really unique thing to consider. I appreciate you bringing that up, Ted, because the Lord has set upon us who were made lower than the angels more dignity and honor, which Scripture is clear about that, that we will judge angels, Paul says, so that even though we're less in the economy of creation, we are greater in the economy of redemption. What an amazing reality, that the God of the universe has set that kind of honor and dignity upon human beings. Praise his name.

I ask you to turn with me in your Bibles to the Gospel of Matthew. We'll take a break from our study and exposition of Ezra/Nehemiah and resume that, Lord willing, in probably in January in chapter 9. We finished chapter 8 last week. I want us to look for a few weeks at the part of just really celebrating the coming of our Savior, some Christmas passages and we're going to look this morning at one that at first glance is not gonna seem that exciting. We're going to be preaching from Matthew 1:1-17 which is the genealogy of Jesus Christ that begins the New Testament.

I was thinking about this, you know, the reason we're preaching from it is because the Bible makes clear all Scripture is God-breathed and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and training in righteousness that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished, equipped, thoroughly furnished for every good work. We understand that but it is something somewhat daunting and, you know, if you're like me, when you're reading your Bible and you come to genealogies, they tend to be really challenging just to kind of stay focused as you read through it. You know, "So-and-so is the father of So-and-so," etc. etc., and one of the interesting things is the Bible is filled with genealogy. I mean, it's not every page but there's a lot of genealogy in the Bible. The book of Genesis, the word *genesis* in Greek translated into our word here in this genealogy, it's the word that's used in the first verse of chapter 1 of Matthew, means "beginning or origin," and that's why the book of Genesis, it gets its name from this same word that occurs here in this first verse. The book of Genesis is the book of beginnings, the book of origins, where God shows us who we are, where we come from, and we find genealogy at various places in the Scripture, all throughout Genesis, 1 & 2 Chronicles, but we find it sprinkled with

Numbers, we find it sprinkled other places too. We have this genealogy here in Matthew 1:1-17 which is apparently the legal descent of the Messiah. It is the legal line of Jesus the Messiah. Why do I say the legal line? Because this is Joseph's line is the one who would be basically acting as his father, but of course God is his Father as verses 18 to 25 make clear. He's not of human father. God is his Father. But Joseph, Matthew establishes, is in the line of David because the Messiah needs to be in the line of David legally, and the line of the Messiah goes through the father. It's, you know, David has a son Solomon, the line of the kingship goes through man, a father to a son. In Luke 3, we have the genealogy of Jesus that's biological, the biological genealogy of Jesus. Luke makes clear that not only did Jesus' descent come through the legal father of Joseph, but his physical flesh coming from his mother Mary is also in the line of David. David had a son Nathan and Nathan's line leads to Mary, and David had a son Solomon, and Solomon's line leads to Joseph, and so you have both Gospel writers taking time to establish that.

These are things that when we look at it, it's hard for us to relate to. You know, I remember reading, I've been reading on writing recently because in doing my doctoral work, we had to read some books in the beginning on just how to write, and one of the things that one of the authors was talking about is when you read something, I mean when you write something, it is your burden to convince the reader in the very beginning of your writing, that you want them to stay with you and listen to you. You know, you pick up a book and if it's just boring, you're just gonna put it away. So I thought about that in relation to how God begins the New Testament. This didn't seem like he read that book, you know, grab them at the beginning. Of course, the Lord knows better than the author of that book but what's interesting is for the Jews this would have been much more grabbing than it is for you and me. The Jewish people had been brought up to look for the genealogies. We even saw this when we were looking at Ezra a few weeks back, we noted that Ezra 7 when Ezra's introduced, he's introduced as he comes onto the scene, the first thing we see of Ezra is his genealogical credentials. We don't hear, we don't see him doing anything or saying anything. The first words in Ezra 7, "Now Ezra was the son of..., was the son of..., was the son of...,," all the way back to Aaron and that was to establish his credentials and his authority.

One of the things that genealogy also does is to say by way of introduction, is it shows us the Bible is rooted in real history. You know, we're not as Peter says in 2 Peter 1, we are not offering cleverly devised tales. The Bible, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is not fairytale, it is fact. We're not talking about a hoax, we're talking about history, real things that happened in space and time with a real man and that is what makes all of the difference. And genealogy and the Bible's belaboring of genealogy is a resounding testimony to that, that it matters who begat who, who was the father of who, all the way down because God was working his plan out in history and it shows us his faithfulness to the promise but that his promises were made to real people in real life circumstances and he offers his Son who was a real man, truly fully God but truly fully man.

So we see this in this passage and what the title of the message this morning is really the theme of the book of Matthew, that he really is bringing this up to establish. The title of

the message is "The King Has Come." The King has come. Matthew 1:1-17. Let's hear the word of God together. Matthew 1:1,

1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham: 2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers. 3 Judah was the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez was the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram. 4 Ram was the father of Amminadab, Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon. 5 Salmon was the father of Boaz by Rahab, Boaz was the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse. 6 Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah. 7 Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asa. 8 Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah. 9 Uzziah was the father of Jotham, Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah. 10 Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh, Manasseh the father of Amon, and Amon the father of Josiah. 11 Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. 12 After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah became the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel. 13 Zerubbabel was the father of Abihud, Abihud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor. 14 Azor was the father of Zadok, Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud. 15 Eliud was the father of Eleazar, Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob. 16 Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah. 17 So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Our Father, we ask now that You might bless the reading of Your word, the study of Your word, that the entrance of Your word might give light and that in Your light we might see light, that You might call us to submission to Your King that You have installed on Your holy mountain, even Jesus. We pray in His name. Amen.

The King has come. This is Matthew's point. When you look at Matthew's Gospel, one of the distinctive things, all the four Gospels basically are telling the same message, the Messiah is here, Jesus is God's Savior, salvation is found by repenting and believing in him, and yet each Gospel has slightly different emphases. The Spirit had different purposes, slightly different angles that you're getting the same basic view but different angles and Matthew's angle is to tell us that Jesus is the King and it is to emphasize his Jewish kingship. He's writing to largely a Jewish audience to prove to them that Jesus truly is the Messiah, that the King that they've been waiting for has indeed come.

Now he's writing probably about two decades after Jesus has ascended into heaven. The Gospel has been going forth throughout the Roman world but the Jews, initially in every city there would be some Jews almost always who believed but it would be a small number usually. They would form the core of the church and then Gentiles would be added. You see this as you watch Paul taking the Gospel through the Mediterranean world in Acts, and over time the church becomes more and more Gentile, less and less Jewish, but Matthew's purpose in writing is to call more and more of the Jews to faith. Now of course, it also applies to all of us too who are non-Jews. He's saying to us Jesus is the King. The King has come.

Now when he says the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham, here's his main thrust. Now the New American Standard now translates that, the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah. It used to translate it the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Christ, and your translation may still say that, Jesus the Christ, and it's important to understand that the word "Christ" in English transliterates, that's a letter for letter rendering of the Greek word Christos. You know, you translate a word when you take the meaning of a word in one language to the meaning, to a word that means the same thing in another language, right? So an example of that is the Hebrew word "mashiach" means "anointed one." That's the word that's used throughout the whole Old Testament. The Mashiach, the Messiah. We transliterate that into English. Mashiach transliterates letter for letter into English Messiah. It translates into Greek Christos. Do you follow what I'm saying? It goes from Hebrew to Greek, meaning to meaning from Mashiach to Christos. Well, then what we have is we have two words that say the same thing. Messiah equals Christ. Messiah is the transliteration of the Hebrew word for "anointed one." Christ is the transliteration of the Greek word for "anointed one." Does that make sense?

So Messiah equals Christ, so when you read Jesus Christ, we proclaim Jesus Christ, what they're saying is not Jesus and his last name. I know when I was young, I thought that was just his last name. Ty Blackburn. Jesus Christ. That's what I thought it was but it's not. It's a title. It's an honorific title. It's an expression. It's, in a sense, a creed, a statement of faith, a statement, a propositional statement of truth. Jesus is the anointed one that the whole Bible has pointed to. That's what it means to say Jesus Christ.

So here he's basically saying at the beginning, it used to and the King James says the record of the genealogy of Jesus the Christ because it took it through the Greek word actually in the text of Matthew, he's writing though he's a Jew, he's writing in Greek and he says, Iesous Christos. But here now they're trying to make it clear to us, I think for the same reason because we're used to, other people must be having the same problem I had, they think of Christ as a last name. The translators of the New American Standard most recently changed it to Messiah so that we would understand. But Matthew in his first words out of his mouth here is he's saying, "Listen, I'm going to give you the genealogical credentials that will prove to you that the man Jesus of Nazareth whom you have rejected, many of you are rejecting, He is in fact God's anointed Messiah."

It's a bold statement here in verse 1 and we have to allow ourselves to hear it as they would have heard it rather than it's just old hat to us. Now this was a great statement for Matthew to make and for them to hear, and now the first thing he's gonna do to prove to them that Jesus is the Messiah, is he's going to genealogy. For Jewish audiences, genealogies mattered. They should matter to all of us but they especially did to Jewish audiences.

You see this, like I said, in Ezra 7 but you're gonna see it in Ezra/Nehemiah. They keep going back to the genealogical record to check things out. Where are you from? Are you a Levite? No, you're not a Levite. You're not a son of a Levite therefore you cannot be involved in temple ministry, because God had established his patterns and promises of salvation and he's used this genealogical way of revealing himself. We're gonna see this in a moment more clearly. His promises concerning salvation, what we see in the Bible, his promises concerning salvation are tied to specific family lines, familial lineage. The book of Genesis, the beginnings, the origins, we find this, that God promises a Savior and he basically does it through increasingly narrow and more specific family lineage. As if to say, "Keep your eye out for the Messiah in this place."

Now what I want to do to unpack this for us, this passage, there's so much here actually but and we're not gonna probably get to all of it, we'll see. But I want us to organize our thoughts around three points and the first is our need for a king. Our need for a king. He's basically writing to the Jews saying, "We all know we need a king and I'm telling you the King has come." But our need for a king. It's actually, it's evidenced in the passage and the Jews would have heard it as they listened to the genealogy unfold.

It's interesting how Matthew summarizes it in verse 17 when he completes the genealogy, verse 17, "So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; from David to the deportation to Babylon, fourteen generations; and from the deportation to Babylon to the Messiah, fourteen generations." If you go through and you count it, it works out. You're looking at it and so Abraham, David's the 14th name in that lineage. What's the significance of that? What's interesting is that when you really look at it carefully, Matthew is editing out some names. He's not really concerned with giving you every single one, what he's concerned with doing is giving you the key people and making a theological point. Like there are three kings missing in David's lineage when you go through and you look at the kings of Judah, because he wants 14 between David and the deportation. And in fact, just to give you an idea, like from Abraham to David is roughly a thousand years, okay? It's around 2,000, 2,006, I forget, 50 or 60 or something like that all the way down to like a thousand is when David is born, okay? Then from David to deportation to Babylon, well, David dies in 931, starts reigning as king in 970, born around 1000 AD, so remember we're counting down, BC, right? He's born in 1000, he becomes king at 971, he dies at 931. Well, the deportation to Babylon happens around 600 BC, about 330 years after he dies. So you could say 400 years after David, 330 years after his death. So from Abraham to David, 14 generations. From David now that was a thousand years, 14 generations, now 14 generations for 400 years, and now from the deportation to Babylon at 600 BC to Jesus is another 600 years.

So he's not really concerned, he's not doing the math so much. I mean, he is doing the math in a way but not the way that you or I might like to do it. Now you're probably not that, some of you guys don't even care about this. Numbers always matter to me. I'm like just trying to figure out, you know, anyway. So indulge me, forgive me. If you're a math person, you can encourage me later, say, "Hey, thank you. I appreciate that." Not many of you out there, we have to stick together.

But his point is to make a theological and this was something that was always done in genealogies. You didn't have, to give a clear genealogy you just have to make known the key people and it has to follow all the way through. You could say that, you know, Bill is the grandson of Jim and you could say, "Hey, Jim is the ancestor of Bill," and skip over the dad in the middle. There's nothing wrong with that. You're telling the family line. You're going all the way back to the key point.

Why 14? Because in Hebrew 7 is the perfect number and 2×7 is 14, and so what he's showing is that this is the perfect plan of God. This is what Matthew is saying to his readers. God's perfect plan has unfolded in history. Look at his perfect plan from Abraham to David and he gives four key stopping points on this perfect plan: Abraham, David, the deportation, Messiah. It's like, in a sense, like four mountain peaks of glory, of the progress of God's glorious plan. Now think about that for a moment. These are four glorious mountain peaks. Abraham, check, that's a glorious mountain peak, isn't it? David, check, that's a glorious mountain peak, isn't it? Messiah, check, that's a glorious mountain peak. Deportation to Babylon, what? He's making the point here the deportation to Babylon was a pivotal moment in the unfolding of God's plan of redemption; that the deportation of Babylon though in one sense was a great valley, was a great time of judgment, was a great time of sorrow and brokenness, in the ultimate plan of God's unfolding of his plan of salvation, the revelation of his glorious salvation, the deportation to Babylon was a pivotal moment in God's unfolding plan and it was a good thing. That's kind of arresting in itself. We want to look at that as we go forward.

Now so that's kind of, I kind of gave you more introduction. The first point, our need for a king, really comes after what I just said so if you want to just scratch it out above and move it down. Our need for a king. He's making the point that we, the king has come and he's assuming that they know the need for the king because when he picks up with Abraham, there's a lot, this is a loaded discussion and his readers understand some things right up front. And the first thing was Abraham was the father of the nation and the one to whom God spoke most clearly the promises, the promise of salvation.

So if we go back to Genesis 12, we find here Abraham. This is chapter 12, verse 1, "Now the LORD said to Abram," this is before he has the name Abraham, he's just Abram at this point, "Now the LORD said to Abram, 'Go forth from your country, And from your relatives And from your father's house, To the land which I will show you; And I will make you a great nation, And I will bless you, And make your name great; And so you shall be a blessing; And I will bless those who bless you, And the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.'" This is the great promise of salvation made to Abraham. God calls him from Ur of the Chaldeans.

Abram's not looking for God. God finds him and says, "I'm going to bless you and through you I'm going to bless all the families of the earth."

Now the discerning Jew understood that this was actually picking up on an even earlier promise back in the garden of Eden in Genesis 3:15. Well, before you turn to chapter 3, look at verse 7 of chapter 12, "The LORD appeared to Abram and said, 'To your descendants,' to your seed in other words, in Hebrew literally to your seed, 'I will give this land.'" The word "descendants or seed" is a key word throughout the Bible and particularly in the promises as we go forward. You're gonna find as you look, we don't have time to look at it today but Genesis 15, Genesis 17, Genesis 22, you're gonna find the importance of God promising he's gonna do great things through the seed of Abraham. The descendants, yes, but the seed. Paul's gonna tell us later in Galatians, interpret that for us and say when he said seed, he always said it singularly, seed. Now the word "seed" can have a plural meaning. It's like the word "family." It's a singular word but has a plural understanding, right? So the word "seed" can be singular and plural at the same time. So Paul's saying, "Hey, you realize it was always though that singular word because God had in mind one particular seed, one particular descendant." That all of those promises of the Old Testament pointed to this one man.

Well, this idea of "seed" goes back to Genesis 3, to the fall, and this is where we really see our need for the King. Our need for a king. After Eve has eaten of the fruit, given it to Adam, he's eaten the forbidden fruit. The Lord comes down, asks questions of them. They answer the questions and now he begins to pronounce judgment upon them and he, first of all, pronounces judgment on the serpent, and in this pronouncement of judgment on the serpent, he offers the first proclamation of the Gospel, the first proclamation of the good news is here as God is pronouncing judgment directly to Satan, the serpent. As he's talking to the serpent, he preaches the Gospel for the first time.

Look at verse 14 and 15. "The LORD God said to the serpent," who's deceived Eve, "'Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you will go, And dust you will eat All the days of your life.'" So he curses the actual animal, the serpent, but now he's also looking at the spirit behind the animal that had used the animal, Satan himself and he says, "And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." That is the proclamation of the Gospel. There will come a seed of a woman who will come into battle with the seed of the serpent, and the battle will be of such magnitude that there will be great ferocity, great damage. The seed of the woman who is going to bring victory and salvation will actually be bitten like being bitten on the heel by a serpent, a poisonous serpent. That often means death, especially before the days of antivenom and stuff, and even now if you don't get it quick enough in certain places, certain snakes. But the man's, this seed is going to be bitten on the heel and at the same time he crushes the head. There's gonna be this violent conflict between the seed of a woman and the seed of the devil, and it's going to bring about this great victory.

Now what's going on here? Well, as we go through the rest of Scripture, what we see is that a lot more had happened in Adam and Eve's sin than is at first glance made clear. We know they're driven away from the presence of God but we find out that what's really happened is man has entered into complete bondage; that spiritually he is in great bondage and darkness and this is what's so important because this is the real issue we need to be delivered from and this is especially relevant for those to whom Matthew was writing.

Hold this thought on the serpent and the seed for a moment and think about when he says the Messiah has come and you need to submit to the King, Jesus is the King. The Jews of his day were anticipating a Messiah. They were longing for a Messiah. They were longing for a king to come and deliver them. This is one of the great ironies. They were, they had feverish anticipation that he would come, and yet when he came they rejected him. Why? Because they wanted a deliverer who would bring salvation to them in purely physical visible terms. They wanted a Messiah who would come as a great warrior, a political statesman, a military genius, a motivational expert, and who would then motivate the people, do great strategy and overthrow Rome and take away the financial oppression of the tax system, would take away the moral oppression of being around these ungodly Gentiles. He would fix the social injustice that is rampant in the world, the Jewish world in that day. They wanted a Messiah to deliver them from the pains that they were enduring under Roman oppression.

So when they looked at Jesus, they did not see a king like that and they rejected him, but Matthew is saying, "The King you rejected is the one King that God was going to send and He's the only King who He's ever going to send and you need to submit to Him." You see, the Jews were thinking too small. They were looking with natural eyes. They wanted to be set free from the domination of Rome, from the domination of political tyranny, social injustice. So we need to be free from these things, but they didn't understand or know that's just the symptoms of a far greater bondage. It's like they wanted to treat the disease, treat the surface manifestations of this insidious cancer. Jesus came to treat the heart issue. He came to deliver us from the real problem which is the domination of sin, the domination of evil over us, and it is a spiritual reality and so we need a spiritual Savior who is far mightier and far more glorious than any earthly savior could be. He's a far greater warrior than any earthly deliverer could ever be or has ever been. We need the lion of the tribe of Judah to come and save us and Matthew is saying that has happened. Get your eyes off of the things of this world and behold your God saving you. That's the message of his Gospel. A conqueror, a mighty conqueror has come. A righteous ruler has come and the question is will you bow the knee to him?

You see, we need a king that's a greater king than someone who can fix the problems in our lives, the symptomatic problems in our lives, but too often we're like the Jews of the first century. We even come to God and we want him, we come to the word and we want him to fix the symptoms to make our life more pleasant, to be happier. You know, this often happens. When you really just get to the point of wanting help, even, you think, "I really want help in my life." A couple comes for marriage counseling, they come in and this is how we are, we naturally want our life to work, "So give me some things to help

me know how to treat her so she will treat me like this. Help us with our communication skills." And there's a place for that, but that's not the root. "Help us deal with our issues of a difference of opinion about parenting. Show her she's wrong. Show him he's wrong." And what God wants to do, God's agenda in all those moments is my heart, your heart. He wants to kill sin. He wants to kill in us the right, our desire for our rights, our desire to live our lives for our purposes. He wants to kill that in us and lead us to the freedom of giving all to Jesus and this is what Jesus came to do because that is our fundamental problem.

This is why the world can't get along. You know, Rodney King in 1992, was it? Were the LA riots '92-93? And remember he said and it was a well-meaning, I mean, what he went through, it was a very kind thing for the man to say. Remember, "Can't we just all get along?" He was trying to stop the riots that were happening after the way he had been terribly treated, beaten viciously, and he said, "Can't, why can't we all get along? Can't we just get along?" Well, it was a noble aspiration like I said even in that point, humanly speaking, a noble act to say that, but the problem is we can't get along. Why? Because the problem is not in social structures or institutions, the problem is in the human heart. The problem is wickedness reigning in our hearts. The problem is that when we sin, something major happened, Satan came to rule over everything.

It's interesting, Jesus uses a phrase the night before he's crucified or the day before, actually the week before he's crucified and twice on the night he's crucified. He uses the phrase three times. In John 12:31 he says this after the Greeks come to him looking for, they want to see Jesus and he's told about it, they come talk to him and he tells the disciples, "Now is the time for the Son of Man to be glorified." He knows now is the time for the cross. We are right at the cross and do you know what he says? "Now is the time for the ruler of this world to be cast out." Now think about that. He's saying that until that moment the ruler of this world is Satan, the serpent; that he rules over, he ruled over everything after the fall. And Jesus even a few chapters before then in John 8:44, remember he's preaching to, he's talking to the Jews, preaching to the Jews, they're rejecting his message. He says to them, "You know, if you continue in My word you shall know the truth and the truth will make you free." And they say, "Why do we need to be free? We're not slaves to anyone." Preposterous statement. They've been slaves for 600 years since the deportation to Babylon, just under one different slave master. First it was Babylon, then it was Persia, then it was Greece, now it's Rome with a little brief respite for about a few years.

He says, "I'll set you free." They say, "We don't need to be free." He says, "The Son sets you free, you'll be free indeed," and he goes on to say because they're hating him with murderous intent, he's just telling them the Gospel and he says to them, "You are of your father the devil." He says this to the Jewish people. These are faithful Jews who were going to temple, who are going to synagogue, who are offering their sacrifices, who are listening to the Torah. He says, "You are of your father the devil. The devil was a murderer from the beginning and you want to be just like your dad. You see, you need to be set free and there's only one who can set you free, the Son. If you believe in the Son, the Son will set you free." He says, "I've come to deliver you from the domain of

darkness." 2 Corinthians 4:4, "The god of this age has blinded the eyes of the unbelieving." He's called the ruler of this present darkness in Ephesians 2:1-3.

So the first thing we need to see is we need a king but we need a king not the way we want a king, we need a king the way God says we need a king. We need a king who can deliver us from our real bondage, the spiritual bondage of sin, the bondage of evil. Think about why you're here today. Maybe you haven't been to church in a while, why are you here? What are you looking for? Are you looking for encouragement, for help, just life principles, or are you looking for a King? You may not have come looking for a King but what you need is a King, you need Jesus to be your King. We all need that.

Christian, you may be here today thinking about the problems that you have and want God to fix those problems and so often we find ourselves doing that but what I really need is I need to submit to his kingship. I need to bow the knee to him more fully in every area of my life, every area of my life. The Lord's agenda is to make for me to submit to his kingship, his lordship, and when I do that, what is the result? Freedom. When you become a slave to Christ and you set, his agenda becomes your agenda in whatever area it is, you are free indeed because he sets you free.

Though we have the need for the King, and then as we begin to unpack this back to the genealogy in Matthew 1, our need for the King, then we have the promise of the King, and this is what's basically underscored in the genealogy. Abraham all the way down to David, David down to the deportation, the deportation down to the Messiah, this progressive building of God's story and God's promise. When he told in Genesis 3:15, the promise was there, "I'm going to send a seed of a woman." It's interesting the word choice. It must have just really puzzled Jewish scholars for hundreds and hundreds of years as they read that word, "the seed of the woman." You know, in Hebrew the word "zera" means "seed." When you translate that word into Greek, now you have the seed in English, we translate "zera" into English, you get "seed," but you know, when you translated "zera" into Greek, do you know what you get? "Sperma, seed." The seed of the woman and the reality is "zera" speaks of that which belongs to the male, in which the male brings to the reproduction of human beings.

What is he talking about, the seed of the woman? The seed of the woman will enter into this cosmic conflict with the seed of the serpent. What you have there and they must have puzzled over it but it begins to make sense later on in this chapter, we're gonna find out because there would be a baby born who would be born without the agency of a human father, and a seed would be placed in a woman's womb without the agency of a man, and when that happens, when there is a seed in the woman like that, that's the one that all history has been looking for since the fall when God spoke to the serpent himself and said, "I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed, and you will bruise Him on the heel, and He will bruise you on the head." When the moment of the conception of Jesus of Nazareth, that was fulfilled. The seed of the woman.

So that promise in Genesis 12, though, go back to, I'm sorry, Genesis 3, go back to Genesis 3. Basically what you have there, we're talking about the development of the promise, the promise of the King, how the promise is clarified, how it's narrowed over time. Think about this. God says in the beginning, Satan is now ruling, everything is under his control, we need to be delivered from his control so that we can be saved for God. He says in Genesis 3:15 the good news is there's going to be a human born of a woman who will bring salvation. That's Genesis 3:15, the seed of the woman.

So now think about that. We've narrowed it down. This means there are no alien saviors coming. We don't need somebody from outside. We need a man to save us. Now of course, we're gonna find out as things go on, it's gonna be a God-man, fully God and fully man, but we need a fully human savior. But at this point as they're going forward, they know God's going to send a savior and he's going to be born of a woman. In Genesis 12, the passage we read about Abraham, what's happened? After, you know, thousands of years have gone on, the flood has happened, now the earth is being repopulated by Shem, Ham and Japheth, Noah's three sons and now they've spread out and they've become nations, nations are already forming. We're told in Genesis 12 that out of all those people, the seed is going to come from Abraham's family. There's this narrowing focus down into follow Abraham. The Savior is coming from Abraham.

Now Abraham, I mentioned his name was Abram at first, right? That's what we read earlier. Abram means "exalted father" in Hebrew. It's interesting, he had that name for all those years and he was childless and his name, it's like, "Thanks, mom and dad, for naming me this." I wonder how many times he wondered about that and thought about that? But anyway, God then tells him at 75, "Now I'm gonna make you a great nation." Then at 100 years old, he has a son born to him, Isaac. Then he had Ishmael, remember that, when he's about 85. They tried their own method and he has Ishmael and he has Isaac and later he had some more sons. And then his name Abraham, do you know what that means? "Father of a multitude." God said, "Your name's been exalted father, you have no children. I'm telling you your name is father of a multitude." And then God made him the father of a multitude.

But it's gonna come through you, Abraham, but then what happens is, is it going to be Isaac, is it going to be Ishmael, is it going to be one of his other sons? It's going to be Isaac. Genesis 21:12 when the Lord tells him to send Ishmael away because he's mocking Isaac, remember that story? God tells Abraham, "Don't worry. Through Isaac your seed will be named." It's through Isaac that the Savior is coming. Isaac has two sons, Jacob and Esau. It's clarified later in Genesis it's gonna be through Jacob, not Esau. It's this narrowing focus. Now it's Jacob of the descendants of Abraham. It's now Jacob. Jacob has 12 sons and we're told at Jacob's death in Genesis 49:8-12 that Jacob pronounces this blessing upon Judah. It's actually surprising when you're reading the text. You're reading the story of Joseph in Genesis 37-50, Joseph's the great hero, right? And he gets a good blessing in Genesis 49 also, but really the best blessing is on Judah who was not a shining example in any way throughout his life. He gets the biggest blessing and what God says to him is, "Judah will reign over his brothers and the scepter will never depart from him until Shiloh comes, the one who brings peace."

So now the 12 is down to one. Jacob had 12 sons but it's Judah. Now what we find as we go forward in the ministry of Samuel, when he anoints David king now he goes to a descendant of Judah and he says, "You're the king." Remember all the different sons come before him but he says, "No, David. David is the king." And so this is the narrowing of that promise. God's salvation is going to come. God's going to save us from our sins. God's going to deliver us from the dominion of evil through a son of Abraham, through a son of David. And now in Matthew 1, he's making the point clear. Jesus is of the line of Abraham and the line of David, that's what he said in the very first verse. Jesus the anointed one, the son of David, the son of Abraham, the one that God has anointed with his Spirit, God has put his hand upon to bring salvation is the son of David and the son of Abraham.

But also the promise of the King, we noted that he makes a point out of these four mountain ranges, remember? Four mountains: Abraham, David, the deportation and the Messiah. Why is the deportation one of the high points? I mean, this is one of those things you'd rather not mention. It's kind of like, you know, if you're talking about something, you leave out the bad stuff. You know, like I could say, "You know, the Atlanta Braves won 14, 15 consecutive division titles. Nobody's ever done that except them. Did you know that? Yeah, and they won the World Series in 1995." And I could say that and that sounds pretty good but they also lost it in '92, in '91, in '99 and they really, you know, we could go into all the bad stuff. You leave that out. No, I want to tell you about the good stuff. Well, why the deportation? This is a bad moment, why is it brought up? Because what's happening is God is clarifying what he did with David.

So the Lord's gonna send a Savior who's gonna come through Abraham. He's going to come, he's gonna be in the line of David. Who is David? David is the king. What we're learning there is if you're gonna be saved, you need a king and what's interesting in the way God unfolds that, remember that he first allowed them to have Saul as a king and Saul was of the line of Benjamin. Saul looked like the kind of guy you'd want to have king. He was tall, a foot taller than everybody, but he was not the man after God's heart. He let them have the king they want and he said, "No, you don't need a king like that, you need a king like David, a man after My heart. You need a king like David if you're going to dwell in My land, if you're going to be delivered."

But then, of course, what we find out is David is not really a worthy king, is he? He commits adultery with Bathsheba. Isn't it astonishing that the legal line of David runs through Bathsheba? The grace of God just set on display here as well. The Lord working through even acts of sin and evil somehow accomplishing his greater good and purposes. You have this sense if you and I are going to dwell in God's land, if we're gonna be delivered from our sins, what has to happen is we have to submit to a king, a king like David but a king greater than David and that's the point of the deportation. Because David's kingship was actually an utter colossal failure, I mean, ultimately spiritually. It was the best of human possibilities and Solomon was wonderful humanly speaking but they both came crashing down. And what the Lord is doing in the deportation to Babylon is saying, "Listen, there is no way that, we can't do it, we cannot reform man through

earthly means," and what's happening is he's lifting their eyes from earthly kingdom and earthly deliverance to spiritual kingdom and spiritual deliverance. They kept wanting to have the kingship back but the Lord never intended to give them back the kingship of David in this world.

It's interesting, turn over to 2 Samuel 7:14. This is before David sinned with Bathsheba, after the ark has been brought to Jerusalem. He plans to build a temple. He has in his heart to build a temple and he tells Nathan, the prophet, he wants to build a temple and Nathan says, "Go and do all that's in your heart." Nathan thinks that's got to be a great idea. "Sure, go for it." Nathan then, the Lord tells Nathan to go back and tell him, "No, you can't build the temple." He says, "No, you can't build the temple, you have too much blood on your hands but your son will build the temple." Look what he says in verse 12, "When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant," that is, your seed, "after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."

Now this Scripture was talking about Solomon in the immediate. "I'm not gonna let you build the kingdom but there's gonna be one from your body that's gonna come from you. He's gonna build the kingdom. I'm gonna discipline him, I'm gonna love him, and all of his descendants. There's never gonna be one, there's never gonna be the end of his throne. There will always be someone on the throne of David forever." This is the problem of the deportation. That was not fulfilled. What's up with that? Why? And when they were deported to Babylon, there was never again a king of Israel on the throne of David. What's going on with that? In fact, this is a reason, I think this was the main passage probably that the false prophets preached against Jeremiah. Remember Jeremiah's preaching, telling them, "The Babylonians are coming. God's gonna judge you and He's gonna knock this city down. He's gonna raze it to the ground." And they're like, "No," and their false prophets saying, "No, the Lord says peace, peace." I think they're looking at this verse and they're misunderstanding its true spiritual intent. They're thinking it's impossible for us to lose because God has said there will always be a king of David on the throne, a descendant of David. But what they don't understand is the Lord actually is speaking here on two levels. At first he's saying, "Yeah, you're gonna build a temple. A descendant who comes from you is gonna build an earthly temple," Solomon, "and I am gonna deal with him differently. I'm not ever gonna take it away ultimately from them." I mean, they're not going to reign but the blessing will be upon them. This is why Zerubbabel is still spoken of so highly in Scripture. "But in reality the son who's going to build for Me a house is not Solomon but Jesus who comes from your body, and when Jesus comes, I will establish His throne and it will last forever."

So why, then, the deportation to Babylon clarifies. This is why they should have understood. They shouldn't be looking for an earthly Messiah because God's word cannot

fail, and so when God said he's going to give, he's going to use a descendant of David to build a house for him and it will endure forever and he will reign on the throne forever, that has to be true and therefore he wasn't speaking literally of an earthly king and an earthly kingdom, he was speaking of Jesus who would come and build a spiritual kingdom. This is why Jesus when he came said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world," he tells Pilate this, "My servants would be fighting, but My kingdom is not of this world. You see, I have come to deliver people from a far greater reality." And all of the earthly stuff of the Old Testament was just type and shadow. It was God prattling with us, baby-talking, teaching us what you need. To be saved, you need a King like David to rule over you but he's not the one, he's the shadow, Jesus is the substance.

And so you and I need a King who is Jesus. That's the point of Matthew here in this genealogy. These 14 generations, 14, 14, 14, God's perfect plan being revealed and the deportation to Babylon is significant because it clarifies that the King that is coming is a King far more glorious than you or I would naturally expect or want. He's exactly what we need and the wonder of it is, he's available to all of us. The inclusion of all that Tamar, Rahab, a harlot, Ruth, the Moabitess, Bathsheba involved in the adultery with David, they're all in the line of Christ to say Jesus has come to save all people. There are Gentiles in that line. He's come to save everyone who will submit to his kingship. He is a glorious Savior. He has come at the right time. Galatians 4:4, "In the fullness of time God sent forth His Son." Romans 5:6, "At the right time Christ died for the ungodly."

So we've talked about the need for the King, the promise of the King, and the ultimate question, then, the third point in wrapping up is your response to the King. Will you bow your knee to the King and acknowledge that he truly is the King of kings and the Lord of lords and surrender yourself to him? Or will you continue to look for the things of this world and treasure the things of this world and miss out on the freedom that comes from submitting to Jesus Christ? He invites all who hear him to repent and believe. Turn from your sins, place your faith in him and receive from him true liberty, true joy, true life. That's really what Christmas is about, God sending his King into the world to save sinners like you and me.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Our Father, we thank You for the glory of what Jesus Christ is and what He has done. We pray, Lord, that You would have Your way in our hearts. Lord, we confess how easy it is to be preoccupied with all the wrong things, to weigh the things of this world which are important but to weigh them way too valuable, too weighty, when eternity is what really matters, when glory awaits those who submit to Christ. Lord, help us want what You want. For those here who have not repented and placed their faith in Christ, grant them eyes to see and ears to hear and to trust in the finished work of Jesus Christ, that His death at Calvary satisfies the demands of the law that He has come to deliver us through His death, and His resurrection proves His victory over Satan and over sin, that He has bound the strong man and plundered his house, and whoever looks to Him in faith will be saved. Father, be glorified in our lives. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.