
The Kingdom: Matthew in Overview

Introduction What about kings and kingdoms?

Where are we in our eschatology series?

In our study? Just started thinking through the idea of the kingdom of God.

In our progress? Ready to take up Matthew and Luke with an emphasis in Matthew.

In a change in venue? We are going to be moving the series to Sunday Evenings in February

Next two sermons will be advent sermons from Matthew.

Allow a more casual and teaching style;

Begin a series of sermons on “Handling Life” in the Sunday mornings.

So, we take up the book of Matthew this morning. Matthew was written to the early churchⁱⁱ to establish the nature of the New Covenant kingdom. It highlights Christ as the King who has come and now rules and reigns over His people until He comes again. It answers the question, “What about the kingdom of Israel and the promises to King David and King Solomon?”

Now let me remind you about some core principles in handling the gospels:

Just because there is narrative does not mean that you are being given chronological history. None of the gospels are intended to give a biography or a life of Christ.ⁱⁱⁱ

All of the gospels are making an argument(s) through the book. They make the argument by the placement of the elements in the book. The order in the narratives of the works and words of Christ is intended, not show “what happened next” but rather to push the argument forward.

It is critical to both understand the book as a whole by connecting the pieces and then to understand the pieces in connection to the whole.

We will be taking up the book of Matthew in our series and focusing in on the advent and kingdom texts. In January we will be focusing in on our annual month-long family focus in a series called, *First Things in the Home*. Then we will return to our eschatology series in the evening services through the Spring.

This morning, I want to preach the book of Matthew in one sermon. My aim here is to give you a flyover of the terrain. I want to point out the natural contours and landmarks along the way. Because we will not be preaching through the whole book, I need to help you be able to locate yourself as we go through the texts related to our overall study.

So, open your Bibles to the book of Matthew. Here is Christ, the King and His kingdom.

Jesus, the New King born to be Ruler of the Kingdom

Section: Matthew 1:1-2:12

Key Texts

Matthew 1:1,17

¹ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham.

¹⁷ So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations.

In these advent texts, the Kings' lineage, His parents, His birth, His rejection by the Jews, His recognition by Gentiles and His descent into Egypt are chronicled.

Jesus, the New Israel as the People of the Kingdom

Section: Matthew 2:13-4:22

Key Texts

Matthew 2:15

This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son."

The narrative of Jesus' early life parallels Israel's history. The King's exodus from Egypt as the beloved Son, Israel, He passes through the sea in baptism where He is publicly affirmed by the Father. He then is tested in the wilderness where He obeys God from the heart.

It is here that we get the first of the mountain texts in Matthew. These have great significance in parsing out the argument of the book in reference to the kingdom.

Satan takes Jesus into a mountain to show Him all the kingdoms of the world, offering them to Him in exchange for worship (Matthew 4:8).

Jesus ascends into the mountain to give, not receive, the principles or law of the New Covenant Kingdom (Matthew 5:1; 8:1).

Jesus is transfigured on the mountain so that He shone with His Divine glory. He is the glorious fulfillment of the Law (Moses) and the Prophets (Elijah) whose ministries pointed to Christ (Matthew 17:1-13).

Jesus sits down again on the Mount of Olives and outlines the future unfolding of the Kingdom. This involves the coming judgment of the Jews and Jerusalem and the events around His second coming (Matthew 24).

Jesus and his disciples go out to the Mount of Olives where He is arrested in the final act of betrayal by Judas and rejection by the Jews (Matthew 26:30).^{iv}

Jesus meets His disciples on the mountain to assign them their mission and to ascend to His Father (Matthew 28:16-20).

The focus in this section is on establishing Jesus as the one who fulfills the nation of Israel. He is the beloved son called up out of Egypt like Israel. He is the one whose birth causes great mourning in Israel over Herod's slaughter of the infants just as the birth of Israel caused great mourning in Egypt over death of the first-borns. He begins preaching to gather His kingdom people. He begins those disciples who will replace the tribes. Since the King is born, will they acknowledge Him?

Jesus, the New Moses as the Lawgiver of the Kingdom

Section: Matthew 4:23-7:29

Key Texts

Matthew 7:28-29

²⁸ And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at his teaching, ²⁹ for he was teaching them as one who had authority, and not as their scribes.

The King fulfills and finishes the old while framing the character and conduct of the Kingdom. He goes to the mountain as the new Moses. He does not receive the law, but rather interprets the law in terms of the new covenant and kingdom. He teaches with such divine authority that His listeners are astonished. Here is the King, not just one of His scribes. Since the King is here with His authoritative teaching, will they believe in Him?

Jesus, the Authority as the Power of the Kingdom

Section: Matthew 7:28-12:14

Key Texts

Matthew 8:27; 12:6-8

²⁷ And the men marveled, saying, "What sort of man is this, that even winds and sea obey him?" - Mt 8:27.

⁶ I tell you, something greater than the temple is here. ⁷ And if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy, and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless. ⁸ For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath." - Mt 12:6-8.

Having taught with authority, Jesus now exercises that authority. Story after story in this section is about His authority and His power. In His authority, He has the right to act as King over all creation and all creatures. In His power, He has the might to control creation. Once again, people are astonished at how the creation, the diseases, and the demons all obey Him. Thus, Matthew raises the question as to why the people did not obey Him. Since the King is here with both His authority and His power, will they bow to Him?

Jesus, the Spirit-filled Servant as the Messenger of the Kingdom

Section: Matthew 12:15-13:58

Key Texts

Matthew 12:17-21; 13:53-58

¹⁷ This was to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah: ¹⁸ "Behold, my servant whom I have chosen, my beloved with whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit upon him, and he will proclaim justice to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ He will not quarrel or cry aloud, nor will anyone hear his voice in the streets; ²⁰ a bruised reed he will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not quench, until he brings justice to victory; ²¹ and in his name the Gentiles will hope." - Mt 12:17-21.

⁵³ And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, ⁵⁴ and coming to his hometown he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said, "Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? ⁵⁵ Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? ⁵⁶ And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things?" ⁵⁷ And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, "A prophet is not without honor except in his

hometown and in his own household." ⁵⁸ And he did not do many mighty works there, because of their unbelief. . - Mt 13:53-58.

Jesus uses parables to redefine the nature of the kingdom. He uses parables in order to hide the truth from his original audience and to reveal them through Matthew. Gentiles will be members of the Kingdom as it grows through proclamation in the entire world.

Membership in the kingdom now is not dependent upon earthly genealogy nor Israeli citizenship. It is now by faith. All who believe will become sons and daughters of the King and thus citizens by birth and by faith. Where there is unbelief, mighty works are not done. But where He is believed, even the Gentiles have hope!

Jesus, the Divine Son of God as the One to be Worshipped

Section: Matthew 13:53-16:20

Key Texts

Matthew 14:32-33; 15:9,25-28,31

And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God." - Mt 14:32-33.

in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' " - Mt 15:9.

²⁵ But she came and knelt before him, saying, "Lord, help me." ²⁶ And he answered, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs." ²⁷ She said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table." ²⁸ Then Jesus answered her, "O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you desire." - Mt 15:25-28.

³¹ so that the crowd wondered, when they saw the mute speaking, the crippled healthy, the lame walking, and the blind seeing. And they glorified the God of Israel. - Mt 15:31.

Jesus remakes the kingdom in terms of faith and worship. Matthew repeatedly uses words to connect faith and worship. Over and over again words like unbelief, faith, worship, satisfied, kneel, etc are used by those who meet and bow to Christ.

The section ends with a great confession of faith as the example of true worship.

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ. ²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. Matthew 16:13-21 (ESV)

In the light of that confession of faith, Jesus begins to announce His impending death and resurrection. Will the One who is worshipped also be the One they will serve under and suffer with?

Jesus, the Prophet, as the One Foretelling His Death

Section: Matthew 16:21 - 23:39

Key Texts

Matthew 16:21; 16:28-17:2

²¹ From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. - Mt 16:21.

²⁸ Truly, I say to you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom." ¹ And after six days Jesus took with him Peter and James, and John his brother, and led them up a high mountain by themselves. ² And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became white as light. - Mt 16:28-17:2

Jesus foretells how His death and resurrection transition the kingdom from the old realm of the world, the law and Israel into the new realm of the Spirit. Taking up the prophetic mantle of the Old Testament, He announces that the glory of the kingdom fulfillment requires the death and resurrection of the King in order for the Law and Prophets to be fulfilled.

This section ends with a lament over the desolation of the house of Israel.

³⁷ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! ³⁸ See, your house is left to you desolate. ³⁹ For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.' " Matthew 23:37-39 (ESV)

In the midst of rejection and ruin, where are those who will say, "Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord"?

Jesus, the Son of Man, as the One Coming in Glorious Might

Section: Matthew 24:1-25:46

Key Texts

Matthew 24:29-31

²⁹ "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. ³⁰ Then will appear in heaven the sign of the Son of Man, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. ³¹ And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. - Mt 24:29-31

In fulfillment of the book of Daniel, Jesus is the coming Son of Man who will destroy the old and bring the regeneration and restoration to both deadly and delightful consummation. Through His parables and teaching, Jesus has illuminated the progressive growth and extension of the Kingdom even in the midst of the absence of the King.

There will come a day when the King will return. Just as the prophets had foretold, He will come with power and glory. He will come to gather His people. Will they be found hoping and waiting when He comes?

Jesus, the Sacrifice, as the One Giving His Life for His People

Section: Matthew 26:1-27:66

Key Texts

Matthew 27:45–50

⁴⁵ Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land until the ninth hour. ⁴⁶ And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" ⁴⁷ And some of the bystanders, hearing it, said, "This man is calling Elijah." ⁴⁸ And one of them at once ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine, and put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink. ⁴⁹ But the others said, "Wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to save him." ⁵⁰ And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and yielded up his spirit.

At the cross road of the purpose and plan of God, the dying One on the tree is both the King of Israel and the Son of God. He suffered as the sacrificial lamb, separated from His father. As the dying King of Israel, He brought the old Jewish realm to an end. As the Son of God, He is believed upon by both a criminal Jew and a Roman Gentile to the saving of their souls.

The Romans set a guard to keep Him from being stolen. Will they keep Him from being raised from the dead?

Jesus, the Sovereign, as the One Sending His Servants

Section: Matthew 28:1-20

Key Texts

Matthew 28:16–20

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Christ rises from the dead and meets with the faithful. On the final mountain of Matthew, Jesus meets with His fledgling subjects. There, in all authority, the King launches the global mission of His kingdom promising to be with His people till the end of the age.

Reflect and Respond

It is time to preach *the message* of the Kingdom.

Matthew 3:1–3 (ESV)

¹ In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.’ ”

Matthew 4:17

From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Matthew 4:23

And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people.

It is time to carry out *the mission* we have been given by the King:

Matthew 28:16–20 (ESV)

¹⁶ Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. ¹⁷ And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. ¹⁸ And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

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- ⁱⁱ I believe Matthew, not Mark, was the first of the gospels written. There are too many unfounded assumptions underlying the theory that Mark was written first. It is a very late development in Biblical studies and was originated and propounded by those who hold that the gospels all had an original source behind them. This fundamental idea is without any historical basis and is primarily the result of critical approaches to textual analysis. ***At the end of the day, we do not need to know what the external source was nor the gospel's interdependencies lest we undermine the Holy Spirit's intention, the author's argument and our confidence in the Bible itself.***
- ⁱⁱⁱ In my opinion that the synthesis' of the gospels to try to create a life of Christ may well undermine the very reason that each gospel was created.
- ^{iv} It is important to note that Matthew does not describe the crucifixion in terms of a mountain. That Jesus was crucified on a mountain is largely tradition and is not specifically mentioned in any of the crucifixion accounts. Once again, the Bible authors are not concerned about the location of Jesus' death in the same way that we tend to be. It was not until the 4th century that we have any writings that seem to be concerned with actually identifying the site. Much of the literature discussing it is filled with superstitious non-sense.