



Matthew: New King, New Kingdom

Cell Notes 2020

STUDY 7. Clash of the Kingdoms

Aim. To consider what it means that Jesus was the Messiah in the light of his most violent actions. And to consider where we might need to be 'attacking' systems of the worldly kingdoms that oppress and dominate people.

To Start With:

Who is the most powerful person you have ever met (e.g. royalty, someone in high office)? How did you feel and act around them?

Engaging the Text:

Part 1. Who is the Messiah?

Read Matthew 21.1–17.

1. Matthew references a number of Old Testament scriptures in this short passage. Split into 4 groups and take one of them each, then answer the following Questions.

	<i>If people get stuck</i>
Matthew 21.5 quotes Zechariah 9.9–10	(Sovereign King)
Matthew 21.9 quotes Isaiah 62.11	(Saviour)
Matthew 21.14–17 quotes Psalm 8	(Divine Lord to be praised)
Matthew 21.9 quotes Psalm 118.26	(The Lord is God – i.e. Jesus is God)

- a. What is Matthew communicating about Jesus by using this text?
- b. How would you react if the powerful person you cited in the starting question said this about themselves?

Share your comments back to the group and decide how you would sum up Matthew's perspective.

Part 2. How does the Messiah Act?

Read verses 12–17 again.

2. A. How do you react to verses 12–13? Why?
B. How do you think people at the time reacted?
3. Why do you think Jesus chose to act this way? What is he addressing by his actions? (Isaiah 56.6–8 might help)

N.B. leader's note. The outer court where this action takes place was designated as a place of prayer for Gentiles and women, this was the closest they could physically get to God and the Holy of Holies.



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4. Why do you think Matthew emphasises the groups he does in verse 14–15?
5. Jesus is directly challenging the human kingdom, or system that oppressed the vulnerable and kept them from God. What systems today do you think do the same thing and what might WE need to do to challenge them? (Should we be flipping tables like Jesus did?)

Finally, spend some time in prayer:

- Firstly for those who have power, that they would know God and steward that for justice and the good of all.
- Then for those who are powerless, that they would know God is for them – they are welcome in his kingdom.
- Finally, for ourselves, that we would be courageous to challenge injustice and live for the Kingdom of God, making all know they are welcomed by Jesus, the Messiah, the promised one whose name means 'God to the rescue.'