

**THE KING OF HEARTS**  
**MATTHEW 2:2**  
**JOHN 18:33-38**

**INTRODUCTION:**

Who is this Jesus of Nazareth? Why are we stopping all the flow of commerce to celebrate His birth? Why do we count our years from the year of His birth?

This Jesus is the most remarkable personality. His one solitary life has impacted every century since His birth. James A. Francis has written concerning Him: “Here is a man who was born in obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in an obscure village. He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty, and then for three years he was an itinerate teacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never owned a home. He never had a family. He never went to college. He never traveled 200 miles from the place He was born. He never did one of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He had nothing to do with this world except the power of His divine manhood. While still a young man the tide of popular opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies. He went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed upon a cross between two thieves. His executioners gambled for the only piece of property He had on earth while He was dying – His coat. When he was dead He was taken down, laid in a borrowed tomb through the pity of a friend. Twenty wide centuries have come and gone; today He is the centerpiece of the human race. I am far within the

mark when I say that all the armies that ever marched and all the navies that were ever built and all the parliaments that ever sat and all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man upon this earth as powerfully as has this one solitary life.” What a tribute! What do you have to say concerning this Jesus of Nazareth? I want to declare to you this morning that this Jesus of Nazareth is the king of the ages, the king of hearts.

It became obvious before His birth that He was to be a king. When the angel brought the announcement, His mother, Mary, while she still lived in Nazareth, He said to her: “He will be great, He will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His father, David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever; His kingdom will never end.” This was one of those precious statements that Mary hid in her heart and pondered as the years went by.

When He was born in Bethlehem there was an inquiry concerning Him and His kingship. Matthew reports that wise men came from the East to Jerusalem. They came asking, “Where is the one that has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the East and have come to worship Him.” Their arrival in Jerusalem created quite a storm. It disturbed Herod deeply that there might be a rival king somewhere in Judah. Following advice they came from the students of the Scripture in the temple, He sent these wise men off to Bethlehem to see if their vision could be confirmed. When they found the new born child in Bethlehem, they presented royal gifts to Him. But God warned them so that they did not go back through Jerusalem, they returned home. Herod took the birth of the

arrival king so seriously that he had all the children in Bethlehem, up to the age of two, destroyed. He could not stand the thought that someone might be a threat to His throne. God had protected the new- born king by sending Him to Egypt under the care of Joseph and Mary.

It is of special interest that most of the discussion about Him as king came at the beginning of His life and at the end of His life. When the Jews arrested Him and put Him on trial, they began to bring up the idea of His kingship. When they sent Him to the Roman Governor, Pilate, it was under the accusation that He claimed to be “the King of the Jews.” The Apostle John gives us a careful eye witness account of that encounter of Jesus and Pilate. In a Roman manner Pilate was very abrupt and asked Him, are you the King of the Jews?”

Jesus responded to this question by putting responsibility back on Pilate. “Is that your own idea or did others talk to you about me?” Jesus demanded of Pilate.

Pilate was quick to respond. “Am I a Jew? It was your people and your chief priest who handed you over to me. What is that you have done?”

To this man who understood the political system of this world, Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world.” This should not be understood as a statement that His kingdom is not “in this world.” Rather it is a claim that He did not come to be King by the methods that are ordinarily followed in the world. His rule originated in the mind and in the

purpose of His heavenly Father in heaven. He added, “If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews, but now my kingdom is from another place.” This statement was both a reassurance to Pilate but also a challenge. It was a reassurance in that Jesus was saying to him, “I have not come as a rival to the Roman Empire.” But it was a challenge in that he was saying to Pilate, “I ruled in a kingdom that is spiritual and above and over the kingdoms of this world.”

Pilate understood this for he said, “You are a king, then!”

Jesus took Pilate a step further in His explanation when He said, “You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of the truth listens to me.” This prompted Pilate to make a cynical reply, “What is truth?”

So, at the beginning of His life and at the conclusion of His life, there is discussion of the kingship of Jesus Christ. What are we to understand concerning Jesus as king? Let me share with you three simply summary statements that will help us understand this king of the ages.

### **I. JESUS CAME AS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**

The Jews had lived for centuries with the expectation that God would sent another king like David, even a son of David. Their prophets had held this hope up before them, generation after generation. Jesus Christ came into the world as the fulfillment of that

promise, that hope. This is the theme of the most Jewish of all the gospels, the gospel of Matthew. Beginning with the genealogy in chapter one, which demonstrates that Jesus was the legitimate heir to the throne of David and consummating with His crucifixion on a cross where there was a sign nailed over His head, Jesus of Nazareth, the king of the Jews.” The whole gospel presents Jesus as the King of the Jews.

We will not understand the ministry of Jesus unless we understand that He was presenting Himself to the Jews to be their rightful king. This reached its climax on that Palm Sunday during which Jesus rode into the city on a little donkey fulfilling the prophetic Scripture by God’s prophet, Zechariah. But Jesus was not the kind of king that Israel expected, nor the kind king that Israel wanted. They wanted a king like David, who was strong as a military leader. They didn’t want a king who was a suffering servant who went about doing good. They wanted a king to deal with the Romans, not a messenger to deal with demons and illness. They wanted a king to deal with the Romans, not a messenger to deal with demons and illness. They wanted a king who would satisfy their material desires, not a king who would satisfy the hungers of their heart. So, they deliberately and blindly rejected Jesus as king. It was their idea that Jesus be crucified. It was their idea that he be set aside and not be received as the king of Israel. In fact, in their own words they preferred to have Caesar as their king rather than Jesus. So in the gospel records we have Jesus as the King of the Jews presented and rejected.

## **II. JESUS RULES TODAY AS THE KING OF HEARTS.**

Even though Jesus was not crowned publicly as the King of Israel, this does not mean that Jesus is not a king. For those who hear His truth and receive His gospel, He becomes the king of their hearts. This kingdom in which He takes up rule in the heart of the believer is an inner kingdom, not an outer kingdom. It is a spiritual kingdom, not a material kingdom. You are looking for the kingdom of Jesus Christ today, you do not need to go to Jerusalem or to some foreign capital, you will find Jesus Christ ruling today by His Holy Spirit in the heart of humble believers all over this planet. Together these humble believers make up the present manifestation of the kingdom of God in history.

One of the ways you will be able to identify their presence will be that they will be marked by joy and gladness. The Apostle Paul explained this: “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Those who have been born from above by placing their faith in Jesus Christ come to know the inner rule of the Lord Jesus. As He rules as the Prince of Peace in their hearts they begin to know righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Wherever Jesus Christ rules, there will be peace. He wears the title “Prince of Peace” as He exercises His rule by the Holy Spirit in the human heart.

So, today, the rule of Jesus Christ is not seen by outward observation. There are no signs that mark off a piece of geography that declare you are now entering the kingdom of Jesus Christ of Nazareth.” Rather His rule is inner, spiritual, joyful and saving. He rules as the King of Hearts and the King of Salvation.

### **III. JESUS WILL RULE IN THE FUTURE AS THE KING OF KINGS.**

The other New Testament book that has much to say about Jesus as King is the book of Revelation, the final book in our New Testament. In this final book the kingdoms of this world become the Kingdom of God. In this final book the thrones of men are demolished and replaced by the throne of King Jesus. In this final book His rule is universal, all of the kingdoms become His kingdom. Every knee bows before Him and acknowledges Him as king. All the nations become subject to His throne. This is not true at the present moment, but it will be true once Jesus Christ returns to earth again. He will rule as the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

This final and complete manifestation of His kingdom will be glorious. There will be manifestations of the glory of the eternal God in connection with His kingdom of power. When he came the first time and presented Himself as the King of Jews, they missed Him because He was dressed in the garments of a Nazarene carpenter. He didn't conduct Himself like they expected a king to conduct Himself. When He comes the second time He will be dressed in robes of divine glory and accompanied by myriad of angels.

This future rule of His will be a participatory rule. According to this final book in our New Testament, those who have served him, loved him, died for Him, glorified Him, will now rule with Him. If we suffer with Him we are assured we will reign with Him. Will this not be a glorious moment. Will it not be a wonderful thing when those humble saints who have been trodden upon by the tyrants of history are seated on thrones with Him

who sits upon the central and eternal throne of God? It will be indeed the coming of the Kingdom of God. It will be the inauguration of the rule of heaven on earth.

As we come to this Christmas season we need to be reminded the king has come and has been rejected. We also need to be reminded that to those who receive Him and allow Him to become the King of their hearts, He rules today. All of His divine authority and grace are made known in those lives and through those lives where He rules. To those who invite Him as the King of Heart, He gives the gift of the Holy Spirit to serve as His regal presence in that heart until the day of His Second Coming. In this season we need to be anticipating His return as the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. Jesus is coming to earth again, it could be today!

It is time for us to sing again those words of the old hymn,

“All hail the power of Jesus name,

Let angels prostrate fall;

Bring forth the royal diadem,

and crown Him Lord of All!

Ye chosen seed of Israel’s race,

Ye ransomed from the fall,

Hail Him who saves you by

His grace,

And crown Him Lord of All.



Let every kindred , every tribe  
On this terrestrial ball,  
To Him all majesty ascribe,  
And crown Him Lord of all.

O that yonder sacred throng  
We at His feet may fall!  
We'll join the everlasting song,  
And crown him, crown him, crown him  
Crown him Lord of all.”

We must crown Him King of Hearts in our personal lives today!