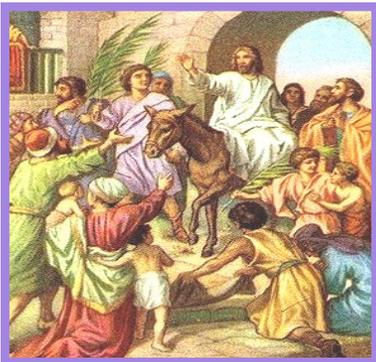


word of God; not by your name, but in the Name of Christ: and that before this divine authority the powers of evil, who have usurped dominion over nations, give way and withdraw.

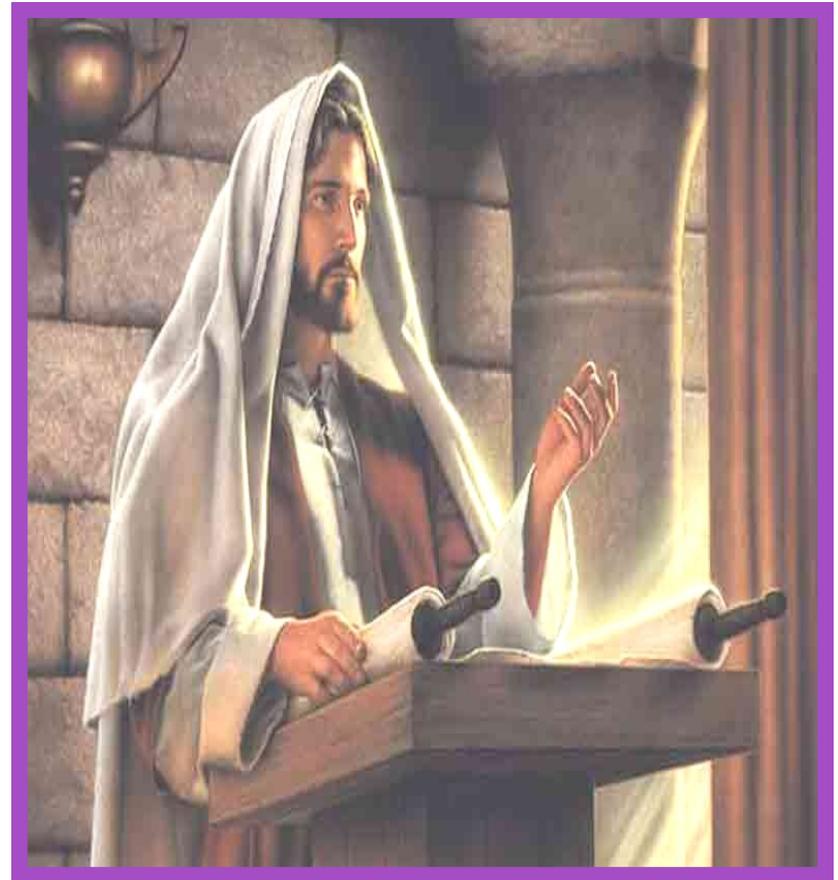
For which reason also was it that the Apostles spread their garments before the path of Christ, anticipating the honor shown to the preaching of the Gospel. In divine Scriptures garments frequently symbolize deeds showing power or moral excellence... It was not for pleasure the Lord of the world was borne a public spectacle upon the back of an ass, but that He might by the Mystery within Him caparison (cloth over an animal) the inner chambers of our soul, and as a Mystic Rider occupy an interior seat in the depths of our hearts, penetrating there as it were by a certain substance of His divinity, guiding the steps of the soul, restraining the wantonness of the flesh, so that made gentle by the hand of kindness He might then wholly rule in the hearts of the Gentiles.

Happy they who have welcomed this Rider in their inmost heart! Happy they whose mouth the reins of the heavenly Word hold fast, so that it may not be loosened by a multitude of words... For He has said of this rein: *And for me, that speech may be given to me, that I may open my mouth with confidence* (Eph. vi. 19)... Speech is the rein, and the goad. He has taught us to open our heart, to endure the goad, to bear the yoke, and to put up with restraint of others loquacity. Rarer is the power of silence than that of speech; Who opened not His mouth against betrayal nor refused the stripes, so that God may find prepared in us a fitting resting-place. Amen.



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**SERMON ON
THE COLT A FIGURE OF THE GENTILES
FROM THE FATHER'S OF THE CHURCH
148 - 2**



JESUS, OUR FIRST PREACHER!

PALM SUNDAY

Based on the Divine Office-Douay-Rheims Version

Volume 2 - Pages 1082 - 1083 (1962 edition)

Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew 21: 1-9

by: Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor

Strikingly does the Lord go up to the Temple; for having turned from the Jews He will now abide in the hearts of the Gentiles. For that temple is the true one in which the Lord is adored, not in the letter but in the spirit. That is the temple of God which is based on the truths of the Christian faith, not on a structure of stone. Accordingly they who hate Him are passed by; and they who will love Him are preferred before them.

He comes to the Mount of Olives, that by His heavenly strength He may plant the *young olives, whose mother is that Jerusalem, which is above* (Gal. iv. 26). Upon this mountain He is the heavenly husbandman; so that all who are planted in the House of God may one by one declare: *But I, as a fruitful olive tree in the house of God, have hoped in the mercy of God for ever* (Ps. li. 10).

Perhaps Christ is Himself the mountain. Who other than He could bring forth such fruitful olive trees; not such as bend under the weight of their fruit, but those which by the fullness of the Spirit abound with Gentiles? He it is by Whom we go up, and to Whom we ascend. He is the Door, He is the Way; Who is opened, and Who opens; on which they must knock who are to enter, and Who is adored by those that are found worthy.

He was in a village, and a colt was tied there and an ass; it could not be loosed save by the command of the Lord. An apostolic hand loosed it. Such was the means, such the life, such the grace. Be you of such a kind: that you also may loose those that are bound.

Let us ponder who they were, who, discovered in sin, were cast out of paradise, and banished to a village. See how Life recalls those whom death had driven forth. So we read, according to Matthew, *an ass and a colt*, so that as in the person of two human beings each sex was driven out, in the two animals either sex is recalled. Consequently in the mother ass we have a figure of Eve who erred; in the colt a

figure of the people of the gentiles. He is seated on the colt of the ass; and rightly, *on which no man ever hath sitten*: because no man before Christ had called the people of the Gentiles into the Church. Mark too has the same: *Upon which no man yet hath sat*. It was however held fast tied by the bonds of unbelief, in bondage to an evil master, enslaved by falsehood: but he had no just claim to dominion whom guilt, not nature, had made master. Because of this when Lord is said, One only is held true Lord: for there are many gods and many lords; but for us there is but One Lord and One God. Though He is not named as Lord, yet is it indicated, not by conjunction of a person, but through community of nature.

Mark introduces the beast as, *bound before the gate without*: for whosoever is outside of Christ is without in the way; but he that is in Christ is not outside in the way. *In the meeting of two ways*, he adds, where he is the certain possession of no one; and there is no stall, no roof, no manger. Unhappy the servitude with none but uncertain rights: for he that has no master will have many. Strangers will tie him fast, to make him theirs. Another frees him, that he may keep him for himself; so He makes acquaintance with harsher gifts than fetters.

It was not without design that two Disciples are sent: Peter to Cornelius, Paul to the rest (Acts x. 23; xiii. 2). Though the persons sent are not named, only the number of them is made known. Should you ask of anyone were sent by name, let him think of Philip, whom the Spirit sent to Gaza on the occasion of his baptizing the eunuch of Queen Candace, and who sowed the word of God from Azoto *through all the cities unto Caesarea* (Acts viii. 26, 40).

Nor should we fail to note that He declared that they would then return: for they had to be formed in soul who would preach the Lord Jesus to every nation. They who accordingly were sent, did they, while freeing the colt, speak in their own name? Far from it; they said only what the Lord had told them; that you may learn that the faith is spread among the nations of the Gentiles, not through your eloquence, but by the