

LOOK WHERE WE ARE GOING
FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT

LUKE 19:28–40
NOV 29, '15

²⁸And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.'" ³²So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of it." ³⁵And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it. ³⁶And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. ³⁷As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of Olives—the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, ³⁸saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" ³⁹And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." ⁴⁰He answered, "I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

This past Friday, I expect those who headed out early for sales started even earlier, studying advertisements, making a plan for where they were going, what they were after, rather than just taking off and wandering around. May be that those who have Christmas decorations up already started even earlier looking at holiday magazines, creating big picture of what they wanted to accomplish. What are our goals for this Christmas?
to end up with piles of stuff and piles of debt?
to have good time with family and good memories?
or to enjoy being part of Jesus' holy family,
to receive the glorious gifts of God's kingdom,
to have debt of sins removed & to have lasting joy?

Today, as we begin new church year,
text helps us to look ahead at where we are going,
when Jesus comes to bring us into the kingdom of God.

The big picture of our themes on Sundays in Advent this year follows a common pattern for prayer:
first Adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication.
Today's text pictures resounding in praise
next Sunday: repenting in preparation
then: rejoicing and praying; finally: receiving the promise.

Today we rejoice in praise as we look at big picture of how

JESUS IS GOING TO BE A GLORIOUS KING

JESUS IS GOING TO HUMBLE HIMSELF

WE ARE GOING TO FOLLOW JESUS TO HEAVEN

JESUS IS GOING TO BE A GLORIOUS KING

²⁸And when he had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. ²⁹When he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet, he sent two of the disciples, ³⁰saying, "Go into the village in front of you, where on entering you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. ³¹If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say this: 'The Lord has need of it.' " ³²So those who were sent went away and found it just as he had told them. ³³And as they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, "Why are you untying the colt?" ³⁴And they said, "The Lord has need of it."

In suspense shows, like Mission Impossible,

it is amazing how the lead characters are able to make precise plans and preparations, timed to the second.

Somehow they have detailed diagrams of where they go and know exactly how things work.

Jesus demonstrates that kind of knowledge here.

He knows exactly where he is going & how to get there.

First he knows how to get the colt for this operation.

Some think it is by of his divine knowledge of everything.

I don't think so because during his time of humiliation he didn't use his divine powers to help himself.

I think he was just amazingly good at knowing people

by paying careful attention. I think he knew owners of colt and what they would do.

Message disciples were sent with was, "Lord has need of it."

Why did he need it? Because he was tired of walking?

I think he needed it to fulfill God's prophetic plan,

as when he said of his arrest in Garden of Gethsemane,

"The scriptures must be fulfilled in this way."

So, how did he know details of the plan for him as Messiah?

Again, some think it was by divine knowledge.

Again, I think it was by paying attention to scripture himself

and seeing all the details it gave about his life & death

which he pointed out to disciples after resurrection.

One of these details was entering Jerusalem like King Solomon,
king of peace who came to coronation riding a donkey.
and even detail that animal offered as sacrifice to God
was not to have previously been used for other purpose.
Another thing that had to happen according to scripture
was the praise, so that if disciples & children hadn't done it
the stones would have. His creation honors him because
The savior reigns...while fields and floods, rocks, hills,
and plains repeat the sounding joy.
All of this is because he is destined to be king of all.
Text begins in v. 28: "When he had said these things..."
What he had just said was parable of king giving
resources to servants, coming back for judgment.
He himself is that king & knew what he was talking about.
One sign of this is that what he says has to happen.
When he tells disciples to do what would seem
to be a fool's errand, they go.
When he says the colt will be there, it is.
When he says the owners will let it go, they do.
Just as shortly before this when he says to dead Lazarus
come out of the tomb, he does.
And when he says today, "This is my body & my blood," it is.
When he says it is for our forgiveness. That's what it does.
Others caught on what he was saying, where he was going.
Disciples shouted, "Blessed is the king
who comes in the name of the Lord."
without fully realizing all the implications.
The Pharisees had a premonition about the upheaval
that would result and said, "Don't go there."
But that is exactly where Jesus was going.

JESUS IS GOING TO HUMBLE HIMSELF

³⁵ And they brought it to Jesus, and throwing their cloaks on the colt,
they set Jesus on it.

Other gospels recognize this as fulfilling prophecy about
the messiah coming in humility before his exaltation.
When I drive, I sometimes take off with general idea
of where I am going and end up not taking the best route.
In Mankato, you often have to take a round about route.
To go to mall from here, can't just go east on Carlson Dr.
Can't just go all way south to Sibley Park on Lor Ray.

Reason is because of the valleys.

Going up to Jerusalem is like this.

To get to Jerusalem from Bethany on Mouth of Olives,
first you have to go down, through Kidron Valley.

For Jesus to get to his kingdom, first he had to go down,
down as the eternal word became a newborn baby
with no memory and no words.

down as a weak child and a homeless person.

down across the Kidron Valley to Garden of Gethsemane
where he fell down on his face in agonizing prayer,
falling down while carrying the cross,

being taken down dead from cross.

down until the one disciples set up on the colt
was laid down by them in the tomb.

Jesus knew this part of the plan by heart as well.

He told disciples in previous chapter: “Everything that is
written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be
accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles
and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon.

And after flogging him, they will kill him,
and on the third day he will rise.”

In opening a combination lock, you have to go one direction,
then back the other in a precise way.

Jesus knew the combination, the precise steps,
to unlock the chains of sin that bind us
and the prison of hell that awaits us
and open heaven for us instead.

Crowd Jesus was with was going to Jerusalem for Passover,
to celebrate how God’s delivering his people from death
by the blood of a sacrificial lamb.

No wonder words they shouted, “Blessed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord” are quote from Ps. 118
which was sung at Passover when eating the lamb.

No wonder we sing these same words when we eat body
of the same lamb with unleavened bread in Communion.

Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world.
to free us from slavery to sin that ends in death
and welcome us into the eternal banquet of heaven.

WE ARE GOING TO FOLLOW JESUS TO HEAVEN

³⁷ As he was drawing near—already on the way down the Mount of

Olives— the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen,³⁸ saying, "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"

Along with these disciples, we are following Jesus into holy city.

If you are to follow someone in crowd or on busy streets
you need to have clear picture of one you are following
and helps to know ahead what route you will take.

We are on way to celebrate joy of Jesus' presence at Christmas
so today we look where we are going.

We are connecting the dots between
"Peace in heaven and glory in the highest" in this text
and the "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth"
shouted by the angels at Jesus' birth.

There can only be glory in the highest for us
when we have peace on earth because of peace in heaven,
peace between us and God brought by Jesus.

We are joyfully following Jesus into the holy city
but first follow his humility in repentance of Advent season.

We who would be among these disciples accompanying Jesus
also find ourselves among those disciples who soon
abandoned Jesus in their words & behavior
until they were brought back again by the preaching
of repentance at Pentecost.

For the world, this season is a big game of let's pretend.

Let's pretend everything is beautiful & everyone is happy.

Let's pretend we can afford all the nice things we want.

These paths that seem to go up often end up leading down.

The ways in which Jesus leads us in following him
often lead down first into humility, obedient service, difficulty,
patient endurance, even suffering

Neither the delights nor the difficulties of this life will last
but we are headed toward God's eternal glory in the highest
which can only happen when there is peace in heaven.

How can heaven be at peace with a world that ignores God,
disregards his will, takes his blessings for granted,
turns celebrations of his grace into just another excuse
to eat too much, drink too much and spend too much
on things that don't last.

It can happen because Jesus the king has come even to us.

He who can use a lowly colt for his holy purposes
can use braying donkeys like us too.
Like the disciples who didn't fully understand
what they were doing but followed Jesus' words,
We here today also listen to Jesus words
calling us to repent, to be forgiven
and to believe what he promises.
Jesus knew where he was going and what he was doing.
He was bound for glory and thanks to him we are too.

JESUS IS GOING TO BE A GLORIOUS KING
just as the words of the prophetic scriptures say.
JESUS IS GOING TO HUMBLE HIMSELF
which is what needs to happen for us to be saved
and brought with him to his glory.
WE ARE GOING TO FOLLOW JESUS TO HEAVEN
so we too follow him on the path to humility
and believing the promises of God's word
which show us the big picture of God's plans for us
both for this life and forever.