

First Sunday in Advent

OLD TESTAMENT – Isaiah 2:1-5

This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: ² In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. ³ Many peoples will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴ He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. ⁵ Come, O house of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Chs 2–4 Expresses contrast between the ideal Israel God desires and the historical reality of the Southern Kingdom (Judah and Jerusalem) in Isaiah's day. The chapters go from the ideal to the reality and back again, showing how Israel can be restored only by God's mercy and grace if first brought low in judgment. (TLSB)

2:1 The book of Isaiah is a series of prophecies, which the prophet collected later in his life. Here Isaiah introduces a section that extends to the end of chapter 4. The next introduction is at the beginning of chapter 6. Chapter 5 is a special insertion described as "The Song of the Vineyard" in the NIV. (PBC)

AFTER the Babylonian captivity a part of the kingdom of Judah was preserved in order that it might be the seed of the coming reign of Christ, to whom it was bound. Therefore this people could not be completely rejected until the lawful reign of Christ had come. And this is why the prophets move over from the physical kingdom to the spiritual, even though they are regarded as fanatics for not preserving the order. But he who sees the continuance of those two kingdoms will also see that the prophets have written in the best way. Accordingly, in the previous chapter Isaiah dealt with the punishments of the physical kingdom because of the sin and ungodliness of those people. Later he dealt with limited restoration after the captivity. Now follows the prophecy concerning the kingdom of Christ that is to come after the return from the captivity. But these words must be carefully noted, because the prophet speaks spiritually when he describes the church of Christ and skillfully depicts it, namely, that this kingdom is ruled by one scepter, which is the Gospel. Wherever this Gospel is proclaimed with sincerity, there this kingdom of Christ is. The Word does not deceive. Works can deceive. The Holy Spirit accompanies the Word, though He may not be present in the preacher and in the hearers. The Jews are still looking for a physical kingdom of Christ in Jerusalem. Yet in that kingdom of Christ no person or mask is shown, but only a voice and a word. The Hebrews explain עַל by saying that it means "to us." We explain it more clearly with "concerning," as in the Epistle to the Hebrews. "To whom, that is, concerning whom," says Isaiah, "we are speaking." Likewise (Heb. 1:7): "To, that is, of, the angels He says, etc." דְבַר means "word," "speech," "thing," "cause," "order," "something." The pronoun "this" is used rather frequently for the word mentioned last. (Luther)

THIS IS WHAT – Literally it might say “The word that Isaiah received. It could also say message, speech, matter, or thing. The Hebrew word is a parallel for logos in the NT. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

SAW CONCERNING – Here means perceived, or received. The manner of communication of the message to the prophet is not in any wise described. (Leopold)

JUDAH AND JERUSALEM – Isaiah was prophesying to an Israel divided into the northern and southern kingdoms. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 9, Part 1)

2:2–5 See note on 4:2–6.(CSB)

2:2–4† Almost identical to Mic 4:1–3. The theme of the “mountain of the LORD” (Mount Zion) is common in Isaiah; it occurs in passages that depict the coming of both Jews and Gentiles to Jerusalem (Zion) in the last days (see 11:9; 27:13; 56:7; 57:13; 65:25; 66:20; see also 60:3–5; Zec 14:16). The peace described in this passage has been inaugurated through the coming of Christ and the preaching of the gospel, and will be consummated at the return of Christ. (CSB)

2:2 *the last days.*† Can refer to the future generally (see Ge 49:1), but usually it has in view the Messianic era. In a real sense the last days began with the first coming of Christ (see Ac 2:17; Heb 1:2) and will be fulfilled at his second coming. (CSB)

Lit, “in the end of days.” Also translated “in days to come” (Gn 49:1; Dt 31:29), when God fulfills this prophecy. (TLSB)

When Isaiah says this he is looks ahead at the NT era. The “last days,” those future days on the horizon for the prophet, included the coming of the Messiah and the final judgment of the nations. For us in the NT era, the last days on the distant horizon of the future include the final judgment. (PBC)

You see that here the prophet speaks in a completely spiritual sense, for what he says here cannot be understood in a physical sense. Moriah is the mountain on which Solomon built the temple, on which at an earlier time Abraham was going to sacrifice his son; and he interprets it to mean “vision.” Here, he says, it shall be established because it is the highest. But when did this take place? The Jews imagine that all mountains flow together and that Mt. Moriah will be the loftiest. But this is not said here. It was necessary, however, for the church to begin at a definite place, where the Gospel would have its beginning and where Christ would come together with His disciples. Although the Gospel is not bound to a place, yet it had to begin at some place, and there has to be a place for hearing the Gospel, not however, for obtaining salvation. Hag. 2:9 says: “The latter splendor of this house shall be greater than the former,” because there the church had to begin, namely, in a physical place, though the church itself is not physical. That mountain, He says, will be most highly praised, because from it the church receives its name and will be called Mt. Zion. Out of a physical mountain the

prophet makes one that is spiritual and a kingdom that is spiritual. Therefore the church, or the kingdom of Christ, is an exalted mountain, the house of the Lord in a spiritual sense, because there it had its beginning in a physical way. (Luther)

MOUNTAIN OF THE LORD'S TEMPLE – Not a physical reshaping of the earth or the formation of a political world empire, but a figurative description of what God will accomplish through the Messiah. The Jerusalem that God promises to create is His Church (28:16; 1Pt 2:4–8; Eph 2:19–22), made of people from all nations (v 3; Rv 5:9). Cf Rv 21:9–27. (TLSB)

God promises that God's temple would be at head of the mountains. This was not literally so in physical terms, because the temple was lower in elevation than the surrounding hills. The promise to make Zion the head of the mountains previews the principle of the messianic kingdom in which the least will be made the greatest and the last made the first. – For us, Zion represents the place of the means of grace – where God's Word is preached for the repentance and faith, where sinners are baptized into the kingdom of God, and the Holy Supper is served in remembrance of the perfect sacrifice offered by the Lamb of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 1)

In the NT era God's kingdom, God's Church, will have precedence over the kings of the world. It will be exalted over the kingdoms of the world. In size and sphere of activity it will excel the greatest of the world's kingdoms. It will extend over the whole earth. And this kingdom will stand firm, never totter and perish, while the kingdoms of this world have their allotted time and then go to ruin. (Stoeckhardt)

WILL BE ESTABLISHED – This is a Hebraism and means confirmed, attested, made stable. Scripture is also wont to speak this way elsewhere. In 1 Kings 2:46 we read: "So the kingdom was established in the hand of Solomon." Thus this kingdom will also be lifted up beyond all hills, all other kingdoms, principalities, and whatever is lofty on earth. No matter how much the church is sure to be harassed and trampled underfoot by death, sins, Satan, tyranny, and heretics, yet in this trampling underfoot it shall be exalted above all mountains. For no other kingdom is so firmly established, and compared with it all other kingdoms are filthy: the Assyrians, the Greeks, the Chaldeans, the Romans, etc. For that kingdom endures, overcomes, and triumphs over death, devil, and heresies. No other kingdom can do this. But this takes place by the Word alone. Very many kingdoms have been laid waste. The church remains victorious over all kingdoms and the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18). (Luther)

CHIEF – The Hebrew expression used (bero'sh) does not necessarily mean "on top of" (lit. "on the head"), but "at the head." As the phrase in Deut. 20:9; 1 Sam 9:22; 1 KINGS 21:9 CLEARLY SHOWS. (LEUPOLD)

ALL NATIONS WILL STREAM TO IT – Isaiah here expressed another version of God's promise to Abraham. "All peoples on earth will be blessed through you" (Genesis 12:3). God promised that He would send His Messiah and that the Messiah's work would become the most important epoch in the history of Judah and Jerusalem. Because of the fulfillment, the Lord would draw all nations to come and learn of His love

for sinner. The coming of people to the mountain of the Lord is God's calling, gathering, and enlightening His church. People come to God because of the promises He fulfilled in Christ. They hear about the work of Jesus whenever they hear the gospel, the record of how God fulfilled His promises for the salvation of the world. By the power of the Holy Spirit, that gospel draws all nations to God. (PBC)

He must first draw us to Himself. The poem pictures people of all nations, a river of humanity, streaming up, up to the "mountain of the Lord." A river flowing uphill defies the laws of nature; barring a miracle, such a thing does not happen. Sinful human beings do not spontaneously long for closeness with a holy God either. Barring a miracle, we avoid Him, we run from Him. But a miracle has occurred. Jesus was lifted up on Golgotha. Mt Calvary became in a very real sense "the mountain of the Lord." Jesus promised that when He was lifted up, He would draw all peoples to Himself (John 12:32). He was. And He did. At Pentecost, thousands fell on their knees to proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord. They brought glory to the Father. And the Father poured out His peace into their hearts. The miracle that happened that day is the miracle that keeps on happening as long as the earth stands. Our Lord keeps calling, keeps gathering, keeps on giving people His peace, one heart at a time. (LL)

As Israel once traveled in the desert to holy Mount Sinai to receive the Law (Ex 19), the nations (fulfilling Gn 12:2-3) now travel on pilgrimage to Mount Zion. Luther: "The kingdom of Christ has been put in progress because it is placed in public view with its powers and gifts. Here one sees truth, pure doctrine, safety, peace; the Gospel is heard, and nothing can give greater joy. For it promises an abundance of things and salvation both here and hereafter, and a man stands safe in this Word against everything that opposes him, even against the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18). Behold, these virtues should influence the nations to make them come. They are proclaimed through the Word, namely, that Christ is the King of mercy and of peace. Moses preaches the Law and is the minister of sin and death. Nobody runs to him. On the contrary, they are terrified. Christ, on the other hand, is the Minister of righteousness, of life, and of peace. Therefore the people flow to Him just as water flows by its own effort and needs no one to push it" (AE 16:29). (TLSB)

A wonderful kingdom this! The others are set up by force of arms in such a way that the nations are subjugated against their will. This kingdom, however, is not established by force, and here men are not compelled against their will. But because it will be raised up, they will flow to it; that is, the virtues of the church will attract the nations so that they come of their own free will. The kingdom of Christ has been put in progress because it is placed in public view with its powers and gifts. Here one sees truth, pure doctrine, safety, peace; the Gospel is heard, and nothing can give greater joy. For it promises an abundance of things and salvation both here and hereafter, and a man stands safe in this Word against everything that opposes him, even against the gates of hell (Matt. 16:18). Behold, these virtues should influence the nations to make them come. They are proclaimed through the Word, namely, that Christ is the King of mercy and of peace. Moses preaches the Law and is the minister of sin and death. Nobody runs to him. On the contrary, they are terrified. Christ, on the other hand, is the Minister of righteousness, of life, and of peace. Therefore the people flow to Him just as water

flows by its own effort and needs no one to push it. This is what Christ says in Matt. 11:12: “The kingdom of heaven suffers violence.” This cannot be understood of a physical kingdom to such a degree as the Jews dream, for the nations hate the Jews. But when He says *all the nations*, this must not be understood of every nation. No, this is a figure of speech, as in Gen. 22:18: “By your descendants shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” The Gospel will be published among all nations, and some will be converted everywhere. For the Gospel sanctifies in every place and bears fruit, as Paul says in Col. 1:6 and as Isaiah says below in ch. 55:11: “My Word ... shall not return to me empty.” Therefore all nations shall come to this mountain, that is, to the church, which is called a mountain. To this place the souls gather through faith; for when the Gospel is heard, hearts grow soft, rejoice, and come running. (Luther)

2:3 MANY PEOPLES WILL COME – Before He said “shall flow,” now He says “shall come” or “shall walk.” This again is a word of spontaneous sanctification. It surely will be a kingdom that is willing, free, and safe. Paul says in 2 Cor. 9:7: “God loves a cheerful giver.” In the other kingdoms there is force and demanding. Although here, in the kingdom of Christ, the body is put in subjection, yet the spirit flows freely, believes willingly, loves, does good, etc. (Luther)

Many nations will turn to the church of God. And those who have already come and been converted will lure others to go with them and seek out the house of the God of Jacob. A mark of true repentance is this: holy zeal for God and His kingdom, then to strive and be actively engaged in winning others. (Stoeckhardt)

COME LET US GO – Isaiah envisions not just creation transformed, but also humanity transformed. This transformation will begin in this life through the power of the Gospel, and will be completed in eternity. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 1)

This is a technical term for pilgrimage to the sanctuary. (TLSB)

They have a taste of the Word of God. Therefore they have a greater desire to hear the mountain of the Lord. He will teach, etc. All the words are emphatic. For Christians live every day by the Word as the body lives by food. He who does not have the Word or ponder it soon becomes a sorry wretch. If I do not reflect on a verse of a psalm or a statement of the Gospel, my heart is completely full of sins. A return to the Word guards against sins. The heart should always grind, if not something else, then at least itself. If the grain, namely, the Word of God, is good, the flour will be good, and the bread will be good. This life of ours is certainly most wretched. There is no rest, and therefore Christianity is most truly a hearing or pondering of the Word, in order that Christ may speak to us at all times. Therefore when anyone has trials that torture him in body or in soul, it is a sign that Christ is not at home, that is, is not in that person’s heart. But he who wants to be set free should place Christ before him—Christ who says in Matt. 11:28: “Come to Me, all who labor,” and in John 11:25: “I am the resurrection and the life.” When Christ speaks he is set free and is not afraid. But when Christ is absent, the trial returns. Then the slaughter and the misfortunes of men begin, and those thoughts

terrify the heart. Then return to Christ, who says (John 6:37): “Him who comes to Me I will not cast out.” Behold, you hear the joyful and saving Word. (Luther)

HOUSE OF GOD – This is the temple where God promised to meet his people. This is now he embodied in the Messiah (Jn. 1:14), who dwells in the midst of his Church. (TLSB)

GOD OF JACOB – Israel’s God, the only true God. (TLSB)

HE WILL TEACH – Synonyms, repeated for emphasis. See p 971. Luther: “This is what will influence and draw the nations, so that they flow to Christ and learn, namely, the Word... From this place the scepter of Christ’s kingdom was sent forth through the apostles without force in supreme peace, and the sweetness of this peace takes hold of the nations. But behold here the promise of a new word, a new law, namely, one that is different from that which was given from the cloud and on Sinai. Here a place different from Sinai is designated. (TLSB)

He will lead them to understand and trust the ways in which he makes himself known. He will open up their minds to his saving action. The creative Word of the Lord that birthed the world will give them new and eternal life as he goes forth from Jerusalem. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 1)

God’s people long to learn the ways of God, and He teaches them. God gave people His Word and teaches them through the written record of His love in the Scriptures. Luther reminds us, “Christianity is most truly a hearing or pondering of the Word in order that Christ may speak to us at all time” (LW, Volume 16, page 31). (PBC)

We cannot walk in the paths of God’s peace unless He teaches us. (LL)

The poor Gentiles, estranged from God, have again found God, their God. However, they desire further instruction in His ways and are willing to walk in His paths, meaning, in the ways that God indicated for man to walk. Willing obedience is also a mark of a true convert. (Stoeckhardt)

The ways of the Lord are His works, especially the works He does in us, namely, that He destroys the works of the devil, sin, death, sadness, fear, trembling, and all evils, then also our daily lapses; and He works the opposite in us: hope, righteousness, patience, joy, peace, etc. These are the ways of the Lord which His Word brings when it is heard and believed. When the Word is missing, we begin to be offended, to judge and accuse others. But when the Word is present, I say: “God has forgiven you your sins. You, too, must likewise forgive that person his sin and pray for him.” In this way the heart is filled with new thoughts through the Word and is put at rest. Then we walk in the paths of the Lord; for Christ works and rules more and more in us—Christ, who is the Word of God and King over all. Good-bye to all other paths, for they are false. (Luther)

THE WORD WILL GO OUT FROM ZION – Once people hear the gospel, they invite others to learn of God’s grace. This is a natural response to the gospel. When we

believe, we want to witness. One need think only about Pentecost. With people from all over the world assembled in Jerusalem, the disciples witnessed and drew others to treasure the promises of God. How the early disciples must have marveled at the fulfillment of Isaiah's words. (PBC)

Law, that is, proclamation. The prophecy stands that a proclamation shall flow from Jerusalem into all nations. This was done through the apostles.... 'Their voice has gone out to all the earth' (Rom. 10:18). By the Word alone, therefore, the church is recognized, and in the glory of the Word the reign of Christ is described. The Word draws the people, makes them willing and joyful. Thus the church is exalted and triumphs against tyrants and heretics even in the midst of tribulation, in order that they may be forced to confess that this is true" (AE 16:31–32). (TLSB)

This is not a physical journey to Israel. The heathen peoples remain where they are living. The Word of God, the news of salvation come to them. And it is the effect of the Word that they in a spiritual way now make a pilgrimage to the house of the God of Jacob, that they turn to the Lord and walk in His ways. (Stoekhardt)

This is what will influence and draw the nations, so that they flow to Christ and learn, namely, the Word. Here there is no armed departure from Jerusalem on the part of the king, no violent clash. Ps. 110:2 says: "The Lord sends forth from Zion your mighty scepter." From this place the scepter of Christ's kingdom was sent forth through the apostles without force in supreme peace, and the sweetness of this peace takes hold of the nations. But behold here the promise of a new word, a new law, namely, one that is different from that which was given from the cloud and on Sinai. Here a place different from Sinai is designated. *Law*, that is, proclamation. The prophecy stands that a proclamation shall flow from Jerusalem into all nations. This was done through the apostles. Let this be the strength of our faith against the Jews. "Their voice has gone out to all the earth" (Rom. 10:18). By the Word alone, therefore, the church is recognized, and in the glory of the Word the reign of Christ is described. The Word draws the people, makes them willing and joyful. Thus the church is exalted and triumphs against tyrants and heretics even in the midst of tribulation, in order that they may be forced to confess that this is true. (Luther)

2:4 HE WILL JUDGE BETWEEN NATIONS – Characteristics of the Messiah (11:3–4). (TLSB)

Since God's Word has become normative, it will be obeyed and so the Lord Himself shall be the arbiter, should misunderstandings arise. This approach does not necessarily imply misunderstanding will come up, but this is actually an attempt to describe the perfect situation in terms of the customary imperfections with which we are only too familiar. The Word is always the court of last appeals. (Leopold)

Ps. 110:6: "He will execute judgment among the nations"; that is, He will perform the office of a judge, will rule through judgment, namely, through the Word. "He," says John 16:8, "will convince the world of sin, etc." This, however, is a description of the kingdom of Christ that is to be extended even among the Gentiles and is not to be confined to the Jews. In like manner, namely, through the Word, He will convict many peoples, that is,

everywhere in the world. Although there is but one kingdom, yet it is present in many peoples. But He will convict them so that they acknowledge that they are sinners and are condemned before God because they do not know God, do not fear Him, and do not believe Him. (Luther)

WILL SETTLE DISPUTES – The peace promised is peace with God based on Christ and His forgiveness. It is profound peace that affects what believers do; they live at peace with one another and the world around them. They become peacemakers as Jesus indicated. The gospel again has created a response: peace with God changes human hearts. (PBC)

The peace that fills our hearts changes our lives, and as we change, we also change the society around us. As the Scriptures declare, that change will not be complete here on earth. (LL)

swords into plowshares. The reverse process occurs in Joel 3:10. What is here called a plowshare was actually an iron point mounted on a wooden beam. Ancient plows did not have a plowshare proper. (CSB)

Weapons are unnecessary in this Kingdom. The spiritual benefits available to all nations and the latter day Jerusalem are pictured as the restoration of the bliss of Eden: undisturbed peace, harmony in the animal world, paradisiacal fertility of the earth (11:1-9; 32:15-20; 65:17-25). Turning weapons into agricultural instruments is reversed and Joel 3:10. (TLSB)

Across the street from the United Nations building in New York, in the United Nations Plaza, a stone wall gives this quote from Isaiah. All people desire peace, but in this world of sin, peace is established by a balance of power between equally powerful nations or by the armed force between un-equals. What Isaiah means is so very different. God's people do not "train for war." Isaiah saw a spiritual peace based on God's love in Christ. Only when Christ returns will sinful human beings set aside their sinful natures, and then all hostility and conflict will cease. Believers focus on the real peace within and ahead, not on the promises of political peace on earth. (PBC)

We can expect to put up with wars and rumors of war until Jesus comes again to take us to live with Him in the heavenly home. Until Jesus comes, armies will always march across the landscape of our planet. Until Jesus comes, war planes will continue to roar through the earth's skies in anger and retaliation. Until Jesus comes, refugees will continue to wander from country to country. Until Jesus comes, burial squads will keep on filling body bags. Until Jesus comes, boastful dictators will continue to strut across the front pages of the daily news. Even so, the peace Christ offers is no illusion. It's not empty promise. It's not "pie in the sky by and by," as some would have us believe. It's here. It's now. It's a precious gift to each of His subjects from the Prince of Peace Himself. (LL)

This is a figurative and periphrastic way of speaking. It means that they will return to complete harmony and peace, and there is no better way to get rid of disagreements than that which Christ uses. In one statement He declares that at the same time all are condemned and that everything is full of sins before God. For those who hear and believe this, for what will they contend? If my property, wisdom, and righteousness are of no avail before God, why should I fight it out for them? In the world there is continual war. The self-righteous fight with one another for their righteousness. The godly condemn their own righteousness and accept the verdict of condemnation; false Christians are altogether carnal and worldly, and for this reason they are the instigators of factions and disagreements. True Christians are in beautiful agreement, because they hold even everything in contempt for the sake of Christ alone. (Luther)

NATIONS WILL NOT TAKE UP SWORD AGAINST NATION – God’s action among the nations will result in peace. They will develop a new lifestyle in international as well as interpersonal relationships. The Lord will become the judge in how they interact. Not by their own barbaric tools of war, but by God’s refreshing, forgiving Spirit, through the teaching of the Word of Christ, they will seek reconciliation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 1)

Military training will not be necessary. (TLSB)

2:5 COME O HOUSE OF JACOB – If even heathen nations respond to the Gospel, how much more should the house of Jacob. Isaiah calls his people to escape the coming judgment by walking in the light of the Word which is preached to them. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 6, Part 1)

The rich promise of God brings a response. When Isaiah considered the promises of God, he encouraged the people of his day to walk in the light of the Lord. (PBC)

God’s invitation had gone out. God yearned to draw His people to Himself. He longed to teach them His ways so they could walk in His paths. But most of those called themselves God’s people wanted to no part of that. (LL)

When there is this kind of preaching, the Gentiles will be converted and reduced to nothing, so that their own righteousness is not exalted. Then it will be most of all necessary for you Jews first to acknowledge that grace. Paul says in Rom. 3³: “To the Jew first and also to the Greek.” For the promise was given above all to the Jews and was first proclaimed among the Jews. Therefore since they are the first people and the chief part of the church, the prophet properly admonishes them to buy while the market is in front of the door. “In a time of favor,” he says below in ch. 49:8, and “at the acceptable time” in 2 Cor. 6:2. “Therefore, O house of Jacob, to you above all this promise applies. Give thanks to God, do not disregard the light but ‘while you have the light, believe in the light, etc.’ (John 12:36), lest the darkness overtake you and you suffer harm.” (Luther)

WALK IN THE LIGHT – To walk in the light is to know the light, to recognize it, and then to follow the path that it illuminates. The psalmist wrote, “Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105). By faith in Jesus, we have been included in the house of Jacob – another name for the church, or the assembly of believers. We too are encouraged to use the Word so that it might show us the path and give us power to walk as the Lord directs. (PBC)

Example of God’s action motivates ethical action (cf 1Jn 3:2b–3). (TLSB)

2:1–5 The Lord will gather the nations to His Church (the latter day “Zion”) through the Word. He calls you to fulfill this prophecy by sharing the Word with your family, friends, and neighbors. The Lord works through that illustrious Word to change your heart and those around you. • May Your light illumine my heart, O Lord, and lead me in the way of peace as I share Your Word with others. Amen. (TLSB)

EPISTLE – Romans 13:11-14

¹¹ And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you to wake up from your slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. ¹³ Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. ¹⁴ Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

13:11–14 In this section, as in other NT passages, the certain coming of the end of the present age is used to provide motivation for godly living (see, e.g., Mt 25:31–46; Mk 13:33–37; Jas 5:7–11; 2Pe 3:11–14). (CSB)

13:11 *present time*. The time of salvation, the closing period of the present age, before the consummation of the kingdom. (CSB)

kairos – It could also be understood time of crisis or last times because they know they are in the last times. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

For Christians of every generation, “the present time” is no time for spiritual slumber. In fact, the window of opportunity to lead a life of love and service to God and our neighbor becomes smaller with each passing day. (PBC)

What we do in this life, we do realizing that “the present time” is a prelude to God’s eternity. (LL)

The hour. The time for action. (CSB)

WAKE UP FROM YOUR SLUMBER – hpnos – Is figurative for “delay, carelessness and indifference.” It is a picture of someone who is too lazy to be ready

and just wants to hit the snooze button. A Christian life is not like that. It is one of eager anticipation. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

“Paul is not speaking of those people who are dead in the sin of unbelief...but rather about Christians who are living lukewarm lives and snoring in their smugness” (Luther’s Works 25.478). St Paul’s words are like a splash of cold baptismal water in the face of us who are so snoozy! (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

Spiritual inattentiveness. (TLSB)

our salvation. The full realization of salvation at the second coming of Jesus Christ (see 8:23; Heb 9:28; 1Pe 1:5). (CSB)

Christ’s death and resurrection have provided salvation, but He will come again and lead us to experience it fully (cf 5:9–10; Heb 9:28). Each day, His second coming is one day closer. (TLSB)

ora – The eschatological aspect is reinforced by the word “hour.” It is the same word Christ used to denote the time when he would be glorified and the purpose of his coming would be fulfilled (Jn 2:4; 17:1), and also the time of his return (Mk 13:32). All of these times are part of the prophetic “day of the Lord,” when God intervenes in history to save his people and judge the unbelievers. They also include every time the Word and Sacraments are shared. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

is nearer now. Every day brings us closer to the second advent of Christ. (CSB)

sotaria – This is THE salvation we are all waiting for, the final deliverance. Every day since we were brought to faith, this salvation comes nearer. Here we are now entering Advent and a new Christian year. May it not be the last for you and for me? It will be the last for a now a few. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

The full realization of our salvation, either at our death or at the second coming of Christ, is always imminent. It could be today! Hence in view of the rapid passage of time, the message is clear: seize the opportunity to live a life of righteousness. (PBC)

Salvation here means the close of this age, when our Lord will return to take those who believe in Him to be with Him forever. (LL)

13:12 *The night.* The present evil age. (CSB)

is nearly over; the day is almost here. A clear example of the NT teaching of the “nearness” of the end times (see Mt 24:33; 1Co 7:29; Php 4:5; Jas 5:8–9; 1Pe 4:7; 1Jn 2:18). These texts do not mean that the early Christians believed that Jesus would return within a few years (and thus were mistaken). Rather, they regarded the death and resurrection of Christ as the crucial events of history that began the last days. Since

the next great event in God's redemptive plan is the second coming of Jesus Christ, "the night," no matter how long chronologically it may last, is "nearly over." (CSB)

The picture is of an approaching dawn. This present age of darkness is passing away; light is dawning. (TLSB)

The night – this present age – is marked by sin, suffering, futility, and death. (LL)

the day. The appearing of Jesus Christ, which ushers in the consummation of the kingdom. (CSB)

The day dawned with Easter morning and the present age will give way entirely when Jesus returns on that day which is almost here. (LL)

DEEDS OF DARKNESS – Deeds of the sinful nature (cf Gal 5:19–21). (TLSB)

PUT ON ARMOR OF LIGHT – Reflect the light of Christ and exhibit the fruit of His Spirit (Mt 5:16; Gal 5:22–23; cf Eph 6:10–17). (TLSB)

The plural of *opla* signifies equipment, which in the case of a soldier means defensive and offensive armor. Christians do not walk about in garments of ease and leisure. They face a battle or warfare, forced on them by forces of evil. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

Armor is the right word, for we are in a constant fight with our own sinful nature, which is only too ready to give to all kinds of temptation. (LL)

13:13 BEHAVE DECENTLY – Having Christ's righteousness by faith also enables and empowers us to live a new life marked by true holiness in our daily lives and conduct. While such life and activity is not what saves us, holiness of living is not simply an optional feature of the Christian life. It is the mark and sign that our faith truly is living and active. We realize then why Paul devotes almost four chapters of this letter (chapters 12-15) to sanctification, that is, holiness of living on the part of the redeemed children of God. (PBC)

Only decent behavior is appropriate in the light of day. Any other lifestyle undermines the Christian witness and threatens to cancel our confession of faith. (LL)

NOT IN ORGIES – *komos* – Feasting given to excess and closely related to drunkenness. Luther says that the Greeks outdo the Germans and indeed the whole world, because they give attention to banquets [orgies] so enthusiastically that they even devised a god who was in charge of this as a useful activity. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

SEXUAL IMMORALITY – The word here is really koitais or beds which suggests multiple partners – what we might call “sleeping around.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 3, Part 1)

AND JEALOUSY – This verse provides a sample list of the kind of conduct that Christian men and women cannot approve. It is no shopping list for the Christian. (LL)

13:14 *clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ.* See Gal 3:27. Paul exhorts believers to display outwardly what has already taken place inwardly—including practicing all the virtues associated with Christ. (CSB)

Baptismal language (Gal 3:27). Refers to living out our Baptism each day (see SC, Baptism, Part 4, p xl). (TLSB)

This process began in our baptism where sometimes the child is dressed a white baptism gown. By renewing our baptism we daily put on this white dress of Christ’s righteousness. – Being clothed with Christ means, first and foremost, accepting by faith the righteousness Christ has earned for us. (PBC)

God makes it possible. Among the many spiritual resources God makes available to us, none is more powerful than Holy Baptism. For, as Paul reminds us in Romans 6: “We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?” (Romans 6:2; 5-7). In Galatians Paul specifically says our being clothed with the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ came about through baptism: “You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ” (Gal 3:26-27). Jesus is our companion and strength for walking in the light of the day. With Christ as companion, and continually strengthened by His means of grace, we will be busy with acts of love and service, and there will be no time for the thoughts of how to indulge the desires of the sinful nature. Stay in the Son-Shine, Paul urges us, and do not retreat into darkness. We stay in this light when we cling to the help God provides so abundantly: His Gospel word of forgiveness; the constant reminders of our baptism, through which we became God’s children; and Christ’s gifts of His own body and blood in the Lord’s Supper, to which we return for evidences that we can touch and taste His grace and forgiveness. (LL)

DO THINK ABOUT HOW TO GARTIFY...SINFUL NATURE – Believers still have sinful, fleshly desires that at times lead them astray (7:14–15), but they should not plan to gratify those desires. (TLSB)

13:8–14 The requirements and essence of God’s Law have not changed from the OT. The Law shows us how to love others as we have been loved by God in Christ. “All have sinned and fall short” of God’s requirement to love Him and others (3:23). The Gospel calls us to rely on God’s mercy in Christ, which then motivates us to love as we have been loved. The context of Rm assures us that God declares us righteous, not because of our ability to love, but solely because of Christ, who “is the end of the law” (10:4). • Father, You have loved me in Christ and declared

me to be Your righteous child. Empower me to love and serve others through Christ. Amen.
(TLSB)

GOSPEL – Matthew 21:1-11

As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent two disciples, ² saying to them, **“Go to the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt by her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³ If anyone says anything to you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.”** ⁴ This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: ⁵ **“Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your king comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’”** ⁶ The disciples went and did as Jesus had instructed them. ⁷ They brought the donkey and the colt, placed their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. ⁸ A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹ The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, **“Hosanna to the Son of David!”** **“Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!”** **“Hosanna in the highest!”** ¹⁰ When Jesus entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, **“Who is this?”** ¹¹ The crowds answered, **“This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.”**

21:1 *Jerusalem.* See map No. 9 at the end of the Study Bible. (CSB)

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the Magi came from the east to Jerusalem and asked, “Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews?” This disturbed the King Herod greatly because he was obviously nearing the end of his life and was not entirely sure who would succeed him on the throne. Herod’s violent and bloody reign had demonstrated how determined he was to maintain his grip on power. Herod’s fear was aroused, all of Jerusalem was disturbed with him. (PBC)

Thirty-three years passed between Christmas and Palm Sunday, and during that interval Matthew does not record a single time that Jesus was called a king. He was called “Son of David,” and that Messianic title certainly had royal overtones (2 Sam. 7:12-13), but it was not until the Palm Sunday parade that Jesus was proclaimed to be a king (Luke 19:38); John 12:13). And once again we are told that the whole city of Jerusalem was stirred. (PBC)

When Jesus was 12 years old, he went up to Jerusalem with Mary and Joseph to celebrate the Feast of the Passover. This was something pious Jews did every year (Luke 2:41-42). So we can assume that Jesus made many trips to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. But this time was different. Jesus was very much aware that he was going up Jerusalem to die. (PBC)

Bethphage. The name means “house of figs.” It is not mentioned in the OT, and in the NT only in connection with the Triumphal Entry. In the Talmud it is spoken of as being near Jerusalem. (CSB)

This was a village on the south-east side of the mount of Olives, which was a hill about two miles east of Jerusalem, beyond the valley of Jehospaphat. Through this valley ran the brook Cedron or Kidron. (Concordia Bible with notes)

The village of Bethany was located on the eastern slope on the Mount of Olives, about 2 miles from Jerusalem. For many travelers it was the final station on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem. Jesus and his disciples arrived at Bethany six days before the Passover (John 12:1). Evidently they enjoyed the hospitality of their friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus for a few days. While they were there a special meal was prepared in Jesus' honor in the house of Simon the leper (Mt. 26:6-13). (PBC)

SENT TWO DISCIPLES – These two are not identified. Jesus frequently sent paired workers on the task (Mk. 6:7; Lk. 10:11). It well may be connected to Deuteronomy 19:15 where two witnesses were required for a criminal accusation. In Matthew 18:16 it again calls for two witnesses in the case of an offense given. (TLSB)

As Jesus was about to enter Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover for the last time, he won it the intention of all the people of Jerusalem to be focused on him. That is why he made special preparations before entering the city. (PBC)

21:2-3 Jesus needed only a single mount. He commanded that the donkey and her colt be brought to Him in order to fulfill the prophecy recorded in Zec 9:9 (cf vv 4–5). (TLSB)

21:2 *donkey*. An animal symbolic of humility, peace and Davidic royalty (see notes on Zec 9:9; Lk 19:30). See also note on Mk 11:2. (CSB)

A donkey symbolized humility, peace and David's royalty. In the Orient the donkey was regarded as greatly inferior to the horse. He might have asked the Father for twelve legions of angels as his personal attendants. The picture is pure paradox. The act is symbolic. He would come as the King of humility and of peace to show that his kingdom is not of this world. The kings of earth conquer by oppression. Jesus shall be victorious while he would seem to surrender. He must enter the realm of death in order to vanquish death. But there shall be a change in the end; when the cloak of humility is removed, his glory shall be resplendent as the sun. Then he shall sit, not upon a donkey, but upon the white horse of his kingdom and shall go forth conquering and to conquer (Rev 6:2) Only the eyes of faith may discover in this man the King whom the prophet Zechariah speaks. (Ylvisaker)

WITH HER COLT – This meant that the colt had not been ridden on to this point. Jesus directs his disciples to bring both animals, even though he would ride on only one. The mother was taken in order to make the foal willing to go. Luke tells us that this colt had never ridden on. For sacred purposes, animals must always be selected which had never been used (Num 19:; Deut 21:3; 1 Sam 6:7). Jesus would also be laid away in an unused grave. (Ylvisaker)

21:3 IF ANYONE SAYS ANYTHING TO YOU – This means to say anything against your taking them. (Concordia Bible with notes)

HE WILL SEND THEM RIGHT AWAY – He speaks as the omniscient and omnipotent. All is known to him, everything is at his beck and call, and the preparations are as for royalty itself. The disciples have no clear conception of these arrangements, but in silent obedience they execute the command of the master. (Ylvisaker)

Jesus could have entered Jerusalem under His own power. However, He rode the donkey to fulfill and reenact the kind of royal inaugurations described in 1 Kings 1:32-40. (TLSB)

21:4-5 Jesus entered Jerusalem as the promised Messiah. Zec had much to say about the advent of the messianic age (cf Mt 26:31). See notes, Zec 9:9; Jn 12:16. (TLSB)

Note Zechariah 9:9: *your king is coming ... humble*. This King is unique, one of a kind, the Messiah. John Wycliffe: “Christ mounted these animals to condemn the riding of pope and cardinals, and of the inferior bishops too, who are wont to ride in superfluous pomp on war-horses decked out with gold and silk” (TT, 190). Luther: “Here there is no violence, no armor, no power, no anger, no wrath... Here there are only kindness, justice, salvation, mercy, and every good thing” (AE 20:94). In His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, Jesus gave public proof that He is this promised King (Mt 21:1–11). (TLSB)

21:4 WHAT WAS SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHET – The prophecies of the OT concerning the Messiah, were all fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth, thus proving with absolute certainty that he was the Christ. (Concordia Bible with notes)

This, the entire occurrence, with all its single incidents, was done in just this way in order that the words of the prophet, Zech. 9, 9, might be fulfilled. Cp. Is. 62, 11. The quotation of the evangelist is a free one, embodying all that the Old Testament says of the meekness and lowliness of this King of kings. (Kretzmann)

21:5 DAUGHTER OF ZION – This refers to the inhabitants of Zion, not the citizens of Jerusalem in general, but according to the view of the prophets and the evangelists themselves, the believer, the Church which yearns for redemption. (Ylvisaker)

This is a poetic personification of Zion, which was that part of Jerusalem where David and the kings after him dwelt. It represents Jerusalem and its inhabitants. (Concordia Bible with notes)

The daughter of Zion is the populous of Jerusalem, or the whole Jewish people. (PBC)

SEE YOUR KING COMES – This was a prophecy universally understood of the Messiah; and thus Jesus openly claimed to be the one predicted by it. (Concordia Bible with notes)

RIDING ON A DONKEY – This was the common beast of the Israelitish rulers in ancient times, Judges 5:10; 10:4; and moreover a beast of peace, in contrast with the horse, which was specially employed in war. (Concordia Bible with notes)

Their king would come to them “gentle and riding upon a donkey” so they could recognize him when he arrived. This was, of course, not the only sign by which they might recognize him; there were many others. His arrival on a donkey would not have been enough by itself to identify him positively, but it would have been plain if he had entered the city in a different manner that he could not be the promised Messiah after all, for the OT prophecies concerning the coming Savior had to be fulfilled in him. And they were! (PBC)

FOAL OF A DONKEY – Jesus rode upon the colt, Mark 11:7; John 12:14; the mother of the colt accompanying. Hence they are spoken of together by the evangelist. (Concordia Bible with notes)

Christ here discouraged all carnal, vulgar Messianic ideas and hopes. Not in the manner of a conqueror-hero, as the worldly-minded Jerusalemites expected, but on an ass, and that the foal of an ass. He made His entry into the city which was soon to reject Him altogether. It was a last great day of mercy for the city, that all the inhabitants might know the Redeemer, but they did not consider what pertained to their peace. All the greater should be the impression which the coming of the King of Grace into the hearts of His believers should make upon them. "And this it is that the evangelist admonishes to preach when he says: 'Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek'; as though he would say: He comes for thy benefit, for thy peace, for the salvation and joy of thy heart; and since they did not believe that, he prophesies that it should be spoken and preached. Whosoever but believes that Christ comes in this way has Him thus. O what preaching, singular and at this time almost unknown! Mark well each single word. The word 'Behold' is a word of joy and admonition, and refers to a thing which one has expected long and anxiously. 'Thy King,' who destroys the tyrant of thy conscience, namely, the Law, and rules thee in peace and a pleasant manner, by giving thee forgiveness of sins and the power to perform the Law. 'Thy,' that is, promised to thee, for whom thou hast waited, whom thou, laden with sin as thou wast, hast called, for whom thou hast sighed. 'He comes,' voluntarily, without thy merit, out of great love, for thou hast not led Him hither nor hast thou ascended into heaven, thou hast not earned His advent, but He has left His property and has come to thee, the unworthy one, who under the compulsion and rule of the Law hast earned nothing but punishment with thy many sins. 'To thee' He comes, that is; for thy benefit, in whatever thou hast need of Him. He comes to seek thine own, only to serve thee and to do thee good; He does not come for His own benefit, not to seek His own from thee, as the Law formerly did; since thou hast not what the Law demands, therefore He comes to give thee what is His, and expects nothing from thee, but that thou permit thy sins to be taken from thee and thyself to be saved.... The evangelist uses only the word 'meek,' and omits the words 'just and having salvation'; for in the Hebrew language the word 'poor' is very closely related with the word 'meek' or 'gentle,' for the Hebrews call a person poor that is poor, humble, meek, restless, and downcast in spirit; as all Christian

believers in general are called that way in Scriptures. For he is truly gentle and meek who does not consider the harm done to his neighbor in any other light but done to himself, takes it to heart accordingly, and has compassion on him. As such a person, that was poor and martyred for our sake, and truly meek, the evangelist describes Christ, who comes tortured with our evil and is ready to help us with the greatest of meekness and love. (Kretzmann)

21:6 DID AS JESUS HAD INSTRUCTED THEM – While Jesus was waiting at the entrance to Bethphage, the disciples carried out His command, receiving, incidentally, further confirmation of their trust in Him. Obedience to His Word will never cause a Christian to be ashamed. (Kretzmann)

21:7-8 Outer garments on the animals were used as saddles. Shortly thereafter, the crowds laid their cloaks on the road where Jesus passed, much as the crowds had done at Jehu's inauguration (2Ki 9:12–13). (TLSB)

21:7 *Jesus sat on them.* He sat on the cloaks. We know from Mark (11:2) and Luke (19:30) that he rode the colt. Typically, a mother donkey followed her offspring closely. Matthew mentions two animals, while the other Gospels have only one (see note on 8:28). (CSB)

The animals, as they were brought to the Lord, were not saddled. But now a peculiar ecstasy took hold of the disciples and of the ever-increasing multitude. (Kretzmann)

21:8 VERY LARGE CROWD – Jesus' raising of Lazarus had caused quite a stir and brought him a great deal of acclaim. This had also attracted attention in Jerusalem and many came out from there to meet the procession.

spread their cloaks on the road. An act of royal homage (see 2Ki 9:13). (CSB)

Quickly taking off their outer garments, a kind of loose coat, they spread these upon the foal, to make a seat for their Master. The example of the first disciples was infectious. All the rest of them, as well as a large number of the people, took their garments and spread them out on the way, as if to receive an emperor, a mighty king. And still the excitement spread. Since many of the customs of the great festivals were, upon occasion, transferred from one to the other, the people did not hesitate, also in this instance, to borrow the usages of the Feast of Tabernacles. Some of them cut down or tore down branches from the trees along the way, and cast them down to make a leafy carpet before Him. But the climax of the exultation was reached at the summit of the Mount of Olives. Here the ranks of the early singers were swelled by great crowds of newcomers, and while the latter turned and marched ahead, the others followed behind the Lord. (Kretzmann)

This was a royal honor, after the custom of the times. (Concordia Bible with notes)

OTHERS CUT BRANCHES – This was an expression of festal joy. Israel had inducted its kings with branches of palms.

Branches, particularly palms, were used to adorn processions, especially religious ones. Descriptions of this custom are found in 1 Macc 13:51; 2 Macc 10:6-7. (TLSB)

21:9 These are three separate quotations, not necessarily spoken at the same time. (CSB)

And in antiphonal shouting the joyous acclaim of the people rose up to heaven as they chanted sections from the great Hallel, with the doxology used on great festivals, Ps. 118, 25. 26. They openly proclaim Him as the Son of David, as the true Messiah, they wish Him blessing and salvation from above. Far and wide, the people joined in this demonstration in honor of the lowly Nazarene. They gladly sacrificed their holiday garments, their festival ornaments, they brought the palm branches and waved the green fronds of early spring to give full expression to their joy, to their confession of their Lord, the Messiah. It is most unfortunate that this exultation was only temporary, and quickly forgotten. And yet the Spirit of the Lord had here, for a short while at least, taken hold of the people. God wanted thus to give testimony in behalf of His Son, before the shame and the horror of the cross would be laid upon Him. And it was prophetic of the time when every tongue would confess that Jesus is the Lord. (Kretzmann)

Hosanna. See note on Ps 118:25–26; both prayer and praise (see NIV text note). (CSB)

The words with which they greet him are chosen from Psalm 118:25-26. This psalm was a part of the great Hallel which was intoned during the feasts of the Passover and the tabernacles, Israel's great Jubilee, when the people walked around the altar with branches of the palm and of goodly trees (Lev 23:40). The words in v. 25 and 26 were the great Hosanna, the song of praise used in the time of the second temple when the populace passed around the altar of the sacrifice, during the feast of the tabernacles, for six days once each day, and on the seventh day, seven times. The same words were in use also on other festivals of praise and thanksgiving. "Hosanna" in the Hebrew signifies "save" or "help." Here it means: Help the Son of David, may he succeed. (Ylvisaker)

We sing the same song each time we pray that Communion liturgy. The familiar words of the Sanctus remind us that the same Jesus who rode into Jerusalem on a donkey comes to us in the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper. (PBC)

Son of David. See note on 9:27. (CSB)

BLESSED...COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD – Jesus is openly acclaimed as the promised Messiah, with a divinely appointed destiny to fulfill. (TLSB)

in the highest. That is, may those in heaven sing “Hosanna” (see Ps 148:1–2; Lk 2:14). (CSB)

This meant to say “let our hosannas on earth be responded to and ratified in the highest heavens. (Concordia Bible with notes)

21:10 WHO IS THIS – The demonstration before Jesus continued all the way down the western slope of the Mount of Olives, across the Valley of the Kidron, and into the very city of Jerusalem itself. As usual under the circumstances, the excitement spread rapidly and carried many with it that knew nothing of the actual reason. (Kretzmann)

21:11 THE CROWDS ANSWERED – They confess him as savior but they really don’t know the full significance of what they are saying. They are probably still thinking he is going to be an earthly king who will rid them of the Romans. In a few days many of them will join in the cry: Crucify Him. Crucify Him!

JESUS OF NAZARETH – Title recalls the Galilean phase of Jesus’ ministry, when He was just becoming famous for His teaching and healing (13:57; 14:5; 16:14). By this time, however, the crowds unabashedly acclaim Him as Messiah. (TLSB)

21:1–11 Palm Sunday is a high point, as a crowd at the Jewish capital openly acclaim Jesus as Messiah. It is also a turning point, however, since it galvanizes His opponents. Like the crowds in Jerusalem, we are prone to fickleness—today all for the Lord, tomorrow turning from Him. Though we often prove faithless, Jesus remains constant. His love and forgiveness never falter. • “ ‘Hosanna in the highest!’ That ancient song we sing; For Christ is our Redeemer, The Lord of heav’n our King.” Amen. (LSB 443:3) (TLSB)