

## **Sermon Draft**

**Text: Mark 11:1–10**

**Sermon: The King Comes**

In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen

As the Season of Advent begins so does the new Church year.

Last week, the Church calendar ended with the Sunday of the Fulfillment or Christ the King Sunday. The end of the year culminates with the Church in eternity. The beginning of Advent takes us back to rehearse the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. Here is Immanuel, true God in human flesh. He enters the capital, where the crowd expects him to be enthroned as a continuation of the Davidic kingdom. They hoped he would overthrow the despised Romans; they had no idea that King Jesus came to reclaim his own and restore what was lost by sin. His enthronement takes place on the cross. Risen from the dead, ascended into heaven, he is returning in glory.

Everyone will see him as he really is.

The imminent arrival of a president, prime minister, or monarch sets off a burst of activity. Preparations are made so everything will be ready when the leader comes. Jesus enters Jerusalem to a throng of people. He, too, is a great and mighty monarch. His realm spans time and eternity. Yet, in coming to Jerusalem for His enthronement, Jesus arrives in the most unorthodox manner.

Jesus sends two of his disciples ahead as the advance preparation team. They're to go into the village ahead. There they'll find a colt tied. They are to untie it and bring it back with them. If anyone asks them why they're doing this, they're to respond, "***The Lord has need of it***" (v 3). Everything happened just as Jesus said it would. The disciples made ready the colt for Jesus to ride by placing cloaks upon it.

What a contrast to the enthronement of a monarch today!

The coronation of a king or queen is something few of us have experienced. Queen Elizabeth has been on the throne of the United Kingdom since 1952. She is the longest-reigning monarch in British history. Upon her death, a new king will be installed. His coronation will be an event unlike any other in this century to date. Dignitaries from many nations will attend the event in person. The event will be filled with as much pomp and pageantry as possible. It will be a media event witnessed by billions from around the globe.

Jesus' entrance into Jerusalem was at best a local news piece. And his handlers could have done a much more impressive job of staging the event. The colt takes Jesus along the road at a casual pace. People gathered along the way. They're excited to see Jesus, but they're not a celebrity audience one would expect.

Regular everyday people from Bethany and the surrounding area. They came to see this Jesus who raised Lazarus from the dead. He was coming to the Holy City, Jerusalem, where they expected him to be enthroned and overthrow the despised Romans. The crowd eagerly put their cloaks on the road along with palm branches. It was a gesture of homage that even the poorest could extend.

Jesus enters Jerusalem not on a warhorse or chariot. Still, the crowds saw in Jesus their hope for salvation and deliverance. They shout ***"Hosanna! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David! Hosanna in the highest!"*** (vs 9–10). The crowds see Jesus as the one who will finally restore the kingdom as it was in the days of David. They see, in Jesus, their future.

What would we like to see Jesus restore for our futures?

America as we think we remember it, America that looks more like us, America that we imagine was once greater than it is now?

The good old days? Would we like Jesus to restore the dreams we once had of a corner office, an impressive title behind our names, a cushy retirement? Would we like Jesus to bring back the security we felt before 9/11? Ah, but the better question is, what do we *need* Jesus to restore to us?

The Lord Jesus is a great King who brings the coming kingdom of father David with him. What the crowd didn't understand was that our Lord's kingdom was more than an earthly physical reign from Jerusalem. Jesus was not overthrowing the Romans and other rulers with conventional forces. Pontius Pilate questioned Jesus about his kingdom.

Jesus acknowledged that indeed he was a king but that his kingdom was not of this world. Jesus is unlike any other earthly ruler. He is God in human flesh. As the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier, the Lord understands this world and humanity better than any mortal. He was made like us in every way, except without sinning (Hebrews 4:15).

For the arrival of a twenty-first-century dignitary, we'd expect a large police escort, many support vehicles, and at least two limousines designed to confuse a would-be attacker as to which one was carrying the leader. Modern crowds stand behind barriers to prevent their coming too close. Body guards surround the dignitary, ready to risk their lives for the safety of the honoree. Everything is orchestrated to bring the leader quickly and without incident to his or her destination.

There were no body guards for Jesus, no one willing to give up his life for him. No soldiers, no security detail, just Jesus' disciples on the road with him. There's no attempt to quiet the crowd or to keep them away.

Then the world finally had its way with him. He was betrayed by a friend under the cover of darkness, while the crowds who welcomed Jesus on Sunday slept. In a hurried manner, Jesus appears before the High Priest, King Herod, and Pontius Pilate in quick succession. Pilate knew Jesus was not guilty of a capital offense, but to please the crowd he gave Jesus over to death. Stripped, whipped, beaten, and adorned with a crown of thorns, Jesus is enthroned on the tree of a cross at Golgotha, the place of the skull. His disciples flee.

Mark records that among the women looking on were his mother Mary, Mary Magdalene, and Salome. It was there in the unnatural darkness of midday that Jesus was enthroned as King forever.

Satan and his minions thought they'd won a great victory. The enemies of Jesus rejoiced; but short was their triumph, for Jesus arose on the third day. Sin is overcome. Jesus lives and death is conquered. Forty days later, Jesus ascends to the right hand of the Father, where he continues to rule all things on behalf of his Church. King Jesus is coming back. There will be no mistaking his identity the second time around.

The trumpet will sound, the voice of the archangel will be heard. Graves will open, and the dead will rise. King Jesus is returning. Every eye will see him, even those who persecuted him. Everyone will weep on account of him (Revelation 1:7).



At his name, ***“every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father”*** (Philippians 2:10–11). Jesus, who holds the keys of death and of Hades in his hands (Revelation 1:18), will welcome home his saints, those who were faithful to the point of death. He will say to those on his right, ***“Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”*** (Matthew 25:34). The Kingdom Jesus came to restore. The Kingdom that comes with forgiveness of our sins.

Until then we wait by observing another season of Advent. We look back at Jesus' first coming in Bethlehem and give thanks. We see the climax of that first coming with his enthronement upon the cross. We celebrate, yet ponder this awe-filled mystery.

The manger and the cross are made of the same wood. Jesus came to die. He came to give his life as a ransom for all (Matthew 20:28). Gentleness, humility, and meekness marked his first coming, even as he journeyed to Jerusalem and to the cross.

A crucifixion is the last place one would look for an enthronement, but here is Jesus, crucified for us. All our sins were laid upon him. By his wounds, we are healed (Isaiah 53:5). He fulfilled God's Law completely. His death and resurrection ushered in his coming Kingdom.

Now we walk by faith in the Son of God, who loves us and gave himself for us. He remains with us, our Immanuel. His presence is hidden in Word, water, bread, and wine. He takes these ordinary elements and uses them literally to join himself to us. Soon we will see Jesus as he really is. What was hidden will be seen by everyone.

His kingdom of glory will surpass every expectation in its power, splendor, and majesty. King Jesus is coming for us. He comes to take us to be where he is, that we may dwell in the house of the Lord, before his eternal throne, forever. Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly.

Amen