

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel - Jesus the King

During this Christmas season, we have examined several very important roles of Jesus Christ. We have seen Jesus as prophet, priest, and now we are going to consider his place as King. One of the most important things to recognize is that these three roles are not just chosen arbitrarily. It is not as though there are all kinds of ways that Jesus Works in our lives but that we have just chosen these three. Prophet, priest, and king are the three offices that God used to challenge, guide, and lead the Jews as God's people. We have seen how Moses predicted that Jesus would come as prophet. We have also seen how David predicted that Jesus would come as priest. These two roles are not nearly as commonly known. Because of the visit of the wise men and many Old Testament scriptures, it is more familiar to present Jesus as King in a sermon.

Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Isa 9:6-7 For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

7Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

In anticipation of Christmas, it is my prayer that preaching on these three roles of Christ will deepen our appreciation not only for what it meant to Israel, but also for us to have the Lord of Glory enter the world and our lives. However, there is a special challenge for Christ as King of our lives. The other two rolls prepare us for receiving Jesus as king and are easy to apply. But for Jesus to actually be the King, is more difficult for us to apply, even though it should not be.

1. The desire for a king.

The desire for a king is best represented by Israel at the end of the period of the Judges who demanded a king. It is said that before that time that without a king in Israel, everyone did that which was right in their own eyes.

Judg 21:25 In those days *there was* no king in Israel: every man did *that which* was right in his

own eyes.

In those days, Samuel was their judge. He set his sons to be judges, but they were corrupt.

1Sam 8:1-22 And it came to pass, when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel.

2Now the name of his firstborn was Joel; and the name of his second, Abiah: *they were* judges in Beersheba.

3And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment.

The elders of Israel cried out for a king to rule over them like all the other nations had.

4Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together, and came to Samuel unto Ramah,
5And said unto him, Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations.

6But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said, Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the LORD.

7And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them.

Now this is key to the understanding of the desire for a king. They had rejected God's Lordship in their lives. They didn't want to live responsibly before Him.

8According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.

9Now therefore hearken unto their voice: howbeit yet protest solemnly unto them, and shew them the manner of the king that shall reign over them.

Israel was going to be allowed to have a king, but they were warned about the dangers of human government.

10And Samuel told all the words of the LORD unto the people that asked of him a king.

11And he said, This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint *them* for himself, for his chariots, and *to be* his horsemen; and *some* shall

run before his chariots.

12And he will appoint him captains over thousands, and captains over fifties; and *will set them* to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots.

13And he will take your daughters *to be* confectionaries, and *to be* cooks, and *to be* bakers.

14And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your oliveyards, *even the best of them*, and give *them* to his servants.

15And he will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants.

16And he will take your menservants, and your maidservants, and your goodliest young men, and your asses, and put *them* to his work.

17He will take the tenth of your sheep: and ye shall be his servants.

18And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the LORD will not hear you in that day.

And here comes the problem. They wanted to be absolved of personal responsibility before God. They demanded a king because he would take care of them. They would be glad to surrender themselves to him in the name of safety.

19Nevertheless the people refused to obey the voice of Samuel; and they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us;

20That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.

21And Samuel heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of the LORD.

22And the LORD said to Samuel, Hearken unto their voice, and make them a king. And Samuel said unto the men of Israel, Go ye every man unto his city.

The same situation can be demonstrated in many sites in America that there is no rule but anarchy. Anarchy does not mean chaos, however. Even though these areas fall under the jurisdiction of mayors and police departments, they are ruled by the cudgel and club where the weak are dominated by the strong and life for most people, as Thomas Hobbes described, is "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." There is an increasing cry for the disablement and even elimination of the police. Hobbes wrote at about the time of the English

revolution in the 1600s and proposed the idea of a social contract with a protector as their sovereign. Under this social contract individuals give up all rights, while those of the protector are absolute. Having gone through the American Revolution it doesn't even begin to enter into our imagination to surrender to such a sovereign King. We still live largely in liberty based on the genius of the founding of our country in a pluralistic society with its free market spirit of competition and negotiation of ideas. We might be persuaded that the threat to our liberty comes from the pressure on politicians to push towards socialism by Marxist hustlers and thugs dressed like commandos. However, the problem we face is not socialism. Socialism has never succeeded and indeed cannot succeed due to the compounding of problems and inefficiency from layers of bureaucracy and human error. If there is one thing that socialism has ever succeeded in, it is in the call for what Hobbes described and the Israelites demanded. There is nothing new under the sun. We do not call Hobbes's sovereign "a king" today. It is more like a king's court, an elite and small ruling class that seeks to mandate and regulate all in the name of safety. As Franklin Delano Roosevelt quoted Benjamin Franklin:

No realistic American can expect from a dictator's peace international generosity, or return of true independence, or world disarmament, or freedom of expression, or freedom of religion – or even good business.

Such a peace would bring no security for us or for our neighbors. "Those, who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety."

– President Franklin Roosevelt's Annual Message (Four Freedoms) to Congress (1941)

This same principle has been applied to the threat of giving up the power of self-determination before God for the sake of safety. That is why Christianity is such a threat to the world. Christianity calls for people to live responsibly before God in love, rather than by the dictates and control of government.

Does mankind cry out for a king in the same way Israel did? Yes.

2. The promise of a king.

The king who was promised by God was no earthly king. The history of one of the most famous kings in history stands out in stark contrast to the One to whom he was submitted:

Charlemagne died in the 9th century A.D. He was crowned Emperor Augustus in Rome on Christmas Day, 800 by Pope Leo

III and is regarded as the founder of the Holy Roman Empire (as Charles I). Through military conquest and defense, he solidified and expanded his realm to cover most of Western Europe and is today regarded as the founding father of both France and Germany and sometimes as the Father of Europe. It is said that his was the first truly imperial power in the West since the fall of Rome.

— Wikipedia.org

The Roman emperor Charlemagne has an interesting story surrounding his burial, however. This famous king asked to be entombed sitting upright in his throne. He asked that his crown be placed on his head and his scepter in his hand. He requested that the royal cape be draped around his shoulders and an open book be placed in his lap.

That was A.D. 814. Nearly two hundred years later, Emperor Othello determined to see if the burial request had been carried out. He allegedly sent a team of men to open the tomb and make a report. They found the body just as Charlemagne had requested. Only now, nearly two centuries later, the scene was gruesome. The crown was tilted, the mantle moth-eaten, the body disfigured. But open on the skeletal thighs was the book Charlemagne had requested—the Bible. One bony finger pointed to Matt 16:26 For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

— Encyclopedia of 7700 Illustrations (Rockville, MD: Assurance Publishers, 1979)

As great as a king the world thought him to be, it is suggested that he knew that all the power in the world had no power over death and eternity. We started off earlier with the promise of Isaiah for a King, but there were so many promises given to Israel for the ultimate King.

Psalm 89:34-37 My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.
35Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David.

36His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me.

37It shall be established for ever as the moon, and *as* a faithful witness in heaven. Selah.

Psalm 132:11 The LORD hath

sworn *in* truth unto David; he will not turn from it; Of the fruit of thy body will I set upon thy throne.

Jeremiah 33:14-17 Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah.

15In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

16In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely: and this *is the name* wherewith she shall be called, The LORD our righteousness.

17For thus saith the LORD; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel;

Of all the things that could be said about Israel's yearning, it was for their King of Righteousness.

Hag 2:6-7 For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it *is* a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry *land*;

7And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts.

Jesus is the desire of nations. He is the king all the world has been looking for whether they knew it or not.

3. Is Jesus the King?

Jesus was the fulfillment of the longing of Israel. The angel told Mary:

Luke 1:32-33 He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David:

33And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

Paul preached in Antioch:

Acts 13:32-34 And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,

33God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

34And as concerning that he

raised him up from the dead, *now* no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David [this is a reference to Jesus as the King who would sit on David's throne].

But to say that Jesus is King requires a lot. The Word in Life Study Bible has this description

Whatever else we can say, the kingdom has to do with whatever Christ the King rules. That's why Jesus began His ministry with a call to repentance. Repentance means to change one's mind or purpose. In terms of the kingdom, it involves:

(1) A change in one's allegiance. If Christ is the King, He deserves our honor, loyalty, and obedience. We put ourselves under His authority and power. Whatever He says, we determine to do. That's the point of the oft-repeated lines in the Lord's [model] Prayer,

Matt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as *it is* in heaven.

Kingdom people submit their own will to the will of the King. Matt 6:10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

(2) A change in one's expectations. One of the difficulties people have with the idea of a kingdom is that it doesn't appear to be in place yet. The world seems to grow farther away from God by the day. As a result, it's easy to live for the here and now, as if this present life is all that matters. But the hope of the kingdom is that there is far more to life than what we see right now. Jesus made extraordinary promises in regard to a future kingdom, not only for Israel, but for all who follow Him as King. The kingdom [will be completed in the Millennium], but it has [already] been established and will last forever (Matt 6:13).

Matt 6:13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

(3) A change in one's values. Our culture values achievement, success, independence, and image. Other cultures value other qualities. But the values of the kingdom reflect what matters to the King. Jesus described a number of His values in Matthew

5:3-10, a section of the Sermon on the Mount known as the Beatitudes (or, as some call them, the “beautiful attitudes”). Kingdom people adopt the King’s values and make choices that reflect those values—in their jobs, families, and communities.

(4) A change in one’s priorities. The real test of people’s values is how they spend their time and money. Jesus spoke directly to that issue in terms of the kingdom. He did not demean the value of work or diminish the need for material goods. But He challenged His followers to bring kingdom values into their day-to-day lives. “Seeking first the kingdom” (6:33)

Matt 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

[This] puts a Christlike perspective on one’s work and its outcomes.

(5) A change in one’s lifelong mission. Some people are driven to accomplish great tasks with their lives. Others live aimlessly from day to day, lacking purpose or direction. Either way, Jesus affects the outlook of a person’s life. He gives His followers purpose and a mission—to live as subjects of the kingdom and promote kingdom values in everyday life and work. Ultimately, He wants His followers to extend His message to the ends of the earth, so that all people have the opportunity to give their allegiance to Him as their Savior and King.

Matt 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.

— The Word in Life Study Bible, (Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville; 1993)

At the start of the message, I said, "But for Jesus to actually be the King, is difficult for us to apply, even though it should not be." Some people are looking for Jesus as an entertainer, some a babe still in a manger, some an excuse to get drunk, etc. Jesus came to rule, but it requires an absolute surrender of our heart, our agenda, and more.

2Cor 10:4-5 (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)

5Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

Rom 6:9-18 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.

10For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.

11Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

12Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.

13Neither yield ye your members *a s i n s t r u m e n t s* of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members *a s* instruments of righteousness unto God.

14For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.

15What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid.

16Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

17But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you.

18Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

Col 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

There is a mistake, though, that the world makes. They are willing to take their chance that there is no God so that they excuse themselves from submitting themselves to Him. They will be eternally shocked to discover that they will be in Hell and will *still* have to submit to God anyway!

Phil 2:9-11 Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:

10That at the name of Jesus every

knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth;

11And *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Isa 7:14, Isa 9:6-7,

1. The desire for a king. Judg 21:25, 1Sam 8:1-22
2. The promise of a king. Psalm 89:34-37, 132:11, Jeremiah 33:14-17, Hag 2:6-7
3. Is Jesus the King? Luke 1:32-33, Acts 13:32-34, Matt 6:10, 6:13, 6:33, 28:18-20, 2Cor 10:4-5, Rom 6:9-18, Col 3:17, Phil 2:9-11