

# Mark 11:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way.

## Analysis

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**And many spread their garments in the way** (πολλοὶ τὰ ἱμάτια αὐτῶν ἔστρωσαν εἰς τὴν ὁδόν)—the crowd's spontaneous action mirrors 2 Kings 9:13, where people spread garments before Jehu at his coronation. By spreading their himatia (outer cloaks) on the road, the multitude performs a coronation gesture, acknowledging Jesus as King. This wasn't a small group but "many" (polloi, πολλοί), indicating widespread recognition of Jesus' messianic significance.

**And others cut down branches off the trees, and strawed them in the way** (ἄλλοι δὲ στιβάδας κόψαντες ἐκ τῶν ἀγρῶν)—John 12:13 specifies these were palm branches, symbol of Jewish nationalism and victory (1 Maccabees 13:51; 2 Maccabees 10:7). The Greek stibadas (στιβάδας) means leafy branches spread as a carpet. This action recalled the Feast of Tabernacles when worshipers waved branches and anticipated messianic deliverance. By spreading branches, the crowd declares Jesus to be the conquering King who will liberate Israel—their expectations, though sincere, misunderstood the nature of Jesus' kingdom and imminent "conquest" through crucifixion.

## Historical Context

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The Triumphal Entry occurred during Passover season, when Jerusalem's population exploded from about 50,000 to over 200,000 pilgrims. Many in the crowd were Galileans who had witnessed Jesus' miracles and heard His teaching. Others came because of Jesus' raising of Lazarus days earlier (John 12:17-18), an

astonishing miracle that had electrified Jerusalem. The crowd's use of palm branches had political overtones—palms symbolized Jewish independence and appeared on coins during the Maccabean revolt (165-63 BC). The crowd hoped Jesus would lead armed rebellion against Rome and restore David's throne. Within days, many of these same people would shout "Crucify him!" when Jesus failed to meet their expectations of military-political messiahship. The entry route—from Mount of Olives, down into Kidron Valley, up to the temple mount—retraced the path David fled during Absalom's rebellion (2 Samuel 15:30), now reversed as David's greater Son enters in triumph.

## Related Passages

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**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. What does the crowd's spreading of garments and palm branches reveal about their messianic expectations and understanding of Jesus' mission?
2. How does the contrast between the crowd's enthusiasm on Palm Sunday and their cries for crucifixion by Friday illustrate the danger of following Jesus with false expectations?
3. In what ways might contemporary Christians misunderstand Jesus' kingdom, expecting political power rather than cruciform love?

## Interlinear Text

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πολλοὶ δὲ τὰ ἴμάτια αὐτῶν ἐστρώνυνον εἰς τὴν  
many And G3588 garments G846 spread in G3588  
G4183 G1161 G2440 G4766 G1519

όδον· ἄλλοι δὲ στοιβάδας ἔκοπτον ἐκ τῶν δένδρων,  
the way others And branches cut down off G3588 the trees  
G3598 G243 G1161 G4746 G2875 G1537 G1186

καὶ ἐστρώνυνον εἰς τὴν ὁδόν·  
and spread in G3588 the way  
G2532 G4766 G1519 G3598

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