

Introduction

Last week we looked at the Son that God sent, and we found that he was a Supernatural Son, a sinless Son, a substitute Son and an all-sufficient Saviour.

This morning we look at the Christ who is LORD.

The mysterious wise men came from the East in search of the one whose birth was to usher in a new era. They came saying, **“Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him” (Matt. 2:2).**

The mention of an unborn babe who was to be a king aroused the jealousy and fear of Herod. The possibility of a rival king stimulated his fear to the extent that he commanded that all male children in the city of Bethlehem below two years of age were to be slain to eliminate this suspected future rival for the throne.

The title “king” in those days had a significance that is almost forgotten in our day. A king exercised authority over a nation of individuals, and according to his wishes, people perished or prospered. Today we give little thought to the title “king,” because there are very few kings who exercise any authority over their subjects.

During this Christmas season it would be profitable if each of us would listen to the angelic announcement of the birth of the Christ and make a positive response to the title of King, or Lord, that was bestowed upon him at the time of his birth. In our sentimental consideration of the babe who was born in Bethlehem to be our Savior, we might miss the title that provides us with a clue to understanding the means by which he is to be the Savior of people.

Few words in our religious vocabulary have suffered a greater loss of original meaning than the word “Lord.” In modern usage this word has been robbed of its original content. We let this title glide across our tongue rather glibly, as if it were nothing more than a given name. In reality it is not a name; it is a title. To use it as a name is to misrepresent its significance.

We need to understand the meaning of “Lord” that we might properly respond to the person whose birth we celebrate at this season of the year. To neglect or to refuse to respond to the implications of this title of the Savior is to deny ourselves of that which he came to accomplish in the lives of people.

The Greek word *kurios* is a word with a wide variety of meanings, each of which has significance for understanding the person and ministry of Jesus Christ.

I. *Kurios* — “lord” — was the normal address of respect in everyday Greek.

The modern term is *sir* in English; *herr* in German; *monsieur* in French; and *senor* in Spanish.

II. *Kurios* — “lord” — was a title of authority.

A. *By this title a distinction was indicated between the master and a slave.* In the ancient world, slavery was a universal practice. The population was divided into freemen and slaves. The slave’s owner was a *kurios* — a master. As such, he could command the energies and efforts of his slaves. He could buy a man as a slave, and he could sell a slave that he owned to someone else. The slave was at the disposal of his *kurios* — his master.

B. ***Jesus used this word to distinguish the slave from his master. “No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon” (Luke 16:13).***

C. *This title Kurios — “Lord,” which the angels ascribed to the babe who was born in Bethlehem, indicated that he was one who would have the right to command.* Many of us have failed to recognize and respond to this fact.

The captain of a ship has the right of command. He is the executive officer over all that transpires on the ship. At his command the ship departs from port, and at his command the ship follows a course to his chosen destiny. The captain is lord.

The commanding officer of a military base is a lord. His authority is respected by both the officers and the enlisted personnel. He has the right of command. The people on the base pattern their lives according to his orders.

The angels said, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Are we guilty of anarchy and rebellion against him whom God ordained to be our Lord and Master?

III. *Kurios* — "lord" — was used to describe absolute possession or ownership.

LK 20:13 "Then the owner of the vineyard said, 'What shall I do? I will send my son, whom I love; perhaps they will respect him.'

He who owned a house, a field, an animal, or a slave was a lord. The word that Jesus used in describing the owner of a vineyard is this word *kurios*.

This word is also used to describe the owner of the colt upon which Jesus made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem

LUKE 19:33 As they were untying the colt, its owners asked them, "Why are you untying the colt?"

In announcing that Jesus Christ is Lord, the angels were actually introducing him to us as the owner of all things.

In John's gospel we read, "***He came unto his own, and his own received him not***" (***John 1:11***). He came to his own people, and they refused to recognize or respond to him. Israel's tragic response to him has been repeated over and over through the centuries. When the Lord is rejected and people are left to their own resources, they lose proper perspective.

IV. *Kurios* — "lord" — was used to denote one who served as a guardian.

In the ancient world, legal rights were denied to women as individuals. To engage in any business or contract or to hold possession of property, a woman had to have a guardian. This guardian could be the husband, a brother, or possibly a more distant relative. By means of a guardian, the rights of the unfortunate were protected.

There is substance for an entire sermon on the thought of Jesus Christ serving as our Guardian, Savior, and Redeemer. He protects us not only from ourselves but also from satanic forces. He is a guardian who has promised to be with us throughout all of our days in all of our ways.

V. *Kurios* — "lord" — was the standard title of the Roman emperors. To be lord implied sovereignty, power, and authority.

A. By means of this title, the emperor issued orders and decrees. Often when a pastor writes to his people he will affix his signature over his title or office as pastor. When a Roman emperor issued an edict, proclamation, or order, he would sign it with his signature and the title "*Kurios*."

B. This title summed up his authority in the same way that a president serves by virtue of his office and a police officer serves by virtue of his oath and uniform. The emperor exercised his authority in more instances and far more extensively than that of any present ruler.

The angelic announcement of the Christ child's birth contained the idea that Christ was to exercise this kind of authority over the souls of people. For us to recognize this may help us to understand why Herod was concerned to the extent that he eliminated the male children in the vicinity of Bethlehem.

VI. In the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, *Kurios* — "Lord" — was regularly used as the name of Israel's God.

In the ascending scale of the various meanings of the word *kurios*, this is the highest. It is used of him whom the Hebrews considered to be their God. We are not reading too much into the angelic announcement when we declare that they were announcing that the eternal God had chosen to enter the realm of human activity through the womb of a virgin. God had chosen to clothe himself in human flesh and dwell among people to disclose the divine love, mercy, grace, power, and purpose for people.

Conclusion

From your heart are you able to say to Jesus, "You are my Master, and I will be obedient to you as a devoted slave"?

Can you honestly say, "You are my Owner, and I will let you occupy every portion and position of my life?"

Can you say, "You are my Guardian upon whom I depend for protection and guidance?"

Are you willing to say to him, "You are my Emperor, and because you loved me enough to die for me, I want to be faithful to you in living a life dedicated to the growth of your kingdom"?

Can you with Thomas say to Jesus, "**My Lord and my God**" (**John 20:28**)? When we make Jesus the Lord of our lives, he becomes our Savior. He brings us an inward assurance of peace and helps us to relate to others in a manner that produces peace among people. That does not mean that we are immune from the day to day problems of living or feel His nearness all the time, indeed there are times when we doubt he is there at all. But He is.

If we are to observe this Christmas in a proper manner, we must yield the sovereignty of our lives to him who alone is Lord.

LUKE 2:11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

Amen