

Title: THE KING'S ARRIVAL, LUKE 2:1-14  
(Chatham, NJ; 12/25/11, AM) (Devotional)

Theme: The birth of Jesus is the arrival of a new king, and more than that it fulfills humanity's yearnings for justice and righteousness.

Purpose: To recount and reflect on details of Christ's birth, and to think about what it means.

Psalm 97

Prelude Song: Hallelujah, Praise Jehovah, 3

Prayer

## I. Introduction

- A. *A Charlie Brown Christmas* – give the facts about the program first
  1. On December 9, 1965 a program was aired for the first time
  2. It almost didn't make it
  3. TV executives hated it from the start for being too religious
  4. One character quotes Luke 2:8-14 to explain the true meaning of Christmas
  5. It won an Emmy and a Peabody award and captured half of the viewing audience
  6. The story line (see photocopy)
  7. The true story of Christmas came through in...A Charlie Brown Christmas
  8. The program is fresh and invigorating every year; more importantly the true story of Christmas is fresh and invigorating every year

Song – The First Noel, 999

Reading – Luke 2:1-14

Song – Hark, the Herald Angels Sing, 1001

## II. The Lord Reigns.

- A. Yet there is so much more to the story
  1. Romans 10:15 echoes Isaiah 52:7-8, "the Lord reigns"
  2. Psalm 97 celebrates the reign of God: power, righteousness, justice
  3. Hebrews 1:1-4 & 8 tells us that God has spoken to us through his son and the writer speaks of his scepter and throne
  4. The transition to NT fulfillment demonstrates the reign of God
- B. The story creates a stir
  1. This king is on a collision course with Caesar Augustus who was elevated to the status of a divinely sanctioned ruler over the entire world
  2. How ironic that his own decree set Christ's birth in the appropriate place
  3. This story also sets another collision course with those who wish to relegate religion to merely a private matter and that personal autonomy trumps everything
  4. He is a king who demands our allegiance and obedience.
  5. This birth is of the king who reigns over the universe; there is no other

Song – What Child Is This? 998

Reading – Ephesians 1:15 – 23

Song – O Come, All Ye Faithful, 997

### III. He came in winter?

#### A. Beyond our cultural images

1. "It was night," John 13:30 seems to be making a metaphorical comment
2. We envision winter when the trees are bare and cold has frozen everything in a terrifying grip of grayness and lifelessness; his birth rescues us from this
3. Could the environment have been like the doldrums? An equatorial phenomenon where no winds blow, ships drift aimlessly, and the heat oppresses
4. Sailors become not only listless but despondent and irritable; days pass in meaningless and relentless boredom
5. These describe something of the condition of mankind in need of redemption
6. Are the properties of the universe, as Richard Dawkins suggests "precisely those we should expect if there is, at bottom, no design, no purpose, no evil and no good—nothing but blind, pitiless indifference." (*Salvo*, Winter 2011, p. 13)
7. Anytime is night/winter/doldrums if this is the foundation of all there is

#### B. We yearn for more

1. Our reflections on who we are, on the future, on life and death, etc. suggest at least a desire that life is more than pitiless indifference
2. The hope for redemption was strong: the shepherds told everyone about what they had seen, Luke 2:17-18
3. Brit Hume found hope in Christianity after the death of his 28-year-old son (see *Salvo*, Winter 2011, pp. 26-28)

Song – O Holy Night, 1028

Reading – Isaiah 9:2-7

Song – He's My King, 166

### IV. The Triumph of Truth, Justice, and Righteousness

#### A. Worldly rulers take note, Psalm 2

1. Not Caesar Augustus or any other world ruler
2. Not the 12<sup>th</sup> Caliph of Islam

#### B. All Authority on Heaven and Earth

1. Mt. 28:18 – all authority has been given to me
2. Eph. 1:20-21, far above all rule, authority, power, and dominion
3. 1 Peter 3:22, seated at the right hand of God
4. A ruler who brought truth, justice, and righteousness, Is. 9:2-7
5. He was born in a stable; He died on a cross; He rules the nations
6. We commune with him now through the bread and wine he gave as a remembrance; we offer our allegiance to him; we live in joyful expectation of the final consummation of his kingdom

Song - Joy to the World, 1018

Lord's Supper

Collection  
Announcements

Song – Silent Night, 1003 (verses 3 & 4)  
Closing Prayer