

## **Your King Is Coming.**

Text: Mat 21:1-9

Suggested Hymns:

18, 491, 10, 5, 511

1) The Coming Of Our King Is A Fact

2) It Means Great Blessings For U

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is Matthew 21:1-9, <sup>1</sup> *Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup> saying to them, “Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me. <sup>3</sup> “And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.”*

<sup>4</sup> *All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: <sup>5</sup> “Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, Lowly, and sitting on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.’”*

<sup>6</sup> *So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. <sup>7</sup> They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. <sup>8</sup> And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup> Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: “Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!” (NKJV)*

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Most of you, in coming here today, were aware that a new church-year is beginning and were giving some thought on this point. With the first Sunday in Advent a new church-year opens.

We have a civil year and an ecclesiastical year. On New Year’s Day, which ushers in the civil year, we are thinking largely of our position in this world, our life here on earth, our daily bread, our duties as citizens, etc.

But when we enter upon a new church-year, our thoughts are exclusively concerned with matters that pertain to our spiritual well-being. We contemplate our position in the kingdom of God, the invitation to use the means of grace, the many Sundays and festivals that will come with their services, each one like an oasis in a dry land.

With things of spiritual importance, things that have to do with our relation to God and the Saviour, let us occupy ourselves today as we ponder the old, but always new Advent message of the text, *Your King is Coming*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

### **1. The Coming Of Our King Is A Fact.**

Advent means coming, or approaching. In speaking of the advent of Jesus, we distinguish three comings of His. One lies in the past, one in the present, and one in the future. The first is His coming in the flesh, when He assumed our humanity. The second is His spiritual coming, through the means of grace. The third is His coming on the Day of Judgment.

Today we think particularly of the coming of our Lord which takes place in the present time, His spiritual coming. Let us see, that here, we are dealing with a great fact.

The text speaks of the coming of Jesus into Jerusalem. It was a remarkable coming, a great advent, when Jesus, amid the shouts of the people, rode into the royal city of Jerusalem on a humble animal, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah, ***Behold, your King is coming to you.***

One thing is plain and really requires no long discussion, namely, that coming into Jerusalem is a solid, historical fact. All four evangelists relate it, all four dwell on it with a great amount of detail. Their accounts are not only true, judged by historical standards, but they are inspired, for these men wrote those things that the Holy Spirit was teaching them. Hence we may rest assured that the events recorded in our text actually took place.

Let this remind us that the coming of Jesus today is also a reality. True, we cannot see it. There is no visible procession, with Jesus at the head, drawing near, so that we could feast our eyes on Him and, seeing Him, hail Him as our King.

For this reason some people call all references to the spiritual coming of Jesus far-fetched talk. They speak of an illusory mysticism, of which we are said to be guilty, and they are wondering that people in the twentieth first century can take interest in something that no one can see or observe or photograph or study by means of a microscope and chemical analysis.

However, many things are true even though they lie beyond the reach of our senses. All the great realities of our soul-life and of the spirit-world can be thought of here. Let us pray to God that we may be kept from the folly of those people who accept nothing but that which they can see.

Children enjoy their father's and their mother's love. But you cannot find this love in the human heart if you search for it by means of scientific instruments, dissect the body, analyse the brains, etc. Still we know that love is there.

That there is such a thing as the coming of Jesus at the present time we know from indisputable evidence, namely, from His own Word. To His disciples Jesus says in Matthew 28:20, *and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world.* It was at the time when Jesus was withdrawing from them His visible presence that He spoke these words. The meaning is: *Do not be sad when you see Me depart. I shall be with you at all times.* And that this was meant to hold good for following generations as well as for themselves, Jesus indicates by adding, *“even to the end of the world.” “I will come again,”* Jesus says in the Gospel according to St. John.<sup>1</sup>

Furthermore Jesus states in Matthew 18:20,<sup>20</sup> *“For where two or three are gathered together in My name, I am there in the midst of them.”* In Revelation 3:20 we read these beautiful words, *“Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.* Thus the coming of Christ as taking place today is witnessed to by unmistakable statements in the Scriptures.

Invisible it is, but real. It is a coming to our soul. Jesus gets in touch with our spirit and thus establishes a connection with us. We cannot understand it, but a fact it is nevertheless.

But note that it is a coming in the Word and in the Sacraments. There is an error against which we have to be warned, namely, that our Lord Jesus will come in some ineffable way, without any means.

Christ does not have to use a bridge in order to reach us, people have argued. Since He is almighty, He can approach us without a connecting medium. On this point there has been one of the great doctrinal debates in the Protestant Church. The view that Jesus will come without any particular means was held by Zwingli and Calvin and their followers.

This view the Lutheran Church has always opposed. It does not deny the almighty power of Christ and His ability to approach us in many different ways, but it holds that here the promises of Christ must be considered and that, according to these promises, His advent is accomplished through definite means, namely, through His Word and the Sacraments.

You may ask me for proof. There are many passages in the Scriptures that we can think of. In the gracious words of Jesus quoted before from Revelation, Jesus says, ***If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him.*** You have to hear the voice, the Word, of Jesus. If you do so, then there is contact between you and Him.

Of Baptism, St. Paul says that as many as are baptised into Christ have put on Christ. We see that in Baptism the closest intimacy with Jesus is established. You come as near to Him as you do to a garment that you put on.

Of the Lord's Supper we know that in it Jesus gives us Himself, His body and His blood. How can any closer communion with Him be conceived of? The Scripture evidence, then, teaching and confirming that Jesus comes to us in the means of grace, is very clear.

And there is no evidence that Jesus will come to us in some other way. Whoever holds the view that Jesus will approach him by a different road is following his own fancy instead of the clear statements of the Lord.

But how insignificant a coming! some one says. Merely in the words of the Bible, merely in the simple ceremonies of Baptism and of the Lord's Supper? That seems incredible!

Friend, think of the coming of Jesus to Jerusalem. Of the many thousands who were gathered there on that day hardly one, if asked beforehand as to the way in which the King of Israel would be likely to enter the portals of the ancient royal city, would have said that He would come riding on the foal of an ass.

Almost every person would have expected much pomp and splendour with the entry of a king. How different, therefore, was the advent of this King from the way the multitude expected it to be! Let us here be reminded that God's ways are not our ways. God says Isaiah 55:8-9, <sup>8</sup> *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,” says the LORD.* <sup>9</sup> *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts.* God often uses insignificant means to accomplish His great purposes. Instead of being offended, let us praise Jesus for coming to us as He does.

## **2. It Means Great Blessings For Us.**

Blessings were expected from Jesus when He entered Jerusalem as King. The multitudes would not have gone out to meet Him with songs and palm-branches if they did not have the hope that His advent meant great things for them. What blessings they looked forward to we can gather from a number of passages.

In their opinion the King whom they were welcoming would free their people from the despicable Roman yoke, re-establish the ancient kingdom of David and Solomon, and usher in a golden political era for Israel, making it evident to the whole world that the descendants of Abraham were chosen by God to be at the head of all nations.

A glance at the procession headed by Jesus might have shown these people how mistaken they were. Jesus came in a lowly manner, riding on a humble beast of burden, surrounded by a handful of uninfluential, poor followers.

All this showed that Jesus did not come to overthrow the government of the Romans and to establish Himself as the political king of the Jews. His appearance ought to have dispelled the thought that Jesus approached to bring blessings through war and bloodshed, through the gathering of legions of soldiers, and the inauguration of a splendid outward administration.

But still their greeting was justified, although in a sense not understood by them. Blessings Jesus was bringing, blessings far greater than the people who greeted Him knew. The multitude addressed Him as the Son of David. ***“Hosanna to the Son of David!*** That was the title of the Messiah, the Christ, which term means “the Anointed.”

The whole New Testament testifies that Jesus is this person, the anointed King of Israel. To understand what blessings this King is bestowing, you have to read Isa. 53, where Jesus is spoken of at length. There we read, ***“Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows.”*** Jesus brings to His subjects freedom from sin, reconciling them to God. How gloriously is all this spoken of in the New Testament!

We may hear this message in the words of Jesus, found in Matthew 11:28-30, <sup>28</sup> ***“Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”*** <sup>29</sup> ***“Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”*** <sup>30</sup> ***“For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”***

Jesus is here speaking as a King, for He makes mention of a yoke. But it is a light yoke. To have Jesus as King means to have rest, peace, and joy, because He has satisfied divine justice, which had to condemn us on account of our sins.

The hosanna cry must be noted. The meaning of the people is: *Hosanna we sing to the Son of David.* They offer Jesus the homage found Psalm 118:25-26, <sup>25</sup> ***Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.*** <sup>26</sup> ***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.*** This is a distinct recognition of Jesus as the Messiah. Hosanna means, “Furnish help.” And help Jesus is giving, help against our most violent enemies, sin, death, and the devil. The situation today is the same as in those days.

People feel that they are in distress and want, but just what constitutes the source of all their trouble most people do not realise. They are like children who are crying without being able to tell just what is hurting them. Be assured that here comes the King who is offering, not a superficial remedy, but a means curing our ailment at the very root.

Perhaps some one will say, *I can understand that Jesus brought peace when He entered Jerusalem because He came to suffer and die for our sins. But what is He offering to us nowadays? Do we still need His coming? Do we still require such a King?*

O friend, you might just as correctly argue that, since we have a constitution guaranteeing to us rights and privileges, we no longer need a prime minister.

It is equivalent to saying that a full-grown man no longer needs food and drink. We have spiritual wants every day, and they must be supplied. We sin daily and therefore need forgiveness - our King brings it today as He comes to us in His Gospel. We need the Holy Spirit - our King bestows that heavenly gift when He enters our heart. We need strengthening of our faith - our King comes for that very purpose.

We need warm, strong impulses to do that which is right and good - our King plants in us this willingness and eagerness to walk in the paths of God, to do what is acceptable in His sight. We need comfort in dark hours - the King comes and gently whispers to our drooping spirits and binds up the broken heart. We need courage to withstand temptations - the King makes us strong, so that we can resist the attacks of the enemy.

Let us, then, welcome our King today, gratefully accepting His blessings. And not only today, but throughout the church-year on which we are entering let the shout go up from our hearts, ***“Hosanna to the Son of David!”*** May we all become more diligent in meeting Jesus when He is standing ready to bless us, namely, in the means of grace! Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> John 14:3