

# Women's Bible Study

A TWO-YEAR JOURNEY THROUGH  
THE STORY OF GOD

## Week 2 | Jesus is the Promised King | The Gospel of Matthew

### *Jesus has come as the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies of a King and Savior*

The Bible as a whole tells one overarching story—it tells us what is wrong with our world today, what God is doing to fix it, and how it's all going to turn out in the end.

#### *A very brief review of the Old Testament:*

The ongoing problem of evil in our world stems from the decision by our earliest ancestors, Adam and Eve, to reject the authority of God and to believe the lie of the devil. Their act of disobedience had consequences that have changed creation and corrupted mankind to this day. Our world is said to be *fallen*, and mankind is poisoned by sin.

God's merciful response to this crisis was to reveal His plan for the redemption of man and for the restoration of the glory of creation.

- God promised Adam and Eve that one day a Warrior would come who would crush the head of Satan. (Genesis 3:15) In this victory, the power of sin and death in our lives would be broken.
- Centuries later, God appeared to one man, Abraham. God promised Abraham that God would give Abraham a land, many descendants, and the blessing (the loving presence) of God. God promised that through Abraham's offspring, these benefits would come to all nations—to all peoples. This promise is called the *Abrahamic covenant*. (Genesis 12,15,22)
- Over many generations of recorded Biblical history, God revealed that the particular offspring of Abraham who would bring this promised blessing is a man who will be a **King**. He will be a descendant of King David and this King will reign forever. (Genesis 49, 2 Samuel 7)
- We learn that this King will be God Himself—God become man. He will be Immanuel – God with us. He will be born a human child; yet He will be called Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)
- This King will establish the eternal Kingdom of God. He will rule in perfect righteousness, ruling over a future Kingdom of perfect peace and ultimate fulfillment—forever. (Isaiah 9:6-7; Isaiah 11). The Old Testament teaches us that there is a *new world* coming, and this promised King will bring it to pass.

At the close of the Old Testament, God's people Israel had suffered decades of exile and oppression as a result of their disobedience to God. A portion of the people had returned to the land of Israel, but the glory of God—the visible manifestation of God's presence and blessing—had not returned to their temple. The people of Israel looked forward to the coming of the promised King—the Messiah. This future King would bring peace to Israel. This future King would usher in an eternal state of righteousness. This future King would bring a restoration of all that was lost in the fall of man. The last prophet of the Old Testament, Malachi, had written about this King, but after that, there had been no word from God for over 400 years.

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## *The Promised King has Come!*

The gospel of Matthew opens with the genealogy of Jesus, proclaiming that *Jesus* is the Christ. *Jesus* is the Messiah, the promised descendant of David and of Abraham. *Jesus* is the one who will fulfill the Old Testament promises of God.

Furthermore, Jesus is no ordinary child. His mother Mary was a virgin; Jesus' conception in her was by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18-25). Jesus is God "*with us*"; Jesus is the Immanuel spoken of in Isaiah 7:14.

The book of Matthew is peppered with Old Testament quotations, linking the prophecies of the Old Testament with their fulfillment in the coming of Jesus. Jesus proclaims that He is the fulfillment of the Old Testament story line. Jesus is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Law and the Old Testament promises.

## *God the Father announces God the Son as King*

1. **Read Matthew 3:1-6, and 3:11-17.** The prophet Isaiah had written in Isaiah 40:3-5 of a forerunner—a herald—one who would announce the coming of the promised King.
  - a. What was the message of John the Baptist? (3:2)
  - b. John the Baptist proclaimed a coming Kingdom; how did John describe the coming King? (3:11)
  - c. What dramatic event happened when Jesus was baptized by John? (3:16-17)

After Jesus' baptism, He was led by the Holy Spirit into the wilderness, where He was tested by the devil. Jesus prevailed against the devil; Jesus proved Himself to be faithful and obedient to God. Jesus succeeded where the nation of Israel had failed. Jesus obeyed God in this wilderness testing and showed Himself to be the *true* Israelite who lives by every word that comes from the mouth of God. (Matthew 4:4). From that time on, Jesus went about preaching, "*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.*" (Matthew 4:17)

## *The Sermon on the Mount describes Kingdom life in this fallen world*

As Jesus begins His teaching about the promised Kingdom, He reveals that the notion of the promised Kingdom is more complex than had been previously understood. Jesus teaches *the good news* of the Kingdom. God has confirmed at Jesus' baptism that the promised King—the anointed one—is here. Nevertheless, the culmination of the Kingdom promises—including a restored earth and the removal of all sin and death—has not yet come.

As we learn about the Kingdom of God in the gospel of Matthew, we find that there is a tension of a *present* Kingdom of God that has *already begun* in the midst of this world, and yet, there is an expectation of a *future* Kingdom where the earth will be restored to the glory of the original creation. That ultimate Kingdom will come when Jesus returns. And so the Kingdom is "*already*" but "*not yet.*" It is *already* here in that God's people are invited *today* to come into the Kingdom. We are invited to come to Jesus and live in the blessing (the nearness and the grace) of God *today*, even as we live in anticipation of Christ's *future* return.

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## 2. Read Matthew 5:3-10 *The people of the Kingdom enjoy an eternal perspective*

Notice that the same destiny is presented in both the first and the last of these verses. In 5:3, “*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,*” and then in 5:10, “*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*” This literary structure—this bracketing—indicates that the verses in between (5:3-10) are describing those who have come into the Kingdom of heaven—living at the threshold of a future glory.

- a. What characteristics and circumstances describe those who live as citizens of God’s Kingdom? (5:3-10)
- b. *Personal reflection:* What do you observe about the perspective Jesus gives in this portion of the Sermon on the Mount? How is this an encouragement to you? How is it a challenge to you? Are you living in light of this perspective?

## 3. Read Matthew 5:13-16 *We are to live distinctively as Kingdom citizens*

- In the ancient world, *salt* was used as a preservative; it guards against the corruption of food.
- *Light* penetrates the darkness; it enables us to find safe footing even at night.

- a. What is your understanding of how these metaphors of *salt* and *light* describe the part we are to play as Kingdom citizens in this fallen world? (See also Colossians 1:13-14)
- b. *Personal reflection:* In what practical way might you be *salt* and *light* in your neighborhood? In your family? How should this concept make a difference in your life?

## 4. Read Matthew 6:19-34 *We are to embrace the priorities of the Kingdom*

- a. It is typical in our American culture to focus our lives on accumulating the treasures of this earth. Why is this focus ultimately futile? (6:19-20)
- b. In what way does a focus on earthly treasures damage us? (6:24)
- c. *Personal reflection:* In Matthew 6:25, Jesus challenges us not to be *worriers*. When we allow *worry* to dominate our lives, what is the underlying spiritual weakness that has affected us? (see 6:30) How must we correct our thinking about God in order to overcome this problem?
- d. What are the priorities of the Kingdom? (6:33)
- e. *Personal reflection:* What does it look like practically in your life to seek the Kingdom of God? What does it look like to seek His righteousness? How do you understand this?

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In chapters 8-10 of Matthew, Jesus performs nine miracles that give us a taste of the glory of the coming Kingdom. These miracles demonstrate Jesus' authority over sickness, blindness, weakness, storms, over demons, and over death. These miracles bring the power of Jesus' future Kingdom into the present lives of hurting, broken people. But in the midst of these wonderful miracles, Jesus turns aside to call on people to follow Him. It is only through *following* Jesus that the fullness of the Kingdom blessings can be ours.

## *The leaders of the Jews reject their King*

In chapters 11-13, Matthew reports the tragic reality that the Jewish leaders were unwilling to accept the message of the Kingdom and the announcement of the King. Although some of the people of Israel responded positively to Jesus and His teaching, the Jewish leaders did not. They determined that Jesus must be put to death. They believed that Jesus was a threat to their way of life and to their temple.

In chapters 14-20, Jesus performs the sorts of miracles that the people of Israel expected of the promised Messiah. He provides food for thousands. He walks on water. But rather than assume power like a warrior, Jesus tells His disciples that He will be the *suffering* servant described in Isaiah 53:4-6. Jesus will suffer at the hands of the Jewish leaders; He will be put to death; and He will rise from the dead on the third day.

### **5. Read Matthew 21:1-11     *Jesus presents Himself as King before the Passover feast***

- a. Matthew 21:5 is a quotation from the Old Testament prophet Zechariah 9:9. What is surprising about this manner of entrance for a promised King?
- b. What is the reaction of the crowds when Jesus enters Jerusalem? (21:8-9)

Note: "*Hosanna*" means "*save us now.*" They expected the Messiah, the Son of David, to save them from the rule of the Romans.

### **6. Read Matthew 26:26-29     *The Sacrifice of the King brings the New Covenant***

- a. When Jesus celebrated the Passover with His disciples, He was anticipating His imminent death. What new meaning did Jesus give to the bread and the wine at that last Passover? (26:26-28)
- b. What benefit is provided by the bloody death of Jesus? (26:28)

*That evening, Jesus was arrested, unjustly tried before the Jews and the Romans, was flogged, and then He was crucified.*

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## *The King hangs on a cross*

7. **Read Matthew 27:35-44.** What was the summary charge made against Jesus? (Matthew 27:37)

## *The King is dead*

8. **Read Matthew 27:45-54.**  
What dramatic supernatural events happened as Jesus gave up His spirit? (27:45-46 and 27:51-52)

## *The King is alive*

9. **Read Matthew 28:1-10** What was the evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead?

## *The King's Commission*

10. **Read Matthew 28:18-20**
- What is Christ's position today? (28:18)
  - What task has been given to the citizens of God's Kingdom? (28:19-20)
  - What reassurance is promised to us as the people of the Kingdom? (28:20)
11. *Personal reflection:* This is a personal affirmation of the good news of the gospel: *I have come to believe that Jesus died and rose from the dead, and through faith in Him I have new life and forgiveness of sin.* Is this good news the belief of your heart? Is this new life the experience that you enjoy? If you're not sure, pray right now that God would make this good news real to you today.

***God's promises to Israel in the Old Testament are being fulfilled in Jesus;***

***Jesus is the promised King!***

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