

## **HOSANNA!**

### **NO. 2196**

**A SERMON  
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AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.**

*“And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried saying, Hosanna to the son of David:  
Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest”  
Matthew 21:9.*

AFTER the miracle of the raising of Lazarus, a great fame went abroad concerning our Lord. He rested still at Bethany, and the people came up to the feast in great number went out—an easy walk from Jerusalem to Bethany—to see Jesus, and to see Lazarus, who had been raised from the dead. These people, on a certain day, formed a company, and marched with Jesus towards Jerusalem. On the way our Lord sent two of His disciples to fetch a donkey and its colt, and upon this last He rode into the city. Another crowd, coming out of Jerusalem, met the company attending upon Jesus, and, forming one great procession, the whole multitude marched into the city escorting the Lord Jesus in humble state, and paying Him honor as King in Zion. Upon no stately warhorse, but riding upon a colt the foal of a donkey, the meek and lowly King entered the city of David attended by vast and enthusiastic crowds who strewed the fronds of palms, and the branches of trees, and their own garments in the way along which He rode. Our Lord thus received a right royal and popular reception to the metropolis of His nation. This was a strange event, so very different from anything else that happened to our Savior, that one wonders at it with great wonderment. That it is to be viewed as an important event is clear, since every one of the four Evangelists takes pains to record it (see Matthew 21, Mark 11, Luke 19, and John 12). Even of certain of the greater events of our Lord's life the Holy Spirit has not preserved us four accounts, but since He has done so in this case, He thereby calls us to give the more earnest heed to it. Herein is a mine of teaching; let us dig into it.

Assuredly, this honor paid to our Lord was passing strange; a gleam of sunlight in a day of clouds, a glimpse of summer tide in a long and dreary winter. He that was, as a rule, “despised and rejected of men,” was for the moment surrounded with the acclaim of the crowd. All men saluted Him that day with their Hosannas, and the whole city was moved. It was a gala day for the disciples and a sort of coronation day for their Lord.

Why was the scene permitted? What was its meaning? The marvel is that nothing like it had occurred before, for our Lord had healed many sick folk, and these and their friends must have felt favorably towards Him. He had fed thousands at a time with the bread of this life, and hosts had been cheered and comforted by His teaching. The common people heard Him gladly, and were ready to gather around Him. Among an excitable people it was a wonder that they had not long ago taken Him by force, and made Him king. No one had yet appeared so like the Messiah of their prophets; no one had so well deserved the people's gratitude. If they had from the first accepted Him as their monarch, and if they had watched every opportunity of doing Him homage, nobody would have been surprised. The marvel is that the popular enthusiasm had been repressed so long.

It was the Lord Himself who had suppressed the popular enthusiasm. With great skill He had succeeded in bridling a dangerous fanaticism. He “did not strive nor cry, nor cause His voice to be heard in the streets,” and with such a cry, and such a voice as He had, the marvel was that He preserved quiet, and kept the nation from revolt. Had He withdrawn His hand, the people would have been eager to assail their foreign rulers. Had this been the errand on which He came, He might at any moment have been saluted as “the King of the Jews.” He, with a masterly art, repressed everything that would have made Him a popular hero. He uttered unpalatable truth, or He stole away from the scene of His miracles, or He kept

Himself in obscure villages, and thus He eluded their honors. When He had fed the multitudes, He took ship, and went to the other side of the lake that they might not follow Him. Many men live for ambitious ends, but our Lord lived to escape the honors of men. The proud hunt after praise, but our Lord fled from preferment, hid Himself from fame, and shunned the throne which by descent belonged to Him. He often bade those whom He healed go home and tell no man what He had done, for the dense throngs that gathered about Him rendered it difficult for Him to move on His mission of mercy. "He went about doing good," and did not wait in any place to reap the laurels which His miracles had earned Him. No wonder that at last the people felt forced to surround Him with their praises. The pent-up fires of gratitude at last had vent. The covered flames of admiration leaped up at last, and cast a brilliant light over the old city. Men's hearts had been somewhat worse than diabolical if they had not felt a grateful enthusiasm for so grand a benefactor. No one before had ever so greatly blessed Judea; ten thousand voices felt it joy to cry "Hosanna," before such a one.

It came at last, you see; I have read you the story in John and in Matthew. They saluted Him with their shouts of loyal welcome. But there was little in the acclamation when it did come. There was great shouting for the while, and abundant strewing of branches, and lining of the road with garments, but there was little else. Remember what happened less than a week afterwards! If not the same individuals, yet people of the same city cried, "Crucify Him, crucify Him." The Hosannas may be very loud, but they will not be long. "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord" sounds very sweet, but how much more vehement will be the cry, "Let Him be crucified"! Everything which comes to Jesus and His cause by popular acclamation, requires to be duly weighed; and when weighed it will be found wanting. "*Vox populi vox Dei*," they used to say, but the saying is false; the voice of the people may seem to be the voice of God when they shout "Hosanna in the highest," but whose voice is it when they yell out, "Crucify Him, crucify Him"? "Surely men of low degree are vanity, and men of high degree are a lie." So little value did our Lord place on popular applause that He repressed it; and when it did burst forth, so little did it elevate His spirit that we find Him in the midst of it, gazing upon the city with tears in His eyes. While others were glad, He was weeping for the woes which His prophetic eye foresaw. The throng was carried away by the present moment and the enthusiasm of the hour, but His heart was anticipating that dreadful day when they would find His blood upon them and upon their children, and the Romans would utterly destroy their city, and quench the light of Zion in rivers of blood. It may be well that an enthusiastic admiration of religion should be professed by the multitude, but it is no more stable than smoke. It may seem good that the Christian minister should be popular, but popularity is lighter than vanity. Once the Savior rides in state as a King, but soon He walks down those very streets bearing His cross like a criminal. How soon is the public voice purchased for evil! What dependence can be placed on the clamor of the streets?

We, however, have the story placed before us four times by the Evangelists, and therefore let us now give it our attentive consideration. May the good Spirit impart instruction to us by this strange stir and singular scene! May some divine impulse come to us out of this riding of our lowly King into Jerusalem!

First, I shall ask you to think of *Christ triumphant in Jerusalem*. Secondly, I shall bid you see herein *Christ glorified in His church*. And then, thirdly, we will think of *Christ entering into the heart*. Under these three divisions we may arrange our thoughts, and, God helping us, we may meditate to profit.

**I.** First, I ask you to view CHRIST TRIUMPHANT IN JERUSALEM. Why this procession? Why these shouts of homage? Our Lord always had a reason, and an excellent one, for all that He arranged or permitted. What did He mean by this? How shall we interpret the scene?

I think it was, first, *that He might most openly declare Himself*. He had frequently avowed His mission in plain speech; He had told them who He was, and why He came, but they would not hear, so that they dared to say to Him, "If you are the Christ tell us plainly." He had plainly told them times without number. Now He will assure them still more positively of His kingdom by openly riding into the city of Jerusalem in state. Now shall they see that He claims to be the Messiah, sent of God, of whom the prophet said, "Say you to the daughter of Zion, Behold, your salvation comes." Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings shall His fame be proclaimed; multitudes of people shall acknowledge with loud voices that "He comes in the name of the Lord"; until the envious Pharisees shall be driven to ask, "Do you hear what these say?" You will remember that our Lord rode into Jerusalem as a King, but He was also brought there as the Lamb of God's Passover, whose blood must save the people. It was not meet

that the Lamb of God should go to the altar without observation; it was not fit that He who takes away the sin of the world should be led to the temple unobserved. The day was near when He was to be offered up, and all eyes were called to look on Him and know who and what He was. Therefore He permitted this great gathering and this honorable attention to Himself that He might say to Israel, by deeds as well as by words, "I am He that should come. I am He who of old had said, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of Me, I delight to do Your will, O My God." Thus He beyond all question manifested Himself to the people. When they crucified Him the rulers knew what He professed to be. Albeit many of them were in ignorance as to the truthfulness of His claims, yet they knew right well that they were crucifying one who professed to be the Lord of glory, one who was acknowledged to be the Son of David, one who had publicly avowed Himself to be King in Zion. I think this was one reason for the joyous entry into the city of God.

Next, *it was our Lord's public claiming of authority over Israel.* He was the Son of David, and therefore He was by natural right the King of the Jews. If He had taken possession of His own He would have been sitting on the throne of the chosen dynasty of David by right of birth. He was, moreover, as the Messiah, and Christ, the King of His people Israel. Concerning Him it had been said by the prophet, "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, your King comes unto you: He is just and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon a donkey, and upon a colt the foal of a donkey." Our Lord Jesus literally came to Zion in this manner. As King, He rode to His capital, and entered His palace. In His priestly royalty the Son of God went to His Father's house, to the temple of sacrifice and sovereignty. Among the tribes of Israel He is seen to be "One chosen out of the people," whom the Lord had given to be a leader and commander for the people. Although they might afterwards choose Barabbas, and cry that they had no king but Caesar, yet Jesus was their King, as Pilate reminded them, when he said, "Shall I crucify your king?" and as His cross declared when it bore the legal inscription, "This is Jesus the King of the Jews." Before His trial and His condemnation He had put in a public claim to the rights and prerogatives of Zion's King, whom God has set upon His holy hill. Would to God all my hearers fully recognized our Lord's kingdom, and yielded to His sway! Oh, that you would bow before Him, and put your trust in Him! Part of His intent in riding through Jerusalem was that we also who dwell in the isles of the sea might know Him and reverence Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. Let each one cry in His inmost soul—

*"Great King of Grace, my heart subdue,  
I would be led in triumph too,  
A willing captive to my Lord,  
To sing the victories of His word."*

Possibly our Savior intended, also, by this singular procession, *to let His enemies know His real strength among the people.* If He could gather so great a crowd of adherents without any summons or prearrangement, surely the whole population must have been, to a large degree, in His favor. If such an enthusiastic reception was spontaneously given Him, how many would have gathered if a plan had been arranged? Had He agreed to lead them against the Romans, thousands of fanatics would have followed His banner. If He had designed to make Himself a king, and had permitted His servants to fight, the old fierce courage of the Jewish race would have burned up like a flame of fire, and His enemies would have fled before Him. He came not with war in His heart, but He would let the foeman see the hilt of the sword which He might have drawn from its sheath; He would let scribe and Pharisee bite their lips, while they said, "Perceive you how you prevail nothing? Behold, the world is gone after Him." If the Savior had willed to use the baser methods that men nowadays would freely employ, by asking the world's alliance, He might have made Himself a King at once. Had He blended politics with religion, and yielded something to general prejudice, He might at once have set up a worldly kingdom. But no, He knew no selfish ambition, His kingdom was not of this world; He came not that He might be honored here, but that He might be put to shame for our redemption. The diadem to which He aspired was a crown of thorns; yet He lets His adversaries see that He was not lowly because He was weak or gentle because He was feeble. They might, if they would, have seen by that day in Jerusalem the greatness of the self-denial which abstained from earthly honors.

Nor have I exhausted the Savior's reasons. We are told by the Evangelist that He did this *that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet.* I have just now quoted the text from Zechariah 9:9.

Our Lord was always careful and earnest to fulfill each prophecy of Holy Scripture. He held the inspired Word in high esteem, and was careful of each letter of it. You never hear a word from Him derogatory of the inspiration, authority, accuracy, or infallibility of the law and the prophets. He fulfils the Word of the Lord even to its jots and tittles. He directed His life by that old chart, in which the way of the Messiah was laid down long before He came to earth. Oh, for the same reverence of Scripture among preachers nowadays! God forbid that we should be lowering men's ideas of inspiration, as some are fond of doing. May we value every word which came from the Lord in old time! May we willingly change the course of our thought and teaching rather than neglect a single word of inspiration! When we see what the will of the Lord is, let us follow it implicitly. Obedience to the rule of Scripture was the way of the Head; it should also be the way of the members. If the King Himself is careful in His walk towards the Word, surely we ought to be.

I think also that as our Lord thus looked back and fulfilled Scripture, *He was looking forward to give us a prophetic type of the future*. Beloved, our Lord will not always be rejected. There are days of triumph for Him. "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner." This is the age of iron, but there comes a golden age of love and light. We look for His appearing and His reign; His reign of peace and joy. There will come a day when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ. He shall sit upon the throne of His father David, and of His kingdom there shall be no end. The Lord shall reign forever and ever. Hallelujah! Has not Jehovah said to Him, "Ask of Me, and I shall give You the heathen for Your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Your possession"? Yes, there will come a day when He that was the reproach of men shall be the glory of His people. Kings shall bow down before Him. All generations shall call Him blessed. When I see that joyful procession going up the hill to Zion, and mark how they that went before joined with those who followed after, while the King Himself rode in the center, I seem to see a rehearsal of the long succession of the faithful in all ages. The prophets have gone before Him, listen to their loud Hosannas! We come behind Him, even we upon whom the ends of the earth have come, and we have our glad Hosannas, too! Here patriarchs join with apostles, prophets are one with martyrs, and priests keep rank with pastors and deacons, all with one voice lifting up the same note, "Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord." We see, then, in the simple state of our Lord in the streets of Jerusalem, a vision of the long glories which await Him in the New Jerusalem, where He shall sit upon His throne, and His enemies shall be made His footstool.

One thing more I cannot help mentioning; surely, our Lord allowed the populace a vent for their enthusiasm *with the desire to delight His friends*. Do you not think that the sympathetic Jesus thought it worth while to give His little band of followers what our forefathers would have called "a gaudy day"—a high day, a holiday? These had been with Him in His humiliation, and He would give them a taste of His glory. They had seen Him despised and rejected of men, and He relieved the monotony of His humiliation with a glimpse of His glory. For once they should be allowed to cast their garments under His feet and strew fragrant branches on His path. For once their zeal should have license to climb the trees and break down the boughs to strew His pathway. Nothing on that day filled their ears but the praises of their loved Lord and honored Master. They would soon enough have sorrow when they would see Him seized in the garden and taken away bound to Caiaphas and Pilate to be condemned to die. He would give them a breathing space, an interval of pleasure, wherein their spirits should no longer drag on earth, but rise on wings, into a lofty joy. Our Lord loves His people to be glad. He kept His tears to Himself, as He wept over Jerusalem, but the gladness He scattered all around, so that even the boys and girls in the streets of Jerusalem made the temple courts to ring with their merry feet and gladsome songs. Hear how they clap their hands with delight! "Hosanna! Hosanna! Hosanna!" You hear it everywhere and the Lord smiles as He sees the joy which pours in floods around Him. The Lord loves to cast into our cup some drops of heaven's own honey, until the bitterness of grief is sweetened, and His followers are made happy by their joy in Himself. "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." I wish I could express myself in tones more clear and musical, but though bodily weakness compels me to be measured in my utterance, my soul does magnify the Lord, and my spirit does rejoice in God my Savior. May the Lord Himself cast into your hearts the burning coals of joyful love to Him, and so may your souls take fire, and blaze aloft with vehement flames of delight! May this day be to your spirits a day of palms and

psalms, of prayers and praises, of Hallelujahs and Hosannas. Let us sing all day, as we sung in our opening hymn—

*“Hosanna to the anointed King,  
To David’s holy Son!  
Help us, O Lord! Descend and bring  
Salvation from Your throne.  
Blest be the Lord, who comes to men  
With messages of grace;  
Who comes in God, His Father’s name,  
To save our sinful race.  
Hosanna in the highest strains  
The church on earth can raise;  
The highest heavens, in which He reigns,  
Shall give Him nobler praise.”*

**II.** Secondly, my text is to my mind a parable of CHRIST GLORIFIED IN HIS CHURCH. There are choice days when the shout of a King is heard in our assemblies. We have not yet fallen to a dull monotony of barrenness; we have hills like those of Carmel. The low water mark of lukewarmness is covered deep beneath flood tides of holy exultation. I am going to speak about these hallowed seasons.

I think that *such days come to the church of God after special miracles of grace have been worked.* Lazarus is raised from the dead, and when the people thus see the greatness of the Prophet of Nazareth, they begin to commend and extol Him, and this leads on to holy excitement. If the Lord will be pleased to work remarkable conversions among us, we shall have grand times. If special instances of His gracious power are seen by us, we will bear our palms of victory before Him, and many hearts will inquire, “Who is this?” Our hearts shall rejoice as with the joy of harvest when we see the Lord saving great sinners; yes, we will shout as victors who divide the spoil. Do you not think that when Saul of Tarsus was converted, and the churches had rest, that they had also great exultation in their King? Everywhere it must have been talked of that fierce Pharisee who had become a bold preacher of the faith which once he sought to destroy. What joy there is in saintly hearts when ringleaders in sin become champions for truth! Oh that our God would work such transformations in this city! Pray, my brothers and sisters, that the Lord would do the same for us, and for all His churches just now. Oh, for displays of His power to quicken the dead! Oh, for Lazarus to be raised, and to live among us as a wonder of grace whom neighbors would come to see! O Lord, give us this signal of delight! Let us see Your arm made bare in the eyes of all the people.

Next, *it was a time of testimony*, for those who had been present, and had seen Lazarus raised from the dead, bore witness. One stepped forward and said, “With these eyes I saw Lazarus come forth from the tomb of rock.” “As for me,” said another, “I saw him buried, and I helped to carry him to the grave, but I saw him come back to the house alive.” “Yes,” said a third, “I rolled away the stone, and as I stood watching for the result, I saw the dead man come forth alive, and I helped to loosen his grave clothes.” All these bore witness to what they had seen. You cannot tell what a joyful effect it produces, and what enthusiasm is stirred, when one after another bears personal witness. Lord, open men’s mouths! Lord, make the quiet ones to tell forth Your praise! Your silent tongues deprive us of our joy. Your cowardly reticence robs Christ of His glory and the church of its increase. If God has done anything for you, or you have seen Him do anything for others, bear testimony to it. It is the Lord’s due, and your duty, that you should speak to the glory of Christ Jesus. When great wonders have been done, and those who saw them are willing to bear their testimony thereunto, then we may look for red-letter days, wherein gladness and praise shall be in the ascendant.

It was a good sign, too, of joy to come, that *the enemies were now raging worse than ever.* They sought to kill both Jesus and Lazarus. If the devil never roars the church will never sing. God is not doing much if the devil is not awake and busy. Depend upon it that a working Christ makes a raging devil. When you hear ill reports, cruel speeches, threats, taunts, and the like, believe that the Lord is among His people, and is working gloriously. We look upon the “many adversaries” as one of the tokens that a great door and effectual is set before us. When we hear thunder we look for rain. Wrath in the lowest hell is a prognostic of Hosanna in the highest heaven.

It is also a cheering sign when there is *a general eagerness among the people concerning our Lord*. When the disciples gather around their Master, and are prompt to do His bidding, then good times are come. When all agree, it is also well. When they that go before, and they that follow after, are all of the same mind, then is it a day of joy. When grey heads grow young, and young heads grow wise, it is a token for good. When the aged lift up their eyes to heaven and say, "God, even our own God, shall bless us," things look well. When our matrons and our sires grow hopefully confident, and say, "The Lord has blessed us in days gone by, and He is going to bless us yet again," then the weather glass points to "Set fair." When the younger sort that follows after, who have been converted but lately, burn with a holy zeal, and cry, "We will give the Lord no rest until He blesses us," then the sun of the church is shining high up in the sky. When we are all ready, each man, each woman ready, to take our share in the harvesting, then will the sheaves be garnered. It is cheering when the congregation shares the excitement with the church and its ministers, and the prospect of a divine blessing is before the mind of all who seek better things. Surely, the time to favor Zion, yes, the set time has come, when her King is longed for, and every heart beats high with love of Him.

The case is clear when all this is attended *with an abounding generosity*. It is well when disciples are not only willing to fetch another man's colt, but are willing to lay their own garments on it; when they will not only gather palm fronds to strew the path, but will take off their own coats to carpet the way of the King. When everybody does something, or gives something, or at any rate joins in the hearty Hosannas, then is the King come into our midst. Our King is not where hearts are miserly and souls are selfish, but one token of His presence is that His people offer willingly unto the Lord. At such times believers feel that they are not their own, but are bought with a price, and things which once looked like sacrifices too great to be expected of them, are cheerfully presented as sacrifices of joy.

Beloved, we must not forget that it is a token of God's having come to His church and of His having given her a joyful day, when *the children share in it*. Luther was greatly encouraged when he found that the children met together for prayer. He said, "God will hear *them*. The devil himself cannot defeat us now that the children begin to pray." It is very beautiful to read Mr. Whitefield's remarks about his sermons at Moorfields and elsewhere in London, when mud and stones were cast at him, and yet a group of children always surrounded his pulpit, and though some of them were hurt, yet he noticed how bravely they stood by him through the service. He thought it a token for good that children drank in his words. When God moves the children to earnestness, He will soon move their fathers and mothers. When boys and girls meet to praise God, do not despise their little meetings, nor say, "It is only a parcel of children." The children are in God's esteem the most precious portion of the race. He sets high store by His little ones, and He has set a special curse upon those who offend one of the little ones that believe in Him. Jesus, Master, come, we pray You! Come in Your lowly pomp, in all Your gentleness, and grace, and then will the children of these modern days sing loud Hosannas to Your name, like those in Your temple of old.

I want you to notice in our text, that *our Savior was received with the shout of Hosanna!* The best interpretation I can give is—"Save, oh, save! Save, oh, save!" Different nations have different ways of expressing their good will to their monarchs. A Roman would have shouted, "Io triumphe!" We sing, "God save our gracious Queen." The Persians said, "O King, live forever." The Jews cried, "Hosanna!" "Save," or, "God save the King!" The French have their "Vivas," by which they mean, "Long live the man." Hosanna is tantamount to all these. It is a shout of homage, welcome, and loyalty. It wishes wealth, health, and honor to the king. In the Saxon we say, "Hurrah," in Hebrew, "Hosanna." That mighty shout startled all the streets of the old city, "Hosanna, Hosanna, the King is come. Save Him, O Lord! Save us through Him! Long live the King!" While it was a shout of homage, it was also a prayer to the King. "Save, Lord; save us, O King! O King, born to conquer and to save, deliver us!" It was, moreover, a prayer for Him—"God save the King, God bless and prosper His majesty. "Prayer also shall be made for Him continually; and daily shall He be praised." We never cease to pray, "Your kingdom come; Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." Let us then cry, Hosanna, making it at once a loyal shout; a prayer to our King, and a prayer for Him. All these things appear in the benediction which follows; "Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest."

Would it be amiss if we were to indulge in a hearty shout for our King? May we never grow enthusiastic? May we never overleap the bounds of prim propriety? Shall we never cry Hallelujah! Shall no

Hosannas burst from our lips? Surely, if our King will come into the midst of His church again, and end these black days of doubt, we must and will shout, or else the very stones will cry out, Yes, O Lord Jesus, You shall have our Vivas: we will shout, “Long live the King!”—

*“All hail the power of Jesus’ name!  
Let angels prostrate fall.”*

Nor will we cease to pray to You! Some of you that have not yet been saved by Him will, I trust, say, “Save me, Lord! O Jesus, save me!” You will not disturb but delight the present meeting if you will in your hearts cry, “Lord, save me!” Remember the cry of two blind beggars on this very journey of our Lord, and how He opened their eyes when they cried, “Son of David, have mercy on us.”

Will we not also put up prayer for our Lord this morning? Will not each one in his pew now breathe a petition to God, saying, “Father, glorify Your Son”? You have said that the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand; make it so. O Jehovah, You are well pleased with Jesus; show Your good pleasure towards Him by giving Him to conquer ten thousand times ten thousand hearts. Let a nation be born in a day. May He reign forever and ever! Hosanna! Hosanna!

**III.** I have only a little time for my third point, and yet it is of great importance; CHRIST RECEIVED IN THE HEART. His triumphant ride into Jerusalem was a type of His entering the renewed heart. I pray that you who have never received Him may listen, and may, by the listening, be led to pray for His coming into your heart.

On that day, when Christ came up from Bethany, *the city gates were wide open*. We read nothing about them, because they were not in the way; there were no shut gates to Him. He rode into Jerusalem without let or hindrance. Are your gates wide open this morning? If not, I would say, “Lift up your heads, O you gates; and be you lift up, you everlasting doors: and the King of glory shall come in.” He is willing to abide in your hearts, and go no more out forever; be sure that your gates are set wide before Him. May the Holy Spirit open your hearts! Do not tolerate the thought of shutting out your Lord. Never! Throw wide the portals of your soul. Yes, go forth by willing obedience and say, “Come in, my Lord! Come in!” *He was cheerfully received as King*. Our Lord did not come to subdue the citizens at the point of the sword. He did not come with force of arms to coerce the city. You must receive Jesus willingly, or not at all. He comes to reign, but He comes in the gentleness of love. He rides on no high-mettled charger, He lays His hand on no sharp sword which clatters at His side; about Him are no men-at-arms, behind Him come no heavy guns, dragged along the trembling streets. Jesus was willingly received; everyone exultingly welcomed Him. Will you so receive Jesus? Has He made you willing in the day of His power? You may well salute Him, and welcome Him to your heart and your home, for you have never before received so blessed a guest. Open wide the gates, and entreat Him to come in, for He will bring heaven with Him. He never uses force; He conquers only by love. The Holy Spirit works upon the will of man, but He leaves it still a will, so that we freely choose our Lord, and delight in Him as our King.

Remember, beloved, *the coming of Christ is with gentleness and love*. Riding on a colt the foal of a donkey, is a very different thing from riding the fiery warhorse. I like not men who seem as if they were converted to hate everybody else. It is not Christ who has come unto you if you have grown prouder, harder, more passionate than ever. No, the Christ who enters to save, is Himself so meek and lowly of heart that those who take His yoke upon them learn of Him, and they become meek and lowly too. Admit the lowly Christ, and be of one mind with Him. He will kill your bad temper, conquer your malice, and cast out your pride. Come and be the willing subject of a King who rides forth in lowliest guise.

*His entrance caused great joy*. No man’s heart was made heavy that day. The face of the King frowned on none. Other kings have found it needful to force their way through crowds of rebels to their capital, and wade through slaughter to a throne, but none was found to hurt or devour in all the holy mountain when Jesus came to Zion. Women have been ravished, men have been murdered, even babes have been massacred when monarchs have entered cities, but when our King comes, boughs and palm fronds, shouts and songs, are the setting of a very different scene. Instead of shrieks and groans, we hear the ringing music of children, with their glad Hosannas. Oh, will you not admit the Lord Jesus? Who will refuse an entrance to One who brings with Him joy and peace?—

*“He shall come down like showers  
Upon the fruitful earth;*

*Love, joy, and hope, like flowers,  
Spring in His path to birth.”*

When He comes, men feel a burning enthusiasm for Him. It should not be needful that I should plead for His admission. Surely you should run down the hill to meet Him, and then come back, following after Him with glad Hosannas. Lord Jesus, we cannot be cold in Your presence. Our souls burn as with coals of juniper when we remember You.

But I must tell you one thing which I am sure will not dampen your ardor, if you are in a right state. If Jesus comes into your souls *He will come as a Reformer*. He will make your heart a temple, and out of it He will drive the buyers and the sellers, and all else that would pollute the soul. With His scourge of small cords He will whip out many a naughty thing from the heart which He makes His temple. Yes, let the thieves go! If your heart has been made a den of thieves by evil desires, should not these be chased out without mercy? So let it be. Welcome, You great Refiner! Gladly would we lose our dross.

I feel so glad to have to add that when He comes into your heart *He will hold a formal reception*. Did I not note it to you when we were reading the fourteenth verse—“The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them.” Dear heart, if Jesus comes to you, all that is blind and lame about you shall be healed. That was a singular *royal reception*, was it not? Many of that select company came on crutches, and some with legs doubled up, or malformed. Blind men were there, with useless eyeballs or empty sockets where eyes should have been. Into this limping, groping circle came the King of glory, and He did not repel them, but He healed them. Admit the Lord into your heart, and the limping of your unbelief will be exchanged for the leaps of faith. Then shall you see those things to which your heart has long been blind. Let Him in! Let Him in! Believe on Him, and trust Him, and let Him into your heart, and you shall find Him the physician of your soul.

Last of all, you that have not yet received Him, we want you to *join with the rest of us in honoring Him and glorifying Him as He comes into your heart*. “Oh!” says one, “if He will only come into my heart I will indeed praise Him.” Have your Vivas ready! Receive the Lord Jesus Christ with all honors. Mention His name with rejoicing. Have your hurrah ready to welcome the King, the Conqueror, as He enters your soul. Be jubilant! Be enthusiastic! Rejoice that such a one as He should come to dwell with such a one as you, and bring such blessing with Him. Praise Him! Praise Him! Extol Him in the highest heavens! Then pray to Him. “Save, Lord! Save, oh, save!” Then pray for others to Him in the same words, “Hosanna; save, Lord, save!”

And when you have done with Hosannas and prayers, conclude, as the Psalmist did in that famous one-hundred-eighteenth psalm, when he cried, “Bind the sacrifice with cords, even unto the horns of the altar.” Ask God of His love today to bind you to Christ, the altar, with one of those wreaths of love and ribbons of triumphant grace which you now throw at His feet. Oh, for a twisted garland of mercies, the roses of gladness, and the lilies of delight, to bind our heart to Christ forever! These cords of love may seem weak, but in very deed they hold us faster than chains of steel. Nothing holds a man like the silken cord of gratitude. When you know how Jesus loves you, when you see how He died for you, then you are drawn to love Him in return, and are held to serve Him in life, in death, and to eternity. Thus do we celebrate our Lord’s triumphant entrance into the City of Mansoul, and we feel that we could prolong the celebration throughout the whole of our lives—

*“Yes, we will praise You, dearest Lord,  
Our souls are all on flame,  
Hosanna round the spacious earth  
To Your adored name.”*

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