



When they drew near to Jerusalem, to Bethphage and Bethany at the Mount of Olives, he sent two of his disciples and said to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately on entering it, you will find a colt tethered on which no one has ever sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone should say to you, 'Why are you doing this?' reply, 'The Master has need of it and will send it back here at once.'" So, they went off and found a colt tethered at a gate outside on the street, and they untied it. Some of the bystanders said to them, "What are you doing, untying the colt?" They answered them just as Jesus had told them to, and they permitted them to do it. So, they brought the colt to Jesus and put their cloaks over it. And he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road, and others spread leafy branches that they had cut from the fields. Those preceding him as well as those following kept crying out:

"Hosanna!

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!

Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that is to come!

Hosanna in the highest!"

Introductory Prayer: Lord Jesus, I wish to accompany you closely on the road to Calvary. If I were to contemplate you more often as you hang scourged and bloody upon the cross, I'm certain I would be able to rest in your love and base my actions on that one truth. I know that you have loved me with an eternal love: you have proven it there on the wood of the cross. So, I long to respond with gratitude, peace and the firm determination to spread your love to everyone.

Petition: Lord, Jesus, grant me the grace to proclaim you as Messiah and Savior.

1. A Different Kind of Messiah: Up until now, Jesus has never publicly accepted the title of Messiah. He had confirmed privately to his apostles that he is the Messiah, but he had commanded them to tell no one. When people had called him the Messiah, he had never accepted the title and most often tried to get away from them as quickly as possible. He had reasoned that the Jews don't understand what the Messiah is really about. Knowing the Messiah is to be a great descendent of King David, they expect the Messiah to appear, raise an army and lead an uprising against the Romans that will drive them from the country and re-establish David's kingdom. Several times we read of Jesus having to slip away because the people intend to make him king. He is not going to be what they expect, and he cannot let their expectations get in the way of his mission.

2. A Suffering, Not a Political, Messiah: His entry into Jerusalem is exactly what the prophet predicted for the Messiah. He enters riding a donkey, for the Hebrews the traditional mount of royalty. Another thing that was supposed to happen when the Messiah entered Jerusalem, was that boys were supposed to be the first to begin to shout, "Hosanna, son of David." This is exactly what happens. People were supposed to throw down branches and cloaks to pave his way into Jerusalem and this happens too. The Pharisees see all this and complain to him because they see that it is a fulfillment of the prophecy. They want him to tell people he is not the Messiah. Jesus refuses to do so. He will be the Messiah that was prophesied – the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. God can fulfill our deepest desires and needs in a way we least expect. Can I read the events in my life as his answer to my prayers?

3. The Messiah Rejected by the Experts: The chief priests, scribes and Pharisees are angry. They have already decided they don't want to accept Jesus as the Messiah. Why do they wish to reject him? Is it because he doesn't show the signs that the Messiah should show? No, he has fulfilled all the prophecies. Instead, they see that Jesus as Messiah will threaten their social and political positions. Jesus will be more important than they. They don't want that to happen. They don't want to lose power. In the end they allow themselves to be convinced that he cannot be the Messiah. Rather than consider all the evidence in his favor, they reject him because they don't want a Messiah like that. Is there any way in which I, in my own life, reject something that God wishes of me or permits me to suffer because I don't want God acting in that way in my life?

Conversation with Christ: Jesus, fill my heart with a love that knows no limits, the love that drew you from heaven to die on the cross for me. Fill also the hearts of all those who

feel threatened by the modern Pharisees who reject you and want to erase your name from the world, so that they will witness bravely to you and to your sacrifice for us.

Resolution: Today, with the courage of my conviction that Jesus is the savior of the world, I will proclaim in some way that he is my Lord and God, especially through charity towards everyone I meet.

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