

The Promise of a King

Our program today was titled “The Promise of a King.” Some of the songs included “The King Shall Come,” “Fit for a King,” and “The Birthday of a King.” At Christmas we celebrate Jesus’ birth, but even at his birth, he was recognized as the king.

The wise men asked, “Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” (Mt 2:2).

It’s important to recognize and affirm Jesus as king. Your eternal destiny—heaven or hell—depends on whether you recognize Jesus as the king.

Some people recognize Jesus as king, like Nathanael:

John 1:49 *[He said], Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel.*

Some people refuse to recognize Jesus as king, like the Jewish religious leaders who called for Jesus’ execution:

John 19:15 ... *The chief priests [said], We have no king but Caesar.*

Jesus told a parable (Lk 19:12f) about some citizens who said of their king, “We will not have this man reign over us” (.14). That’s exactly the attitude of many of the Jews of Jesus’ day—we will not accept him as king. Many people today say the same thing. They may value Jesus as a philosopher, a teacher, or a moral example, but they will not accept him as the authority over them.

What does the Bible say about Jesus’ claim to be the king? The kingship of Jesus is probably one of the best attested, most clearly taught truths of the entire Bible. Jesus is the King, and we must accept him as the King. Many facts lead us to that conclusion.

I. The OT foretells of a coming king.

The Jews were right in their belief that a king would come and establish a powerful kingdom. That expectation is based on OT statements.

Isa 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of [his] government and peace [there shall be] no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever...

Jer 23:5 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

A. The OT prophets foretold of a coming king. The Jews were looking for this king. Even the wise men from the east understood that the Jews would have a king.

B. One of the first statements from Jesus when he began his ministry was that he had come to bring in this kingdom.

Mark 1:15 [Jesus said,] "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel."

Trans: So God had made a promise of a king. The Jews were looking for a coming king, and Jesus claimed to be that king.

But that king had to meet strict qualifications. The OT prophets had foretold many details about this king. Anyone claiming to be the king had to fulfill these prophecies.

II. Jesus fulfilled many OT royal prophecies during his earthly ministry.

A. Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the expected place of the king's birth.

Micah 5:2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.

When the wise men showed up asking where the king of the Jews was born, the Jewish religious leaders cited this verse.

B. Jesus descends from the royal line of David in the tribe of Judah. The Gospel writers trace Jesus' lineage back to King David.

Luke 1:32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David.

One of the common titles for Jesus was "son of David." So Jesus met that qualification.

C. The angels told the shepherds that Christ the Lord had been born. Christ is the OT term "Messiah," the anointed one. In the OT, they anointed prophets, priests, and kings. Jesus fulfilled all three offices.

Lu 2:11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

In Mk 15:32, Jesus is called "Christ, the king of Israel."

Jesus is called "the Christ" about 19 times in the NT.

John 20:31 But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

D. Jesus entered Jerusalem as the king according to OT prophecies.

1. The Jews expected their king to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. That's what the prophet foretold.

Zec 9:9 ... behold, thy King cometh unto thee: ... riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.

2. That's exactly what Jesus did at his Triumphal Entry (Mt 21:5). On that occasion, the crowds affirmed their belief that Jesus was their king by shouting

Lu 19:38 Blessed [be] the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest.

John 12:13 [They] took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed [is] the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

E. At his trial, Jesus affirmed his kingship.

Matthew 27:11 ... the governor asked [Jesus], saying, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus said to him, "It is as you say."

*John 18:36–37 ³⁶ Jesus [said], "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but **now** My kingdom is not from here." ³⁷ Pilate therefore said to Him, "Are You a king then?" Jesus answered, "You say rightly that I am a king. For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, ...*

Jesus himself affirms that he is the king and that he has a kingdom.

F. Pilate affirmed that Jesus was the king of the Jews

Mark 15:9 Pilate [said], "Do you want me to release to you the King of the Jews?"

John 19:14 ... [Pilate] saith unto the Jews, Behold your King!

John 19:19 *And Pilate wrote a title, and put [it] on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS.*

Trans: The Jews expected a king to show up and establish a kingdom. Jesus claimed to be that king, and others recognized him as king. Sadly, the nation of Israel as a whole did not accept Jesus as king—“we have no king but Caesar.”

III. Jesus will fulfill the remaining OT prophecies at his Second Coming.

- A. When Pilate asked Jesus if he were a king, Jesus said that his kingdom was not from here “now.” God’s sovereign plan was not for Jesus to bring in the kingdom at his first advent. However, he will bring in a kingdom.
- B. Jesus will reign over an earthly, political, geographical kingdom on earth, just like King David did.

Isaiah 9:7 *Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice*

Luke 1:32-33 *He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*

What kind of kingdom did David reign over? A spiritual kingdom? Was it a purely religious kingdom? Was it a kingdom of ideas and words? No. David’s kingdom was literal, physical, geographical, and earthly. Likewise, Jesus will reign over that kind of kingdom. And it will be a 1000-year reign.

Rev 20:4 [the faithful martyrs] *lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

If you are a Christian, you will reign with Christ in his coming kingdom.

- C. Jesus will reign as King of kings and Lord of lords forever and ever.

Daniel 7:13–14 *[I saw] One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! ... Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.*

Revelation 11:15 *[The angel said,] “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”*

Revelation 19:16 *[Jesus] has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS*

God promised a king to come and reign over the nation of Israel. Jesus is that king. He was born the king, claimed to be the king, and he offered the kingdom to his people. Sadly, they rejected that offer. They crucified their king. But when he returns in glory and power, he will establish his kingdom on earth. He will reign over Israel and over the entire world. We look forward to that day when the righteous king will bring peace to the earth.

We must affirm with Nathanael and with all true disciples, “*Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel* (John 1:49).

I wonder if you have made that confession—have you turned from your sin and confessed Christ as Lord? That’s the only way to be saved. Rom 10:9-10

And if we acknowledge Jesus as the king, we also recognize that he is the sovereign ruler of our lives. We submit to him and obey his will for our lives. We recognize his authority over us as our king.

The wise men asked, “Where is he that is born the king of the Jews?” When they found out where Jesus was, they went and worshipped him. Let us do likewise. As we celebrate his birth, let’s acknowledge him as King of kings and Lord of lords.