

Come, See In The Manger Our Saviour And King.

Text: Titus 2:11-14

1) Come, See There Our Gracious Saviour

Suggested Hymns:

2) Come, See There Our Glorious King

34, 50 ALHB, 33, 288, 627

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 Titus 2:11-14, ¹¹ *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, ¹² teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, ¹³ looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for Himself His own special people, zealous for good works.* (NKJV)

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

Dear friends in Christ,

We have just sung:¹

COME hither, ye faithful, triumphantly, sing;
Come see in the manger your Saviour and King!
To Bethlehem hasten with joyful accord;
O come ye, come hither to worship the Lord!

That is where we all wish to gather today, around the manger in Bethlehem; yes, we want to invite every one to come with us. We know very well that we do not need not make a trip to that town in person.

The manger is there, no more than it is anywhere else, and the Babe is there, no more than He is anywhere else. And yet we sing: *“Come hither, ye faithful, “Come see in the manger your Saviour and King,”* because we want to see the King in the manger.

Today we wish to gaze upon Him. We wish to see Him by faith. Many people place a little manger with a figure of a babe beneath the Christmas tree.

Others have transparent decorations representing the scene of Jesus' birth in the stable of Bethlehem. That helps them to think about the precious Babe.

But the best way to see the Christ-child today in the manger is to see Him by faith in the Word, in the Word of Scripture. It is idle to regret that we could not be in Bethlehem when Jesus was born. Let us rather rejoice that we may see Him as God shows Him to us today here in His precious Word.

Our theme is *“Come, See in the Manger Our Saviour and King.”* May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. Come, See In The Manger Our Gracious Saviour.

We are not invited simply to listen to a message. Certainly there is a message; for today again we hear the angelic message which came to the shepherds: *“Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹ For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”*²

Today again we have the message of the fulfilment of all the prophecies of which the star reminded the Wise Men from the East. Oh, if there were no more than these messages, that would be glory, that would be joy!

But there is more. The shepherds were led to see the sight. They saw the Babe in the manger. It took the Wise Men some time to come from the East. They travelled a great distance and overcame difficulties and obstacles. By this time Jesus was a young Child and they were living in a house in Bethlehem.

We read in Matthew 2:11, *“¹¹ And when they [the Wise Men] had come into the house, they saw the young Child with Mary His mother, and fell down and worshiped Him. And when they had opened their treasures, they presented gifts to Him: gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”*

And likewise we also are not only to hear a message, but we are to see the Babe in the manger. Our text tells us expressly that *“the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.”*

Not only to the shepherds, not only to Joseph and Mary, not only to the Wise Men, not only to the disciples who together with John saw the Word made flesh and saw His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace

and truth, has appeared. No, to us also this grace, the Saviour, is appearing. We also are to see Him, to see Him with the eyes of faith.

Why, even the children of God in the Old Testament saw Him. Of Abraham, Jesus states: ⁵⁶ *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad.*”³ Daniel in far-away Babylon declares: ¹³ *“I was watching in the night visions, And behold, One like the Son of Man, Coming with the clouds of heaven! He came to the Ancient of Days, And they brought Him near before Him. ¹⁴ Then to Him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, That all peoples, nations, and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, Which shall not pass away, And His kingdom the one Which shall not be destroyed.”*⁴

Micah, the prophet, saw the Prince of the house of David going forth from Bethlehem, the city of David. Together with them and the saints of all ages, we today, see the Babe in the manger.

Oh, that all the world would come with us to look upon Him, not merely to receive a message from Him, but to receive the Saviour Himself! *“Come, see in the manger our Saviour!”*

Come, see Him in the light of the entire New Testament revelation. The believers of the Old Testament also saw Jesus in the word of prophecy; but much of the image was still indistinct, much was not made known to them. Even those who, like the shepherds, and others, who saw Jesus in the manger in Bethlehem, and the Wise Men who saw Him as a young Child in a house could not see Him as we see Him, we, who have the entire New Testament.

What a Saviour He is! God made manifest in the flesh, or, as our text calls Him: *“our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,”* or as the Gospels declare again and again: *“conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,”* coming to us in lowliness and poverty, in a stable, as a little baby. Come, see in the manger omnipotence and weakness in this one Baby Jesus!

Why so lowly? Why in such humility? Why in such weakness? It is to tell us that He has not come to force us into subjection, not to punish us because of our sins, not even to humiliate us because of the consequences of our sins which we suffer on this earth and which we deserve.

No; He came to be one of us, He partakes of our flesh and blood. He came to be one of us, He partakes of our suffering. He came to be one of us, He partakes of our humiliation. He came to be the weakest, the poorest, the most distressed of us all, as our text states, “*who gave Himself for us.*”

Not even a poor village inn had a place for Him. Out in the stable He was born of a poor mother. She wrapped Him in swaddling-clothes and laid Him in a manger. Poor shepherds from the field were His first visitors.

What words could be more appropriate as we look into the face of this lovely, pure, and holy Child, God’s Child, God’s only-begotten Son, than these words of our text: “*the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men*” and “*who gave Himself for us*”?

The little Babe smiles up at you to tell you that He has come to take upon Himself that which is the worst part of you — your sins; to suffer for you your greatest pain and distress and humiliation — the punishment of your sin.

Indeed, we Christians should be thankful even for this, that God has given us His Law; for without His Law we would fall into all manner of such foolish, ruinous, and shameful practises as we see among the heathen.

But this revelation of the Child of God in the manger is immeasurably greater and grander even than the Law — it is the grace of God. It tells us that for His Child’s sake God forgives us our transgressions of His holy Law. “*O come ye, come hither, come see in the manger our Saviour!*”

And before we leave the manger, let us most emphatically note the words of our text: “*the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.*” Is not that a beautiful version of what the angel said to the shepherds: “*I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people,*” to all people, none excluded?

You are to have it. Your children are to have it. I am to have it. Every one of us is to have it. I am not concerned what your Christmas presents are, for here is one greater than the best of them all for each one of you. Today this Babe in the manger calls to all helpless ones on this earth, to all sorrowing ones, to all, whoever they be, “*Come unto Me, come unto Me. My name is Jesus, Helper, Saviour.*” O come, then, let no one stand aside; come here and see in the manger our Saviour.

The hymnist writes,⁵

Come then, let us hasten yonder;
Here let all,
Great and small,
Kneel in awe and wonder.
Love Him who with love is yearning;
Hail the star
That from far
Bright with hope is burning.

2. Come, See In The Manger Our Glorious King.

But wait, you have not seen everything. Even if you have seen the Saviour, you are to look again and see more. You are to see our glorious King.

At the sound of the word “king” a misgiving may enter our hearts. The words king and ruler, may disturb some people. But do not lose sight of the fact that there is ruling and — ruling.

There was Pharaoh who ruled the Jews in Egypt. That was a horrible rule. In the Christmas readings⁶ we hear of Caesar Augustus. That rule of the Romans also was a hard and galling rule, causing pain, sorrow, distress, much injustice, much suffering, even the death of thousands.

And today there is, and must be, a harsh rule in our prisons. And worst of all, think of the rule of wicked passions and of sin entralling people, driving them to their own ruin. No wonder people have thoughts of fear when they hear the words king and ruler.

These words suggest so much selfishness, lovelessness, injustice, tyranny, that the very sound of them may alarm us.

But this King’s rule is entirely different. It is like that of a loving father ruling his family with wisdom and with kindness. His wife and children cheerfully say, *“Dad is the king of our home. God preserve that king to us!”* Yes, that is different!

And better still, what a precious rule that is when good thoughts, holy emotions, purity, and righteousness have taken hold of us and rule us! O what a blessing if one can actually say as Joseph said: *“How, then, can I do this great*

wickedness and sin against God?”!⁷ No, I can’t do this great wickedness, my heart is ruled and controlled by God’s purity. God rules in my heart.

He does not rule from without, forcing and driving me. He rules from within. He has transformed my heart. He rules in me, after the new man at least, as He ruled in Adam and Eve before they fell into sin.

We are servants of righteousness because we want to be. That is the kind of King that is lying in the manger. *“Come and see in the manger your ... King!* Come, worship the Lord. He is worthy to be our King. He is the Lord from heaven.

Not a mere man, driving us according to his interests and his selfishness, but the Good Shepherd, ruling the sheep for the sheep’s good and welfare. Come and see the King. He is going to drive out of you ungodliness and worldly lusts.

Is there one among us today who wants to be an unbeliever, wants to be a mere savage, wants to be without God, wants to be without this Christmas-message? “No,” say we, “we want to be ruled by God. Oh, if we could only be more godly, if our faith could only be stronger, if our love to God would only be more devoted, warmer!”

Very well, then, come here, see in the manger the King, who is not only to teach you in words, but teach you so that you will love goodness and be able also to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts.

This King does not only wish to tell us what kind of people we ought to be, He wants to make us such people as we ought to be. That is the nature of His teaching. He has not come simply to tell us that we ought to clean our hearts, He has come to cleanse them for us, He has come to purify us.

Come and see in the manger your ... King. What a wonderful King! That is the kind of King we want. No wonder all His saints are crying to Him, Come, come, Lord Jesus!

Luther expressed this thought in a hymn:⁸

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy child,
Make Thee a bed, soft, undefiled,
Within my heart, that it may be
A quiet chamber kept for Thee.

And having swept and cleansed our heart from these filthy, worldly lusts, from the filth of unbelief, ungodliness, from the misery of covetousness and jealousy, He wishes to fill it and adorn it with beautiful faith, such as we see in Abraham, who would rather trust in God's Word than in his own eyesight.

As we see in Moses, who *refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter*⁵ *choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,*²⁶ *esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.*⁹

As we see in Simeon, when he lifted the little Child up into his arms and said: ²⁹ *“Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word;”* ³⁰ *For my eyes have seen Your salvation.*¹⁰

As we see in Paul, who considered all his earthly advantages as rubbish¹¹ in order that he might possess Jesus, have Him in his heart, and have Him rule his life, so that he could deny ungodliness and worldly lusts and live soberly and righteously and godly in this present world.

Yes, let us frequently look at this little Lord Jesus, so that He may transform us into such people as He would have us to be!

Instead of our heart being a filthy and a cursed battle-ground of all shames, hatreds, and poisonous wickedness, He will make it a little heaven, where God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit dwells and where faith and love and patience make a very abode of holy joy and pure happiness, a vestibule of heaven itself.

As Luther wrote in a hymn,¹²

Give heed, my heart, lift up thine eyes;
Who is it in yon manger lies?
Who is this child, so young and fair?
The blessèd Christ-child lieth there.

Let us pray with the hymnist,¹³

Lord Jesus, reign in us, we pray,
And make us Thine alone,
Who with the Father ever art
And Holy Spirit one.

But let us not tear ourselves away from the manger as yet. Look upon Jesus, your King and Saviour. It is not only that He would bring this joy to you as many joys are brought to us in this world, to be ours but for a moment and then to be taken away from us again.

No joys of this earth last. They are here today and gone tomorrow. For example, youth, health, and peace. But it is different with the blessings and joys which this King, this Babe in the manger, brings to us. What He gives will be ours till He gives us even greater things and richer blessings.

Oh, what a King! There in the manger as you see the little Lord Jesus, He wants to be your King and lead you on to greater joys, to perfect happiness. As we look at the Lord Jesus, we are *looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ.*

Our joy is great as we look at our Saviour and our King and consider all the blessings He bestows upon us. But who can measure our happiness when we remember that all this is simply the beginning of gifts? He is going to give us more, much more.

Our King is going to lead us on, lead us to overcome all obstacles, all difficulties, to bear all trials and burdens. While we are waiting for the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour He will protect and keep us. And in His own appointed time He will come and take us to His glorious heaven.

Today we see Him in the manger as a weak babe in poverty, come to give Himself for us. But in His own time He will appear in glory as the King of kings and the Lord of lords, before whom all knees must bow and all tongues confess that He is Lord. Then His enemies will be put under His feet. And His faithful disciples will enter into His glory with Him.

Oh, come, then, come and see our Saviour and King in the manger! What a Saviour! What a King!

Hark! the herald angels sing
Glory to the new-born King. Amen

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

¹ ALHB 50

² Luke 2:10-11

³ John 8:56

⁴ Daniel 7:13-14

⁵ Hymn 24 v 5

⁶ Luke 2:1-14

⁷ Genesis 39:9

⁸ Hymn 23 v 11

⁹ Hebrews 11:24-26

¹⁰ Luke 2:29-30

¹¹ Philippians 3:8

¹² Hymn 23 v 7

¹³ Hymn 30 v 7