

**Jesus is the Son of David | Advent 1 | Matthew 1:1-17**  
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Since the beginning of time, about 60 billion people have walked the face of the Earth. Of those 60 billion people, only a handful have made any real, lasting impression. In that handful, one stands far above all of the others. That would be Jesus.

Jesus never wrote a book, but millions of books have been written about him.

Jesus never painted a picture, but the world's greatest art has been inspired by him.

Jesus never traveled far from his birthplace, but the testimony about him has gone around the world.

Jesus had only a handful of followers, but today over 30% of the world's population follows him.

Of all the people that have walked this earth, Jesus has made the greatest, most lasting impression.

Nevertheless, there are a wide variety of opinions about who this Jesus actually is. Some say that Jesus is a master teacher. Some say that Jesus is a hippie. Some say that Jesus is a revolutionary. So this Advent, we are going to ask this very question: Who is Jesus? We want to get to the bottom of who Jesus actually is, what he did on earth, and why he has had such a lasting impact on our world.

In order to find our answers, we're going to take a look to the Gospel of Matthew. More specifically, we're going to look to the genealogy with which Matthew begins his Gospel. It may seem like just a random assortment of hard-to-pronounce names. But in actuality, it's crucial for helping us answer the question: Who is Jesus? Matthew wants us to know the answer to this question. More than that, Matthew wants us to know Jesus.

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So this morning we begin with this truth - Jesus is the Son of David. This is how Matthew begins his Gospel: "A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the Son of David" Jesus is the Son of David. And David was a king of Israel...perhaps the quintessential OT king of Israel. So that makes Jesus *the* King. So Who is Jesus? Well, Matthew tells us that Jesus is the king.

Of course, when we call Jesus King, we have to make a distinction. Jesus is *not* like our modern rulers...our modern politicians. American politicians make all kinds of promises when they're out there on the campaign trail. In 2004 John Edwards said, "We will stop Diabetes, Parkinson's and Alzheimer's!" In 2012 Newt Gingrich said, "We will put a colony on the moon by 2020!" And also in 2012 Michelle Bachman said, "I will pull

American troops out of Libya *and Africa*". This doesn't even include what we heard in 2016 and what we might be hearing now.

Politicians will say almost anything to get elected - and to stay in office! And as Americans we've become accustomed to leaders who just tell us what we want to hear. We've become accustomed to politicians who go for the jugular of their opponents at every opportunity. We've become accustomed to politicians whose main concern is approval ratings. I wonder, then, why we're so continually surprised when these over-promising politicians under-deliver.

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However, when we look at Jesus we see a completely different kind of leader. We see not a politician but a king. And more than that, a king who doesn't make empty promises. In fact, Jesus is the fulfillment of the promises of God. **Jesus is the promised king.**

Here's what Matthew tells us about Jesus. "A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ" (1:1). Christ isn't, of course, Jesus' last name. Christ is a title. It's the Greek translation of the Hebrew word "Messiah," which means "anointed one." And the OT foretells of a coming Messiah - a king who would be anointed with the Holy Spirit to accomplish God's mission of redeeming and restoring this creation. No empty promises here. Only the fulfillment of God's OT promises.

In fact, we heard one of God's many OT promises in our reading from Jeremiah this morning. "I will raise up for David a righteous branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land." The Messiah would come from the line of David and sit on David's throne. Matthew goes to great lengths to show us, his readers, that Jesus is this king. **Jesus is the Christ, the Son of David, the promised king.**

When Matthew writes his Gospel, David was long dead. The nation of Israel had been without a legitimate king for hundreds of years. But from the very first words of his Gospel, Matthew shows us that now a king had finally come to sit on the throne of David. And that King is Jesus. Throughout his Gospel Matthew hammers home this truth by citing 10 OT promises of God and showing how Jesus was the fulfillment of these promises. Over and over again Matthew wants to make sure we know that Jesus is the **promised King.**

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But this promised King doesn't come to rule as a tyrant. This promised king doesn't come to cut down his opponents and run over the enemies of Israel. As the promised king, **Jesus is the Compassionate King.** Matthew demonstrates this crucial point as he continues to list the genealogy of Jesus.

In the ancient world, people traced their lineage through the father. It comes as no surprise, then, that the majority of the names that show up in Matthew's genealogy are that of males. However, it's not exclusively male. In fact, Matthew mentions four women.

Four surprising women, actually. There's Tamar in verse 3, Rahab and Ruth in verse 5, and Bathsheba in verse 6. Matthew doesn't highlight Jesus' connection to Sarah, to whom Abraham was married. Or Rebekah to whom Isaac was married, or even Rachel to whom Jacob was married. Listing these matriarchs of Israel would have been a logical move for Matthew.

But he doesn't do that! Instead Matthew lists Tamar and Rahab and Ruth and Bathsheba. All four women who were outsiders to Israel. Tamar and Rahab were both Canaanite women. Ruth was a Moabite woman. And Bathsheba was a Hittite woman. That Matthew traces the genealogy of Jesus through these four women is significant. Not only were they outsiders to Israel, but they were also women who had been mistreated and marginalized. Women, three of them, who had been sexually abused and exploited. Women who held onto great shame. Yet, from these women come Jesus, the Christ. The Promised King and the Compassionate King.

The Jewish Messiah was expected to come and drive out the Roman oppressors. The Jewish Messiah was expected to come and crush the nations and establish God's rule. But when Jesus came, he came in compassion. He came to save. Jesus came to bring the outcasts home to God. Jesus came to remove the shame of marginalized people like Tamar, Rabah, Ruth, and Bathsheba.

So what Matthew gives us here in his genealogy is a preview of the rest of his Gospel. Who did Jesus spend his time with? Outcasts. The diseased. Those who are quarantined from society. Who did Jesus call the greatest? Servants. Who did Jesus give the Kingdom? Those who are poor in spirit. See, the promise of God is that he would raise up a king who would bring righteousness. And that's what Jesus does. He brings *His* righteousness to us.

Jesus isn't a king who sits on his throne and commands us to "try harder". No, Jesus is a king who descends from his throne, filled with compassion, and identifies with us in the pit of our shame and guilt. At our darkest points in life, when we feel the ugliest, when we are the most desperate, when we are in the most despair, Jesus says, "I Love You". You are mine. You have *my righteousness*. *I have made you holy in the eyes of God*.

Jesus is the promised king, Jesus is the compassionate king,

Jesus is also **the rejected king**.

As it turned out, to those who were expecting God's promised King, Jesus just didn't meet their expectations. For them, Jesus was the wrong kind of king because he associated with the wrong kind of people, preached the wrong message, appointed the wrong leaders, carried out the wrong mission, and offered the wrong kind of redemption. Jesus was the rejected king.

You and I know what it's like to be rejected. We've been rejected by significant others. We've been rejected by family members. We've been rejected by coaches. We've been rejected by employers. And this rejection is brutal for us, isn't it? Especially if you're the kind of person that just wants to please others and be liked by others! Rejection is brutal when we just don't measure up to the expectations of others.

But unlike us and unlike our politicians, Jesus was not concerned with pleasing others. Jesus didn't become King so that he would be liked by everyone. Jesus became King in order to bring God's rule and reign to this world. And that's just what He did.

When Jesus was crucified on Good Friday for being the wrong kind of king, ironically above his head were the written charges against him: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews". Jesus was utterly rejected. Rejected unto death. But when Jesus rises from the dead on Easter, he comes out, a conquering king to whom has been given all authority in heaven and on earth. That's what he says. All authority has been given to him.

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So who is Jesus? Well, Jesus is our king. He's our Promised King, our Compassionate King, the rejected King who has taken his place at the right hand of God the Father to rule over all things.

Who is Jesus? He is the king who lived for us, who died for us, who was raised from the dead for us. He is our king who doesn't come to demand from us. He comes for us. He comes to forgive our sins, he comes to be present with us in times of despair. He comes to bring us eternal life and salvation.

Who is Jesus? He is the king worth following each and every day. Just ask Matthew. In Matthew 9:9 he writes, "As Jesus went on from there, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the tax collector's booth, 'Follow Me', he told him, and Matthew got up and followed him." Amen.