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C1424 – July 2, 2014 – Matthew 4:12-17
The Ministry Of The King

Last time we worked with Matthew 4 and the three temptations. He was being tempted the entire forty days but what's the purpose of Matthew 4 and the three temptations? Why did Matthew include this? To demonstrate the character of the King. Does Jesus have the right character to be the Messianic Davidic King? How do you prove someone's character? By testing. Testing is the positive side of demonstrating the purity and genuineness of someone or something. Who was the author of the testing? The Holy Spirit. He led Jesus into the wilderness to be tested. Jesus yielded to His leading showing us that He was walking in the will of God. What is the negative side of the test? Tempting. Who was the author of the tempting? The devil. He was in the wilderness. So the Spirit is testing and Satan is tempting. What's the difference? Let's make two points to clarify the differences. First, testing seeks to discover the quality or character of the object tested whereas tempting persuades to evil, seeks to destroy or ruin. This is a clear difference. However, what makes the difference difficult to detect is what? They can both be occurring at the same time. That's why we struggle sometimes to distinguish, "Am I being tested or tempted?" It could be both. Clearly both were going on here. What's the second difference? God doesn't tempt; He only tests; Satan does tempt; he's the tempter. So God was testing Jesus' character to demonstrate it was pure and righteous but at the same time Satan was tempting to ruin Jesus. Now to keep the two in perspective "Who was really in charge here?" Who was the aggressor in the confrontation? The Holy Spirit. We play this up because that's not the picture most people have. They envision Satan coming out and attacking Jesus with the temptations, as if there was a possibility that he could be successful and Jesus could fall. That's not at all what happened in my thinking. The Holy Spirit took the fight to Satan. He was the one instigating the fight. He's the one leading Jesus into the wilderness; Satan's turf. And for what purpose? To

demonstrate Jesus' character. The Holy Spirit was demonstrating that Jesus was who He was divinely approved to be at His baptism; the Son of God, King of Israel.

How did we classify the three testings or temptations? There are several ways this has been done. J. Vernon McGee said it was physical, spiritual and psychological; Stanley Toussaint said it was personal, national and universal; Fairbairn said it was sensuous, imaginative and rational; Dwight Pentecost said it was lust of the flesh, pride of life, lust of the eyes. I follow Pentecost's scheme because it harmonizes well with what passage? 1 John 2:15: the tri-fold rubric that shows the three avenues through which temptation can come. Pentecost said, "there are three avenues through which Satan can assault an individual; through "the lust of the flesh," through "the lust of the eyes," and through "the pride of life" (1 John 2:15 KJV). Satan approached Christ through these three channels..."ⁱ I think these were the same three channels that he tempted Eve so you find a parallel there. Whatever is going on there is related to what is going on here and it seems that what was going on there was the kingdom was being handed over by the first Adam so what is going on here is the kingdom is being regained by the second Adam. Pentecost goes on to make a second point about the three avenues of temptation. He says, "On the basis of this threefold temptation, the writer to the Hebrews said He "has been tempted in every way, just as we are" (Heb. 4:15)."ⁱⁱ Was it essential that Christ be tempted in every way as we are? Absolutely. Why? So that as our high priest He would be able to identify with us in our temptations. So that He knows what you and I are going through and be a faithful intercessor. Regardless of what you think, Jesus Christ does know what you are going through. He's been there. What was the first avenue of temptation after the forty days? The lust of the flesh. Jesus was hungry. Is there anything wrong with being hungry? No. It is normal for a human to become hungry. So what was the temptation? To satisfy that sensation by depending upon Himself rather than God. How did Jesus respond to the temptation? By quoting Scripture; the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. The first temptation was defeated by the word of God. So much for the lust of the flesh. The word of God is powerful. What's the second avenue of temptation? The pride of life. Where does Satan physically transport Him for this temptation? To the center of Jewish thought and life. The temple compound. What is He challenged to do? Apply Ps 91. Go ahead Jesus, if you quote Scripture why not follow this Scripture? Surely you are spiritual; if you

are spiritual all you have to do is show that you trust God by hurling yourself down and He'll rescue you. Then everyone will know that you are the Messiah. How did Jesus respond? By quoting Scripture; the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. By the way, what was wrong with Satan's use of Scripture? It was a misuse. The promise did not cover reckless acts. Reckless acts put God to the test. Did God need to be tested? No, Jesus implicitly trusted His Father. So much for the pride of life. The word of God is powerful. What was the third avenue of temptation? The lust of the eyes. For this temptation where did Satan take Him? To a very high mountain. Why? To show Him all the kingdoms of the world. Were they Satan's to give? Yes, he's the god of this world, the prince of the power of the air, he received them from Adam at the Fall and so they are his to give to whomever he wishes. What was the point of temptation? To receive all the kingdoms of the world without having to go to the cross. Was it God's plan for Jesus to receive all the kingdoms of the world? Yes. But it was through worshipping and serving Him not Satan. How did Jesus reply? By quoting Scripture; the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God. So much for the lust of the eyes. Looking at all three together, what does Jesus show us about how to handle temptation? To use Scripture. The question is, "Can we do that?" Do we know the Scriptures well enough to use them with skill in outmaneuvering Satan? Jesus gives us the model and shows that it has been done and can be done. Jesus was a master of the Scriptures.

Finally, we discussed the troublesome issue of *temptability* as it relates to the unique person of Jesus Christ. In other words, we're not dealing here with how Jesus dealt with the temptations, that much is clear; He used the word of God in dependence upon the Spirit of God. Here what we are looking at is the issue of whether the temptations were genuine or not. And if they're not then can Jesus really identify with you in your temptations? Hebrews 4:15 says that it is critical to answer this question in the affirmative because it states that He was tempted in all things as we, referring to the three avenues. So we must affirm that the temptations were genuine. But why is it a troublesome question? Because Jesus was both God and man and James 1:13 says God cannot be tempted. So how then can Jesus as the God-man be tempted? We said to answer the question you can't look at it by merely focusing on one of His natures. Clearly, everyone agrees that if Jesus is looked at only in His divine nature then He was not tempted. On the flipside if Jesus is looked at only in His human nature then He was tempted. But is

the passage looking at Jesus in only one of His two natures, the human nature? No. It's looking at Him as a total person, the two natures in one Person. And when looked at as a total Person we have to affirm that He was tempted but He was not susceptible to the temptations. In other words, *temptability* does not imply *susceptibility*. We used the example from W. G. T. Shedd of a few men attacking an army. It can be done but it can't be successful. In the same way Jesus could be tempted but He could not be defeated. It was impossible for Jesus to sin. So it becomes very clear why the Holy Spirit led Jesus into this situation. Why? To demonstrate that Jesus was who heaven proclaimed Him to be; the Son of God, King of Israel. Israel should have repented; they should have responded properly to their King.

Now that the King's character has been demonstrated we come tonight to the King's public ministry. In Matt 4:12 we see the word **Now** signifying a change in scene. We have been looking at the temptations in the wilderness, traditionally about six miles from the Jordan on the road to Jerusalem. Here we have a change in scene. Jesus, after the temptations, was in Judea. Where's Judea? The southern region all around Jerusalem. In that locale **Jesus heard that John had been taken into custody, so He withdrew into Galilee; 13and leaving Nazareth. He came and settled in Capernaum.** There's a movement here in the verse but what's the overwhelming sense you get from that verse? What did Jesus sense? That His life was in danger. The word **withdrew** can mean "took refuge." Jesus took refuge by moving from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north. We'll get to that big point but before we do Matthew is also doing something else. He's tying two things close together? Note in verse 12 John's taken into custody and in verse 17 Jesus' beginning from that time to preach. So putting those two things together what is Matthew connecting very closely? The end of John's ministry and the beginning of Jesus' ministry. Toussaint says, "Matthew is careful to record his narrative so that it leaves his reader with the impression that John's imprisonment is the occasion for the commencement of the King's ministry."ⁱⁱⁱ Now this is a little bit strange. Why is this strange? Because John in his gospel has Jesus ministering alongside of John for about a year in Judea prior to his being taken into custody. Matthew doesn't even acknowledge that ministry. Toussaint rightly observes, "Matthew quietly passes over one whole year of the Lord's Judean ministry which is recorded in John's gospel."^{iv} So we have a problem and the problem is why would he do that? The answer is to suit his own purposes with his

gospel. No gospel writer is trying to give a simple biography of Jesus and J. Vernon McGee goes so far as to say that it is in vain to try and harmonize the gospels, they are not written to be harmonized. The reason he sets forth is because they are all written for distinct purposes.^v Matthew's purpose is to present Jesus as what? King. Mark's is to present Him as what? Servant. Luke's is to present Him as what? Son of Man. John's is to present Him as who? Son of God. So they all have distinct purposes and in keeping with these purposes they select their material. If Matthew's purpose is to present Jesus as the King then how does commencing Jesus' ministry with the conclusion of John's ministry show Jesus as the King? It was official royal protocol for a king to begin His public work only when the forerunner had completed his. Thus Matthew is in keeping with royal protocol. In his view when John completed His ministry as forerunner Jesus began His public ministry as King.

So we see in verse 12 John is taken into custody. The traditional sight of his imprisonment is on the other side of the Jordan in the prison at Machaerus. Walvoord says John was taken to "the fortress of Machaerus on the east side of the Dead Sea (cf. Lk 3:19-20)." ^{vi} Why was John imprisoned? Because he offended one of the Herod's. Which Herod? Herod Antipas. Who was Herod Antipas? He was one of the sons of Herod the Great. Remember, we saw Herod the Great in Matthew 2. He was "the king of the Jews" when the Magi came looking for the true King of the Jews. The Herod family was a uniquely well-suited family. They knew and understood the political and religious issues in the land and were therefore able to manage the very tenuous circumstances which could easily blow up at any moment. Actually the Herod's were descended from Esau; they were known as the Edomites and when overrun by John Hyrcanus they were forced to convert to Judaism in the time after the Maccabean Revolt. So they were semi-followers of Judaism. Herod even married a girl from the Maccabee family. Her name was Mariamne and she was the most beautiful girl in the land. But he was so paranoid he murdered everyone he suspected was a threat. He even murdered her. But he died in 4BC which allowed Joseph and Mary to bring Jesus back to the land; out of Egypt I called My Son. By this time his son Herod Antipas was in power and when he divorced his wife Phasaelis and married his brother's former wife Herodias, John, being the fearless preacher that he was, condemned him along with all his other bad behavior. So Herod Antipas had him locked up. Furthermore, we might comment that John had a

large following and if things got out of hand between him and his followers and the Pharisees and Sadducees and their followers then Antipas would have a war on his hands and he didn't want those kinds of problems so he just locked him up.

And at the time Jesus heard of it he clearly interpreted it as a threat to Himself because it says **He took refuge in the Galilee**, even though Antipas also ruled over the Galilee he still interpreted it as a safer haven because evidently it was the Pharisees and Sadducees who were so antagonistic to John and were probably feeding information to Antipas and they lived in Jerusalem. So it could be argued that He's escaping the antagonistic Pharisees and Sadducees at this time.

Why would Jesus be threatened by their opposition to John? Because Jesus preached the same message as John. Note Jesus' message in 4:17. "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." What was John's message in 3:2? Identical message, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." If the Pharisees and Sadducees didn't like John and his message do you think they would like Jesus and his message? Not likely. And was it time for Jesus to be arrested and go to the cross and be crucified? No. So Jesus realized it was in His best interests to take refuge in the Galilee (John 4:1ff). Even though Herod Antipas ruled both regions it was still time to get away from the Pharisees and Sadducees who had their headquarters in Jerusalem.

Now this reminds us of what Matthew showed us in seed form in Matt 2. What does Matthew start tracing in Matthew 2? That the leadership is rejecting Jesus. In Matthew 2, at the birth, the magi came looking for the King of the Jews. Herod calls in the chief priests and scribes to identify where the Messiah is to be born. How do they respond? They can quote chapter and verse but are they interested in trotting six miles down the road to see Him? No. Instead it's Gentiles that are interested in seeing Him. That was the first indication that the leadership are not going to accept Jesus as the Messiah and it's just a glimpse but it sets the trend in motion that will lead to His death. In Matthew 3 what do we find out about the leadership? John is baptizing and the Pharisees and Sadducees come out to him to be baptized. How does John respond when he sees them? "You brood of vipers, who warned you of the wrath to come." He evidently knew they were not interested in repenting. They thought they were prepared for the kingdom,

they had Abraham as their father. How did John respond to that? God is able to raise up from these stones children to Abraham. So twice we've already seen the leadership are rejecting and in the wake of that rejection there's a sense in which you gather that somehow Gentiles are going to come into the picture. And what are we seeing here in Matt 4? More resistance from the leadership. John was imprisoned, probably under the gossip of the leadership. So by this point the rejection is becoming so obvious that the situation is endangering the Messiah's life before His time has come and so He's retreating. From where to where? From Judea, the heart of the Jewish world into the Galilee where you find a mixture of Jews and Gentiles. Now there are a couple of things we have to keep straight here and I'll just lay them out then we can develop them. One is that there's a foreshadowing of Jesus ministry extending to Gentiles. That's nothing new, we've already seen that as early as Matt 2. But the second is that we can't allow that to blind us to the fact that He is still ministering exclusively to Israel. Jesus is not starting a ministry to the Gentiles. Gentiles will come into the picture but the main issue is Israel and the kingdom message.

But let's point out some general things about the **Galilee**. Jesus took refuge in the Galilee and the Galilee is the key to the whole passage! Were there Jews in the Galilee? Yes. Were there Gentiles in the Galilee? Yes. So it's not Jew or Gentile, it's Jew and Gentile. This creates an interesting situation. Note that verse 13 alerts us that Jesus goes where first? To **Nazareth**. What was Nazareth? It was His hometown. Matthew doesn't give us commentary on Jesus' ministry at Nazareth. He skips right on by that but the Gospel of Luke reports that He was going around the Galilee teaching in all the synagogues and everyone was highly impressed with Him. Then He went to his hometown of Nazareth and what did He do in the synagogue there? When the time came for the reading the attendant brought Him the Isaiah scroll and He read the very famous passage of Isa 61:1-2. He actually stopped in the middle of the verse so he did not quote verse 2b, just 2a. What's Isa 61:1-2a? The prediction that the Messiah would proclaim the good news of the kingdom to Israel. So He reads this, closes the book, gives it to the attendant and says, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing." In other words, I'm the Messiah and the kingdom of God is at hand. Did they accept His message? They were skeptical. Some said, "Isn't this the son of Joseph?" If He was the King then He has to be authenticated as the King. How could the King be authenticated? By signs, miracles and wonders. They wanted to

see a sign but the story goes that Jesus wouldn't do a sign and so they got angry and what did they try to do to Him? Throw Him off a cliff. So here again we've got rejection and His life is in danger so he leaves Nazareth, a prophet is not welcome in his hometown and Matthew passes all that by but he mentions that **he came and settled in Capernaum** meaning this became His city (Matt 9:1). He lived here with Peter in Peter's mother's house. And you can go there today and we will go there next year, there are some very interesting remains at Capernaum.

So **Capernaum** is going to be His base of operation for His entire ministry. This city is the key to the passage. Note the little bit that Matthew tells us about the town. Where was **Capernaum**? It was **by the sea**. What sea? The **sea of Galilee**. Actually it's a lake. It's a freshwater lake with freshwater fish and those who go to Israel with us next year will see this lake and visit **Capernaum** which is by the lake, very near where the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. So you want to become familiar with **Capernaum**. It's located on the N side of the lake of Galilee. Jesus is going to stay in this area. He's going to go out from this little town and His words and works are going to spread over the whole world. So if you ever think that you need to go to a big city and a big church to make a big influence think again. Jesus hardly ever left this little area of Galilee and yet virtually everyone on earth has heard of Jesus Christ.

What else does Matthew tell us? That it was **in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali**. What are **Zebulun and Naphtali**? Two of the twelve tribes. At the time of Joshua and the Conquest the land was divided into tribal divisions and by this time Capernaum was in the region of the land allotment of these two tribes. What's the significance of these two tribes and their land? As you can see from the prophecy below these two areas were known together as "**GALILEE OF THE GENTILES—**." Why did they call them that? We already said Jews lived there. But what's unique about the tribe of Zebulun is that they never drove out the Canaanite Gentiles. Judges 1:30 points this out. What about Naphtali? The land allotment for Naphtali was the most beautiful, scenic and productive of all the tribes. So guess who loved to move into Naphtali? Gentiles. So it was because of the relatively high Gentile populations in these two tribal allotments that together made them known as "**GALILEE OF THE GENTILES—**." Did it mean the ministry was to the Gentiles? No. That's the conclusion I was trying to get you to avoid earlier.

Yes, in hindsight you could say that it's an indication that Jesus is going to extend His ministry to Gentiles but at this time the kingdom offer to Israel is still on the table, verse 17, the kingdom is "at hand. So Jesus is not at this time extending His ministry to Gentiles; He's not opening the door to them. You have to wait till Matt 16 to see that; that's when there is mentioned this thing called the Church. But the Church isn't brought into the picture until the kingdom is no longer "at hand."

But let's look at the Galilee again and Capernaum in particular as far as strategy in ministry. The **Galilee**, and in particular **Capernaum**, was a commercial region. You've got all this Jewish produce; fish, fruits, vegetables, and you want to export your product so you can make money, what do you need in order to export? Roads. You've got to have major trade routes to attract customers and export your products? Did **Capernaum** have trade routes? You bet. It was the central commercial city in the region. Farrar says, and this is an extensive quote but it puts together everything we've said about the Galilee. He's relating how Jesus moved His ministry base to Capernaum. Why did he do that? "Not, however, for its beauty only, but because of its centrality, and its populous activity. It was admirably adapted for that ministry which fulfilled the old prophecy of Isaiah, that "the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles," should "see a great light;" and that to them "who sat in the region and shadow of death" should "light spring up." He's going to emphasize the Gentiles aspect; I'm saying I think that's wrong. Jesus is not starting a ministry to Gentiles. But nonetheless his quote has some valuable insight. He continues, "For Christ was to be, even in His own lifetime, "a light to lighten the Gentiles," as well as "the glory of His people Israel." And people of many nationalities dwelt in and encompassed this neighborhood, because it was "the way of the sea." "The cities," says Josephus, "lie here very thick; and the very numerous villages are so full of people, because of the fertility of the land...that the very smallest of them contains above 15,000 inhabitants." He adds that the people were active...cultivating every acre of their rich and beautiful soil. No less than four roads communicated with the shores of the lake." See, here you get to the trade routes and it's not just goods that travel down trade routes; it's ideas. "One led down to the Jordan valley on the western side; another, crossing a bridge at the south of the lake, passed through Peraea to the fords of Jordan near Jericho; a third led, through Sepphoris, the gay and rising capital of the Galilee, to the famous port of

Accho on the Mediterranean Sea; a fourth ran over the mountains of Zebulun to Nazareth, and so through the plain of Esdraelon to Samaria and Jerusalem. Through this district passed the great caravans on their way from Egypt to Damascus; and the heathens who congregated at Bethsaida Julius and Caesarea Philippi must have been constantly seen in the streets of Capernaum. In the time of Christ it was, for population and activity, “the manufacturing district” of Palestine, and the waters of its lake were ploughed by 4,000 vessels of every description, from the war-vessel of the Romans to the rough fisher-boats of Bethsaida, and the gilded pinnacles form Herod’s palace. Ituraea, Samaria, Syria, and Phoenicia were immediately accessible by crossing the lake, the river, or the hills.”^{vii} Isn’t that remarkable? The town was strategically chosen by Jesus for His kingdom message to go out. Loffreda, one of the chief archaeologists of Capernaum agrees saying, “Firstly, Capharnaum was a crossroad of primary importance, being along the Beth-shan – Damascus highway; whereas Nazareth was a mountainous and isolated hamlet. Secondly, Capharnaum was sufficiently apart from the big centres and especially from Tiberias where Herod Antipas had set his capital. In that way Jesus was able to spread his messianic message to many persons without running too soon into trouble with the political and religious leaders.”^{viii} So the two points are first, we see a foreshadowing of Jesus’ ministry being extended to the Gentiles due to the leadership’s rejection of the kingdom message,^{ix} but second, the kingdom message is still on the table and Israel still has her shot. Both are going on and we don’t know how much Jesus knew but he certainly knew that the rejection level had just bumped up a notch at the arrest of John.

And why did this happen? Why, according to Matthew did this take place? Verse 14, **This was to fulfill what was spoken through Isaiah the prophet.** What did Isaiah prophesy? Where did Matthew get this quote? Isa 9:1-2. So evidently Jesus’ move to Capernaum in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali reminded Matthew of Isa 9:1-2. What’s Isa 9:1-2 all about? **“THE LAND OF ZEBULUN AND THE LAND OF NAPHTALI, BY THE WAY OF THE SEA, BEYOND THE JORDAN, GALILEE OF THE GENTILES— ¹⁶“THE PEOPLE WHO WERE SITTING IN DARKNESS SAW A GREAT LIGHT, AND THOSE WHO WERE SITTING IN THE LAND AND SHADOW OF DEATH, UPON THEM A LIGHT DAWNED.”** Now contextually, Isa 9 is referring to the fact that these two tribes were under the domination of Gentiles but a time was coming when they would be freed from Gentile dominion. When will it be freed from

Gentile dominion? In the kingdom. It's a kingdom passage. And Isaiah's view is that when the Jews are living under Gentile dominion they're walking in darkness. They're having to live under Gentile powers and its oppression and bloodshed. So in the kingdom they'll be delivered from the darkness and brought into the light. So what is Matthew's point? Did the kingdom come? Did the deliverance from Rome come to those in the Galilee? No. What did come was the King who was to bring about the deliverance. He is a light and John 1, of course, amplifies that Jesus is the light of the world. But the main point is that Matthew is making an application of Isa 9:1-2 to a different situation. The kingdom had not come but the King had come and what message did the King bring? Verse 17, **repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand**. So the fulfillment of Isa 9:1-2 in its literal sense was **at hand** but an application was already being made of it since the King had come into that region. The kingdom itself would only come if the nation did what? **Repent**.

That's verse 17 and what's the most striking thing about verse 17? That the message Jesus began to preach at this time, royal protocol, was identical to the message John preached. What did John and Jesus mean by **the kingdom of heaven**? Very vital to understand. People read that today and they think, hmm, kingdom of heaven must mean kingdom in heaven. Why does Matthew use kingdom of heaven? Because every other gospel writer uses kingdom of God. So why does Matthew differ? Because he's writing to Jews and Jews were especially sensitive to using the name G-d. You didn't just drop that name casually; you used it sparingly. But parallels with the other gospel writers show that it is equivalent to the expression kingdom of God. What do these two phrases mean? They do not mean that the kingdom rule would be exercised in heaven, they meant that the authority to rule would come from God in heaven. But the sphere of rule would be on the earth. How do we know that? Where do we get our concept of the kingdom being on earth? From the covenants! We go back to the covenants, especially the Abrahamic and Davidic. Matt 1:1, Jesus, son of David, son of Abraham. Always go back to the covenants. The kingdom had been promised to Abraham as involving a land and a seed through whom would come blessing. When the people asked for a human king the covenant promise came to rest upon David; David's house and David's throne and David's kingdom through Solomon would be established forever. Where is the promised Davidic throne? Is it on earth or is it in heaven? It's on earth! What would we have to do to the covenant in order to move the throne to heaven? Spiritualize it; allegorize

it! And that blows my interpretive principles because then I can do whatever I want with the language, I've lost the controls. So I have to go back and say what is the Davidic covenant and the throne and I trace that down through the OT and the throne is left vacant at the Exile so I expect that it is going to be filled. I expect the Davidic house to be re-instated, I expect the King to rule in the city of Jerusalem over the people of Israel. But for the kingdom to actually arrive is contingent on what? Israel's repentance. And what is John's message? What is Jesus' message? **Repent**. They know that the kingdom can't come apart from repentance. The Jewish people need to have a change of mind. At this time the kingdom was uniquely **at hand**, meaning what? It was near; not that it was here. NEAR! Near only. How was it near? Because the King who would bring in the kingdom was here. All that was necessary was for the nation to repent, then the kingdom would have come.

And lastly, in verse 17 note that Matthew identifies this as **the time** when Jesus began to preach this message, that is to relate back to verse 13, from the time that he heard John was in custody and took refuge in Capernaum he began to preach this message. This was the royal protocol, once the forerunner completed his ministry then the King's formal ministry began.

In conclusion, what have we seen? In verse 12 Matthew shows that Jesus' life was threatened when he heard that John had been taken into custody by Herod Antipas. The leadership of Israel were antagonistic to John and would have been antagonistic to Jesus too since He came with the same message. Therefore he took refuge in the Galilee. Antipas ruled this region too but the leadership of Israel was centered in Jerusalem. In verse 13 he went to Nazareth, His hometown but was rejected there and so He came and settled in Capernaum, which is on the northern shores of the Lake of Galilee in the region of the tribal land allotments given to Zebulun and Naphtali, two regions historically associated with Gentiles. This city was a major trade center of the world and was strategically chosen as a base of operation for the kingdom message to go throughout Israel. In verse 14 Matthew saw it as an applicational fulfillment of Isaiah 9:1-2 which predicted the judgment of Gentile dominion over the Galilee and ultimate freedom of the Jews in the kingdom. Jesus' entrance into this region was similar since He was the King of the kingdom to come. Yet in verse 17 the coming of the kingdom was conditional on Israel's repentance. Thus Jesus came preaching this message

to the Jews. In hindsight we see that the rejection by the leadership was paving the way for His ministry to go to Gentiles as well.

ⁱ Pentecost, *Words and Works*, p 105.

ⁱⁱ Pentecost, *Words and Works*, p 105.

ⁱⁱⁱ Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 81.

^{iv} Toussaint, *Behold the King*, p 82.

^v See J. Vernon McGee, *Thru The Bible: Matthew through Romans*, p 24.

^{vi} Walvoord, *Thy Kingdom Come*, p 37.

^{vii} Farrar quoted by Pentecost, *Words and Works*, p 141-42.

^{viii} Stanislao Loffreda, *Recovering Capharnau*, p 68-69.

^{ix} Pentecost, *Words and Works*, p 142.

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