

Sermon Shepherd King, Servant King, Sovereign King

Intro/

So, King Charles has had another birthday – 76 – must be careful what we say here, as that's probably still younger than most of us here – and they've made a gold sovereign to mark his birthday – solid gold apparently but made from recycled gold – still expensive though – but I suppose people must be buying these sovereigns or they wouldn't keep making them would they? So, he's 76 and he's reigned for 2 years now – but how well do we know him?

I suppose we know a few things about him, don't we? Like he's into ECO things – he likes homeopathic things – he has his own label for jams or chutneys and things – he's got 2 sons – he's married again – but does anyone here actually know him? Are you friends with him?

No —I thought not!

But there is another King isn't there? A King who is infinitely better than Charles –

A King who has always reigned and who always will reign – a King who is ageless – a King who we don't only know about but we actually Know Him – and He knows us! He knows each one of us by name –

And of course, I'm talking about King Jesus, aren't I? and it's King Jesus we're gonna think about this morning.

1/

Our readings have all shown different aspects of who King Jesus is – He's the Shepherd King, He's the Servant King and He's the Sovereign King.

The reading from the prophet Ezekiel shows how God planned for Jesus to be the Shepherd King all along –

All the Kings and Leaders in the past had taken advantage of their positions and they had ignored the plights of the people – God says that these Kings and Leaders should have been like shepherds over the Israelites – caring for the people and looking out for the people in the same way that shepherds cared for their sheep.

The shepherd that looked after his sheep made sure that they all had food and water – if any were poorly or hurt then the shepherd would carry them and bandage up their wounds – if any wandered off and got lost then the shepherd would go and look for them –

But the Kings and the Leaders of Israel had not done any of this for the people – they had only taken care of themselves – they had been harsh and unkind to the people and now the people were all scattered around the land – and God could see just how much His people needed a Good Shepherd to take care of them –

And so it's into this situation that God speaks through Ezekiel saying that God Himself will rescue His people – that God Himself will go searching for His people and that He will look after them – and He says that just as a shepherd looks after his scattered flock so will He look after His people. And He goes on to say everything that He will do for His people – how He will care for them.

God paints a lovely picture here, doesn't He?

And then several hundreds of years later we hear Jesus proclaiming that He is the Good Shepherd – Jesus is the One whom God had spoken of all those years ago.

Jesus says that He is the Good Shepherd who lays His life down for the sheep – Jesus knows all of His sheep and all of His sheep know Jesus – of course Jesus is talking about the people here again and not literal sheep – so He’s talking about us too. And again, He paints a lovely picture doesn’t He?

Jesus is the Shepherd King – and all through the Gospels we see how He demonstrated this fact – there was the time He went all the way through Samaria to find that woman at the well – He went searching for he –

There was the time He fed all those people up on the mountainside that day because they were hungry –

And there were all the people that He healed – like blind Bartemaeus, or the paralysed man or the men with leprosy –

And then ultimately, he did what a Good Shepherd would do – He lay down His life didn’t He? on that day of crucifixion.

Jesus really is the Shepherd King!

2/

But He’s also the Servant King.

Our reading from Matthew’s Gospel says quite clearly that Jesus came to serve.

And we see how Jesus put that into practice when He washed the disciples’ feet that day –

You remember how that happened don’t you?

They were all reclining at the table for the evening meal which was probably the Passover Meal, when Jesus suddenly gets up and after taking off His outer garments He wrapped a towel round His waist, put some water in the basin and then set about washing and drying everyone’s feet –

This task should have been done by the servant, but for whatever reason – footwashing had not happened that day –

And Jesus finished by saying that He'd set the example here for how He expected His followers to be – to also be people who serve –

I don't know about you, but when I think of Jesus doing menial tasks like that – it's kind of the opposite of what I'd expect –

I mean – here's the creator of the universe – the One who just has to speak and things come into being – and the One who speaks to storms and they stop instantly – and the One who makes 5 loaves and 2 fish feed thousands of people – this is the same person who's doing the job of a servant and who's washing dirty, dusty feet! It doesn't seem to go together somehow, does it?

So Jesus is not only the Shepherd King – But He is also the Servant King –

3/

And then lastly Jesus is the Sovereign King –

In the reading we heard from the Book of Revelation, Jesus says that He is the Alpha and the Omega – the One who is, who was and who is to come –

Jesus has always existed – and He always will exist –

He is the first and the last – the beginning and the end –

In fact the word Alpha and Omega are the first and the last letters of the Greek alphabet – so you could say that Jesus is the A to Z – everything that we need can be found in Jesus!

Jesus really is all that we need!

He's our Shepherd King, He's our Servant King, and He's our Sovereign King

When He was being interrogated by Pilate – Pilate actually asked Jesus, 'Are you the King of the Jews?'

And Jesus said to Pilate, 'You are right in saying that I am a King.'

And He also said that His Kingdom was not of this world – because His Kingdom is a Spiritual Kingdom –

When Jesus was raised from the dead He ascended into heaven and sat down at God's right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under His feet and appointed Him to be head over everything! That's in Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

So Jesus is King of Kings – He's Lord of Lords – He's our great High Priest – there really isn't anyone who is greater than King Jesus.

End/

This Jesus, who cares for people like a shepherd cares for his sheep even to the point of laying down His life for us –

And who takes on the role of a servant –

Is our great and awesome Sovereign King – who reigns for ever and ever –

And one day – we don't know when – King Jesus will come back – and there'll be great trumpet blasts and Archangels singing His praise and Jesus – the everlasting King will appear in all His Glory and everyone will see Him.

Jesus is our Shepherd King

He is our Servant King

And He is our Sovereign King

Amen