

Matthew 21:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

Analysis

A very great multitude spread their garments in the way—Ancient enthronement ritual (2 Kings 9:13). The Greek πλεῖστος ὄχλος (pleistos ochlos) means 'the vast majority.' **Others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way**—likely palm fronds (John 12:13), symbols of Jewish nationalism and victory since the Maccabean revolt.

The crowd enacted coronation ceremony for Jesus as Davidic king, yet within days would cry 'Crucify him!' This fickle adoration reveals human hearts: eager for a political deliverer to overthrow Rome, unwilling to embrace a suffering Messiah who demands heart-surrender.

Historical Context

Passover celebrated Israel's liberation from Egypt, making it prime time for revolutionary fervor. The crowds expected Messiah to restore David's kingdom now. Their palm branches echoed 1 Maccabees 13:51, when Simon Maccabeus liberated Jerusalem (142 BC) to great rejoicing with 'branches of palm trees.'

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. When have you enthusiastically praised Jesus for what you wanted Him to do, rather than for who He is?
2. How does the crowd's fickleness warn against popularity-driven faith versus cross-bearing discipleship?

Interlinear Text

ὁ G3588	δὲ G1161	πλεῖστος G4118	ὄχλος G3793	ἐστρώννυον G4766	ἐαυτῶν G1438	τὰ G3588	ἱμάτια G2440
	And	a very great	multitude	spread	their		garments
ἐν G1722	τῇ G3588	ὁδῷ G3598	ἄλλοι G243	δὲ G1161	ἔκοπτον G2875	κλάδους G2798	ἀπὸ G575
in		the way		And	cut down	branches	from
δένδρων G1186	καὶ G2532	ἐστρώννυον G4766	ἐν G1722	τῇ G3588	ὁδῷ G3598		
the trees	and	spread	in		the way		

Additional Cross-References

John 12:13 (Parallel theme): Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord.

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.

