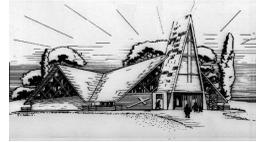




Free Evangelical Lutheran  
Synod in South Africa

## Sermon - Second Sunday of Advent

*Hosanna to the Son of David!*



St. John's Lutheran Parish Shelly Beach

### • The Word of God for this Sermon is written in Mt 21, 1-11:

- **ESV** 1 Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Beth-phage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,
- 2 saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me.
- 3 If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."
- 4 This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying,
- 5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'"
- 6 The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them.
- 7 They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them.
- 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road.
- 9 And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"
- 10 And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?"
- 11 And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."
- *Let us pray: Come Holy Spirit, open our ears and our hearts for the Word of our coming King. Lift up our heads and give us the true joy for the Advent of our King Amen.*

### • **Dear Daughter of Zion!**

- Welcome to the time of Advent, here, in sunny South Africa! The holidays are coming, or have come already, for some. Many people come to the sea! Its family time, party time, there is a lot of anticipation. People are excited, looking forward to the holidays! Of course for all those on the service side of things it means hard work, maybe even extra hard work. But, in general it is a time we look forward to!
- And the church would do best not to destroy this what is in many cases the leftovers of the original meaning of the season. Rather the church should reveal and give the right foundation for the joy, for the anticipation of the coming of something good. The deep origin of these holy days should be dug out and brought to light again! As Christians we have all the more reason to be glad about this season! Jesus and His church are not the ones to destroy joy! Jesus reveals to

all people the fountain of joy, of being together, of family, of peace, of caring for one another, of giving to one another! It is true that for many this fountain is not flowing into their lives any-more. God's Word digs this out for us and says, hey, here, come to the fountain of joy. This will not destroy any bits of existing joy, any leftovers of the season, but it will anchor it to the place where the true joy flows from and joy will be multiplied!

- This is what I need to proclaim to you today, 'daughter of Zion, behold your king is coming to you!' The fountain of joy is mobile. The fountain of joy is a He, a person, who comes to Jerusalem, the daughter of Zion.

- He is the son of David. That is what the Gospel of Matthew highlights. Nothing wrong with His legal descendancy to be the King of Israel. Just like Solomon, the son of David and Bathseba, generations ago, rode into Jerusalem as a sign to the people that he, Solomon, takes over from king David, in the same way Jesus rode into Jerusalem. He rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and on a colt, just like Solomon, to signify, I come as your legal king. I have been baptised, that is anointed, as king of Israel, as king of the Jews.

- 'Just like Solomon' and yet with one huge difference: This King came to stay. This is the King who would remain king of God's Israel forever! There cannot be another king of Israel after Him. Netanyahu or whoever else the ruler of the modern Israelis will be, cannot replace this King! He is *the* Son of David, who fulfils all prophecies which prophecy that God would make sure that the son of David will rule forever! Jesus is this King!

- On that day Jesus entered the earthly Jerusalem. The ancient prophecy of Zechariah was fulfilled that time. This King, dear daughter of Zion, comes to you!

- But, do you need a king? One thing is certain, we can all do with a good king, someone who will rule with honesty, someone who is not corrupt. Someone who will mean it well with you! What is the benefit of having someone else, outside of myself, who is my king? Wouldn't it be better if I could rule and decide over my own life? There is a huge temptation to think this way and to desire this very thing, to be the carver of ones own destiny, to determine ones own way of life!

- What if troubles come? Afflictions, like sickness or grave injuries, or despair and hopelessness, depressions? Many try and find support in friends or family, that is what friends are there for, they would say. Friends are a great help, no doubt about that. But, the powers of friends and family are limited, unless they are Christian. The fear for death and maybe as many of our times have indicated, the fear for this life on this earth can terrify us, can squash all joy and hope out of us. People don't see a future any-more! That is, there is no commitment and desire even to live this life! Nothing seems to matter! Many are in surrender mode- they have basically given up! Others are angry, even aggressive, because their future is attacked. So, the ultimate would be, to have a king who could take this fear away

from us. The fear for failure, the fear for other people and forces who seem to cast a shadow of doubt on our existence. If this fear would not be a threat anymore. That would be something.

• In the end, fear for life on this earth is nothing else than fear for death, because that is what makes this life on earth so uncertain so temporary- we always have to reckon with death. If fear of death could be taken care of it would mean that whatever happened to me, in the end it would be a happy ending! My end would be life no matter what happened to me.

• What if there was a king who would and could keep all the promises He makes? Someone who never lies! The good news of Advent is that, God the Father sent Jesus to come to us. He sent Him not to condemn us, not to take anything good away from us. He came to fulfil all of God's promises made to His people! He came as king to destroy the evil power of fear hanging over us.

• And now, it is important, to realise the unique way in which Jesus came to accomplish certainty of life, certainty of a future, a life of meaning, even in this world, for us! It says in the Word for today, *"Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden."*

• Do you see Him riding into Jerusalem? In humbleness! That is, not with military power and might, not on a warhorse! Mounted on a donkey and Matthew specifies and on "the foal of a beast of burden". There we have the meaning of the donkey. A donkey is not adequate for making war. A donkey is useful for carrying burdens, heavy burdens!

• There we have the clue what Jesus came to do in Jerusalem, in what manner He came to rule: He came to serve- a king who comes to serve you, to give to you. He didn't come to feed on you. He came to feed you. He didn't come to ask a sacrifice from you. He came to sacrifice Himself for you.

• Strangely enough He came to enter death Himself, our greatest fear. That is why Peter would have none of that. No, not death for you, Jesus. Then death would have swallowed you, what then about us? How can someone be of help who falls prey to our greatest fear- death. But Jesus didn't fear death most, He loved His Father more! His death was not the payment of sin- He didn't have any sin! Yet, He died. So, He has earned credit to hand out! Because He is the Son of God, an eternal being, His credit is enough for all people! He hands out the forgiveness of sins from the Father. He came and He comes today to carry your burdens which are too heavy to deal with yourself! Yes, exactly those super heavy ones, which crush you, which make you hopeless, which makes everything uncertain and makes you fear life and in the end death- He came to take care of those especially scary ones!

• What does He do with you? He takes a strange route: He leads you straight into death, into His death. He takes you with Him onto His Cross. There He declares

you officially dead before God and His Law- this He does in Baptism and confirms it whenever we confess our sins!

- What does this mean? Consider yourself dead to sin and alive in Christ! Something amazing happens, the greatest miracle of all. Jesus takes us into His death and the outcome- Life in Christ. Certain Life with Christ with the fear of death destroyed!
- Dear daughter of Zion, I am not exaggerating, your eternal Life has already begun, not in your experience in what you see and feel, in a hidden way. Yet this does not mean a virtual reality, a non real dream-like fantasy fairy-tale vision or something. No. Not figuratively speaking either- God doesn't play video games with us. Jesus' death was a horrific necessity, a grave burden to carry for God. He, who is Love, had to forsake His own Son. But this paid off, this mega sacrifice paid off mega-wise, for you and for all people! Real benefits.
- If you are baptised, you have been there- you have died to sin. As you confessed your sins this morning, Christ put another nail into the coffin of your old Adam. You are dead to sin and the consequences thereof, you are dead to the fear of death. Fear for death and fear for this life in this world, as terrible as it may be, has no say over you any-more. Your King comes to you, your true and real King comes to you and His Word gives you of His Life and drives fear out of you. He reveals what He has done with you.
- Therefore, do not be afraid of life nor of death nor of any powers, people, demons, satan and of your burdens and weaknesses, of your failures. If He is for us, who can honestly be against us! In other words, what remains to be afraid of? Nothing, absolutely nothing! This is the good news of Advent! This is the wisdom of God that we learn to see ourselves as God sees us!
- And now, can we keep this good news to ourselves? No ways. As you go, give this hope to others who are hopeless. Hand it out. Don't be stingy with the Grace of God you have received! And the worse it gets on earth, or in our country, the more you and I, we as the daughter of Zion have a purpose to hand it out.
- How can you be afraid of life and death on this earth any longer, you already died to sin and death. You are alive in Christ. He lives with you and you live with Him! So we sing:
- **Your Zion strews before You green boughs and fairest palms; And I too will adore You with joyous songs and psalms. My heart shall bloom forever for You with with praises new and from Your name shall never withhold the honour due! Amen.**
- *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Amen.** [Phil 4,7].*