

Commentary on the Readings for December 4, 2022

The Second Sunday in Advent

The Readings for the Second Sunday in advent all refer to the coming of the King. In the Old Testament the reference is to the coming of one of the Davidic kings of the ancient Jewish Monarchy. In the New Testament, the readings refer to the coming of the great "King of kings" who is Jesus Christ, the only one that could fulfill all such prophecies or references.

In the **First Reading** from the *Prophet Isaiah (11:1-10)*, the prophet has just announced the imminent destruction of the kingdom of Judah and its center, Jerusalem, with its temple. However, at the same time, He holds out a branch of hope to the people of Israel. One of their descendants will bring Jerusalem great honor and glory, and He will out-shine all the previous kings of Israel. This prophecy could only be filled by the Anointed One of God, Jesus Christ.

The **Responsorial Psalm, (72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17)**, although composed originally for the anointing of one of the Davidic kings, the accolades are too grand and far-reaching to be referring to any earthly person and can only be attributed to God in the person of Jesus Christ, the "King who was and who is and who is to come."

In the **Second Reading** from *St. Paul's Letter to the Romans (15:4-9)*, we hear Paul exhort the early Christians to prepare for the coming of the Lord. This "Letter" was written during a very difficult time for the early Christians, much like the Jews of Isaiah's time. Conditions were much the same, the Romans were about to destroy Jerusalem. Paul counsels the Christians to be patient and refer back to earlier scripture that tells of the glory and honor to come for those who are faithful. In turn, this will give honor and glory to the "Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ."

In the **Gospel Reading** from the *Matthew, (3:1-12)*, we hear the familiar story of the preaching of John the Baptist, the last of the Old Testament prophets, whose sole mission was to announce the coming of the "Anointed One of God." Sometimes familiar stories just float "in one ear and out the other." We should stop and really listen to this story and its message.

All of the above readings are prophecies of one kind or another. They are meant to make us stop and ask ourselves who we are worshipping when we come to Mass each Sunday. Surely, we are not worshipping the priest, even if he is a great speaker. And remember, just being there in body isn't worshipping anyone until we put our mind and heart into it. Our "King of kings" is waiting for you to come and worship Him; but it takes body, soul, mind and heart. **So, who are YOU worshipping while you spend your hour in church on Sunday?** Something to think about during your Prayer Time this week!

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