

# The King Ascended to His Throne – John 18:33-37

**Introduction** – *“For this cause I was born, and for this cause I have come into the world, that I should bear witness to the truth.”* – Jesus. While Pilate waxes on about the philosophical nature of “truth” in the next verse, Jesus was speaking about a very particular truth. Jesus is a king. He was a king. He is the King. He is the King of kings. His kingdom is not of this world and so the Way to His throne was not the way of the world. But Jesus was not in a quandary here. He was not surprised by the double-crossing, the kangaroo court, the betrayals, denials, the sentencing or the method of execution. This was the Way to His throne. But He was to ascend and now has ascended to His throne – and the implications of this are massive.

**The Purpose of His Incarnation** – Jesus was born in order to be king. The prophets had declared this (i.e. Isaiah 9:6-7). David had sung about it (Psalm 2:7-9). Solomon had foreshadowed it (Psalm 72:1-2, 8-11). Paul instructs on it (i.e. Rom 5:18-21, Phil 2:5-11). *“For this cause I have come into the world.”*

**The Purpose of His Atoning, Sacrificial Death** – Jesus went to the cross in order to be king. Jesus Christ was a priest according to the order of Melchizedek (Heb 6:19-20ff) and as this perfect High Priest, He made the perfect, once-for-all sacrifice for our sins (Heb 10:10-12). Being a priest according to the order of Melchizedek means that He is a Priest and a King, like Melchizedek (Heb 7:1). His priesthood and His kingship are inseparable. *“Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out. And I, if I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all peoples to Myself”* (John 12:31-32). God was always sovereign over all His creation, but was pleased to use various intermediate agencies. In the first Adam, man had suffered the loss of his mediatorial reign over the earth to serpent of old. Through His death as a Man, Christ redeemed mankind to become, under His headship, the vice-regent over God’s creation again. *“But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God...”* (Heb 10:12). His death and resurrection brought Jesus to the place of His delivering, rescuing, redeeming kingship.

**The Purpose of His Ascension** – Jesus did not go up to heaven to retire into the bosom of the Father. He *“...sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.”* (Heb 10:12b-13, see also Psalm 110). Jesus was given the mediatorial reign as the New Adam over all He had conquered. *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me...”* (Matt 28:18). It is as though the Father says to the Son and the Son to His apostles, *“Go out into all the earth, find your redeemed, gather them from the four corners of the earth. For this purpose institute ordinances, make laws, issue commands, appoint servants, subordinate whatever exists to the gracious and magnificent ends of My appointment”* (W. Symington). Remember, Christ’s resurrection did not take Jesus to heaven. His ascension brought Him with the clouds to heaven (Acts 1:1-11). His reward is not simply that He gets to be in heaven with the Father now. It is that He reigns over His kingdom from His throne until all His enemies, except death, are manifestly put down (1 Cor 15:25-26).

**The Purpose of His Reign (Session)** – As the conquering King, Jesus is in the process of bringing forth this salvation to the world. They must be reconciled, they must be made willing, and their vile imaginations must be brought down. He does so by His rod of omnipotent strength and by the irresistible scepter of His grace. His Spirit is sent to convict the world, to woo the sinner, and to resurrect dead hearts. We are by nature guilty and unruly and therefore we need to be governed. We need a King. And this efficacious, gracious and life-giving King will rule until *“...the earth shall be as full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”* (Isaiah 9:11).

**See the Victorious King in the Preaching of the Gospel** – Jesus told Pilate that he was right to call Jesus a king. And all that we have learned of Christ’s kingship is that it is victorious in its mission. *“For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone”* (Heb 2:8-9). We are to believe what we cannot yet see.

**This Victorious King is Actively Ruling Amidst the Opposition** – Christ is not Lord of an invisible place not on this earth. He is Lord of your life, your home, your community, your city, your nation and the nations of this world. His reign does provoke resistance at all levels. But Jesus is actively reigning, just as He was while standing before Pilate (John 19:11). That same active King is ruling now.

**The Way to Exaltation in This Kingdom is Always Humiliation** – Jesus stood before Pilate knowing full well what was coming. But He knew where it was going as well. It is no different for the members of His kingdom. The way up is down. The way to the throne is through the grave. Pick up your cross and follow Jesus – to the grave, to the resurrection, to the ascension and universal reign (1 Pet 5:9-10).