

Bible Basics Conference 2011: “Christ the Lord, Christ the Head, Christ the King”

Part 13

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Place	Catford
Date	12.11.2011
Duration	00:32:16
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/cbb005/bible-basics-conference-2011-christ-the-lord-christ-the-head-christ-the-king

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[00:00:00] Well, I'm delighted that we have the children with us and I would just ask the children whether they're 12 years old or 11 years old or 10 years old or 9 years old or 8 years old anyway and perhaps even younger, if they try and listen, yeah, focus on what we've got to say here because this really is a story, it's a narrative, it's an important story, a vital story, a key story.

So try and concentrate, try and listen, try and burn, I see we're off to a good start.

[00:01:10] This is an account of events in history, primarily.

Now I'm afraid there are no pictures, no clip art, no photographs, it's just words, okay?

And on reflection, prayerful reflection, I decided that the best way to deal with this subject was actually to present the words of scripture on the screen and just comment on them.

So that's what we've got, it's mostly words of scripture, a few comments by myself.

Now we've learnt that God promised to send his king, the son of David.

[00:02:01] His king would rule in righteousness, his rule would be unending.

As we look through the Old Testament, we learn a lot about this one that God was going to send, a king, yes, a king, but a lot more than that.

And the term used for him, or one term used for him, is Messiah or Christ, same word, different language, which means anointed one. Now when we think of someone being anointed, we think of a monarch, a king, a queen. Our queen was anointed, anointed with oil. But the term Messiah encompasses a lot more than that, it includes his offices of prophet and priest as well.

But it's him as king that we want to look at today.

Just over 2,000 years ago, the angel Gabriel spoke to a young lady in Nazareth and told [00:03:07] her incredible news.

You will have a baby, and who is this baby going to be?

He will conceive in your womb, and bring forth a son, and shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the son of the highest, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

The king that God promised, this is it, this is the one.

Here is the one who'd be the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. We noted some of them yesterday, Robert told us about Psalm 2, for example, and Psalm 45, [00:04:03] and there are many other prophecies of God's king. He came, Jesus was born.

The king, the king who'd be given the throne of his father David, and where was he born?

Not in a palace, but in a stable.

The Bible presents two genealogies in the New Testament.

One in Matthew, and one in Luke, but different. The genealogy in Luke, we understand to be his line through his mother Mary, and this shows that biologically he was descended from David, the son of David. Here is part of the genealogy from Matthew.

[00:05:03] The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham begot Isaac, Isaac begot Jacob, Jacob begot Judah and his brothers.

Now where I've put dot, dot, dot there means I've left some names out, it's not these people are unimportant, but they're not necessary for what we're going to say here.

We go on to Jesse, Jesse begot David the king, David the king begot Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah, Solomon begot Rehoboam, and then we go down the line of the kings, Abijah and Aser and Jehoshaphat, till we get to Josiah, Josiah begot Jeconah and his brothers about the time they were carried away to Babylon, and then again we miss a lot of names out, and Jacob begot Joseph the husband of Mary of whom was born [00:06:05] Jesus who is called Christ.

This is Jesus' genealogy through Joseph, his legal father, though not his biological father of course.

It shows him to be legally in the line of the kings through David, Solomon, Rehoboam and so on down to Josiah and Jeconiah and then the kingdom ended as they were carried away to Babylon.

Well perhaps a year after he was born, wise men from many miles away came to Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, the place where God had set his name, wanting to know where was the one who was born king of the Jews.

Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men came from the east to Jerusalem saying, where is he who's been born king of the Jews? [00:07:07] For we've seen his star in the east and have come to worship him.

Where was he? Well he wasn't in the palace. When Herod the king heard this, he was troubled and all Jerusalem with him. And when he gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

So they said, in Bethlehem of Judea.

He was born in a stable.

The wise men found him not in the palace, but in a house in Bethlehem.

Notice who came to worship the king. It was foreign wise men.

[00:08:03] Notice the views of the religious leaders. They knew where the king was going to be born, but they ignored him.

Notice that the people were troubled. They were troubled, but that's all. They didn't do anything about it. They were just troubled.

And the ruler of the land tried to assassinate him.

So the king came, unrecognized by Israel in general, unwelcomed, ignored by many, violently opposed by some.

And if we knew nothing further of the life of the Lord Jesus, if we were coming to this with fresh eyes, it would give us a clue.

It would give us an indication of what would happen in the future. The king isn't wanted by his people.

[00:09:02] So the king grew up in a despised village called Nazareth.

And we move on to when he's about 30 years old.

Before the Lord Jesus started his public ministry, we read about John the Baptist.

We read in those days, John the Baptist, his forerunner, came preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

So this is John the Baptist.

The king is ready. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. You need to repent.

We read of the Lord Jesus at the start of his public ministry in Matthew 4. From that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

[00:10:02] So this is the Lord Jesus. The king is ready. The kingdom of heaven is at hand. You need to repent.

And a little while later, after choosing his 12 disciples, the 12 Jesus sent out and commanded them saying, go to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. As you go, preach saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

And whoever will not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet. So here we have the 12 disciples and their messages.

The kingdom of heaven is at hand. The king is ready.

And those hearing it needed to receive.

The king in person was there and he was ready to establish his kingdom and he was expecting from his subjects repentance and a welcome for those who are proclaiming the gospel.

[00:11:13] A few recognized him.

We read of Nathanael in John 1.49.

He recognized that Jesus was son of God and king of Israel, but it was only a few.

And Paul referred to this situation earlier. After feeding of the 5,000, the people wanted to make him king. We read, therefore, when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he departed again to the mountain by himself alone.

They were fickle. He knew them.

They liked the miracles, but there was no repentance, there was no change of heart. [00:12:07] There was no acceptance of him.

The Lord Jesus knew that. In reality, they rejected him.

And the Lord Jesus spoke to one of the towns where he performed most of his miracles.

He began to rebuke the cities in which most of his mighty works have been done because they did not repent.

If the mighty works which were done in you, this was Capernaum, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day.

But I say to you, it would be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for you.

And the Lord speaks of other towns in a similar vein.

The crimes of Sodom had been appalling and God had destroyed the town.

[00:13:06] But it would be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for Capernaum, where he performed so many of his miracles, where everybody knew him, where he'd spent so much time.

So what had they done that was so awful? He says it would be more tolerable for Sodom on the day of judgment, that vile place, than for them.

What had they done that was so awful? Well, they'd seen him and they didn't want him.

You know, we should take this in, this should be a message for us, particularly for any who haven't accepted the Lord Jesus as Saviour. You know, we're so privileged, we know so much about him.

[00:14:01] But privilege brings responsibility.

If we don't accept him, then we are responsible.

The Lord Jesus was rejected.

And when he was rejected as Messiah, he was rejected in his whole person, completely. Not just as king, but he was specifically rejected as king, in fact.

He performed his miracles, he taught God-given truths, and he did present himself to them specifically as their king.

Five hundred years before, Zechariah had prophesied, daughter of Jerusalem, behold, your king is coming to you.

He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Matthew 21, we read, now when they drew near Jerusalem and came to Bethphage at the Mount [00:15:04] of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples saying to them, go into the village opposite you and immediately you'll find a donkey tied and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to me.

All this was done that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet saying, tell the daughter of Zion, behold, your king is coming to you, lowly and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.

So this was done in fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy.

So the disciples went and Jesus, and did as Jesus commanded them. They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them and set him on them. And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road, others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. And the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out saying, Hosanna to [00:16:02] the son of David, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna in the highest.

Perhaps they'd had a change of heart at last.

They seemed to be welcoming their king, but in less than a week, they were screaming away with him, crucify him. Now, of course, the Lord Jesus knew this would happen and recorded in Luke 19 is a parable which he told.

He spoke another parable because he was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately. Therefore, he said a certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return.

But his citizens hated him and sent a delegation after him saying, we will not have this man [00:17:03] to reign over us.

And that was the Jews' terrible attitude to their true king. We will not have this man to reign over us. And the Jews dragged Jesus before the Roman authorities.

And the Jewish leaders accused Jesus to the Roman governor Pilate. And what's their accusation? We found this fellow perverting the nation and forbidding to give tribute to Caesar and saying that he himself is Christ, a king.

And on the next slide is just a small part of the extraordinary and appalling dialogue that took place between the Jewish leaders and Pilate. I've just extracted a few bits from it. In all the Gospels. [00:18:04] Pilate, I find no fault in him. Do you want me to release the king of the Jews? The Jewish leaders. Not this man, but Barabbas. Barabbas was a murderer. A little later, Pilate, I find no fault whatever. Jewish leaders crucify him. A little later, Jewish leaders, if you release this man, you're not a friend to Caesar. Caesar, the emperor, of course. Everyone making himself a king speaks against Caesar. Pilate, behold your king.

Jewish leaders crucify him. Pilate says, shall I crucify your king? Jewish leaders, we have no king but Caesar.

What an extraordinary statement that is, isn't it? We have no king but Caesar. [00:19:03] I doubt whether Jews could possibly think of any other circumstances where they'd make such a statement. But they hated their own king so much that they preferred the authority of a cruel and oppressive Roman emperor. And then we see in Mark 15, the soldiers, Roman soldiers, Gentiles, mock him and his kingship. Then the soldiers led him away into the hall called Praetorium, and they called together the whole garrison. They clothed him with purple. They twisted a crown of thorns, put it on his head, and began to salute him. Hail, king of the Jews. And they struck him on the head with a reed and spat on him. And bad than me, they worshipped him, not in a true way, of course, a mocking way. And when they had mocked him, they took the purple off him, put his own clothes on him, and led him out to crucify him. [00:20:01] A disgusting and degrading spectacle. And Pilate is defeated by the Jewish leaders. He wanted to release Jesus, but he felt forced to give in to them and have Jesus crucified. Then they crucified him and divided his garments, casting lots that might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophet. They divided my garments among them, and from my clothing they cast lots. Sitting down, they kept watch over him there. And Pilate, not because he believed, but to annoy the Jews. And they put up over his head the accusation written against him. This is Jesus, the king of the Jews.

A true statement for all passing by to see. This showed not only who Jesus truly was, but also from where the notice was located [00:21:01] on his cross, what Jew and Gentile thought of him. And so they completely and utterly reject their king. The king came to his people, they didn't want him. And John writes, he was in the world, and the world was made through him, and the world did not know him. He came to his own, and his own did not receive him. They had him killed. And here's just one quote, from 2 Samuel 7.

I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever, and your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever. That's God speaking to David. And here's just one quote, from 2 Samuel 7.

I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever, and your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. And as we noted earlier, it had been confirmed to Mary, the Lord God will give him the throne [00:22:06] of his father, David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever. And as his kingdom, there'll be no end. A clear and unequivocal statement. So now we seem to have a problem. The people don't want their king, they execute him. So, God has sent his king.

He promised to do so. And the people say, no, we will not have this man to reign over us.

So what happens next? Does God abandon his promises? Well, many, it seems, take the view that God sort of changes his promises. He abandons Israel as a nation and replaces it with the church. But the promises God made to Israel find their complete fulfillment in the church. [00:23:04] The blessings promised to Israel have been transferred to the church. And I don't believe this is the way God works, and it doesn't fit with scripture. Now, in those dark moments, after the Lord Jesus was executed, how God would fulfill his promises was a problem for his followers. They'd been relying on him to liberate the country and free them from the Romans. And this is what one of the Lord Jesus' followers says. He's shocked by the sudden arrest and execution of Jesus, Cleopas. We were hoping that it was he who was going to redeem Israel. They expected him to liberate the country and rule them as king. Now, Cleopas didn't realize it, but he was actually speaking to the Lord Jesus in person. Lord Jesus risen from the dead. [00:24:02] And what's the Lord's answer to them? You should have understood. He said to them, oh, foolish ones and slow of heart to believe in all that the prophets have spoken. Ought not the Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expanded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself. They should have had some understanding from the scriptures. Now, of course, within a few days, the disciples had met with the risen Lord and they understood better. But there was still this issue that puzzled them. The Lord Jesus hadn't brought in the kingdom. They knew that he was God's Messiah. They knew what God had promised. They knew he would reign. They didn't have any doubt that God would do what he said. But when? And this is the very last question they ask of the Lord Jesus before his return to heaven. [00:25:07] So before he went back to heaven, the disciples asked him whether he would at this time whether he would at this time restore the kingdom to Israel. And he said to them, it's not for you to know the times or seasons which the father has put into his own authority. It will happen. But time is in God's hands and that's where we stand now. The Lord Jesus is not recognized in practice as David's son, as king, but he will be. And what happens in the meantime? What does the Lord say about now, between his ascension and his coming to Rome?

I think actually it's helpful. I appreciate time has gone beyond, but I'll go through this quickly. [00:26:05] I think it's helpful just to see a few highlights from Matthew's gospel. In Matthew chapter one, we have the genealogy of the king. In chapter two, the wise men say, where is he who's born king of the Jews? In chapter three, John the Baptist announces the kingdom of heaven is at hand. In chapter four, as Paul was telling us, Satan offered the Lord Jesus the kingdoms of the world. Of course, of course, the Lord Jesus could not accept. Of course not. In chapter four, the Lord Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is at hand. In chapter five to seven, he sets out the principles and standards of the kingdom in the Sermon on the Mount. Essentially, he offers himself to them in chapter eight to 11 as their Messiah. The disciples during this time announce the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And

Jesus is rejected.

The Messiah is rejected. [00:27:02] And we see in Matthew 11 to 12 an appeal to individuals. He says, come to me, all you that labor in the heavy land. I will give you rest. And in chapter 13, we see seven parables of the kingdom, the kingdom in mystery form. Chapter 16, the Lord Jesus says on this rock, I will build my church. The rock, of course, being himself, who he is. He speaks of his death and resurrection. He begins to speak of that. Officially, he offers himself as king in chapter 21. Chapter 27, they're screaming, crucify him. And in chapter 28, of course, he rises again from the dead. Once he's rejected by the people, things change. The Lord Jesus starts telling his disciples, not everybody else, but his followers, new things. So in Matthew 13, he talks about things that will happen between his return to heaven and [00:28:03] his coming back again. We have the seven parables that are the mysteries or secrets of the kingdom of heaven. They're mysteries. They are things that were hidden in Old Testament times, but revealed to his disciples. There are seven of them. I'll go through them incredibly quickly. In the parable of the sower, God's word is proclaimed. Some accept, some don't. The second parable is the parable of the wheat and tares. And we see that Satan is active. There are those who pretend to be genuine, but aren't. In the parable of the mustard seed, we see great growth, but the birds of the air are there and they are not.

But the birds of the air are there and they are a picture of Satan. In the parable of leaven, we see a mixture of good and evil. We see the parable of the hidden treasure. Christ sells all he has to buy the field with the treasure. [00:29:04] Parable of the pearl of great price. Christ sells all he has to buy the pearl. And that's truly wonderful, isn't it? Because that is us.

Those of us who trust in the Lord Jesus, he gave up everything in order to buy us. And the last parable was the parable of the dragnet. At the end, the wicked will be judged. And the kingdom in mystery form ends with the sorting of the good from the bad. So we're part of this sort of hidden form of the kingdom, the secret form. It's not identical to the church. The kingdom in mystery form, the church, just a couple of points. The kingdom mystery form is a mixture. The church is only believers. The kingdom ends in judgment. The church ends with the rapture. [00:30:01] And we notice in Romans 11 that through their fall, through the rejection of their Messiah, salvation has come to the Gentiles. Their fall is riches for the world and their failure riches for the Gentiles. Of course, the rejection of Christ wasn't a surprise to God. Of course not. And salvation for Gentiles was always in God's plan. So what of our relationship with the Lord Jesus? Well, we learned yesterday of the lordship of our Lord Jesus Christ and that he is the head. We know him as Lord.

We know him as head. We know him as saviour. We know him intimately and personally. Each of us who's been saved by him have that intimate and personal relationship with the Lord Jesus. His role of king is an important topic and it's brought out in scripture. [00:31:03] But he's been rejected and doesn't rule as king over the earth. And our focus individually as believers and corporately as his body is not on his being king, as we indicated yesterday, but on our closer relationships as saviour, Lord and head. And I'm out of time, so here's a brief summary. The king was promised to Israel. Mary was told that her son Jesus was the fulfillment of this prophecy. Wise men from the east recognized that Jesus was king of the Jews. Although told of his arrival, his own people were troubled, but generally ignored him. As an adult, he presented himself to Israel as their king. They rejected him totally. They had him executed. During his ministry, the Lord Jesus presents the kingdom in mystery or hidden form for this age. All are welcome. [00:32:01] And he will return after he's taken his church and he will rule as king.