

Ad te levavi  
St. Matthew 21:1-9  
December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024  
Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
St. Michael and All Angels Ev. Lutheran Mission, UAC  
Augusta, GA  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## That It Might Be Fulfilled

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Sermon Text:**

“Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying, ‘Tell ye the daughter of Zion, “Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.””

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

Awaken us, Lord God, that we may be ready when Thy Son cometh to receive Him with gladness and serve Thee with a pure heart; through the same Thy Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost ever One God, world without end. Amen.

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

My dear friends, today we begin a new Church year. The Church’s year always begins with the season of Advent. We do not jump right from Thanksgiving to Christmas like the rest of the world. There have even been some in the world that were ready to jump into Christmas mode right after Halloween. The world may rush to experience Christmas, and then leave it as soon as it comes, but the Church does not. We begin with the season of Advent. Advent is from the Latin, *ad veni*, it means to come.

The season of Advent is all about coming, specifically, the coming of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. The Lord + Jesus comes to us in three different ways this season: He comes wrapped up in swaddling clothes at His birth into our flesh on the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord; He comes on the Last Day to judge both the quick and the dead, and to bring the ones who, clothed in His righteous by faith, into the eternal Kingdom of Heaven; and, He comes daily and often to His Church on earth through His precious Word and His Blessed Sacraments, through which He creates and sustains faith in life in all those who receive His holy Word by the work of the Holy Ghost.

Why does our Lord come to us? Because we cannot come to Him. Even if we could come to the Lord, why would we? We are filled with sin and shame. There is such great evil and error in our hearts. We are filled with darkness. Death consumes our very soul. There is no good thing in us with which we can present to the Lord as worthy of any praise. Anything we may bring—our good works, our righteousness, our merits—will never be accepted by the Lord, for they are corrupted by our sinful thoughts, words, and deeds. Our hearts are corrupt and are not worthy to be given to the Lord + Jesus. He will not accept them. But, this is why our Lord comes to us. For we cannot go to Him.

This is why we have every year on the First Sunday in Advent this Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. Matthew that would seem a better fit in the season of Lent. Our Lord arrives

into Jerusalem, on an ass and a colt, the foal of an ass. This is the same Gospel that we hear every year on Palmarum, the Sunday of the Palms, Palm Sunday. It fits on that Sunday, because it kicks off Holy Week and our Lord's journey to His cross and suffering in our stead. Why does the Church year begin with a Lenten text? Because our Lord + Jesus comes to us poor, miserable sinners in our lost condition to redeem and save us from sin and death.

Our Lord's whole purpose in coming to us is to save us. His whole purpose in coming to us is to suffer and die for the sins which we have committed. He comes to save us from the sins from which we can in no wise save ourselves. Therefore, my dear friends, the Church's year begins with it celebrating the purpose for our Lord's coming to this earth. He comes to His Church, to those who are lost in sin and death, who suffer the pains of this sinful world, to redeem and save us. He comes to us lowly, and humble, and meek, and riding upon an ass. For only He can redeem and save us from sin, death, and the devil. Only He can fulfill the Law of God, and pay the penalty of the sins of all of mankind.

He comes that might be fulfilled all the prophecies that were foretold about Him by the prophets of old. The prophecies foretold that the Anointed One of the Lord, the Messiah, the Christ, would come to the people of Zion; to His beloved Bride, the Church. His coming had been foretold since Adam and Eve first sinned in the Garden of Eden. This promise was repeated throughout the Old Testament. Here today we see in the pericope the fulfillment of that promise. Our Lord + Jesus comes to His people to redeem and save them from sin and death, by paying for the penalty of sin with His own suffering and death.

The truly amazing thing for us is that our Lord does not do this because of anything good in us. We do not deserve His coming to us. What we deserve is for Him to cast us headlong into the fiery pit of Hell for all eternity with the devil and his angels. This is what our sins and merits deserve. But our Lord + Jesus shows His great love and mercy for us, and for all mankind, by coming to this world, by coming to us. He takes upon Himself our flesh. He becomes one of us. He becomes a man to fulfill the Law which we are unable to fulfill. And bearing our cross He enters into Jerusalem, the place where the temple stands, the place where the sacrificing of bulls and heifers occurred daily for the sins of the people of the Lord God.

The sacrifices of lambs and rams could not fully satisfy the curse of the Law. This is why they occurred daily, twice a day. Such death could not appease a wrathful Lord God. These sacrifices would have to go on forever and ever, and would still not be enough. We would still be lost in our sins and transgressions. This is why our Lord + Jesus comes to us on this First Sunday in Advent lowly and riding on an ass. This is why we see our Lord at the beginning of Holy Week, coming to His people, coming into Jerusalem to the shouts of Hosanna, why He bears in His body our flesh, so that He may sacrifice Himself for us on the tree of the holy cross.

He does this solely out of love and mercy for us. For we in no wise deserve it. He gives Himself to us, even though we do not deserve it. He comes to us, even though we do not deserve it. He loves us, even though we do not deserve it. This is the true picture of mercy, to not be treated the way we deserve. Our Lord shows us mercy in coming to us. He willingly and lovingly comes to us, His creation, to redeem and save us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. No greater love can be given than to lay down one's life for another. Our Lord + Jesus lays down His life for the whole world. He lays down His life for those who reject and ignore Him. He shows that He loves us, even when we do not love Him.

This is how the Church's year begins, my dear friends. It begins with our Lord + Jesus coming to us. This is how the season of Advent comes. We see our Lord coming to redeem and save us from our sins and trespasses. We see our Lord coming to us to set us free from the prison house of death and the grave. We see our Lord + Jesus coming to us to free us from the bondage in which the devil

and his angels have bound us. He comes to set us free; to liberate us from the pains and sorrows that come in this life. He sets us free from pain and woe by pointing us to a more glorious land.

The crowds accompanying our Lord + Jesus as He enters into Jerusalem held palm and olive branches, they shouted acclamations of praise. Our Lord is welcomed as a victorious hero and King who has defeated His enemies once and for all. Our Lord + Jesus has indeed defeated our enemies. He has defeated sin. He has defeated death and the grave. And He has defeated the devil and his angels. For He has come into this world bearing our flesh. He bears our flesh, but He is without sin. He is perfect. He is lowly, humble, and meek. For He comes in love to His people to rescue them from their enemies.

Therefore, my dear friends, let us join with the crowds that accompanied our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and sing His praise. Let us give Him thanks for having come to us to redeem us. For our Savior has come to all nations, to the heathen. He has come to us to redeem and save us. Let us do as St. Paul tells the Church at Rome to do, and cast off the works of darkness; the works of sin and shame. Let us put on the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, bearing the white robe of His righteousness, so that we might not give any provision to the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof. Let us walk in the light of the Lord + Jesus. For He has come to take us from this vale of tears to our eternal home in heaven. We were, and are, unable to redeem and save ourselves. We were, and are, unable to come to the Lord + Jesus and fulfill His Law. But our Lord comes to us poor sinners, so that we might be with Him forever and ever. Let us give Him thanks and praise forever for all His love and mercy toward us. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*