



# THE KING HAS COME

WEEK 4  
12.24.17

## FOCUS VERSE

### Micah 5:2

But thou, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

## LESSON TEXT

### Matthew 2:1-10

1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,

2 Saying, 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.

3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.

5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

6 And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

7 Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared.

8 And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

9 When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

10 When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.



## FOCUS THOUGHT

The King of all came to earth as a baby born in Bethlehem and was adored and worshiped by all men everywhere.



## CULTURE CONNECTION

### The Greatest Gift of All

**C**hristmas is the one holiday most affected by a myriad of traditions and customs—some pagan and some celebrating biblical events and principles. Without trying to sort through all the customs or discussing the pros and cons of how Christians should observe or not observe Christmas, let us consider for a moment the most celebrated custom of Christmas: giving gifts. The observance or non-observance of this tradition also varies widely, but one thing is certain and true: the birth of Jesus Christ, whenever it occurred, delivered to earth the greatest gift of all—the Son of God born for our redemption.

The sparkling eyes of young and innocent children contemplating Christmas presents cannot begin to compare to the glow of the Holy Ghost on the face of those receiving

Him—their personal reception of the greatest gift. It is amazing to observe the glow of the Holy Ghost evident on their faces.

In his article “Finding the Joy of Christmas,” David B. Crabtree wrote about the missing joy in many people. “The old Christmas song says, ‘It’s the most wonderful time of the year.’ And for the Christian it should ring true. Yet for many, Christmas is a season to survive. Depression, grief and loneliness are often exacerbated by shattered family circumstances and increased debt loads” (Pentecostal Evangel, [http://www.ag.org/pentecostal-evangel/Articles2001/4571\\_crabtree.cfm](http://www.ag.org/pentecostal-evangel/Articles2001/4571_crabtree.cfm)).

The greatest gift of all makes true joy possible for all people at Christmas and at every other time of the year. Whatever burdens you may be carrying, you can enjoy the joy Jesus Christ brings into your heart.

#### OUTLINE

##### I. THE KING IS BORN

- A. The Search for the King
- B. The Finding of the King

##### II. THE KING LIVES

- A. His Entrance into Jerusalem
- B. His Testimony to Pilate
- C. His Reign in Our Hearts

##### III. THE KING WILL RETURN

#### CONTEMPLATING THE TOPIC

A shabbily dressed man stopped at a place of business. He was driving a car that would be described as a “junker.” His face bore the stubble of several days’ growth of beard; he had dust on his body and clothes, and he walked with a sloppy gait.

The clerks, working on a commission percentage, all found something else to do when he walked into the store. He was not worth expending any effort upon, they thought. The newest clerk was delegated to wait on the man and showed the unkempt customer the

items in which he expressed interest.

The man began to buy freely; as a result, the clerk earned a handsome commission. The man was a famous personality, a millionaire, who had been working in his garden. He was not what he appeared to be.

Things are not always as they might seem. This is basically true of Jesus’ ministry when He was on the earth. It explains why most people of that day failed to recognize Him for what He really was, the promised King of the Jews. It also explains why most are not following Him today. Most people fail to accept Him for what He really is.

Born in a lowly manger in a small village near Jerusalem, Jesus nevertheless came from the portals of glory. His followers were initially a small group of men and women who ministered to Him and His disciples. He exercised no power over armies or nations, but He did have control over demons, the elements of nature, sickness, and death. He still rules, but His kingdom is not what many would consider to be the realm of a king. “For

the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost” (Romans 14:17).

## SEARCHING THE SCRIPTURES

### I. THE KING IS BORN

Jesus’ birth was scarcely noticed by most people. However, God arranged for representatives of the entire world to see the coming King. Luke described the adoration of the shepherds. Although humble, they represented the Jews coming to Jesus. He also tells about a woman named Anna and a man named Simeon who adored the babe. These were two godly people who had awaited the birth of the Messiah. Although not from the elite religious sects, they proved that there were some who recognized the spiritual nature of the coming Christ. The third group were Gentiles. Although they were not of the intellectual Greeks or of the forceful Roman authorities, they revealed that Gentiles also were called to worship God.

#### A. The Search for the King

The account of the wise men described in the Gospel of Matthew leaves us with many unanswered questions. This is in accordance with the pattern of the Word of God. The Bible does not attempt to satisfy every curiosity about the truths it proclaims. We can be certain, however, that the Scriptures record enough to instruct us with what is important for our salvation.

No one is certain as to the exact origin of the wise men. Most scholars believe they came from the region that was Babylon or perhaps from what was ancient Persia. They were called “wise men” because they belonged to a group of men who were students of astronomy. Such men comprised a priestly order and were known and respected for their great wisdom.

No one knows how many wise men made the journey. The number three, commonly associated with them, is prevalent because of the three gifts they gave to Jesus. There may have been more in the caravan.

There has been a great deal of speculation as to the origin and placement of the star. Speculation also exists as to the origin

of the knowledge the wise men had concerning Jesus. Some have traced the source to traditions that had been alive since the time of Baalim. Others give credit to prophecies of the devout Jews who lived throughout the world at that time. We must not overlook the fact that God could have revealed the truth to them.

Most Bible scholars believe the wise men did not come to Jesus until some time after the night He was born. The fact that Herod slaughtered children up to two years of age and the indication that the wise men found Him in a home seem to imply that Jesus was no longer in Bethlehem.

The inhabitants of Jerusalem were stirred when the caravan of wise men came into their city. The wise men quickly made known the purpose of their journey. They had not come on a trading mission or as tourists, but they were interested only in finding the one born King of the Jews. They added a supernatural aspect to the story of their search with the declaration that they had been following a star.

These men had come a great distance that probably involved months of travel. It was a trip involving many dangers, discomforts, and hardships. Their willingness to undertake such a task gave credence to their story that was not easily dismissed.

The news of their arrival soon reached Herod, king of the region. He was not a Jew; he was an Edomite, a descendant of Esau. He had recently given himself the title “King of the Jews” and had done everything possible to gain the favor of the Jewish people, who actually hated him.

Upon hearing the news of the wise men, Herod acted in accordance with his character. History is filled with accounts that portray his extreme jealousy for his throne. He had already slain five potential rivals, including his favorite wife and two of his sons. His reputation was such that even the emperor in Rome, using a play on words, stated that it was safer to be Herod’s pig than his son.

It is no surprise that Herod was disturbed when he heard there was another bearing the same title as he. Inhabitants of Jerusalem were disturbed, not knowing what the enraged king might do.

Herod called together men who were considered experts in the law. He wanted to know what the Scriptures foretold concerning Christ. They had the answer and referred to the prophet Micah.

The Jewish religious leaders could point to the many prophecies concerning Christ in the Old Testament, but they were unable to associate them with Him. They failed to realize that Jesus was the promised King. He was not the kind of Messiah they were expecting.

Many people make the same mistake concerning spiritual things. Jesus will come into hungry hearts through the Holy Spirit infilling. The Bible plainly states how this infilling is to be received, but many refuse to accept God's way.

The wise men were called before Herod, who instructed them to continue the search for the young king. They were to locate the young ruler and return to Jerusalem, letting Herod know where the child was. Herod lied when he told the wise men his purpose was to worship Jesus. Later incidents show exactly what his real motive was.

## **B. The Finding of the King**

God was still leading the wise men when they left Herod. They continued to follow the star until they reached the house where Jesus and His family were staying. They entered and found the young child; their long search had ended. They must have felt greatly rewarded for having undertaken the long journey with all its hardships.

Jesus can be found today regardless of a person's need. His Spirit will fill anyone who will seek Him. We can have a deeper and more meaningful walk with the Lord if we are willing to seek Him through prayer and the study of His Word. Some individuals have displayed bumper stickers with the words "Wise men still seek Him." We could add to that, "And they will find Him."

After the wise men presented gifts to Jesus, they turned to leave, possibly thinking they would return to Herod. God was still controlling the destiny of the Christ child, however; Satan would not be permitted to use Herod to stop the foreordained plan. God warned the wise men not to return to Herod, and they returned to their homeland by a different route.

## **II. THE KING LIVES**

Israel had looked for the coming of their king for centuries. Devout Jews are still looking to Heaven for their Messiah. They have been a persecuted people since the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians. They were dominated by the Romans when Jesus was born. Heavily taxed, under the control of hated rulers such as Herod, forced to bow to the power of heathen Rome, they longed for their Messiah.

Looking for a deliverance from Rome, they failed to recognize that there was a need of deliverance from an even greater tyrant—Satan. Therefore, their eyes were completely blinded to the spiritual nature of Christ's coming. The entire Jewish nation would have gladly become His subjects had He offered to drive the Romans from Jerusalem and establish a worldwide kingdom with the city of David as the capital.

There was ample evidence in the Scriptures to show the Jewish nation that Jesus was their promised Messiah. Had the religious leaders continued their search in the Scriptures they began when the wise men first came into the city, the revelations of the prophets could have revealed His true nature and purpose. They could have compared the predictions of the prophets with the actualities of Jesus' life and would have seen the beautiful harmony manifested in His coming.

God seldom does anything without first preparing people for the impending event. Prophecies also project His Second Coming, and the prophetic signs of His coming are being fulfilled today.

The fact of His true kingship was intimated when Satan tempted Jesus with the possibility of becoming a worldwide king by a means other than the Cross. All Jesus would have to do was to worship Satan. He could then have rulership over the kingdoms of the world. Jesus replied to the temptation that only God was to be worshiped. (See Matthew 4:8-10.)

### **A. His Entrance into Jerusalem**

Perhaps the strongest claim to His being King occurred just prior to Jesus' crucifixion. The final week's activities began with what has been commonly termed "The Triumphant Entry of Christ into Jerusalem." Palm

branches were placed at His feet as He rode into the city; the crowds acclaimed Him as King; and His religious enemies were deeply disturbed because they fully understood the significance of His actions. Matthew 21:5 points to the incident as being a direct fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy concerning the coming Messiah.

*"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zechariah 9:9).*

The fact that all four Gospels record Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem shows the importance of what Jesus did.

## **B. His Testimony to Pilate**

Pilate was very disturbed when Jesus was brought to him for sentencing. The Jewish leaders alleged that Jesus was guilty of rebellion against Rome. (See John 19:12.) Such an accusation was a serious one, and it demanded a full investigation by Pilate. During the questioning, Jesus did not deny He was a king, but He did qualify the statement by telling the Roman governor, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36).

Jesus further told Pilate He had been born for that express purpose and He had come into the world to witness truth. Pilate became convinced Jesus was no threat to Roman authority. As far as he was concerned, Jesus was a religious zealot who had made the mistake of enraging the religious authorities. They were demanding His death for no reason other than envy. Jesus, therefore, had committed no crime and should not be sentenced to death. However, Pilate turned Jesus over to the Jews, who proceeded to crucify Him.

Criminals who were crucified by the Romans had an inscription placed on their crosses or around their necks showing what crime had been committed. John records that Pilate wrote the sign for Jesus' cross.

*"JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS" (John 19:19).*

The Jews did not like this statement because it actually condemned them. They wanted Pilate to change the statement to make it appear as only a claim that Jesus had made, but the Roman ruler refused to alter what he had written.

## **C. His Reign in Our Hearts**

Jesus did not look like a triumphal king while He was hanging on the cross. He had been mocked and abused by His tormentors. His body bore the bloody marks of a Roman scourging. His only crown was a wreath of thorns, placed upon His head in mockery. His scepter was a reed, placed in His hand, and His throne was His instrument of torture—the cross.

It is little wonder that gloom, fear, and disappointment filled the hearts of His followers. Crucifixion was a mark of complete defeat and failure. They thought it was all over, and looking at the scene from the natural viewpoint, they were right. But they were to learn things were not as they seemed to be. The Cross was a part of God's great plan. He was still in control of the situation.

The psalmist predicted the triumphal kingship of Jesus. One of the prophetic psalms declares:

*"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle" (Psalm 24:7-8).*

Jesus had repeatedly warned His disciples of His impending death. He knew the acclaim of the multitudes—which sounded good to the ears of the twelve—would soon change to a clamor for His death. Although necessary, His death was not the end of the story. He foretold the great victory that would result from the crucifixion. He saw Satan as nothing but a defeated foe.

Paul wrote about Jesus' obedience to the plan of God. His greatest victory might have been when He was praying in the Garden of Gethsemane, for there He indicated His willingness to follow the plan of God. There was no other way for the plan of God to be

fulfilled. Because of His willingness to die on the cross for the sins of the world, Jesus has been highly exalted. His name is above every other name. (See Philippians 2:8-10.)

Jesus completely ruined principalities and powers, "he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15). This verse might refer to the great triumphal parades that victorious Roman generals held upon their return from battle. The procession was headed by the victorious general, followed by his army and the spoils they had taken. At the end of the procession were the defeated foes bound in chains and held in complete disgrace. The Romans wanted to show they had triumphed. In this passage, Paul stated that Jesus had shown the world He had won the victory over all the forces of Hell.

Jesus can be King of our lives even now. His victory will be our victory because He has defeated the very enemy who held us in bondage. We must be willing to bow before our Lord in repentance, take His name upon us in water baptism, and then invite His Spirit to enter into our lives. This is the beginning of the spiritual life of the New Testament Christian. We must be willing to submit ourselves to Him every day of our lives. We will become His subjects in a great spiritual kingdom, and He will become our Lord. He who reigns in our hearts now will reign in His eternal kingdom.

### III. THE KING WILL RETURN

The final aspect of Christ as King of the Jews is yet to take place. We find it vividly described in Revelation, the last book of the Bible. There are portions of the Book of Revelation that are not yet revealed. One great message, however, rings loud and clear. It is the simple truth that after everything has finished its course upon the earth, Jesus is the One who will emerge as the victorious King. All His enemies will have been destroyed, and He will establish His great kingdom upon the earth.

Satan recognized the worldwide scope that would be Christ's ministry. He did not want Jesus to rule as a result of the Cross. He offered Jesus the opportunity to be the ruler of the world if He would but fall down and worship him (Matthew 4:8-9). Had Jesus yielded to this temptation, there would

have been no Cross and hence no salvation for mankind. Jesus refused Satan's offer. He was willing to obey the plan of God, which required that the kingdom be established as a result of His death.

The same type of temptation is being offered to people today. God has great things for those who are willing to fully consecrate themselves to Him. Satan, on the other hand, is presenting a plan whereby we would turn to other means as a substitute for what God has to offer. True spirituality can be obtained only by a complete dedication to God. Satan's plan sounds good to the natural man, but the person who is truly desirous of real depths in God realizes the emptiness of this type of religious experience.

After His resurrection, Jesus ascended into Heaven. We ought to remind ourselves that He left some great promises before He ascended. John 14:1-3 is an often-quoted passage illustrating the many promises in God's Word concerning the prediction of His second coming. His coming again for a ready people has been considered the great hope of the church (I Corinthians 15:19).

The second coming of the Lord will be far different from His first appearance upon the earth. Zechariah pictured the Second Coming in a prophetic way. The nations of the world are pictured as being gathered against Jerusalem in battle. This will be the final battle of the war of Armageddon, and the city will be completely destroyed (Zechariah 14:2). The defeat of the city and the humiliation of its inhabitants are described in explicit language. It appears as if the enemies of God's people are to have their way at first, but suddenly, something will happen to change everything. Jesus will return to the Mount of Olives and completely destroy His enemies. He will be the complete victor. (See Zechariah 14:9.)

Revelation 19 gives us additional insight into the events of the Lord's return. There is great joy pictured in Heaven as Christ goes forth into the battle Zechariah described. The great struggle between God and Satan, which has been in progress throughout time and which has destroyed so many lives, soon will end. Peace is coming and Heaven knows it. Jesus is described as going forth, uniting

all nations, and completely subduing those who oppose Him. Bearing the title “King of kings and Lord of lords,” His supremacy will be unquestioned.

Satan will be cast into the bottomless pit; the Antichrist who sought to establish a worldwide rule under the direction of Satan and the False Prophet who went before him will be destroyed; and the nations who dared to oppose God’s plan will be destroyed. Christ will then establish His kingdom. All mankind will see that perfect peace can be found only through the plan of God. Jesus will become the King of the world.

We who know the Lord now are aware of the great peace Jesus alone can give. It is wonderful to realize this can be felt worldwide.

## INTERNALIZING THE MESSAGE

The people of God have the greatest future of any people in the world. The hope of this world lies in things that can and will be destroyed. We, however, are in the family of the heavenly King.

Jesus was not generally recognized in a position of true power and authority during His earthly ministry. Even His close followers

failed to recognize His true nature until after He had risen from the dead and they had been filled with His Spirit. The Jewish world of that time hated Him and the Gentile world, for the most part, ignored Him. Yet, there were some whose faith in Him was strong. Those, who obeyed His command to go to Jerusalem, found themselves in the kingdom of righteousness, joy, and peace. It is a rulership that exists when the Spirit of Christ lives within us. This reconciles us to God and gives us the great hope of seeing Him someday.

We have the promise that Jesus is going to establish a kingdom upon the earth which will last for one thousand years. Commonly called “The Millennium,” it will be a time when all the enemies of God will be defeated and the Lord will be supreme. This will be a time of perfect peace. Righteousness and justice will fill the earth because Jesus will rule. That which exists within the heart of the Christian will completely fill the earth.

Afterward the new heaven and the new earth will be revealed. We will be living in the period that is described in the final two chapters of the Book of Revelation. The greatness of this future reserved for the true Christian cannot be over emphasize. ■

## REFLECTIONS

- How did the Jewish concept of the promised Messiah differ from what they saw in Christ’s activities and life?
- The Jews were not prepared for Christ’s first coming because they had a misconception of prophetic predictions. Why are many people today not prepared for His second coming?
- In what way did Christ show authority during His earthly ministry? How did His death reflect His power?
- How do we enter Christ’s kingdom today? What is His kingdom in the present world?
- Describe Christ’s future kingdom. How will it be different from the world we know today? What will make that difference?