

## Sermon Outline

### Your King Is Coming!

- I. Jesus comes humbly as the king we need.
- II. We welcome this king as our Savior and Lord.

## Sermon

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

My dear beloved flock, the text for our meditation today is the Holy Gospel according to Saint Matthew the twenty-first Chapter verses one through eleven.

Boys and Girls, Happy New Year! I pray that you are doing well as we begin a new church year. Is your house a flurry of activity yet? There's one phrase that is guaranteed to make a house move into action. The phrase, "We have guests coming for dinner!" The house has to be put in order and cleaned. The menu has to be planned. Grocery shopping needs to be done. The dinner needs to be prepared. The table needs to be set. If folks are coming over for dinner, everyone needs to get ready to roll out the red carpet and give them a king's welcome!

Today is the start of a new Church Year, and I'm giving each of you advanced notice:

### Your King Is Coming!

I'm not talking about any earthly ruler visiting, but Jesus Christ, the true King of this world, this universe, all galaxies, and especially the King of your lives, is coming! How does our King come? How do we welcome His coming? Ponder these questions as you hear the rest of the sermon.

#### I.

Some of you may respond, "Pastor, that's old news. Of course, our King has come. Jesus came, died, rose again, and ascended. Tell us something we don't know."

Yes, we all know that long before Jesus was born and long before Jesus was welcomed into Jerusalem as the Son of David, the prophet Zechariah had given Israel advanced notice: "Behold, your king is coming to you; . . . humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey" (Zech 9:9). Yes, as we heard in our Gospel, we know that Jesus fulfilled this promise of Zechariah by entering Jerusalem riding on a donkey. But what we sometimes do not think much about is that this same one who entered Jerusalem continues to come to us today and will one day come in glory on the Last Day. Rather than us panicking, today's Gospel calmly guides us to recognize how our King comes to us and how we are to welcome him. So this is not old news; it is an advanced notice of very good news: your King is coming!

How did the people of Jerusalem recognize Jesus as their king? Not by elegant clothes or a white horse. They trusted in that promise given by the prophet Zechariah: "Your king is coming to you; . . . humble, and mounted on a donkey." The king they needed was not an arrogant tyrant but a humble servant who would enter Jerusalem as Solomon had so long ago when he succeeded David: riding on a lowly donkey. Here was the humble King the world needs, someone who would reverse the pattern of sinful selfishness through humble service by dying a humiliating death naked on the cross in the place of every sinner. Jesus came as the humble King the world needs.

Your King is coming! How do we recognize Jesus' coming in our day and age? As in the first century, so also in the twenty-first century, our King is not recognized by elegant clothing or a white Jeep. No, he continues to come as the humble King we need, the King who serves rather than being served. As we look back over the Church Year that we've just completed, there are things that happened that we would rather forget. We're ready for a clean slate and new start. And that's why your King comes to you. He comes clothed in humble words like "Your sins are forgiven." He comes clothed in common water with the invocation of the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to assure you that you will always be his children, no matter what happened last year. He comes clothed in lowly bread and wine, which are his very body and blood, feeding you with life that lasts forever. He comes as the King we need, forgiving sins, showing grace upon grace!

#### II.

How did Jerusalem of old welcome their king? They gathered a large group, spreading out their garments and tree branches on the road. They shouted, “Hosanna, Son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.” That one word, *hosanna*, says it all. It means “Save, we pray.” The people welcomed their King as the only one who could save them from sin. They welcomed him as one who comes in the name of the Lord because he is not just representing the Lord, but he shares the very name of the Lord and is the very Lord of whom King David wrote, “The Lord is my shepherd.”

How will we welcome Jesus as he comes to us in this new Church Year and on the Last Day? Our Gospel guides us to be like these faithful in Jerusalem of old and welcome Jesus as our Savior and Lord. The “Hosanna” and “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord” are both from Psalm 118, which is a central part of the *Sanctus* in our Holy Communion liturgy. Jesus, our humble King, comes to us today, and we citizens of the new Jerusalem welcome our King, shouting out our hosannas, “Save, we pray,” and knowing that in the Jesus whose body we eat and blood we drink we have the Savior and Lord who has and continues to serve us with exactly what we need: forgiveness, life, and salvation. All of those times when we have not welcomed other as we should, all of the times when we have not extended to others the same forgiveness we have been shown by Jesus Christ, our sins of pride, arrogance, lust, disobedience of those in authority, and many more, all forgiven by the coming of the King.

Your King is coming! Yes, that’s not just old news, but it continues to be fresh good news. It was true when Jesus entered Jerusalem to die for our sins. It was true on the day when you were baptized and Jesus began to reign as the gracious King of your life. It is true today as you receive your King’s perfect righteousness at this altar in his body and blood. It will be true throughout this new Church Year as your King continues to come humbly and be truly present with his gifts of life and salvation. And it will be true on the Last Day, when we will behold our King no longer coming in humility, but in radiant glory as Lord of lords and King of kings.

Your King is coming! Advent is a wonderful season for spiritual preparation and refreshment. Look at the streets where your King comes to you, humbly serving you. In the daily devotions that you share with your family, your King comes to you. In the extra midweek Advent services we’ll have together, your King comes to you. In our Sunday services with Holy Communion, your King comes to you. Your King comes to you, meek and mild for your salvation.

So today, welcome him, sing your hosannas, and pray with Luther that ancient cradle song:

Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,  
Prepare a bed, soft, undefiled,  
A quiet chamber set apart  
For You to dwell within my heart. (*LSB* 358:13)

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.