

Sermon for the First Sunday in Advent

“Outcry”

Luke 19:28-40

12/2/18c

<sup>28</sup> When He had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem.

<sup>29</sup> And it came to pass, when He drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, <sup>30</sup> saying, “Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. <sup>31</sup> And if anyone asks you, ‘Why are you loosing it?’ thus you shall say to him, ‘Because the Lord has need of it.’ ”

<sup>32</sup> So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. <sup>33</sup> But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, “Why are you loosing the colt?”

<sup>34</sup> And they said, “The Lord has need of him.” <sup>35</sup> Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. <sup>36</sup> And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road.

<sup>37</sup> Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, <sup>38</sup> saying:

“ ‘Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!’  
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!”

<sup>39</sup> And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.”

<sup>40</sup> But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.”

In the name of Jesus. Amen.

“The outcry against Sodom and Gomorrah is great,” the LORD declared to Abraham, “and their sin is very grave” (Genesis 18:20). We don’t know all the evil that was going on in the ancient cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, but from the account of Lot and the two angels in Genesis 19 we know that a large part of it, at least, was sexual impurity and perversity. “Where are the men who came to you tonight?” the men of the city asked Lot. “Bring them out to us,” they demanded, “that we may know them” (Genesis 19:5).

An outcry was raised many years later against a man named Zacchaeus, for different reasons. In his Gospel, St. Luke relates to us the incident of Zacchaeus and the sycamore tree just a few verses before today’s Holy Gospel. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector, and he was very wealthy. Why the outcry? The people hated Zacchaeus because he worked for the Romans, and because he had used his position of authority to his own advantage, getting rich at the expense of his fellow Jews.

An outcry goes up today against wickedness too—the sort that was found in Sodom and Gomorrah, the sort that Zacchaeus had practiced, and many other types of evil as well. “Our God!” we pray, “so many people want nothing to do with You, and they do horrible things to their fellow man in defiance of all Your commandments! They deny Your Word and attack Your people; they idolize money and power; they kill innocent human beings; they are proud, they are arrogant, they do not fear You!”

But the outcry also goes up about me, and about you, the outcry spoken by our own guilty conscience: “I should have told the truth, but I didn’t.” “I should have showed kindness, but I didn’t.” “I should have stayed pure, but I didn’t.” “I should have been obedient, but I wasn’t.”

“I haven’t been good enough!” “I haven’t been a good enough father.” “I haven’t been a good enough mother.” “I haven’t been a good enough husband.” “I haven’t been a good enough wife.” “I haven’t been a good enough son.” “I haven’t been a good enough daughter.” “I haven’t been

a good enough pastor.” “I haven’t been a good enough Christian.” “I haven’t been a good enough person!”

And Satan, the accuser, joins the cry: “You know God’s Commandments, don’t you? *Then for heaven’s sake why haven’t you kept them?!*”

In the midst of such a great and loud outcry, Jesus meets you on this first Sunday of the new church year with a different Word. He bids your heart be peaceful and glad for, He tells you, “The Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10). As Your Savior said about Zacchaeus, whom He called to faith, so He says of you: “[This man/this woman/this child] also is a son of Abraham” (v.9).

Jesus meets us today—Jesus, the very Son of God, coming upon earth as true man in our same flesh and blood, to bring down all God’s rich mercy upon people like Zacchaeus and people like us...not God’s wrath, but God’s *mercy*. Jesus—no mere angelic messenger of God, but God Himself. Jesus—God’s chosen, God’s anointed, who “will not cry aloud or lift up His voice, or make it heard in the street” *Isaiah 42:1-1*. No outcry on Jesus’ part for your blood—He came to shed *His* blood *for you*.

In our text we see Him, the King of our salvation, entering Jerusalem amid great accolades, but shortly to be shouted down by His foes and crowned with thorns to silence the outcry against us.

The Palm Sunday crowds acclaimed Jesus as king. Not entirely realizing what they were saying, the crowds were speaking the truth:

*Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD!  
Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!* (Luke 19:38)

An outcry arose from some Pharisees: We object! Jesus, muzzle Your disciples! “Rebuke” them! (v.39)

Jesus would not.

You know, Jesus rebuked demons (Luke 4:35); the Lord rebuked the fever that held Peter's mother-in-law (4:39); and the wind that stirred up the Sea of Galilee and imperiled His terrified disciples, that wind too the Lord Jesus rebuked (8:24), but He would not rebuke those who acclaimed Him as the God-given King on Palm Sunday.

Why? Because it was true, and Jesus, the "Branch of righteousness" (Jeremiah 33:15), can say nothing against the truth. Jesus was the heaven-sent King. He came in the name of Yahweh, the LORD, to establish peace between God and man again, to show the glory of God's grace.

When heaven opens and God's Son comes down to die on the cross to atone for the sins of the world, there *must be* an outcry (never mind the objections of the unbelieving Pharisees). There must be an outcry...from the crowds...from the stones if necessary!...there must be an outcry, a crying out in praise and joy and gladness, from you and me and all Christians.

*We cry out in praise because of God's grace toward us—the grace that is in and through Jesus!*

Yes, dear friends in Christ:

THE OUTCRY AGAINST US ALL HAS BEEN SILENCED  
THROUGH THE REDEEMING LOVE OF GOD  
IN CHRIST, OUR KING AND OUR CRUCIFIED, RISEN SAVIOR.

We are thus blessed to be able to cry out in faith the praises of God's salvation. God's salvation.

We have this crying out in praise of God’s salvation in this season’s Gradual, from Zechariah 9:9:

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion.  
Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem.  
Behold, your king is coming to you;  
Righteous and having **salvation**.*

We have it in this Sunday’s Introit, from Psalm 89:

*Blessed are the people who know the festal shout (v.15)*  
The “festal shout” is the cry of praise from God’s **saved** people—that He has **saved** them!

We’ll sing it this month in our hymn of the month, “God Loves Me Dearly”:

*God loves me dearly,  
Grants me **salvation**,  
God loves me dearly,  
Loves even me.*

And shortly we’ll have it in the Sanctus before Holy Communion:

“Truly blest is He who comes in the name of the Lord”—*We bless Jesus, who is coming to us—yes, even us, today, in this place—with His body and blood for our salvation.*

Throughout this Church Year that God has given us, let us join all believers and all creation in crying out the praises of the God of our salvation.

In the name of Jesus. Amen