

Born a King

Read Matthew 2:1-18

We have been focusing on Jesus' teachings about the Kingdom of God. Now let's talk about Jesus Himself.

Jesus came as a king. That is part of the implications of being Messiah. Messiah would be an eternal, universal king from the line of David. And when Jesus came teaching, "*The kingdom of heaven is at hand,*" (Matthew 4:17, NASB), He was announcing the arrival of the King...who was Himself.

Externally, Jesus was not what anyone expected as a king. He was born as the seemingly-illegitimate child of a poor, teenage girl. He was raised in Nazareth. Nathaniel's comment about Nazareth was typical of the times: "*Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?*" (John 1:46, NASB). And Jesus spent His ministry as an itinerant, homeless, peasant Rabbi without formal education.

But several times in His life, at special points, He was recognized as King. Let's look at a few of those times. First, on the night of His birth, the angel told the shepherds that in Bethlehem, the city of the great King David, a Savior had been born, who was Messiah, the Lord (Luke 2:11).

As you read Matthew 2:1-18, ask yourself why wealthy and influential men from another culture and religion made a long, difficult journey to a small Jewish village. It was because the heavens themselves had signaled that a great King had been born. They spared no effort and expense in coming to worship Him and lay rich gifts at His feet.

Their coming is the beginning of the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy that God's Servant would be a light to all nations (Isaiah 49:6), and that Messiah would reign over all the earth (Psalm 72:8-11; Isaiah 42:1, 4). Remember that Matthew's gospel opens by including several gentile women in Jesus' genealogy (Matthew 1:3, 5). It closes with Jesus sending His disciples with His story to the ends of the earth (Matthew 28:18-20).

Even Herod testified to Jesus' kingship by his determination to kill the infant. He considered Jesus a serious threat to his throne.

These reactions at Jesus' birth became typical of His entire life: gentiles recognized Jesus' greatness, while most of the Jews were either indifferent or murderously hostile.

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