
We read as follows in Jesus' name:

Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 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. If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once."**

This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, *"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.'"*

The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and He sat on them. Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 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!" (ESV)

This is Your Word, heavenly Father; sanctify us in the truth, Your Word is Truth. Amen. (John 17:17)

In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Our adventing King, our coming King, has come already, and still comes, and is yet to come.

We just heard a portion of His first coming – in the flesh – in our text,

how He rode on a borrowed donkey's colt to enter Jerusalem for that fateful Passover.

But what kind of a King borrows His mode of transportation for His grand entrance into His city?

I suppose one that lives near poverty, who does not seek to build up a large supply of earthly wealth.

Or one who will not ever have any use for it later on.

Both of these describe Jesus' condition on that first Palm Sunday.

St. Paul pointed out, **that though [our Lord Jesus Christ] was rich,**

yet for your sake He became poor, so that you by His poverty might become rich. 2 Corinthians 8:9

St. Paul would, again, remind you that, for a time, the Son of God put aside His glory.

Though all the world belonged to Him, and through Him all things were made,

He ...did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but emptied Himself,

by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

In a few weeks, we will once again observe the lowliness and poverty of His entrance into this world as we hear the Christmas story.

How Mary and Joseph borrowed a manger, a donkey's feeding trough, to lay our Lord in.

And just as He began in this world, so He would end... in a borrowed tomb.

But it made sense to borrow that too, not just because He didn't have the finances to cut one Himself,

but because He wouldn't need it that long anyway - knowing He would rise on the 3rd day.

...

Have you ever contemplated the oddity of what our Lord told His disciples to say should the owners of the donkey and colt ask what they were doing?

Simply tell them, **"The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once,"** He said.

Notice how truthful and direct Jesus is, **'The Lord needs them.'**

Perhaps these donkeys belonged to a man who recognized the disciples and He whom they followed.
I wonder if, when the disciples said, **'The Lord needs them,'**
the owner knew and recognized Jesus to be the Lord Himself, the Messiah,
or if, perhaps, he thought of Jesus simply as a prophet of the Lord
and so to give these animals for Jesus' use was to give them to the Lord as well.
Regardless, he does just what Jesus said he would do... he sent them on. Luke 19:33-35

And so the prophecy was fulfilled, as St. Matthew pointed out,
*'Behold, your King is coming to you, humble,
and mounted on a donkey, and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'*

It was no Jedi mind trick that the disciples played on the man, as if to make him go against his will.
The owner gave them because the Lord had prepared his heart to listen to His Lord's Word.
And when he had the opportunity to give to the Lord, he did so promptly, without hesitation.
Having that inside scoop, that the Lord was coming, do you wonder if it wasn't this man
who then went around and started the crowds chanting, "Hosanna to the Son of David,"
excitedly preparing the hearts of the people for the Lord's coming.

...

Dear fellow redeemed,
"The Lord has need of them," and he [sent] them at once.

This is the response of a faithful manager, a faithful steward, of the Lord's stuff,
and the man didn't even realize it was in order to fulfill this 500 year-old prophecy.

Can you imagine what might have happened if the owner had declined to let them go,
and the disciples returned to Jesus empty-handed.
Such a thing would not have pleased the Lord or His heavenly Father at all.
Here the Lord had given the man this donkey and colt for this very reason, but he would withhold it?

And yet, isn't this the response that our Lord often receives from us
when we do not use God's possessions according to His will?
When instead of giving a fair price or an honest wage, we are greedy and miserly.
When instead of giving generously to those in true need, we selfishly withhold charity.
When instead of offering our best services to the Lord, we use them for our own glory and reputation,
or we would offer to Him whatever is leftover after we feel we are rested up sufficiently.
When instead of spending our diligence in His Word, we despise it by hearing it, but not heeding it...
not letting it effect in us godly contrition, leading to true repentance,
nor a desire to amend our sinful lives according to His Word,
or even doubting it, disbelieving it.
When instead of receiving His Sacraments faithfully,
cherishing our baptism into Christ,
or taking, eating, and drinking His body and blood for our forgiveness often, as He invites us to,
we lazily ignore gathering together around them,
and instead use this precious time to focus on our own temporary whims and desires.

These are not the faithful responses of servants to their Lord's will.

These are the responses of rebellious servants, who believe that they are their own lords and masters, that what is in their possession is for their own selfish use, and that their lives are their own.

And yet, not even our Lord, the King and Ruler of the universe thought this way.

His body was not His own, but His Father's who gave it.

Jesus did not begrudge the earthly poverty and meanness that He lived in,
or the heavenly riches and honor and glory that He temporarily lived without.

He was pleased to selflessly serve His own creatures and servants – that we might receive His grace. Willingly, totally, perfectly, He gave His body and all that He had over to His Father's will, and poured out His precious blood and gave up His life, holding nothing back... for you.

...
The donkey owner's response shouldn't surprise us.

This is the proper response of one who realizes that all that he has is from the Lord in the first place, that he is not the owner, but the steward, the manager, of the Lord's possessions.

How much easier it is for us to let something go, when we realize that it is not ours, but that we were simply taking care of it for a time, until the Lord needs it.

Dearly beloved by the Lord,

Our bodies, even our very lives, are not our own.

They are a stewardship, a management of the Lord's possessions.

He created you, just as you confess in the Explanation to the 1st Article of the Apostles' Creed:

*I believe that God has made me and all creatures;
that He has given me my body and soul,
eyes, ears and all my members, my reason and all my senses...*

And on top of that He has purchased them back as we confess in the Expl./2nd Article:

*[He] has redeemed me, a lost and condemned creature,
purchased and won me from all sins, from death and from the power of the devil;
not with gold or silver,
but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death;
in order that I might be His own...*

And as St. Paul also affirms for us,

You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. 1 Corinthians 6:19c-20

So it is entirely appropriate that when we gather to our Lord, around His precious body and blood, that we sing along w/ the Palm Sunday crowd, "**Hosanna**," that is "save now" **to the Son of David.**

Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.

And it is entirely appropriate that you receive His absolution, or forgiveness, firmly believing that your misuses and mismanagement of His possessions are forgiven before God in heaven.

Having received these sacred gifts, then be certain that you have a heart prepared for His final advent, for His final coming, no longer in humility, but in great glory on the last day, when you will inherit the heavenly kingdom with streets of gold and gates of pearl.

And in the meantime, while you wait for that inheritance, you have a heart well-prepared to manage the Lord's possessions on earth according to His will as a faithful steward of His grace and blessings. In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

Soli Deo Gloria