

SUNDAY.

## *Crumbs – Good News for the Diaspora!\**

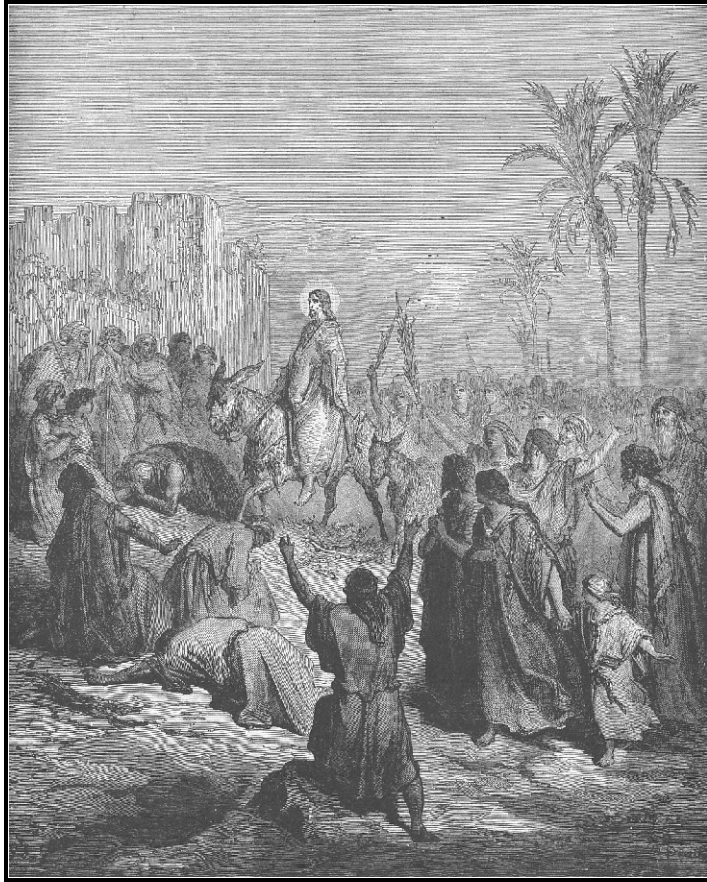


Illustration: Christ's Entry in Jerusalem

### FIRST PART. **THE FESTIVAL SEASON.**

A Devotional for the  
First Week in Advent.\*

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold thy King cometh unto thee: He is just, and having salvation. – Zechariah 9:9*

This is a word of prophecy written at a time when the Savior had not yet come. It is a word of prophecy given to the Daughter of Zion, the Daughter of Jerusalem. Who was the Daughter of Zion, the Daughter of Jerusalem? It was the congregation of believers in Israel, who desired to lift up their eyes to Mount Zion towering forth in Jerusalem, for upon that mount stood David's royal palace, and it was from David that the eternal King – the Savior – was to descend according to His human nature. And the desire of the believers was not to be put to shame. Through the Holy Spirit, the Prophet cried: "Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold your King comes to you," your King, your eternal King! And He "is just, and having salvation": through His justice and righteousness, the righteousness which He procured for you, a poor sinful people, He will help you forevermore.

Christians, believing Christians, the Savior has come. By His bloody merit He has procured for you that righteousness with which you can stand before God. He has helped you. Say:

Jesus' blood and righteousness  
My jewels are, my glorious dress,  
Wherein before my God I stand  
When I shall reach the heavenly land.

You are now the Daughter of Zion, the Daughter of Jerusalem. And now rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion; shout, O Daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King comes to you: He is just, and having salvation. Christians, you believe in Him, you are righteous before God, you are helped.

*PRAYER.* – Lord Jesus Christ, dear Savior, I give thanks to You that You have fulfilled Your Word – given through the prophets – that

You have truly come. Even me, a poor sinner, have You made righteous before God: to me, too, have You opened heaven; me, too, have You helped. Continue to help me, Lord Jesus, through Thy Word and Thy Holy Spirit, that in true faith I may firmly hold You; that I may rely upon Your merit wrought for me; that I may serve You, my King, willingly and gladly, and finally enter the blessed realms above. Amen.

Hymn 146, 1. 4.

LET the earth now praise the Lord,  
Who hath truly kept His word,  
And the sinners' Help and Friend  
Now at last to us doth send.

Welcome, O my Savior now!  
Hail! My Portion, Lord, art Thou!  
Here, too, in my heart, I pray,  
O prepare Thyself a way.

MONDAY.

*I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel. – Genesis 3:15*

Adam and Eve, and in and with them all men, had been deceived by the devil, concealed in the serpent. And they had fallen into sin, death, and damnation. And Satan triumphed. Then came the Lord, the eternal Son of God. And in the hearing of Adam and Eve, He first said to the devil: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed." So, after all, the devil's victory was not to be final. There was to be another battle, another strife, between him and his hosts on the one hand, and mankind on the other. And furthermore, the Son of God said: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel." The outcome of this battle and strife was to be that the Seed of Woman, a man born of woman, should, in bloody,

mortal combat, completely overcome the devil and rescue man from his power, from sin, death, and damnation. And by saying "His seed," the Son of God spoke of Himself, who should become man and accomplish all these things. – This is the first Advent message, the very first message concerning the coming of the Savior. Herewith Adam and Eve and many of their offspring comforted themselves, until other prophecies were added.

You Christians, look to Bethlehem and to Golgotha and into the empty grave, and there see how the Son of God made good His word. And believing in Him, let your souls be comforted.

*PRAYER.* – Lord Jesus Christ, You eternal Son of God, I give thanks to You that You did become true man, and by Your bitter suffering and death, and also by Your victorious resurrection, have redeemed me and all mankind from all sins, from death, and from the power of the devil. Grant me, I beg You, that in true faith, I may at all times find true comfort in You, and remain steadfast in such faith against all the temptations of the Prince of this World, who, nevertheless, is judged already, until by a blessed death You will lead me into eternal life. Amen.

Hymn 146, 8. 9.

Bruise for me the Serpent's head.  
That, set free from doubt and dread.  
I may cleave to Thee in faith,  
Safely kept through life and death.

And when Thou dost come again  
As a glorious King to reign,  
I with joy may see Thy face,  
Truly ransomed by Thy grace.

TUESDAY.

*In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.*

*– Genesis 3:15*

When God blesses a poor sinful man, I say, when He blesses, must not every curse vanish; must not all sin be forgiven, death become life, damnation be turned into salvation? Most certainly.

Now, bearing in mind yesterday's meditation, listen to something of olden times. – Men had multiplied on earth. But nearly all had cast the prophecy of the Seed of Woman, the Savior, to the winds, and had become wicked. The doom of the Flood had come upon them. Noah only, and his family, had been spared. Even the descendants of Noah had soon become wicked. Then, about the year 2000 after the creation of man, God chose unto Himself Abraham, the descendant of Shem, the son of Noah. Out of Abraham's descendants He wanted to raise up a people unto Himself. To this people He desired to give His Word. Of this people, as concerning the flesh, the promised Savior should come. And He said to Abraham: "In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed." By the Seed of Abraham Christ is meant. Though Christ God's blessing was to come unto all men.

Christ has come, and the blessing has come with Him. You know this, O Christian. Now bow before Christ in faith, O sinner, O poor and lost sinner, and receive His blessing, that every curse may be taken from you, your sins be forgiven you, death turned into life, and damnation into salvation. God wants to bless you. Do you not desire to be blessed?

*PRAYER.* – Yes, Lord, I indeed desire to be blessed, O my God. I bow down before You, Lord Jesus Christ, my Savior. Grant me Your blessing. Make every curse vanish. Forgive me all my sins, turn death into life for me, grant me eternal life for Your own sake. Perform unto me Your old, unchanging promise. I know You will do it. I give thanks to You; I desire to give thanks to You in all eternity, for Your blessing. Amen.

Hymn 107, 5.

Plenteous grace with Thee is found,  
Grace to cover all my sin;  
Let the healing streams abound;  
Make and keep me pure within.

Thou of life the Fountain art,  
Freely let me take of Thee:  
Spring Thou up within my heart,  
Rise to all eternity.

WEDNESDAY.

*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will perform that good thing which I have promised unto the house of Israel and to the house of Judah. In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of Righteousness to grow up unto David; and He shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land. In those days shall Judah be saved, and Jerusalem shall dwell safely. And this is the name wherewith He shall be called, The Lord, our Righteousness. – Jeremiah 33:14-16.*

The promise which said that through his seed – which seed is Christ – all the nations of the earth should be blessed, had passed from Abraham upon Isaac, from Isaac upon Jacob, called Israel, from Israel upon Judah, and from Judah upon King David, who lived a thousand years before Christ. And henceforth the believers called the expected Messiah – or Christ – the "Son of David." The prophets then often foretold many things concerning Him. And about six hundred years before Christ, the Prophet Jeremiah spoke the words found at the head of this lesson. The Lord Jehovah would become the Son of David and help His people by becoming their righteousness wherewith they might stand before God. And then, as their rightful King, He would execute judgment in the land, and for time and eternity clothe them with righteousness and salvation. And the children of Israel sang: "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest! Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest! Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" And when Christ had come and was now entering Jerusalem, the people sang, and the children in the

temple sang unto Him this song of praise. And do you, O Christian, also sing to Him with heart and mouth, just as now our own children also sing to Him, “Hosanna in the highest!”

*PRAYER.* – I give thanks to You – Lord Jesus Christ – You great Lord Jehovah and Son of David, that You have come to us miserable and lost sinners, and have established eternal help and deliverance for us. In You we have that righteousness – in which we stand before God – and eternal salvation. Now help us, Your beloved Christians, that in true faith, we honor, laud, and praise You, our true King, and serve and obey You with cheerful hearts as long as we live. And finally, take us where we shall praise You forevermore with the choir of angels, O Lord Jesus. Amen.

Hymn 135, 3. 4.

My hosannas and my palms  
Graciously receive, I pray Thee;  
Evermore, as best I can,  
Savior, I will homage pay Thee  
And in faith I will embrace,  
Lord, Thy merit through Thy grace.

Hail! Hosanna! David’s Son,  
Help, Lord, hear our supplication!  
Let Thy kingdom, scepter, crown  
Bring us blessing and salvation,  
That forever we may sing:  
Hail! Hosanna to our King.

THURSDAY.

*The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. – Isaiah 53:6.*

Thus did Isaiah prophesy concerning Christ, the promised Messiah. He spoke as if these things were then already long past. And

now they are long past. The Lord did lay on Him the iniquity of us all, and we are free and saved eternally. These are the glad tidings brought to us now.

But how few thee are that believe these glad tidings! Many are offended at Christ Crucified. Flesh and blood, in looking at Him, behold no form nor comeliness, no beauty such as they would rather see. He is despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. Man, as it were, hides his face from Him; natural man esteems Him not. Yet the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all. Surely He has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows. He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. We are all as sheep gone astray; but the Lord has laid on Him the iniquities of us all. He was the blameless and patient Lamb of God that bore the sins of the world. It pleased God so to bruise Him. He has made His soul an offering for sin. They who are born of God know this, and behold this, and delight in it. And even He, our Savior, delights in the congregation of believers which has sprung from His sowing of blood and from the travail of His soul. By His knowledge He – the righteous Servant of God – justifies many; for He bore their iniquities. Despite the unbelief of many, the portion of His spoil is large, because He has poured out His soul unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors, and bore the sin of the world, and made intercession for the transgressors. – And you, too, O Christian, are of the portion of His blessed spoil. Your sin, also, did the Lord lay upon Him.

*PRAYER.* – I give thanks to You, crucified Redeemer, because You did bear my sin, and did make me righteous in the sight of God. I thank You for the blood You did shed and for Your death on the cross. When I contemplate this, my soul is delighted in You. For this is my salvation. I thank You that – through Your most precious Gospel – You did pluck me, a poor sinner, from out of the unbelieving world, and through faith in You, did make me a portion of Your spoil, and are satisfied with a great satisfaction. Hold me fast, Lord Jesus, and take spoil upon spoil from unbelief and destruction, O Jesus. Amen.

Hymn 145, 6. 12.

He becomes the Lamb that taketh  
Sin away, | And for aye  
Full atonement maketh.  
For our life His own He tenders,  
And our race, | By His grace,  
Meet for glory renders.

Let me in my arms receive Thee,  
On Thy breast | Let me rest,  
Savior, ne'er leave Thee!  
Since Thou hast Thyself presented  
Now to me, | I shall be  
Evermore contented.

FRIDAY.

*Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life; in Thy presence is fullness of joy; on Thy right hand there are pleasures forevermore. – Psalm 16:10-11.*

These words were spoken *by* David, but not *concerning* David. It was the eternal Son of God – who wanted to become the promised Son of David, the Messiah – that spoke these words by the mouth of David. Two infallible exponents of the Bible tell us this, the Apostles Peter and Paul, as you may read in Acts 2:25-31 and 13:35-37. With these words the Son of God spoke of His resurrection, which was to follow soon after His death on the cross. And the Son of God actually did what He had promised to do. On the third day after His death He arose. And thereby He, as our Savior and Substitute, did away with our death entirely – together with its fearful causes and terrible consequences – and utterly destroyed it. Though the resurrection of Christ, we sinners have been made righteous before God; dying, we have been brought to life; damned, we have been saved. This was

foretold by the prophets in the Old Testament, and proclaimed by the evangelists and apostles in the New Testament. And whoever, thought the Holy Ghost, in true faith accepted this in ages gone by or whoever accepts it now – whoever comforted his soul with it then, or does so now – really possessed all these things then and possesses them now.

My dear Christian, look alone to Christ in faith, and rejoice in what He has done for you.

*PRAYER.* – Not I, O Lord Jesus, not I must overcome, nor can I overcome, the cruel power of my sin and of death and of judgment and of damnation, and save myself. No, all this You, You, have done for me. For this I render You heartfelt thanks. Grant, I beg You, O Jesus, that I may look alone to You, and trust and rely on what You have done for me, and what Your sacred Word does say. Thus, Your righteousness, Your life, shall be mine, Your blessedness my own. O risen and living Lord and Savior, I put my trust in You. Amen.

Hymn 218, 4. 5.

This is a sight that gladdens  
And fills my heart with glee;  
Now, naughtsoever saddens  
My soul, nor takes from me  
My trust or fortitude,  
Or any precious good  
Which by His victory  
My Savior gained for me.

Hell and its prince, the Devil,  
Now of their power are shorn,  
I now am safe from evil,  
And sin I laugh to scorn;  
Grim Death with all his might  
Cannot my soul affright;  
He is a powerless form,  
Howe'er he rage and storm.

SATURDAY.

*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit Thou at my right hand.*

– *Psalm 110:1*

Thus David, the prophet and king, from whose seed Christ should be born, foretold the final ascension of Christ, both his and our Lord. Through the Holy Ghost he heard in advance how God the Father – after Christ’s great victory of our salvation was accomplished – would say to Christ: “Sit Thou at my right hand.” And so it came to pass. Christ, true God and man, our Substitute and Savior, ascended into heaven, and – note well – opened heaven for us, which had been barred against us. When He ascended into heaven, He re-opened unto us the door of Paradise that day. The cherub guards the gate no more: to God our thanks we pay. And He – true God and man – our Substitute and Savior – sat at the right hand of God. And thus, He prepared a place for us where we shall be in the most intimate communion with God forevermore, and where the glory of God will illumine our entire being, both soul and body. He has accomplished all things for us. He has prepared all things for us. And He – true God and man – our Savior and Substitute – now sits at the right hand of God, and fills all things with His presence and omnipotence. Or is there a space where the right hand of God is not? And He that sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, rules over all. In this way, our dear Savior is with us always, even to the end of the world. And thus He guards, guides, leads, directs, and rules us that we may obtain the salvation of our souls. Let us receive Him, let us trust in Him, and rely on Him – on Him who secured us every blessing, and brings us to the blissful abodes of heaven.

*PRAYER.* – Jesus, exalted Savior, You called me, a poor sinner, to that glory which You have procured for me, which You have prepared for me, which You have taken possession of for me. O Lord Jesus, I trust in You alone. O You, my Righteousness - You, my Life - You, my Salvation, protect me from Satan, from the wicked world, and from my own evil flesh and blood. Keep me in the true faith and trust in You, and open wide heaven’s door for me when from this earth my soul shall flee. Amen.

Hymn 557, 5.

O sweet and blessed country,  
The home of God’s elect!  
O sweet and blessed country  
That eager hearts expect!  
Jesus, in mercy bring us  
To that dear land of rest;  
Who art, with God the Father  
And Spirit, ever blest.

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\* Notes:

The word *diaspora* is from two Greek words: *through* + *sowing*. Thus the meaning is a *scattering* and from which we get the word *dispersion*. The Lord’s faithful people are scattered throughout the world. Hence the *Diaspora*. There is *Good News for the Diaspora!*

The word *advent* means *coming* or *arrival* and is often used for an important person or event – or both! For example, the Church celebrates the Advent of the Son of God in Bethlehem where the King of kings and the Redeemer of the world is born and placed in a manger.

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These devotions are adapted from *Crumbs* by C. M. Zorn (1914).  
The hymn stanzas are from *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (1918).  
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