

Mark 11:1-11

**When they were approaching Jerusalem,  
at Bethphage and Bethany,  
near the Mount of Olives,  
he sent two of his disciples and said to them,**

**‘Go into the village ahead of you, and immediately as you enter it,  
you will find tied there a colt that has never been ridden;  
untie it and bring it.**

**If anyone says to you, “why are you doing this?” just say this,  
“The Lord needs it and will send it back here immediately.”’**

**They went away and found a colt tied near a door, outside in the street.**

**As they were untying it, some of the bystanders said to them**

**‘What are you doing, untying the colt?’**

**They told them what Jesus had said; and they allowed them to take it.**

**Then they brought the colt to Jesus and threw their cloaks on it;**

**and he sat on it. Many people spread their cloaks on the road,**

**and others spread leafy branches that they had cut in the fields.**

**Then those who went ahead and those who followed were shouting,**

**‘Hosanna!**

**Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!**

**Blessed is the coming kingdom of our ancestor David!**

**Hosanna in the highest heaven!’**

**Then he entered Jerusalem and went into the temple;**

**and when he had looked around at everything,**

**as it was already late, he went out to Bethany with the twelve.”**

**Meditation**

**It has begun...**

**Today we hear of his entry into Jerusalem riding a young colt.**

**His followers exuberant with expectations of freedom  
and a new life free from Roman oppression.**

**His followers: women, children and men line the streets waving palms  
celebrating the return of the Messiah...**

**the return of the Son of David sent to set their people free..**

**celebrating the return of the great state of Israel to its rightful place in the ordering of  
nations...or so they thought.**

**and as we have talked about before...at the very same time,  
the Roman legions had also arrived...**

**marching in the other side of the ancient walled city of Jerusalem.**

**They too came with an air of expectancy...**

**expecting to set the matter straight...once and for all**

**expecting to use their mighty force to keep the people in line...**

**expecting to move in quickly, to enforce efficiently and to return home  
with hardly a scratch on their shield to show for their efforts...**

**Much happens in the last week of Jesus' earthly life...**

**events are picking up steam.**

**He gets into more debates and arguments with the Temple authorities**

**the chief priests and scribes are getting more and more angry**

**and they increase their vigilance trying to find ways entrap him and**

**reasons to arrest him without inciting his followers to defend him...**

**none the less Jesus' destiny seems to be in place...**

**Historians and biblical scholars alike believe that Jesus must have known the danger he was in...  
He would have been aware of how offensive his actions and his teachings were to the leaders of both Rome and the Temple...  
He would be very aware that crucifixion awaited him...unless...  
unless he changed his story,  
unless he apologized for what he said...  
unless he was willing to say that he was wrong about God's unconditional love, unlimited compassion and mercy without boundaries....**

**But he couldn't...he wouldn't do that.**

**Jesus knew to depth of his soul  
the beauty and the love of his Abba Father...  
not only for himself but for all people  
and rather than deny any of that...  
he willingly went to his death.**

**The ancient Jews who lined the street of his return waving Palms so high  
didn't understand what was really going on.**

**They had hopes for a new life and a new nation...**

**You can't blame them...it was what had always been taught...**

**The ancient Romans didn't understand either...**

**they thought they were only fighting rag tag Jewish peasants...**

**And what about Jesus?**

**Even though he was aware of the consequences that lay ahead of him...did he really understand the full scope of his life and mission at that time?**

**Do any of us fully understand the meaning of our trials and struggles  
as we go through our lives?**

**If we believe that Jesus was fully human, which we claim as Christians,  
then the answer must be that he did not...**

**But the fact that he couldn't foresee past his crucifixion,  
for me at least, is even a more powerful inspiration  
than if Jesus was only a divine being disguised as a human being  
and thus having full knowledge of his Resurrection.**

**A lot of Christians want to and do believe Jesus  
knew everything about everything.**

**They want to and do, believe that he was fully in control  
and that he knew that he would rise from the dead...**

**But I can't blame folks for wanting to believe that...**

**that belief certainly offers a lot of security...**

**which reduces anxiety and uncertainty**

**But that kind of thinking was a declared a heresy way back before the 3<sup>rd</sup>. Century.**

**(Docetism affirmed as heresy at the Council of Nicea in 325)**

**But human beings aren't like that.**

**If Jesus did know everything, then he wasn't really human.**

**If he wasn't really human then everything that he went through**

**really wouldn't have any meaning, or purpose for us.**

**Because ...well...**

**he could do all that because he was God.**

**But hey! we are just human...**

**we can't be expected to be that committed to Truth...**

**So...it's ok if we take the easy way out...**

**But if Jesus didn't know the end of the story...**

**If he didn't anticipate his Resurrection from the dead...**

**Then what gave him the strength to hold true to his experience of his God?**

**Did he just have a lot of will power?**

**Was he simply a very courageous man?**

**Or was there something more?**

**Did he tap into something more than his human will or courage...**

**Was there some other presence, some power, some grace  
available to him?**

**My answer is yes!**

**I believe that that 'something' was his deep knowing**

**was that the Kingdom of Heaven...**

**the Presence of God was within...not without.**

**Look inside he would tell the people!**

**Don't look for signs here or there...**

**but look for the presence of the Mystery of God within...**

**and when you open yourself to it**

**you too will find the Power to heal and feed and comfort...**

**you too will find the Power, the strength, the courage**

**to bear the consequences of Truth...**

**The power of this next week before our celebration of Easter**

**lies in his ability to open himself to the Presence of God**

**the Mystery of Grace**

**the Power of Love that is embedded deep within all of us...**

**all of creation.**

**His belief was so real and so certain that it sustained him**

**throughout the trials ahead of him.**

**And so it can be for us...**

**Whatever we are going through...**

**Whatever we are facing now and will face in the future**

**we can do so with grace and courage and love**

**because of the Power of God that resides in us too.**

**That is the powerful Truth that he gave his life.**

**But Truth, this Truth, does not force us to believe it...**

**We must be open.**

**We must be willing.**

**We must make an conscious and intentional turning towards this Mysterious  
powerful Grace and say: "yes"**

**We must trust his words and his example...and of course, that is the meaning of faith.**

**We must not let the powers of this world frighten us into believing that we are not practical  
or realistic...**

**It is they who are living in an ego driven fantasy...**

**We have been shown the way.**

**We have been given the light...**

**We have been asked to:**

**To act justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.**

**and this will lead to Life for ourselves and all of creation.**

**It is as simple, as difficult and as a profound as that.**

**Yes...it has begun...but I'm not talking about his life lived 2,000 years ago...**

**but about our lives beginning anew right here, right now.**

**Do you know what you believe?**

**What is your conviction that will hold you and guide you?**

**Are you willing to say 'yes' to Truth?**

**amen.**