

## The King Speaks

✧ In kindness to the brokenhearted (vv.1-3)

✧ In triumph of righteousness and praise (vv.10-11)

In the Name of Jesus our King, dear fellow forgiven, mercied subjects of His Kingdom:

Last Sunday we enjoyed hearing our children proclaim the Good News that Jesus our Savior is born. We've heard many good comments about how beautifully you children told the wonderful news about *Gifts from the Manger*. But after the worship service someone pointed out a problem with these boxes, beautifully wrapped by one of our dedicated sisters in Christ. If you opened them, would they be empty? Not really. Each is filled with air that reminds us of the Hebrew word ( רוּחַ ) for spirit, breath, wind. Faith listens as the dear Holy Spirit fills each box by God's powerful Word through Isaiah. Listen: **The King Speaks...**

✧ In kindness to the brokenhearted (vv.1-3)

There once was a stammering king who had to give a speech. Nazi Germany attacked Poland, and in 1939, Great Britain declared war on Germany. The new monarch, King George VI, had to address all of Great Britain for the first time on radio. Her citizens needed to hear their new king clearly encouraging them to take up arms against a powerful enemy who would soon be bombing their cities full of civilians. Some of you may recognize the plot of a movie, *The King's Speech*, where Colin Firth portrays the struggles of King George VI as he learns to speak clearly in a time of crisis. It's an encouraging story not only for anyone who stutters, but also for facing problems bravely and accepting instruction to overcome them.

Leaders of all kinds, have to "rally the troops" in times of adversity. But the best speeches can't win wars, especially not the war with God. God is still the Author of HisStory. He preserves our freedom to worship Him so that we can enjoy the peace God's **kindness** gives.

These *Gifts from the Manger* are actually not empty. They picture how God's Word fills every heart that listens when **The King Speaks**.

Through Isaiah (ca. 700 BC), Jesus Messiah lets the gift out of the box saying, "***The Spirit of the LORD God is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to preach good news to the afflicted.***" The Hebrew word for *Spirit* is also *wind* or *air*. And it would be empty wind except that this is ***the Spirit of the LORD God*** who brings powerful gifts for Christ, the Anointed One, to give freely. All the world's wealth could not buy a single gift of the Spirit. But when we pray as Jesus taught us, "***Thy kingdom come,***" we're asking our King Jesus to bring all the gifts of the Spirit to our hearts and lives. He does not need a sleigh like stories of jolly old Saint Nick; **The King Speaks** in Word and sacraments. He preaches ***good news to the afflicted***, suffering from Satan's bombardment of lies for passionate pleasure, then crushing guilt afterwards. The ***good news*** is that Christ has completely crushed Satan's head by dying and rising again.

When your heart is broken by grief or sin, Christ comes to bandage your feelings and free you from the chains of guilt. He comes ***to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor*** like Israel's ancient Jubilee year when all debts were cancelled, all slaves set free, all land returned to families. Under the **kindness** of God everyone could trade ashes of grief for the ***oil of joy***. Wrapped up in praise instead of a fearful, fainting spirit. Like solid oak trees whose tap roots grow as deep as the tree is tall, the LORD's ***oaks of righteousness*** would withstand not only the storms of life, but the howling wrath of God on Judgment Day. God's gifts of the Word, our King, and boundless Joy from heaven, makes us ***a planting of the LORD to display his beauty***. No "King's Speech" can deliver like the God of heaven.

The Spirit-Anointed King Jesus also declares *the day of vengeance for our God*. When Christ **The King** returns on Judgment Day, there will eternal joy for all repentant believers, and eternal wrath for all who refused to repent. The Bible clearly says that God hates sinners: *“The arrogant cannot stand before your eyes. You hate all evildoers.”* That’s the verdict of God’s law, but praise God there is another verdict of mercy. The Bible also says that God loves sinners and freely forgives all who seek refuge in Him. In the same Psalm Christ’s ancestor, King David praises: *“But as for me, by your great mercy I will enter your house. I will bow down toward your holy temple with reverence for you. LORD, lead me in your righteousness. Because of those who slander me, make your way straight before me.”* (Psalm 5:5,7f EHV) When **The King Speaks In kindness to the brokenhearted**, we rejoice to respond...

### ✧ **In triumph of righteousness and praise (vv.10-11)**

How else could God get our attention if we never had a broken heart, never felt any affliction, never realized the prison of guilt that sin builds around us, never chafed under chains of conscience as we fail to live up to our own expectations, much less to God’s? Like a wise king who recognizes the value of a good challenge, or a winning coach who puts his players through their paces in practice for the championship, **The King Speaks** to bring **triumph** like no lazy leach will ever know.

It’s sadly true that even some Christians live more like parasites than believers. They only want the Creator as long as He supplies their brand of creature comforts. They love salvation more than the Savior. And since all good can only come from God, if He doesn’t deliver when and how they want, they despair or even rebel under God’s rule. But notice how differently a repentant believer responds when **The King Speaks**: *“I will rejoice greatly in the LORD.”* Before God does anything or even says a word, we *Give thanks to the LORD for he is good*. God is just plain *good*. Simple, childlike faith as we hear echoed in Mary’s Magnificat, triumphs in **praise** for God in all circumstance. We don’t trust happiness in happenings.

*My soul will celebrate because of my God, for he has clothed me in garments of salvation. With a robe of righteousness he covered me, like a bridegroom who wears a beautiful headdress like a priest, and like a bride who adorns herself with her jewelry.”* The righteousness God gives in our baptism provides the most beautiful robes and jewelry to all who repent of their sins and trust in **The King** for forgiveness. We praise God first for who He is. But we also praise God for what He does, always giving us the forgiveness of sins through Word and sacrament. And we also praise God for what He means to us. As a bridegroom desires his bride and the bride her husband like nothing else, we desire our Savior’s love.

Thanks to Jesus coming the first time to be our suffering King and conquering Savior, with Him we **triumph in righteousness and praise**. Did you hear the gift of hope? *“For as the earth produces its growth, and as a garden causes what has been sown to sprout up...”* We look for these miracles every springtime when God’s grace scatters the cold of winter in the warmth of new life, not just in the land, but in our hearts and souls filled with gifts of life and peace: *So God the LORD will cause righteousness and praise to sprout up in the presence of all the nations.”* Every worship service here **The King Speaks**.

October 2, 1992, we gathered here to for a Memorial Service for a man I’d met while knocking on doors, spring of 1987. Back then he was healthy, living his own way, feeling little need for God. He never told me to get lost, so I kept visiting. Inoperable lung cancer got his attention almost ten months to the day the doctor said he had left. **The King Speaks** – the man was listening, repenting of his sins, joyful. Folks had to ask seeing his purple athletic suit why he was so joyful as his body wasted away. He kept giving thanks that God’s will was done for him in Christ, getting through to him before it was too late. God gave him peace with his estranged father and a faithful spirit eager to leave a legacy of gratitude for this ministry of new life in Christ. God the LORD caused *righteousness and praise to sprout up in the presence of all the nations*, all souls of ethnic groups that have come to worship our King Jesus here under Steve Williams’ window. Praising God in heaven now, Steve’s legacy of praise still proclaims comfort and peace, escape from guilt to God’s glorious splendor. Listen as **The King Speaks**, then glory in His praise. Amen.