

## Matthew 21:1-11

Today is **Palm Sunday** - the day on which Jesus triumphantly entered into the city of Jerusalem. On that day He was warmly **welcomed** by the people, and they poured out great **honor** and **praise** on Him. This event also reminds **us** of the **Last Day** - the day on which Jesus will **return** again to this world in all His glory, and **we** will warmly **welcome** Him, as we **follow** Him into the glories of **heaven**. May the Holy Spirit help each of us to fully appreciate the gracious words of our text, as we follow the theme: **Your King Comes To You**.

Some six hundred years before the birth of Jesus, God spoke the words of our text through the prophet **Zechariah**. He told us that the promised **Savior** was coming to His people. The prophecy was a part of our 1st Lesson today, *“Rejoice greatly, Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! Look! Your **King** is coming to you. He is **righteous** and brings **salvation**. He is **humble** and is riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”* These words clearly tell us that the **Savior** would come to Zion. He would come as a **King**, but **not** as a king who would throw His **weight** around and **oppress** them. Rather, he would come as a **humble** King, bringing **peace** and **love** to His people. No doubt, the people wondered who this king would be. Their only **clue**, was the **sign** that their Savior and King would be riding on a **donkey**, on a **colt**, the foal of a donkey.

Now let's fast-forward to the day we're celebrating today - **Palm Sunday**. It was just a few days before Jesus would be **arrested** and **tortured**, which would lead to His **death** by crucifixion. It was also just one week before Jesus would **rise** from the dead on Easter morning to proclaim His **victory** over death and the devil. On Palm Sunday Jesus specifically acted in a way that would show the people that He is the **fulfillment** of Zechariah's prophecy. He sent two disciples into the city with the following instructions: *“Go to the village ahead of you. Immediately you will find a **donkey** tied there along with her **colt**. Untie them and bring them to me. If anyone says anything to you, you are to say, ‘The **Lord** needs them,’ and he will **send** them at once.”* And that's exactly what **happened**. The disciples brought the donkey and the colt, and placed their cloaks on them. Then Jesus sat on them, and rode into the city of Jerusalem.

Jesus came to the people of Jerusalem as their **King**. He came to **rule** His people for all **eternity**, but He wasn't like all the **other** rulers of that day and age. Jesus didn't have an intimidating **army** accompanying Him - He didn't wear fancy royal **clothes** or a golden **crown**, and He didn't ride on an impressive **war horse**.

Instead, Jesus came in great **humility** - riding on a common **pack** animal - a **donkey**. Jesus came as a **gentle** king.

Jesus would **not** be placing a burdensome **yoke** on the shoulders of His people. There would be no **slavery** imposed on them. But rather, Jesus came to **bless** them - providing them with **forgiveness** for their sins, lifting the burden of **guilt** off from their shoulders, and removing the **shame** from their consciences. Jesus would provide them with **freedom** - freedom from the rule of **Satan** - freedom from the power of **death** and **hell** - freedom to live as **God's** sons and daughters, privileged to live their lives ruled by the **love** of Jesus. These are gifts which Jesus would **earn** for them through His perfect **life**, His innocent **suffering**, and His shameful **death** on the cross.

Jesus comes to us **today** in the very same way, as a **humble** and **gentle** king. Jesus made us to be **His people** - people who call on His **name** - people who place our **trust** in Him as our Savior from sin. He **first** came to us at the time of our **baptism**. In baptism, Jesus **came** to us, and established His **kingdom** in our heart. He took **our sins** on Himself, and He gave us **His holiness** in return. Jesus took the **death** we earned and deserved, and He gave us **His life** and **resurrection** in its place. And Jesus **continues** to come to us through the **Gospel** in His **Word** and **Sacrament**. He **pardons** our sins, and with the message of His **love**, He **gently** rules us, and **guides** us **safely** through life in this sin-filled world.

Jesus is our **gentle** King, and He comes to us with outstretched arms saying, "*Come to me all you who are **weary** and **burdened**, and I will give you **rest**.*" Jesus **sympathizes** with our weaknesses, sheds **tears** over our troubles, and **comforts** us with His words of **love** and **mercy**. And yet, there are many people in our world today who have **no interest** in Jesus and His kind of rule. They don't want to be **associated** with a leader who rides on a **donkey**. They **scoff** a king who is **gentle**, and want one instead who is **tough** - one who offers them **riches**, **fame**, and **success**. They want to associate with the **movers** and **shakers** of this world. They have no use for gifts like **forgiveness** and **mercy**, because they aren't **troubled** by their sins, and they think they're **invincible**.

But where do **we** fit in? When we continue to **repeat** our sinful behavior, and **give in** to the sinful desires of our flesh, we're just like the **world**, and we show **no desire** to have Jesus as our king. When we speak **harshly** to one another, and refuse to carry each other's **burdens**, we're just like the **world**, and we **turn away** from Jesus as our king. When we don't come to Jesus with our **worries** and **fears**, but instead keep them to **ourselves**, we're just like the **world**, and we

**dishonor** Jesus as our king. When we consider **worship** and hearing and studying God's **Word** to be of little **importance**, we're just like the **world**, and we send the message that we don't want **Jesus** to be our king.

When we feel our **sins**, and shudder at their **evil** - when we feel the Scripture's blunt decree, "*The wages of sin is **death***" - when we see all the **misery** that sin has brought to our lives, our relationships, and our world - and when we realize how **short** is our lifetimes are and that we will soon face **judgment** - then we need to hear God's Word: "*Look! Your **King is coming** to you. He is **righteous** and brings **salvation**.*" This is the Savior we **need** - God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Don't **worry** about how Jesus looks on the **outside**. Don't be put off by the lowly forms of **Baptism** and the **Lord's Supper** which He uses to **come** to us. **Welcome** Jesus and His message of salvation just like the people of Jerusalem did. We read, "*A very large crowd spread their outer **clothing** on the road. Others were cutting **branches** from the **trees** and spreading **them** out on the road. The crowds who went in front of him and those who followed kept shouting, **Hosanna** to the Son of David! **Blessed** is he who comes in the name of the Lord! **Hosanna** in the highest!*" Open your heart, and welcome Jesus with **joy** and **praise**. Greet Him each and every day. **Praise** Him with your hosannas. And **pray** for ongoing **success** and **blessing** on His rule - in our **world**, as well as in our **lives** - as Jesus blesses us with His **grace**, His **righteousness**, and His **peace** through the Holy Spirit.

You and I are **servants** of Jesus - a **gentle** king, and being one of His **servants** is better than being a CEO in the kingdom of this world, because Jesus **loves** His servants, and He **blesses** us with His undeserved **love**, and with **victory** over this **world** and all its **hardships**. Jesus gives His people **peace** - peace that this **world** can't give. Jesus gives His people **joy** - joy that no sorrow can **erase**. And Jesus gives His people **life** - life with Him in **heaven** - life which has **no end**.

**Your King Comes To You.** May the Holy Spirit lead us to **treasure** these words, and to understand how **blessed** we are to have Jesus as our Savior. And may the Good News go out into all the world, that in **Jesus** we have a **Savior** from sin. Amen.