

Waiting for the King

Matthew 3 - 4; Mark 1:1-20; John 1:19-42

PPT Title

Waiting for the King

Main Point: Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God to earth.

Key Verse: *"The time has come," (Jesus) said. "The kingdom of God is near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!"* - Mark 1:15

Props: Bible; bag of coins, scroll; optional: wristwatch

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Ask: If I told you a King was coming to visit today, what would you expect? *Listen for answers.* **Say:** We usually think of a king wearing a royal robe and a crown. He sits on a throne and lives in a great big house. He might be married to a queen, and might command a powerful army. **Ask:** Would anyone expect a poor person in dusty clothes who didn't even have a home to live in? Probably not. Today we will be talking about a different kind of King and a different kind of kingdom. As we might guess, God's idea of a King is way different than ours. That's because God's thoughts are WAY better than our thoughts. The Bible says, "Just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so [God's] ways are higher than [our] ways and [God's] thoughts higher than [our] thoughts." (Isaiah 55:9) Think of it this way: The world's most powerful telescope sits on top of a mountain in Arizona. Through it, scientists can see stars and planets that are 10 million miles away! This is just a glimpse of how much higher God's thoughts are above our thoughts. Let's dig into God's word to find God's idea of the perfect King, and perfect kingdom.

Say: We have just learned about the birth of Jesus. This was a miraculous event, to say the least. The Bible doesn't tell us very much about Jesus' life between his early childhood and the time when He was a grown man. Today we will begin studying His life after He had grown up. Today we'll see that Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God to earth.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Say: What exactly is the kingdom of God? Some people have the wrong idea about the kingdom of God. They think it's another way of saying "heaven." Heaven is a wonderful place that believers will go to when they die. But the kingdom of God includes more than heaven. A kingdom is wherever the will of the King is done. So, the kingdom of God exists wherever God's will is done. We know that God's will is done in heaven (Matthew 6:10). For a short time, God's will was done on earth. When God created the earth, everything was good and Adam and Eve did the will of God. Adam and Eve walked with God and talked with Him. They enjoyed each other's company and everything in this kingdom was wonderful. But when Adam and Eve chose to sin, their sin separated them from God, their King. They were no longer able to do His will. Every single person who came after Adam and Eve also sinned. No one did the will of God, the King. Sadly, the kingdom was no longer on earth.

But God longed to restore the kingdom. So He started preparing the way. God called on a man named Abraham. Abraham had faith in God. God made wonderful promises

to Abraham: God would give Abraham tons of kids and grandkids, and God would bless them. They would be called the Israelites. Abraham's family would grow and grow, and one day, a very special Boy would be born in this family. That Boy would be the greatest King ever. He would save the Israelite people (Daniel 9:25), and would be a blessing to everyone on the earth (Genesis 12:3). He would rule forever. We all know that Boy was the baby Jesus - but at the time, none of the Israelites knew that Jesus was the One that God had promised.

Let's back up for just a minute and see what was happening before Jesus came.

Teacher: Hold up your Bible, open to the New Testament. **Say:** This is the New Testament, which begins when Jesus came to earth. And this is the Old Testament, which tells everything that happened before Jesus came. Throughout the Old Testament, God had given the Israelites promises about the coming kingdom (Jeremiah 31:33-34, Hebrews 8:5). He gave many clues about the coming King (Genesis 12:3, 49:10, Isaiah 7:14, Micah 5:2). Without knowing the King's name, the Israelites called Him Messiah, which means: the One who is chosen by God. For hundreds of years, the people waited for their King, Messiah. **Optional for younger students:** Teacher, tap your wristwatch, to indicate waiting. The Israelites wondered what the King would look like. They wondered what kind of accent He would speak with. They wondered and they waited.



Also in the Old Testament, the Israelites often chose to turn away from God, and follow false gods. So they stepped out of God's protection, and they were taken over by enemy nations. They had been ruled by the Babylonians, and then the Persians, and the Greeks, just to name a few. At the time when Jesus was born, the Israelites were being ruled by the Romans. The Israelites were called Jews at this time (which is short for Judah). The Jews were allowed to worship God and go to the Temple, but they had to pay taxes to the Romans (**Teacher, hold up coins**), and they had to follow some Roman laws (**Hold up scroll**). Because they were God's chosen people, the Jews did not want to be under the rule of the Romans. They continued to wait for their King, Messiah, who would set them free. **Optional:** Tap your watch again.



JOHN ANNOUNCES THE KINGDOM (Matthew 3:1-12, Mark 1:1-7)

Say: Now let's all open our Bibles to the New Testament, starting in Matthew. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all tell the stories of Jesus' time on earth. God used these four different men to give different details for each story. Today, we'll read from several different books. We don't usually flip around so much in the Bible. But today is a little different. I want you to hear details from each writer to get the full picture of the King.

Can everyone turn to Matthew 3? The first two chapters of Matthew tell about Jesus as a baby and young child, but in chapter 3, Jesus is a grown man, about 30 years old. All the gospel books tell us about a man named John. John was actually Jesus' cousin. He was the special child that God gave to Zechariah the priest and his wife Elizabeth in their old age. In Matthew 3, John was a grown man, too. He was 6 months older than Jesus. God gave John a very important message for His people. Matthew 3:1 says:



In those days John the Baptist came and preached in the Desert of Judea. He said, "Turn away from your sins! The kingdom of heaven is near." - Matthew 3:1-2



Wait just a minute! Did everyone hear that? John was shouting that **the kingdom of heaven was NEAR!** The long wait was finally over! The King, Messiah, was coming. The kingdom was about to break out on earth once again.

Crowds of people came from all over to hear John preach about the King who was about to come. After all, they had waited for SO LONG. Many people repented from their sin. They had a true change in their hearts and minds. John baptized these people in the Jordan River. Their baptism was a symbol. It was a way to tell everyone who



was watching that they had turned back to God's way of living. Some of the people stayed with John, learning all they could about the One who was coming. The people were so excited that the King was coming.

JOHN ANNOUNCES THE KING (Matthew 3:13-16, Mark 1:8-13, John 1:19-34)



Say: Some of the Jewish leaders came to see if John was the King that God had promised. John told them he was not the King.

"I baptize people with water," John replied. "But One is standing among you whom you do not know. He is the One who comes after me. I am not good enough to untie His sandals."

This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan River. That was where John was baptizing.



*The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him. John said, "Look! The Lamb of God! He takes away the sin of the world! **This is the One I was talking about.** I said, 'A Man who comes after me is more important than I am. That's because He existed before I was born.' I did not know Him. But God wants to make it clear to Israel who this Person is. That's the reason I came baptizing with water." - John 1:26-31*

Ask: Who was the King? **JESUS!** **Say:** John had been telling people that the Messiah was coming. When Jesus arrived, John announced that Jesus was the One! Finally, the people knew His name! John knew that Jesus was the One because God told him (John 1:33). John said, "I give witness that this is the Son of God." (John 1:34) Just like in a courtroom, when a witness tells the truth about what he has seen and heard, John was a witness that Jesus was Messiah, the One chosen by God, the long awaited King.



Optional if time allows: Jesus wanted John to baptize Him (Matthew 3:13). Jesus wanted to show everyone who was watching that John's message was true. John did not feel worthy to baptize Jesus, but he obeyed Jesus' request. John baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. And when they came out of the water, the heavens opened, and the Spirit of God came down like a dove and rested on Jesus (Luke 3:21-22).

A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, and I love Him. I am very pleased with Him." - Matthew 3:17

Right after Jesus was baptized, He went into the wilderness beyond the Jordan River. The devil came to Jesus out in the desert. The devil knew that Jesus was the Messiah sent by God. He tried to tempt Jesus. He wanted to cause Jesus to sin to keep Him from being the perfect King of kings. Jesus was completely sinless, and Jesus was not interested in anything the devil had to offer. Jesus did not sin. Jesus always was and always will be holy - completely perfect, without sin.

Teacher Note: Jesus was not the seed of Adam. He is God's Son, born without a sin nature.

SOME CHOOSE TO FOLLOW THE KING (Mark 1:14-20)



The King had come, but the kingdom was not in place on earth yet. That would happen a few years later when Jesus laid down His life and God raised Him from the dead. It would be at that time that people's sin could be wiped away, and by His grace they could once again do His will. In preparation, Jesus traveled around the countryside telling people that the Kingdom was almost there. He did more than speak. He healed every kind of sickness and diseases to show His godly power (Matthew 4:23). He proved He was more than just an earthly King.

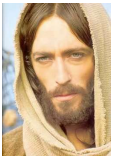
Jesus went into Galilee. He preached God's good news. "The time has come," He said. "The kingdom of God is near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!" 3

- Mark 1:14b-15

We know that the Jewish people had been waiting for the King to come for hundreds of years. Men and women taught their children and grandchildren all about God's promise to send the King. Each generation hoped that their generation would be the one to welcome the King. Finally, He had arrived. The Messiah was at their doorstep. Wouldn't every person run out to greet Him? Wouldn't everyone bow down to praise the King?



Some did. Some left everything they had to follow Jesus. Jesus called some weathered fishermen to follow Him. They left their fishing boats and nets, and went with Jesus (Mark 1:16-20). Jesus called a tax collector. That tax collector left his job and his wealth to follow Jesus (Matthew 9:9-13). Many people found Jesus' invitation irresistible. They didn't know everything about Jesus yet, but they knew He was sent by God. They were drawn to Him, and they followed Him.



Others weren't so sure. This Jesus did not look like the King they had imagined throughout the years. He didn't wear a crown or robes. He didn't come from the capital city. Instead, He came from the unimportant town of Nazareth (John 1:46). He did not command an army. These people could not imagine how this peace-filled man could set them free from their enemies - the Romans. These people did not understand that the kingdom of God was completely different than the world they lived in (John 18:36). Jesus came to set them free in a FAR BETTER way. By following Jesus, they would be set free from a greater enemy than the Romans; they would be set free from their sin. They would enter God's kingdom and have new life. They would gain power through the Holy Spirit to live a life that was more exciting than anything they had ever dreamed of.

Next week, we will hear what Jesus had to say about the kingdom He brought to earth.

Application: We know that God's ways are FAR above our ways. Will you investigate God's plan to bring His Kingdom to earth? Will you put your ideas aside and live your life God's way? Will you put your trust in Jesus, the Messiah, the King of kings, and enter into His kingdom? If you are already a part of the kingdom of God, will you live your life fully following Jesus, so that those who see your life will be drawn to follow your King?

PPT Verse

Key Verse: *"The time has come," (Jesus) said. "The kingdom of God is near. Turn away from your sins and believe the good news!" - Mark 1:15*

PPT Main Point

Main Point: Jesus came to bring the kingdom of God to earth.