

MIDWEEK ADVENT 1 2020

TEXT: MATTHEW 1: 1, 6

THEME: JESUS, THE SON OF DAVID

The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. 6 and Jesse the father of David the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah,

In the name of Jesus:

One of the more popular programs on television today is a miniseries called *The Crown*. It is a miniseries that focuses on the life of Queen Elizabeth of England. It's popular because many people today have a fascination with royalty.

King Edward VIII of England was one of the kings of England. He was not the heroic king who led the British against war and oppression. He was not the famed leader who put the needs of the people before the crown. He was not the inspiration for a Shakespearean play or for folk singers or movie producers. King Edward VIII was an absolutely disappointing king who abdicated his throne just to marry a divorced woman. Names like Henry V and Richard the Lionheart and Elizabeth I and even Elizabeth II will be remembered through the ages, but not Edward. Edward is barely little more than a brief footnote to—and a black mark on—the British monarchy.

Matthew introduces Jesus to his readers by tracing the lineage of Jesus through kings, patriarchs, heroes and disappointments. His Gospel begins with the words: “The book of the genealogy of Jesus.” Today we look at Jesus, the Son of David.

There is wonderful meaning in the name Son of David. David is the greatest king that Israel had known. And yet, Jesus is the Son of the Greatest King. His Kingdom would be something spectacular.

Unlike King Edward VIII of England, King David is considered the great hero of Judah and Israel. After those kingdoms fell on account of their sinfulness and unbelief, many waited in hope that one of David’s descendants would come to restore Israel to its former glory. They hoped for a warrior king who would crush their enemies and make them a nation that was again to be feared.

So why does Matthew focus on Jesus as the Son of David? Jesus was the descendant of other kings as well. He was a descendant of Manasseh, the king who led Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem to do more evil than the Amorites and the nations before them. Why did Matthew not want to focus on, let’s just say, Manasseh, the king who sacrificed his own sons to false gods and filled Jerusalem with blood from one side of the city to the other? No one

wants to remember King Manasseh because he was a failure, a part of history that most would prefer to forget. He did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, like so many before him, and like still others who would follow him. Manasseh was like King Edward: an embarrassment, a shameful excuse for a king.

So why include David? Because Matthew wants to remind us that Jesus came to save and redeem all, the greatest heroes and the worst failures. We could just as easily call Jesus the Son of Manasseh because it would remind us that Jesus' purpose in coming to this earth was not to return Judah and Israel to their former glory but to establish an eternal kingdom that is founded not on account of power and might, but mercy and grace. He came to rescue all of those whose hearts were stained by sin.

David was a great king, the Bible says that he was a man after God's own heart. But he also did what was evil in the sight of the Lord. The boy who slew the giant Goliath would need someone to rescue him. King David would be reminded by the prophet Nathan of his own sin and his own need for a Savior. He committed adultery with Bathsheba, killed Uriah, her husband by sending him to the front lines of battle, then took Bathsheba as his wife. Confronted by his own sin, David acknowledges that he was sinful from the time that he was conceived (Ps 51:5). The great and mighty King David would

bow before God in repentance, begging God not to banish him from the Lord's presence nor take the Holy Spirit from him (Ps 51:11). God forgave David, cleansing him of all of his iniquity. God was indeed merciful and restored him by forgiving him of all his sins for the sake of his descendant who was to come.

Jesus had many confrontations between Himself and the Pharisees. In one confrontation, Jesus asked them, "What do you think about Christ? Whose son is he?" They answered, "The son of David" (Mt 22:42). But then Jesus responded by quoting Psalm 110 and asking them how David could call his own descendant his Lord. The Pharisees didn't get it, they didn't understand, in fact they would never understand that the mighty King David believed that his own descendant would be infinitely greater than he, would indeed come to be his Lord.

Isaiah also prophesied that Jesus would reign on David's throne forever. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore" (Is 9:6-7).

While Jesus is the Son of David and the Son of Manasseh, he is an altogether different kind of king. He is the only truly righteous King, whose kingdom will have no end. He is the One whom God would send one who would become our righteousness. As the prophet Jeremiah foretold, “In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: ‘The Lord is our righteousness’ ” (Jer 23:6).

Jesus is our righteous King, who had a crown of thorns placed his head. He was covered in sin and shame, sacrificed for the sins of his fathers Manasseh and David. The Lion of Judah became the Lamb who was slain. The King who put the needs of the people before the crown. As King, Jesus came not to be served but to serve and give His life as a payment for sin for all. This King took on the form of a servant and became obedient unto death, even death upon a cross. On that day, the inscription over his head was the only thing that would mark Jesus as a king. But there the Son of David died. He died for David and Manasseh, kings and queens, peasants and paupers, rich and poor, strong and weak, young and old, for sinners from every family.

You are also sons and daughters of David, for you have inherited from David his sin and shame. Yet Jesus, the Son of David, came to save all who share in David’s weakness, in his frailty, in his sin—not just the father, but all

of his sinful children. That is why Matthew begins his Gospel, by calling Jesus the Son of David. For Jesus ushers in the kingdom of heaven that is proclaimed in his Word and given to us by grace and received by faith. Therefore, we can join with King David and sing, "Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures throughout all generations (Ps 145:13). Thanks be to God that Christ's kingdom has come among us also!

In the name of Jesus. Amen.