

## **Behold, Your King Is Coming To You.**

Text: Matt 21:1-9

1) What type of King comes to us

Suggested Hymns:

2) What is the purpose of His coming

603, 5, 621, 283, 463

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,

About three hundred years before the event occurred which is recorded in our Gospel — Christ entering the city of Jerusalem —there was an occurrence of a similar nature at the gates of that city.

A great king, in command of a formidable army and surrounded with military splendour, halted his fiery war horse before the walls and demanded of

the watchman that were stationed in the turrets an unconditional surrender. There was consternation among the inhabitants.

While the king was making preparations to besiege the city of the Jews, the high-priest hurriedly called together the priests, and had them put on their white robes, and quickly escorted them to the gate where the king was issuing his orders for the assault.

The gate was opened, and the priests reverently bowed before the great king, and he was informed by the high-priest that the inhabitants would not offer resistance, but that they surrendered the city to him and his army. All they asked of him was that he should show clemency and consider the Jews his loyal subjects. That king was Alexander the Great.

What a difference between that great monarch coming to the holy city in military attire, followed by grim warriors, and Jesus coming meek and lowly, surrounded by the joyful throng of his followers shouting as they moved along, ***“Hosanna to the Son of David! ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!’ Hosanna in the highest!”***

Alexander the Great was not a welcome guest, although it is said that he treated the Jews kindly and even condescended to offer sacrifices in the temple according to Jewish rites.

The Jews had just cause to fear the Macedonian king who on his conquering tour to the East laid waste the land, and burned the cities, and either slew or took captive and then sold as slaves all who dared to oppose him.

But what cause did the Jews have to fear Jesus with whom the prophecy of Zechariah was being fulfilled, ***“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.’”***? All the inhabitants of Jerusalem could gladly welcome this king in their midst.

And now, my hearers, that King comes to you this day. He comes invisibly in His word and in His holy sacraments. Every land, every city, every hamlet, every home where the Gospel has found a place, is Jerusalem; and there is the daughter of Zion, and the promise given to her is being fulfilled, ***Behold, your King is coming to you.***

And since among us we have the Word of God taught in its purity and the sacraments administered according to the Lord's institution, that King is our King also; and He continually comes to us also in His word and sacraments.

Let us therefore hear this day the joyful message of Advent, ***Behold, your King is coming to you.*** May the Lord bless our meditation.

### 1. What Type Of King Comes To Us

What comfort for us to know that our King comes to us. Jesus who came to Jerusalem has not forsaken us. Although He does withhold from us His visible presence, yet He is with us invisibly and enters our homes and our hearts! What comfort for us to know that our King does visit us on this earth, although He ascended into heaven and sits on the right hand of God the Father Almighty!

And why is that so comforting? Because our King is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He is more than Alexander the Great and all the powerful rulers on earth. He is a King under whose rule and guidance we shall neither fear nor want.

For how does our Gospel describe this King? What type of King comes to us? He is an omniscient King who knows even the most secret thoughts in the hearts of men. He is an almighty King who can accomplish all He desires and with whom nothing is impossible. He is a meek King whose heart is full of kindness and tender mercies.

He is, first of all, an omniscient King. Omniscient means all-knowing. We read in our text, ***<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.***

We must know that the Lord had not been in the village where the beasts of burden were tied. He had not sent some one ahead to procure those animals and tie them there for His disciples to come and get them for Him.

No; He came from the opposite direction, from Galilee, by the way of Jericho and Bethany. And yet He knew, as though Himself He had been there, that those animals were in waiting for Him. Now, how is that to be explained?

There is but one explanation, and that is to concede His omniscience. O what comfort is to be derived from this!

***Behold, your King is coming to you,*** an omniscient King! He knows everything and all, the past and the future. Nothing is hidden before Him. He knows all our cares and troubles. People may make light of our tribulations, while we are suffering to such an extent as almost to make us feel as though we could not bear our burden any longer; the Lord, our King, does not undervalue our agonies and our distress.

He knows our difficulties and fully understands our groaning under those heavy burdens. He knows even the very thoughts in the hearts of men, and, if there are enemies plotting against us secretly, He knows all their plans, and He even knew them before they conceived such thoughts of wickedness.

He is an omniscient King. And, at the same time, an almighty King. We read, <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.***"

And again we read, <sup>6</sup>***So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them.*** <sup>7</sup>***They brought the donkey and the colt.***

In the gospel according to St. Luke we find an account of this same occurrence, and there we are told, ***"But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, 'Why are you loosing the colt?'"*** <sup>34</sup>***And they said, "The Lord has need of him."***<sup>1</sup> How wonderful!

The Lord would make use of a colt. He does not purchase the animal. He borrows it from a man who is apparently a perfect stranger to Him. He does not even ask for it, but directs His disciples to get it and moves the owner's heart not to interfere, but to let the disciples take the animal to their Master.

He influences that man's will from afar off and makes him do exactly what He wants Him to do. Now, how is this to be explained? There is but one explanation, and that is to concede His omnipotence. O what comfort is to be derived from this!

***Behold, your King is coming to you,*** an almighty King, a King who is so powerful as even to rule the hearts of men and to make them perform and do His

will! Are you in want and bodily needs? Are you tempted to say, ‘*What shall we eat?*’ or ‘*What shall we drink?*’ or ‘*What shall we wear?*’<sup>2</sup>

***Behold, your King is coming to you!*** He can furnish you with the necessities of life. Heaven and earth belong to Him. His resources will never give out. He is able to procure for you in some way all that you need.

Are you in ill health and suffering, coping with diseases that baffle medical skill? He is the Lord, your Healer. He can give you health and strength and make all your diseases disappear. Are you in difficulties or perplexities of any kind, in sorrow, in trials and tribulations? He can deliver you. He can lead you out of your troubles with His powerful hand. He is almighty. With Him nothing is impossible.

But the most comforting point of our Gospel is this: He is also a meek King. Meek means lowly, humble, unassuming. We read in our text, “<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.’***” Woe unto us if that omniscient and omnipotent King came to us provoked and full of anger!

For since He is omniscient, He certainly knows all our sins and manifold transgressions; and since He is almighty, He can severely punish our iniquities and pour out upon us the vials of His wrath.

And what else have we deserved with our sins than to be doomed to eternal condemnation? But no; our King comes to us not to mete out justice and to reward us according to our iniquities. He comes meek, in loving-kindness.

No harm does He intend. He is full of compassion. His heart is filled with kindness and tender mercies. Are you troubled on account of your sins? Does your conscience tell you that you are too great a sinner, that your sins could never be forgiven, you have no right to grace, because did not receive the Lord’s grace at the time it was offered to you?

***Behold, your King is coming to you,*** meek, lowly, humble. He again offers to you His grace and assures to you the full forgiveness of all your sins. Are you afflicted with some affliction, with poverty, with want, with distress, with sorrow

of any kind, or tribulation of any description? ***Behold, your King is coming to you***, meek, lowly, humble.

His desire is to lighten your burden or to give you strength patiently to bear what you must bear in this life for your own good, so as not to be deprived of the happiness of the future world. He will allay your sorrows, comfort you in distress, and wipe the tears from your eyes.

Behold then, such is your King who comes to you in His word and sacraments, an omniscient King before whom nothing is concealed, an almighty King with whom nothing is impossible, and a meek King who is kindly disposed to all, even the greatest of sinners.

## **2. What Is The Purpose Of His Coming.**

And now, in the second place, let us consider the purpose of His coming.

We read, “<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!’*” What a grand entry! What a joyous gathering! The Lord is coming down the slope from the mount of Olives, riding a beast of burden and advancing toward the city.

His eyes are fixed on Jerusalem with its white shining walls, enclosing thousands of dwellings and gardens, and on that magnificent structure, the temple of Jehovah with its glittering pinnacles flashing in the sun. His disciples form the escort. A very great multitude gathers at the gate and conducts the Lord into the city.

The crowd swells more and more as they move along. Everybody is happy. Everybody is filled with joy. Branches are cut down from the trees and thrown on the road. Garments are spread out on the ground for the Lord to ride over them. With rejoicing, with singing and shouting, as if the king were coming home to his royal palace from some expedition, the procession passes along the streets up to the temple, where even the children join in the songs of praise and cry, ***“Hosanna to the Son of David.”***

Here, my friends, we find depicted the true purpose of the Lord's coming to us in His word and sacraments. His purpose is not merely to take away from us our sorrows, as the omniscient and almighty King. No; His purpose is to substitute joy for sorrow, to fill our hearts with gladness, to make us rejoice over our salvation.

At that time He came to Jerusalem to die for the sins of the world. Only a few days later He was taken before the tribunal of Pontius Pilate, condemned to death, nailed to the accursed tree, and for three days His lifeless corpse remained in the tomb and was then raised again from the dead.

He paid the penalty for our sins and the ransom price for our souls. He performed the great work of our redemption, worked out the forgiveness of all our sins, and gained for each and every one of us eternal life.

And now, when the Lord, our heavenly King, comes to us in His word and sacraments, He offers, gives and imparts to us these sublime treasures, procured with the high price of His own precious blood. Wherever His word is, there is Christ Himself; and the purpose of His coming to us is always to bring joy and happiness to our hearts and to fill our souls with the hope of eternal life.

May the Lord, then, never come to us in vain! May we always receive Him cheerfully, as did the disciples and the multitudes in our Gospel, receive Him in true faith, and prove such faith not only with our lips, but also with our lives; not only singing His praises, but also doing Him service and leading a Godly and holy life in uprightness and honesty.

Then the purpose of His coming shall be accomplished. We shall be a happy people indeed. Joy shall reign supreme in our hearts and homes, and such joy as can never be compared to the joys and pleasures of this world. Anthems of praise shall fill the earth; and when the storm of life is past, we shall join the angel chorus and sing with them, *'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!* 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> Luke 19:33

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 6:31