

Luke 19:36

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way.

Analysis

And as he went, they spread their clothes in the way
(πορευομένου...ὑπεστρώννυον τὰ ιμάτια αὐτῶν ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ,
poreuomenou...hypestōnnyon ta himatia autōn en tē hodō). The imperfect tense
spread (ὑπεστρώννυον, hypestōnnyon) indicates continuous action—they kept
spreading garments as Jesus progressed. This spontaneous act of worship
transforms the dusty road into a royal carpet, creating a 'way' (όδός, hodos—the
same term used for 'the Way' of Christian discipleship in Acts).

The crowd's actions fulfill messianic expectation without Jesus explicitly commanding it. Like John the Baptist who prepared 'the way of the Lord' (3:4), these disciples literally prepare the way before Him. Their outer garments symbolize laying their very selves before Christ's feet. This extravagant devotion previews Mary's anointing (which John places earlier, at Bethany) and anticipates the early church's radical generosity.

Historical Context

Spreading garments before a king was an ancient coronation ritual (2 Kings 9:13). In the Roman Empire, conquered peoples sometimes spread clothing before victorious generals during triumphal processions. The crowd's action thus carried both Jewish messianic and Greco-Roman royal overtones. The road from Bethany to Jerusalem was likely rocky and dusty—spreading garments would cushion the colt's path and honor the rider.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What does it cost you to 'spread your garments' before Jesus in daily worship and submission?
2. How does this scene challenge comfortable, low-cost expressions of devotion to Christ?
3. In what sense should the Christian life involve continuously 'preparing the way' for Christ's presence?

Interlinear Text

πορευομένου δὲ αὐτοῦ ὑπεστρώνυνον τὰ ἵματια αὐτῶν
as he went And G846 they spread G3588 clothes G846
G4198 G1161 G5291 G2440

ἐν τῇ ὁδῷ
in G3588 the way G1722 G3598

Additional Cross-References

2 Kings 9:13 (Parallel theme): Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king.