

Readings

Scripture

¹Now when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethphage, to the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, ²saying to them, "Go into the village in front of you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Untie them and bring them to me. ³If anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them at once." ⁴This took place to fulfill what was spoken by the prophet, saying, ⁵"Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden.'" ⁶The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. ⁷They brought the donkey and the colt and put on them their cloaks, and he sat on them. ⁸Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. ⁹And the crowds that went before him and that followed him were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David! Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!" ¹⁰And when he entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred up, saying, "Who is this?" ¹¹And the crowds said, "This is the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee."

- Matthew 21:1-11 (*English Standard Version*)

Reflection

By means of this Triumphant Entry Jesus shows the crowds what kind of Messiah he is, namely, not the earthly Messiah of Israel's dreams, the One who wages war against an earthly oppressor, but the One who came to promote and establish "the things that make for peace" (Luke 19:42), lasting peace: reconciliation between God and man, and between a man and his fellow man. Accordingly, Jesus enters Jerusalem mounted on a colt, the foal of an ass, an animal associated not with the rigors of war but with the pursuits of peace, for he is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). But the people in general, their minds filled with earthly ideas concerning the Coming One, did not understand or appreciate this.

- William Hendriksen, *The Gospel of Matthew* (p. 760)

Sermon Outline

In the Crowd
Matthew 21:1-11

Were You There?
Brad Anderson

Are you willing to allow your illusions of salvation to give way to the true Savior?

It is not easy to do...why?

Illusions are very powerful...

Reality seems weaker...

Illusions are filled with self-created, heart-felt, well-intentioned ends...

Reality presents the truth of Jesus Christ, uncontrollable...

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- What comes to mind when you hear the word, "illusion"? Why are illusions so powerful?
- How would you arrange for Jesus to have maximum exposure in your city: What media outlets? What large gatherings? What restaurants? Where would he stay?
- To what town has Jesus arrived in Matthew 21? Why?
- Jesus comes on a donkey and not on a stallion. What kind of Messiah does that portray?
- Why such a large crowd at this time of year? What did they shout? Why?
- What kind of kingdom, and king, were the people expecting? How do their wishes compare with the reality of Jesus?
- How might that discrepancy account for the same crowd later on shouting, "Crucify him!"?
- Would the request of Jesus for the disciples to get the donkey be a hard one to keep? If someone had questioned them while getting the donkey, how convincing would be the line which Jesus offered them to speak?
- How much do you comprehend at this point about who Jesus really is?