

Where is he that is born king of the Jews?

This is the first question in the NT. The first question we have in the Bible, is in the OT in Genesis 3:9: “Where art thou?” The first question we have in the NT is, “Where is he?” God asking the first of Adam after Adam hid in shame, and wise men asking the second question to anyone who would listen. “Where is he that is born king of the Jews?”

When we celebrate the birth of the one designated by God as the king of the Jews, we need to realize that he has not yet ascended the throne and has yet to rule over the house of Israel. So, it’s still a reasonable question: “Where is he that is born king of the Jews?”

The wise men came to Jerusalem because that was the capital of Jewry, and the natural assumption would be that the king would be born in the palace, but that was an incorrect assumption both according to prophecy and according to hindsight.

Herod called his wise men and asked them where the Christ should be born. The insight of Herod is marvelous; he knew that the king of the Jews and the Christ of the OT were one and the same. Herod was a pagan and unbeliever. This vicious and bitter man knew that the king of the Jews was the Christ; the Messiah; Jehovah.

Herod’s wise men apparently quoted the Scriptures, not needing to turn to the written word. In chapter 2, there are four prophecies that are set forth. We’re not going into them right now, but I want to remind you that these four prophecies present a series of contrasts.

The first prophecy tells of his birth in Bethlehem tells of the hatred that would exist toward him, but also of the homage that was paid to him. These wise men offered gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh, but on the other hand, there were some, particularly Herod at first, who hated him and sought his death.

In the second prophecy, we appreciate that it speaks of his exile, but even while in exile, he’s leading an exodus of people who honor and glorify his name.

The third prophecy speaks of the sorrow of those who believe in him, but mingled with that sorrow is much joy and happiness because of his coming.

The fourth prophecy speaks of the meanness or contemptibleness of his circumstances, his birth, and his living or dwelling in Nazareth. The question was asked, “Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?” It was a question of contemptibleness aimed at one of such base circumstances, yet we know that out of these circumstances came the king of kings and lord of lords.

Tonight, we're going to devote our study and meditation to the second prophecy; the one concerning his exile and his exodus.

Notice, in answer to this question, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" He's hated by some and others pay homage. He is in exile today (Satan rules this world), but he's drawing great numbers or an exodus of people to him. His presence brings great sorrow, but it also brings great rejoicing. He came from the most insignificant of surroundings to rise to heights that are unequalled, and indeed unattainable, by man.

First of all, in answer to the question, "Where is he?" they found him. They found him as a child at home. The wise men did. Prior to that, he had been found by shepherds in a manger. After leaving the house in which they found him, the king of the Jews went down into Egypt for a while, until those who sought his death had died. Then, he returned to Nazareth.

At the age of 12, we find the king in the temple; he was questioning, discussing, and possibly at times, debating issues of the law. Nothing is heard from him from his 12th year until approximately his 30th; there are 18 years of silence concerning the king of the Jews. But, at about the age of 30, he appeared on the banks of the Jordan River, and John said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

We see him coming up out of the waters and we read of the king being tested by Satan, but we also know that he was victorious. We read of his appearances in cities around the Dead Sea and in the area of Galilee. We read throughout the NT about his miracles and his works. We read of him riding into Jerusalem riding upon a foal of a donkey upon which no man had ever sat. We read of the children of Israel crying out, "Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed *is* he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest." They are proclaiming him to be king.

But, those around them told them to be silent and they commanded him to silence his disciples, but he replied, "If they are silenced, the very stones would cry out!"

But, we also read that he was rejected. We see the king of the Jews as he is tried and convicted by perjured testimony. It was the king of the Jews that hung on the cross. When Pilate had inscribed over the cross, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews". The enemies of our Lord went to Pilate and said, "Change that writing; make it say 'he claimed he was King of the Jews'", to which Pilate replied, "γέγραφα, γέγραφα" (I have written what I have written); it's going to stay just like I wrote it!

We see the king of the Jews buried. The king of the Jews arises. The king of the Jews ascends on high. Now, where is the king of the Jews?

[Hosea 5:15] The king of the Jews has gone into exile. Where is the king? He is in exile, and he is going to stay there until the nation of Israel acknowledges their offense, but he says, in the great tribulation, "they will seek my face early".

The king is in exile. While he's in exile, he is doing two things. As our great high priest, he intercedes for us when we sin. We've had numerous studies along that line, so we're not going into it now, but let's look at the second thing he's doing: While in exile, he is doing exactly what many kings have done in exile. Some kings seeing their actions fulfilled, others not seeing their actions fulfilled, but our Lord's actions will be fulfilled.

Where is he? He's in exile. What's the second thing he's doing? He's forming a kingdom in exile. The Chinese did that by setting up a provisional government in Formosa (now Taiwan). Some exiled leaders set up a government, they set up a cabinet, then they move back into the country, and they move in the government they established while in exile.

David, who was a man after God's own heart, is a type or picture of the Christ in many respects. David's kingdom, and the establishment of it, was in three phases, and those three phases parallel the establishment of the kingdom our Lord is developing right now, while in exile.

In the first phase, after being anointed king of Israel, he was forced to flee or go into exile. Saul was king, but when he learned that David had been anointed king and would take his place, Saul made it his life's ambition to destroy or slay David. When Satan came to know that Jesus the Christ was to be the king of kings and Lord of lords, and take his position, he sought to prevent the seed from being born. Unable to prevent the seed from being born, he sought to destroy the seed of the woman on numerous occasions. Unable to do that, he tried to keep him from going to the cross. Unable to prevent that, he tried to keep him in the tomb and to prevent his rising from the dead. Unable to do that, unable to touch him or reach him in the heavens, Satan occupies his time as the accuser of the brethren and centers his attacks upon the believers or the brethren. (Remember, Matthew 12:50 tells us that not all believers are brethren; the brethren are those who live their lives faithfully. That's why it sometimes seems that bad things always happen to good people.)

David fled from Saul, and in his exile, he set up a provisional government. Gathered around him was a group of men; men who were sinners and criminals; those about whom nothing good could be said; refugees, escapees from prison, murderers, thieves, all other undesirable people, gathered about David. But, out of these, David fashioned a government that stood.

When it came time to establish a government, he established a government that lasted about seven years over the house of Judah, which included the house of Benjamin, but over them alone. Our Lord is coming out of exile one day, he will call his own unto him, and out of them, his government will be fashioned.

David, after ruling over Judah for about seven year, ruling from Hebron over the house of Judah alone, went to Jerusalem, ascended the throne, and assumed the government over all Israel. Our Lord, having called his own unto him here, having them in the heavens for about seven years, will be coming back to earth and establishing rule over all the earth.

He will establish a government in his time of exile, there in the heavens, in that seven year period, the time of the Judgment Seat of Christ, the rewarding and losing of rewards, then he is coming back and taking over all of the government.

This evening, let's take a look at what our Lord is doing. What is he doing? He is gathering a group of people that will serve with him when he establishes his Kingdom. There are nine characteristics that can be drawn from Scriptures, from the picture or type of the Christ presented by the story of David, of these men that he gathers about him.

The first, they were sinful. They were not good men. They were refugees from the human race. You could not find a sorer group of men than those gathered around David, and according to the Bible, a sorer group cannot be found than those the Lord is gathering around him: Us. We are but sinners! Saved by grace. Some people have elite, genteel, cultured sins; others have crude, obscene, vicious sins. But, sin separates us from God, and anything that separates us from God is as bad as anything else that separates us from God. These sinful men were nothing, and they knew they were nothing, but David could (and did) take them and fashion them into men upon whom the government could sit.

The second thing about these men, is they were true. At least, they were true after David had drawn them to himself. They loved David and they were true to him; they would die for him, and many of them did. They were loyal. The Lord is looking for those who love him and those who will be loyal. He's not looking for those who vacillate or sway with every change of the wind, but for those who are loving him; those who are true and loyal. He's looking for those upon whom he can depend. Do you have mixed emotions when it comes to our Lord? Can you think of a day in which you were more or less loyal than you are today?

The third characteristic we notice is that these were brave men. They were brave and unafraid. Sometimes, as Christians, we are too timid. Of course, sometimes we are too brash. These men were brave, and when the situation arose, they stood their ground. There was one day when two armies came out against David; one on one side of the Jordan, the other on the other side. Now, this was at a time when the Jordan was on a rampage because of flooding. David's men came to the first group on the side on which they were already located, dispatched them, saw the other group, plunged in, swam to the other side, and then dispatched them. These were brave men. They weren't worried about the dangers. We sing the song, "Onward Christian Soldiers, marching as to war." We are in a battle. This is a battle between right and wrong. David's men were brave men, and we should be brave also.

The fourth characteristic we notice is they were well-rounded. They were ambidextrous. They could shoot the bow with either hand. How many Christians serve the Lord with one hand while holding onto the world with the other hand? They are torn, with the Lord pulling one way and the world pulling the other. Both arms of David's men were for David. They were well-rounded men. They could take care of any situation that arose.

The fifth characteristic we notice is that David's men were men of faith. They could handle the shield and the buckler. The buckler was a short dagger for close infighting. In handling the shield, remember the typology of Scripture that the shield symbolizes faith. In Ephesians, we're told to take the shield of faith. These men could handle the shield; they were men of faith. Possibly, the greatest indictment against his own disciples was their lack of faith. "Oh ye of little faith!" is something he said on many occasions.

[Hebrews 12:1-2a; *the* sin...faith). In this passage, we are commanded to do two things. First, we're commanded to lay aside every weight. The expression "lay aside" is from an old Greek word that means to lay off your clothes. The runners ran nearly naked in order to not be encumbered. Would you want to run a race in a formal dress and high heels? A weight is something that hinders you in running the race, but it's not necessarily something sinful, wrong, or unclean; it just hinders you. It could be doubt, pride, sloth; almost anything that could be a trailing garment to trip you up. Some weights build you up, but will hinder you in a race. (Running in sand will build your stamina, but you wouldn't want to do it in a race; the same is true of ankle weights.)

Of course, in hindering, it could become sinful, but the majority of us (I'm not confessing your sins, this is just an observation), the majority of us have many things in our lives that dull our spiritual appetite; things that deaden our sensitivity to the things of God. We're to lay aside every weight. We all have different weights; mine is different from yours.

The second thing we're commanded to do is to lay aside *the* sin. The definite article designates one sin; one sin which all Christians possess. You and I have this one sin in common. Some call it the besetting sin, but that common sin is lack of faith or apostasy. This word "besetting" or "encompassing" reminds us of the ring of wild beasts in the jungle that encircle the campfire at night, ready to pounce upon a careless victim. It reminds us of an attacking band of savages, encircling the camp, looking for an opening.

These men that David took to set up his kingdom and establish them in places of responsibility were men of faith. They could handle the shield. They could protect themselves from the onslaught of Satan. Oh ye of little faith. Faith should be the simplest of all the spiritual graces a Christian can have. Faith is nothing but confidence. Faith in a person is confidence in that person. Faith in God is confidence in God. Faith in Jesus is confidence in the Christ. Jesus said he would not trust himself to man because he knew what was in man. He what is in man today.

If lack of faith is our besetting sin, what has God done that has caused us to lose our confidence in Him? Has he ever lied or failed to keep a promise or take care of you or manifest his love toward you? When you claim a lack of faith in God, you're saying, "I don't trust God". Faith is Confidence. These men that rallied to David and eventually made up his cabinet were men of faith.

The sixth characteristic that we notice is that these men were self-sacrificing. I don't like to use the word "sacrifice" in relation to the worship of a Christian, because what can I sacrifice when all that I am and all that I have is his and is just on loan to me from God? How can I give anything to him, when he has already bought everything? He's bought it all! Now, he made a sacrifice for me, but if I give him all that I have, there is still no sacrifice, because I'm not my own; he bought me and he bought me with a price.

These men around David were willing to sacrifice their lives for him. One day, a group of them were engaged in conversation. It could have been a hot day, and David could have been tired and exhausted from battle, but David said, "if I just had a drink of water from that well by my father's gate, I think I would be satisfied". I think that one man caught another man's eye, etc., and those three slipped out and said, let's get that drink of water for David.

Those three men went through the valley filled with Philistines, in the camp and out of the camp, all the way through to Bethlehem, and got a helmet full of water from that well that David drank as a boy, and took it back to him. "Where did you get this?" You mean, you went through the camp and back, and he poured it out and said, "I will not drink this; it is as your blood; you gave your life to get that!" It's too sacred. I'll not drink it. His men were brave.

History is full of men and women who were brave. We know people on the mission field who have to be brave to be where they are and do what they are doing. You have to be brave, yet sometimes, our sense of bravery is so dulled that we are afraid to go next door and witness to someone whom the Lord has put upon our hearts. We don't necessarily need to go door-to-door witnessing to strangers, but you know the Lord wants you to witness to a particular person, but you get shaky and afraid and say, "not me, Lord. Send someone else." (Send Aaron!) Or, we do like many have done and go to someone else and say, "The Lord has put this person on my heart and I want you to go speak to him." Afraid.

These men around David were not afraid. There were just 400 of them, but they withstood the armies of Saul. These men were sacrificial.

The seventh characteristic is they were wise. [James 1:5] These men were wise. We're told they were well versed and instructed in things pertaining to Israel. They knew what was going on with Israel. They knew what was going to happen to Israel. They were instructed in the things to come. The greatest area of ignorance on the part of so many Christians is in the area of what is to come.

I've heard people say, "You can have all that ruling and reigning stuff. Just so long as I get to heaven, that's all I care about. They ignore the majority of the Scripture. They want to know nothing about tomorrow. They want to know nothing about the Kingdom. They want to know nothing about the Lord Jesus Christ. They want to know nothing of our responsibility to God. They want to know nothing about rewards for the faithful and chastisement for the unfaithful. They want to know nothing!

These men surrounding David, despite coming from the atmosphere in which they were born and reared, now we find them instructed in the things pertaining to Israel. There's not one person alive who can't use instruction. The Holy Spirit will lead you and guide you in the study of this book. The men around David were wise men.

The eighth characteristic we see in these men around David is they were disciplined. It is said of them that they never broke rank. Every man stayed in his place. No one aspired to a higher position; they just did their job to the best of their abilities. They were content to be where they were placed in David's army, and they never broke rank. The work of God often suffers because of jealousy between the workers. It has been said that ministers are among the most jealous of people, but I don't know if they've ever decided who was worst between doctors, lawyers, and preachers. There is a place for everyone in the work of our Lord, and happy is that person who is where God wants him, doing what God wants him to do.

I'll tell you one thing that I think about often myself: My responsibility to God is to you and those with whom I come in contact. I'm not responsible for the 400,000 in Anchorage, or the millions in the United States, nor the billions in the world, that I don't encounter. I'm responsible for this, and I will stand before God one day and answer for my faithfulness to this charge, and not for what I would have done if I were in some other place. These men around David were disciplined; they had their place and they were satisfied. They were satisfied in their place.

Many people have failed in the ministry because their aspirations were for the biggest and richest and finest, and they looked upon each charge as nothing more than a stepping-stone to the next one. No matter where you find yourself, there you are. Do your work as if you expect to be there for the rest of your life, because it may be where you are for the rest of your life. Just be true in the place where God almighty has put you.

The last characteristic of these men around David is they were men of one purpose. They had one purpose. That purpose was to make David the king. Our one goal; our ambitions and aspirations should be to see him crowned as the king of kings and the lord of lords. One reason I have a consuming desire for our Lord to return is this: I want those scenes over there in Israel that witnessed his humiliation and his seeming defeat, to witness his glory and his power, and that is what will happen when he comes back and his foot touches the Mount of Olives. That mountain will cleave in two from the east to the west (part will move to the north and part will move to the south), and a great valley will be created. All the enemies of God will be drawn into that valley, and then the battle of Armageddon will follow, in which the blood will flow bridle deep on the horses. This will take place down through that valley that will be created and opened up by the foot of our Lord touching the Mount of Olives.

These characteristics are the characteristics of the men David gathered around him. These are the people the Lord is gathering around him today. Where is the King of the Jews? He's in exile. But, he is preparing a provisional government with individuals

taken from among Christians to serve in his cabinet. There will be seven years of intimacy with him in the heavens before he comes back and sets up his Kingdom here on the Earth, and in those seven years, at the Judgment Seat of Christ, he will evaluate the work, faithfulness, and loyalty of each individual. Then, he will assign certain positions to individuals, to which they have attained.

Where is the King of the Jews? I'll tell you where he is: He's getting ready to form that provisional government, then one day, he will establish it. Don't you want to be a part of that? Think about it, and practice it. Do what it takes to live a faithful life so that you won't be found lacking.