

Advent 2019- The Unfolding Story

Part 2- The Revelation Of Jesus As King

- We started last week looking at the story of Christmas
- If you're just joining us, we've looked at how the story is so incredible when you take the time to look at it intentionally
- We saw how God initiates his plan of salvation in a shocking way by coming to Mary & Joseph & informing them of the virgin birth
- Man could only take credit for introducing sin into God's perfect creation. From the beginning we have believed the lie of Satan, "Does God really love me?"
- God was coming for man & the salvation of the Lord wouldn't be something man could ever take any credit for!
- Today we get to the "wise men" & we see how they treat Jesus as a King...but Jesus isn't the only king in this story
- As we learn about Jesus as King, full of grace & truth, we see another king named Herod who's full of wrath & violence, an insecure leader appointed by the Roman's.
- When you think about the story of Christmas, you may not think about Herod & the murder of all the baby boys in the small village of Bethlehem, but that is reality and that was how this great rescue plan started out.
- That sounds horrible, Christmas is for nice thoughts & cookies, presents, eggnog, going to Mike's farm, etc.
- But that's part of the problem w/ living in a culture that turns things like Christmas into a holiday marketing campaign
- When we take the story for granted, we miss the story completely. We need the whole story, the real story more than we need a sentimental version of the story...
- So, let's have a look at this often forgotten part of the story Matthew 2:1-21- "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is he who has been born king of the Jews? For we saw his star when it rose & have come to worship him." When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled, & all Jerusalem w/ him; & assembling all the chief priests & scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born. They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet: "And you, O Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are by no

means least among the rulers of Judah; **for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel.**" Then Herod summoned the wise men secretly & ascertained from them what time the **star** had appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go & search diligently for the child, & when you have found him, **bring me word, that I too may come & worship him.**" After listening to the king, they went on their way. And behold, the star that they had seen when it rose went before them until it came to rest over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, **they rejoiced exceedingly w/ great joy.** And going into the house they saw the child w/ Mary his mother, & **they fell down & worshiped him.** Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold & frankincense & myrrh. And being warned in a dream **not to return to Herod**, they departed to their own country by another way. Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream & said, "Rise, take the child & his mother, & flee to Egypt, & remain there until I tell you, for Herod is about to search for the child, **to destroy him.**" And he rose & took the child & his mother by night & departed to Egypt & remained there until the death of Herod. This was to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet, "Out of Egypt I called my son." Then Herod, when he saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, became **furious, & he sent & killed all the male children in Bethlehem & in all that region who were two years old or under**, according to the time that he had ascertained from the wise men. Then was fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet Jeremiah: "A voice was heard in Ramah, weeping & loud lamentation, Rachel weeping for her children; she refused to be comforted, because they are no more." But when Herod died, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared in a dream to Joseph in Egypt, saying, "Rise, take the child & his mother & go to the land of Israel, for those who sought the child's life are dead." And he rose & took the child & his mother & went to the land of Israel."

- It's clear this passage of scripture is wrapped around the Kingship of Jesus
- This certainly does not give us the warm and fuzzies.
- The magi (Middle Eastern sorcerers) looking for one "born King"
- Herod & all of Jerusalem were frightened about their being a new King
- What does this mean for them...for the existing king?

- What will their lives look like...how will he lead?
- These aren't just questions that they had- they are ones we have when thinking through the kingship of Jesus
- If you're here & you're not yet a Christian, what will it mean?
- What does it mean if Jesus is King? What will I have to give up, who will I become, I am comfortable with who I am, at least I know what to expect, good bad and ugly.
- If you're here & you're already a Christian, we have this inner turmoil going on asking the question is he really King?
- Does Jesus rule and reign in every aspect of my life or just the ones I am comfortable with? Is he just my Savior
- And then some of us, maybe a lot of us, grew up in Christianity & have a flawed understanding of Jesus as King...
- For me it was growing up with everyone calling me the good little boy, always looking the part, saying the right words at the right time, all the while my heart was full of selfishness and envy
- My hope is at the end of this sermon you will have a clearer understanding of King Jesus and what it looks like to fully serve Him
- What we see in this passage clearly states the reason for Jesus coming...
- VS. 2a- "born king of the Jews"
- VS. 6b- "from you shall come a ruler..."

1. Jesus Is Born As A King To Rule Us

- One of the things that's hard for us to grasp is Jesus as King
- Think about how seemingly ok so many of us are w/ "baby Jesus"
- Many of us may see Jesus as the great Nascar driver Ricky Bobby sees him from the movie Talladega Nights. In his prayer before they eat dinner he says "Dear 8lb 6oz newborn infant Jesus, don't even know a word yet, just a little infant and so cuddly, but still omnipotent. We just thank you for all the races I've won and the 21.2 Million dollars.
- Babies don't intimidate anyone usually...what's different?
- What's different is that Jesus wasn't just any baby
- He was the Son of God, "born King of the Jews"
- This isn't just an announcement of a birth; it's political!
- It's the same thing when Prince William and Princess Kate had a child. Billions of people were glued to the TV and their smart

phones for hours and days hoping to catch a glimpse of the newest member of the royal family

- It's the announcement that causes all other announcements to take a back seat...it fills up every headline
- He's not just a nice guy, good w/ kids, kind to the poor, easy to get along with...No, HE IS King!
- Jesus being King is not something we fully embrace when we first become Christians, we love to focus on the Savior, the freedom from sin, the weight of guilt lifted off our shoulders, and all of that is great and wonderful and I love it too... BUT He is Savior and King
- It's the same w/ his title of "Lord"= master, or ruler
- We all want to be forgiven, to be saved, none of us wants a Lord
- Think about these two very different prayers and when we pray them
- "Jesus, save me, help me" is a lot easier to pray than, "Jesus, command me & I'll obey!"
- Everyone prays the first prayer, which is not a bad thing, when disaster strikes, when you are about to lose your home, your job, a loved one. We all become the greatest prayer warrior's known to man. JEDI Knight prayer warriors
- What is it like when things are going well and we are experiencing the mountaintop? How many of us pray the second prayer, Jesus command me and I will obey? I have to be honest, more often than not that is not me. But I am compelled to ask you, Is that you? Do you, like me focus on the Savior and not the King in our prayer lives?
- Baby Jesus doesn't bother people really- can't say much
- He doesn't seem to demand they be generous, selfless, etc...
- We like baby Jesus because we see Him as someone we command, not someone who commands us. Shelly and I have 5 kids and I assure you when they try to command us it does not turn out well for them
- The only problem with that mentality is that scripture tells us he was born KING!! He was not born a prince in a line of rulers hoping to one day become King, He was born KING
- So, Jesus is born the King of the Jews...what kind of King is he?
- Like I said earlier if he was born today, most of us would be glued to the TV or phone trying to find out all the details of this

new king. His family lineage, how wealthy he is, what kind of clothes he wears, what brand of bassinet will he use, what kind of stroller, car seat, bottle, brand of diaper and wipes, etc. We have to know every detail so we can know what kind of King he will be, and out of pure vanity hopefully our kid can be like him even if it is in our own head if we use the same things

- Well, they didn't have that, but they did have the Scriptures
- And throughout the Scriptures, we are given what he'd be like

2. Jesus Is A King Like No Other King

- So, he's born a king, but not like any other king we've seen...
- **Jesus Is A King Born in Poverty, Difficulty & Hostility**
- Kings are born in the best hospitals & guarded heavily
- They are given the best care & protection money can buy
- Here we see that not only was Jesus laid in a manger, but that wasn't the scariest thing to happen to him right from the start. Joseph is warned in a dream that He would be killed if they stayed so they gather all their belongings and flee in the middle of the night for Egypt.
- One of the most amazing things about Jesus during his time on Earth- his ability to identify w/ our suffering
- One of the names the Bible refers to Jesus is...
- "Man of sorrows"- he really gets it. He understands what living in poverty means; he was born in a stable and laid in a feeding trough.
- He understands what being rejected feels like. He was betrayed by one of his closest friends, and when he was arrested the other 11 ran and hid even denying they even knew him to a little girl.
- It seems like this time of the year during the holidays is when suicide attempts and depression and overdoses ramp up.
- Just over a week ago a 26 year old man took his life in Newport, I am not sure why, and from best I can gather there were no drugs involved, just a total loss of hope.
- The point is He identifies w/ you RIGHT where you are
- The problem that everyday folks like us have with royalty is that they live in a sheltered world that seems like a fantasyland from birth to death. I mean we all love the pomp and circumstance of the beautiful weddings and births of princes and princesses but when those things are over and we return back to our normal

lives, they can't relate to us and we certainly can't relate to them. There is this huge disconnect between the two worlds.

- We don't see that ever w/ Jesus. Not from the day of his birth to the time he went back to heaven & the greatest thing about that truth is that it is **BY CHOICE!**
- He is the King who identifies w/ the brokenhearted, the weak, the anxious. He identifies with you and I today, this day. Whether you feel like King of the world, or all hope is lost, He Identifies with you and I. Don't ever forget that truth
- What else do we see about this King that's so different...
- VS. 6- "for from you shall come a ruler who will shepherd my people Israel"
- **Jesus Is A King Who Cares Like A Shepherd**
 - This King will lead, not like a tyrant, but like a Shepherd
 - Later, Jesus himself says that this is who he is...
 - John 10- He says he's the good shepherd who sees the wolf & doesn't run to save himself, but lays down his life for the sheep
 - He is not some hired hand but a shepherd that lays his life down for us
 - He adds that He knows his sheep & his sheep know him
 - He talks about leaving the 99 for the 1 and having a great celebration upon their safe return.
 - NO other king has ever has ever acted or even thought about leaving the masses for one.
 - When you think about a king, you would never imagine this kind of king- a king who knows the names of all of his people, a king who all of the people can know personally, a king who knows the threats they face & a king who cares more about their good than his own comfort; let alone his own life!
 - Yes, this King Jesus knows every sin, every unholy thought you and I have ever had or will have and still freely paid the price to bridge the gap between our unholy selves and a perfect God.
 - Kings are distant, impersonal, selfish, entitled & protected
 - Not this King! He is a king like no other! The Shepherd King!
- **Jesus Is A King Who Calls Outsiders To Find Hope**
 - We all are funny about who comes to the hospital or to the house to meet a new born baby
 - I remember when our oldest child Addison, was born. We were so concerned about her health and safety that we were like hermits

for the first 6 weeks of her life. The whole house was disinfected. Shelly and I wore Class A biohazard suits to prevent infection. When I came home from work, there was a whole decontamination process I went through before I could see her. And then there are all the people at Walmart who see an infant and feel like they need to touch the baby. I mean really. On a side note, if you see an infant out in public and feel tempted to touch that child. Let me encourage you to resist that temptation. Some sleep deprived mom or dad is going to go off on you one day.

- But really only certain people get invited...people we really care about
- Now, if you're royalty, how much does that get magnified?!
- Close family, maybe some dignitaries, but even that could be a stretch
- With that in mind, consider who get's invited to meet Jesus...Magi
- That's who God invited to meet Jesus...you probably don't see the scandal b/c of the song "We three kings"
- That song (like others) isn't telling the story correctly
- I mean we think and see from all the nativity scenes out and about that they were royalty from their own kingdom from the Far East. Right?
- The Magi weren't Asian Kings, they were sorcerers from just south of Baghdad who were obsessed w/ staring at the stars thinking that's how they would find answers to life's biggest questions...they were the equivalent to modern day new-age-quacks
- Added to that, they were Gentiles, which to the Jews = OUTCASTS!
- So, from all the people on the planet God get's picky & hand picks these guys. Can you even believe that?
- They were outsiders who were desperately searching for hope & answers & God says, I want to call you to come find what your heart is after (some of you may be like them right now!!)
- I think many people today are searching for the answers to this spiritual essence of the universe. They refer to themselves as spiritual not religious. They may study many religions, in many ways very similar to that of the Magi. Searching for answers

- Maybe you see yourself as an outsider who doesn't fit in and maybe God is leading you to the place where you can find the answers to your hearts questions
- This King is not like any King we can wrap our heads around
- But there is one way that He is like all other Kings...

3. If Jesus Is King, He Demands Our Allegiance & Worship

- This is what a real King demands & Jesus is no different
- In fact, the Bible says there's a day that's coming where all will bow down before Him...
- Philippians 2:10-11- "so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven & on earth & under the earth & every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."
- That feels like what we know of kings...that feels like a normal response from the commoners to their king
- If Jesus is King, than that demands a response...
- That's the thing about someone declaring they are King; it doesn't leave you neutral! I mean it may leaving you feel that way if I stand up here and say I am the King of the World.
- But I certainly am not from a royal blood line and I certainly am not the creator of the universe.
- "No one who ever met Jesus Christ ever responded moderately to him. The only three things you see people doing when they meet the real Jesus are to run away from him in terror, assault him w/ fury, or prostrate themselves in utter surrender." - Stott
- In this passage we see these different types of responses...
- I bet there are a mixture of those responses here today...
- The People Were Gripped By Fear Of Jesus
- "...& all of Jerusalem w/ him." - why? Why were they so upset?
- An old saying goes something like this...
- "The devil you know is better than the devil you don't"
- Herod was king and he was evil and selfish and ruthless but at least they knew what to expect
- This new Jesus as King is guaranteed to disrupt all the norms!
- They had no idea what to expect
- I think the fear of change, the extent of change, is what keeps so many people from surrendering to Jesus much like the people of Jerusalem in this passage.

- I mean you may know the life you are living is leading to utter destruction but at least you know, at least you have that bit of control.
- A great example of a person not wanting to surrender their lives to Jesus as King was the rich young ruler. He came and asked Jesus what must I do to inherit eternal life, and Jesus names off a few of the commandments. He responds with I have kept all of them since I was a boy. Jesus responds in...
- **Mark 10:21-22 Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said, "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me. 22 At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.**
- This is such a great example of many of us today. We are great at following rules and saying the right things at the right time. But when King Jesus asks us for the thing we love more than Him, that is where the line in the sand is drawn.
- I have read this story so many times and think this guy is an idiot. I think if I was face to face with Jesus I would give up everything to follow Him. Expand... House, car, time, etc
- Funny thing is, at least for me, Jesus has never asked me for anything big like those and yet I sometimes find it hard to even read/study his word on a daily basis. I can't even find 10 minutes much less surrender everything to him.
- **Fear gripped him; fear of the unknown & fear of change.**
- **Some of you likely are thinking of becoming a Christian, you want to be free from addictions or ways of living that rule you...but you wonder what else will change, what will Jesus really do?**
- I think that's REALLY worth considering- Jesus called it "counting the cost" & he had people do it all the time. The story of the rich young ruler we just looked at is a great example of Jesus asking someone to count the cost. He may or may not ask you to sale everything but I assure you, as your King, he will ask you to change.
- I hope by the end I can help you see how, when you do the math, you find what Jesus said to be true, He's the pearl of great price
- **You have to give up everything, but you do it in joy because nothing else compares to Him!**
- **Herod Responds To Jesus W/ Fury**

- Herod responded with anger, fear, murder...why?
- Jesus was **born King**, Herod was **a Rome-appointed king** & therefore was threatened by the news of a legitimate King
- Later Jesus will come face to face w/ Herod the Great's son, "Herod the Tetrarch" who's a self appointed wanna-be king
- He will, like his father, refuse to bow to Jesus & will join his soldiers in mocking & ridiculing Jesus before His death
- **But a day will come when self-made kings & man-made kings will bow to the One who was born King of Kings & Lord of Lords**
- It's easy to point fingers at Herod, but all of us are like Him
- There cannot be two legitimate Kings, only one
- **So, if Jesus is King that means that you & I are not and cannot be king!**
- When we live our lives like we are in charge, we pretend
- **We are sitting on another man's throne, pretending to be Sovereign, pretending to be in charge when Jesus is King**
- That revelation is good news for the world
- **But it's bad news for our pride that wants to sit on the throne**
- Herod (& all of us like him) should've surrendered to Jesus
- Jesus tells a parable of what that looks like...
- Luke 14:31-33- "Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first & deliberate whether he is able w/ ten thousand to meet him who comes against him w/ twenty thousand? And if not, **while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation & asks for terms of peace.** So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple."
- Our pride tells us to dig our heels in & act like we're king...
- **Jesus calls us to see him as the greater King & to surrender**
- **The final group we see who responded to Jesus in this passage...**
- **It's The Magi Who Responded Rightly W/ Worship**
- VS. 10-12- "When they saw the star, **they rejoiced exceedingly w/ great joy.** And going into the house they saw the child w/ Mary his mother, & **they fell down & worshiped him.** Then, opening their treasures, **they offered him gifts,** gold & frankincense & myrrh.
- The Magi were willing to travel hundreds of miles across a desert to find the true king, risking life and limb just for a chance to

see this true King. They were desperate for answers, they were desperate to see this promised King.

- Then they rejoiced, fell down, worshipped & gave gifts...
- To this day, it's still needy people who find Jesus. People who realize there is no other way, there is no other hope.
- The gospel makes sense to the spiritually bankrupt, to the sick, to the poor, to the brokenhearted
- The proud & the arrogant only think of their own achievements
- They say, "Impress me Jesus & maybe I'll think about it"
- But the Magi fell down at the feet of a child & worshipped
- The idea of bowing a knee is something all humans struggle w/
- What is so radical about Jesus as King of Kings is not that he demands us to bow to him, but how he humbled himself for us
- VS. 11b- "They offered HIM gifts, gold, frankincense & myrrh"
- The three gifts were very costly but all three were very different in their meanings
- The gold makes sense for a King. The frankincense makes sense for a High Priest who takes away sin. But the myrrh...it's for dead bodies...it's to embalm the dead.
- Joseph and Mary would have immediately recognized the myrrh and its use during that time. Imagine the response you might get at a baby shower if your brought embalming fluid as a gift?
- Why would this be an appropriate gift for Jesus?

4. Jesus Is A King Born To Die In Place Of His People

- Think about the kind of loyalty that Kings demand
- You swear undying allegiance, "For King & Country"
- The thought is that anyone is willing to die for the King
- That's what's understood as normal, noble, heroic
- Instead of his people die for him...Jesus was born to die for us
- Mark 10:45- "For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, & to give his life as a ransom for many."
- The King who exchanges his own life for his servants
- The Shepherd who lays down his life for His sheep
- This must be the most scandalous part of the story!!!

RESPONSE:

- So, you & I must consider how we respond to this King
- Here & Not Yet A Christian
- You can live like you are king or put your hope in earthly kings, but all of that will only lead to disappointment & cruelty

- Only Jesus is worthy of our life's devotion
- Only Jesus is the King born into the pain, suffering & sorrow of this world, surrounded by death & chaos, to identify w/ us & to lead us out.
- Only Jesus knows your name, the hairs on your head & cares!
- Only Jesus knows your story, your pain & anxiety & has a plan!
- If you're an "outsider" just searching for hope & the answers to life, Jesus doesn't leave you in the dark, He's drawing you in
- If you're overwhelmed by your guilt
- He doesn't say, "Prove yourself!" He says, "Come to me!"
- Don't be like the people who chose fear of the unknown
- Don't be like Herod who stubbornly fought to keep his throne
- Come, respond like the Magi & surrender to Jesus the King.
- **Here & Already A Christian**
- Just b/c you're a Christian doesn't mean you remember this all the time? Our hearts naturally drift away from this
- We must constantly fight this desire to be back on the throne
- But only Jesus is worthy & only Jesus is able to lead us
- Take a minute to consider areas of your life that are not surrendered to Jesus. Then consider how Jesus surrendered his life for you. How he loves you. How he knows you. How he cares for you. What would it look like to surrender to Him?
- Then let's come & remember our King who surrendered his life for us. Who was abandoned & betrayed so we'd have life
- Let's be like the Magi w/ our joy, humility & worship!
- Here & dealing w/ depression/suicide...