

FIRST ADVENT

Matthew 21:1-9

To you be Grace, peace and love from God our Father, Jesus Christ our Savior and the Holy Spirit our Comforter. Amen

Our sermon Text for this Morning is taken from the Gospel reading according to ELSCA pericopal system, which is Matthew Chapter 21:1-9.

INTRODUCTION

The Sunday is called first Advent. Advent means arrival of the Lord; this season last up to four Sundays and is the preparation before Christmas. Advent also marks the beginning of the Church year Calendar.

In the preceding verses of our text which are verses 29-34 of chapter 20, we hear of how Jesus restored the eye sight of two blind men whom his disciple tried to silence when they were calling out to Jesus. Symbolically this shows the spiritual blindness that had to be overcome by many, in order to see him (Jesus) as the Lord and Savior. Not the Messiah that were to save from the Roman rulers but the Messiah who were to save them from sin and eternal death.

Our proceeding verses which are verses 10-11 of Chapter 21, the whole city meaning the people of Jerusalem were amazed at whom this person was who the crowd was hailing; throwing palm branches in front of. They asked who this is and the crowd answered them and introduced Jesus as the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee. The inhabitants of Jerusalem were still spiritual blind since they could not even see prophecy of Zechariah 9:9 in deliberate act of Jesus entering the City on the Back of the Colt (small donkey).

In our text Matthew gives us an account of what took place during what is called victorious or triumphal entry in Jerusalem. This day to most of us is known as the Palm Sunday. The crowds that were following Jesus in a celebrative mood start a procession they spread their clothes and palm branches out in front of Jesus as he rides into Jerusalem. According to John's gospel, John 12: 12-15, they were shouting Hosanna, and according the commentaries the waving of palm branches was a sign of honors for victorious person.

We as the Church in this time of Advent, we are celebrating the arrival of the Lord, how are we going to welcome the Lord. Are we going to wave to our Lord, with joy and happiness?

When Jesus send his disciples in verse 2 to go and get the animals they probably though to themselves where in the village are we going to find these animals? Who will allow us to just take their animals and why a donkey of all the animals? By using this specific animal, the Lord Jesus wanted to reveal to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, his disciples and the crowd who were following him that he was the Messianic King prophesied in Zechariah 9:9. Jesus knew that people knew what it meant for someone to come, riding on a donkey in a procession into the city of Jerusalem.

See you King comes to you gentle and riding on a donkey; the prophecy was fulfilled, the disciple brought the animals and they put their cloaks on them; Jesus then got onto the colt; the younger of the two donkeys. Mark in his gospel, mark 11:2 state that the colt has not broken in; but while Jesus rides it, it remains calm. This demonstrates the power of this King; even this animal could sense that Jesus was the prince of peace.

Christian Friends, this crowd that was part of this procession was enthusiastic about the arrival of this prophet as they call him in verse 11, that some even ran ahead and together with those who followed shouted "Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord". To the crowd Jesus was a prophet that was heaven sent. According to the gospel of Luke 19:37 these praises were for the miracles they had seen and not because they recognized Jesus as the Messiah, the Prince of peace. Christian Friends, can we like the crowd shout out this morning on this Advent Sunday that Jesus Christ is the Lord of our lives, that he is our Savior. Do you agree with me this morning when I say that it is only we have a relationship with Christ that we can cry out and shout, only if we recognize Jesus as our Lord and Savior that we can to that, Cry out and Shout.

Christian Friends not once are we told how Jesus reacted during the procession, if he waved to the crowds or not. He probably had no reaction since the people did not as yet realize that he was not a prophet but was the Messiah. Neither the crowd nor the inhabitants of Jerusalem recognized him as the Messiah. Do we recognize the King, Sisters and Brothers in this time of giving and buying gift having family lunches and dinners there are people out there who do not have the privileges we have.

There are those who are suffering from HIV/AIDS and those who are affected by disease. We might ask what they have to do with us recognizing the king.

The question that we have to ask ourselves this time is, are we ready for the coming of the Lord, how are we going to welcome him in our hearts? What is the Lord coming in the form of the beggar are we going to turn them away? Matthew 25: 44-45 “ They also answer Lord when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you? He will reply. I tell you the truth, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these; you did not do for me”. Let us remember that the Lord will not come in the form of the royal King, but he might come in the form of a street Child or beggar, will we recognize Him?

Christian Friends we are in the days dedicated to 16 days of activism (Stop child and Women Abuse) and in the first day of December is the world AIDS, as the church we pray for the infected and affected but what do we do to reach out to them in this time of giving and celebrating the coming of the Lord? It is time to welcome them in our house and celebrate with them the coming of the Lord. Advent is the time to prepare the coming of the Lord; let us as the church, prepare our home to welcome every one.

Glory be to the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit as it was in the beginning is now and ever shall be word without end. Amen.

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