

A Study of Matthew 21

I. Outline.

1. Jesus' Triumphal Entry to Jerusalem (Matthew 21.1-11; cf., Mark 11.1-11; Lk 19.28-38; John 12.12-19).
2. Cleansing the Temple (Mt 21.12-17; cf., Mk 11.15-19; Lk 19.45-48).
3. Jesus Curses the Fig Tree (Mt 21.18-22; cf., Mk 11.12-14, 20-24).
4. Jesus' Authority Questions (Mt 21.23-27; cf., Mk 11.27-33; Lk 20.1-8)
5. PARABLE of Two Sons (Mt 21.28-32).
6. PARABLE of the Wicked Husbandmen (Mt 21.33-46; cf., Mk 12.1-12; Lk 20.9-19).

II. Summary.

In this cleansing of the Temple for the second time—He had done the same at the outset of His ministry—the Lord revealed His conception of the secret of all civic righteousness and strength. He revealed for all time the laws of civic purity. He came to His city and His Temple; which He cleansed so that the very sources of the streams of influence being pure the streams must become pure. The cursing of the fig tree was the only miracle of judgment that Jesus wrought, and the principal force of it is not direct, but parabolic. He had a perfect right to make what use He chose of the creations of His own power to teach His lessons. We now come to the beginning of the last conflict. The chief priests and challenged His authority. He met their question with another. He had been baptized by John, and at that baptism had received the anointing of authority for public ministry. Now He asks them what was the authority for John's baptism. They could not say, "Of men," for they were cowards. They would not say, "Of heaven," for they were hypocrites. So, with a calm dignity, conscious of the fact that He had already answered them, He refuses to enter further into the question of authority. Our Lord now exercised his authority by speaking in their hearing authoritative parables directly applicable to them, as they themselves discovered.

--G. Campbell Morgan, *Exposition on Bible*, an e-Sword Module

III. Chronology.

BIBLE PERIOD: The Period of the Christ.

If you are not familiar with the 15 Bible Periods, please click here:

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"In these final chapters of Matthew, Jesus was on a mission. He was set. The opposition had set up roadblock after roadblock, and Jesus simply drove through them. He refused to be a victim. He insisted on being what he was—the king himself, directing the entire operation up to and including his own sacrifice. It was time to march on Jerusalem. In Matthew 21-22 Jesus stepped into 'War Zone D' in the capital city" [Weber, Stu; Anders, Max. *Holman New Testament Commentary - Matthew: 1* (p. 335). B&H Publishing. Kindle Edition].

"Matthew gives little note to the time, other records give more to the time. We now come to the events of the last week of his earthly ministry and to his last visit to Jerusalem. The events of this last week are of such importance that they are carefully noted. They begin with the first day of the week (our Sunday). Jesus had spent the Sabbath (our Saturday) at Bethany, at the house of Lazarus

(John 12.9), and now approaches Jerusalem; Matthew relates the events of this first day as far as verse seventeen of this chapter. The events to verse twenty with the cursing of the fig tree occurred on the second day, or Monday; from thence to chapter twenty-six Matthew relates what occurred on the third day, or Tuesday. John 10 to 12.12 records some events which Matthew omits. It was now five days before the Passover, the tenth of the month (Ex 12.3), the day on which the Passover lambs were driven into the city to be kept there until Thursday. The true Lamb of God chooses this day for his entrance” [H. Leo Boles, *A Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew*, Gospel Advocate, 1952, p. 409].

IV. Aids in Exposition.

Matthew 21.1... WERE COMING TO BETHPHAGE, UNTO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES—“Olives elaiā (1636), denotes (a) ‘an olive tree,’ Rom. 11:17, 24; Rev. 11:4 (plural); the Mount of Olives was so called from the numerous olive trees there, and indicates the importance attached to such; the Mount is mentioned in the NT in connection only with the Lord’s life on earth, Matt. 21:1; 24:3; 26:30; Mark 11:1; 13:3; 14:26; Luke 19:37; 22:39; John 8:1; (b) ‘an olive,’ Jas. 3:12, RV (KJV, ‘olive berries’)” [*Vine’s New Testament Word Pictures* (2 vols), an Olive Tree Module].

Matthew 21.2... GO INTO THE VILLAGE OVER AGAINST YOU, AND STRAIGHTWAY YE SHALL FIND AN ASS TIED, AND A COLT WITH HER: LOOSE THEM, AND BRING THEM UNTO ME—“Many of the prophecies concerning Christ were fulfilled by his enemies; some were fulfilled by his friends; and still others, like the one here, were fulfilled by the direct intervention of Christ himself to bring it to pass. But even in such cases where the Lord himself was the instrument of fulfilling the prophecies, he always accomplished the fulfillment in such a manner that no mere man could have done it. Jesus’ pre-knowledge of exactly what the disciples would find in the village is an example” [Burton Coffman Online, <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/bcc/matthew-21.html> Visited: 160623]. ||||| “Jesus and those traveling with Him were getting close to Jerusalem, and Jesus knew how He would enter the city. After all the previous avoidance of publicity, it was now time for Jesus to enter the city in accordance with His true identity. Only a royal procession would suffice, and yet most of the trappings of royalty would be conspicuously absent. Jesus had it all planned beforehand, and He instructed the disciples on what to do. Two of them went into the village of Bethphage (just outside of Jerusalem on the slope of the Mount of Olives), took an ass and her colt from the place where they were tied, and brought them to Jesus” [Tim Ayers, “Jesus Enters Jerusalem in Triumph; Cleanses the Temple,” in *Studies in Matthew*, Editor: Dub McClish, 1995 ADL, p. 142]. ||||| “Hobbs points out that the so-called ‘Triumphal Entry’ ‘carries none of the meaning contained in those words. To the contrary, it was the very opposite. In antiquity, a triumphal entry was the occasion when a King or General returned from a victorious war, usually riding upon a white horse as a symbol of victory, followed by prisoners and trophies of victory in his train. If we would see Jesus’ ‘Triumphal Entry’ we must read Ephesians 4.8 where Paul describes His victorious return to heaven. His entrance was not a ‘triumphal entry’ but ‘the royal entry’ of one who came as the Prince of peace” [Kenneth L. Chumbley, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 1999, p. 366].

Matthew 21.4... ALL THIS WAS DONE, THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET, SAYING—“The use of a donkey was significant for two reasons. First, it symbolized royalty (2 Samuel 18.9; 19.27; 1 Kgs 1.33-44); second, as a beast of burden it signified humility... .. ‘Any prudent person in the circumstances of Jesus would have tried to slip into the

city unseen; the last thing he would have tried to do would have been to court publicity. But Jesus entered Jerusalem in a way that was designed to focus every eye upon him' (Barclay, *By What Authority*, p 87)" [Kenneth L. Chumbley, p. 368].

Matthew 21.7... AND BROUGHT THE ASS, AND THE COLT, AND PUT ON THEM THEIR CLOTHES, AND THEY SET HIM THEREON—"The reason for the use of two animals is not clear, unless it was Jesus' strict attention to the prophecy which mentioned both the ass and the foal. He gave the proud Pharisees no excuse for not recognizing the fulfillment of Zechariah's prophecy. Often in Matthew is added the second element in the Master's deeds. Thus, he mentions two blind men instead of only one (Matthew 20:30), and two demoniacs (Matthew 8:28ff). The use of the disciples' garments was practical as well as symbolical" [Burton Coffman]. ||||| "Matthew speaks of both the ass and her colt being brought; Mark and Luke speak only of the colt, while John says he rode on a young ass (Jn 12.14). Matthew supplies an additional detail but does not say which of the animals Jesus rode Evidently both animals were together for the short trip, but Jesus rode on the colt" [Bob Winton, *Book of Matthew*, p. 249].

Matthew 21.8... A VERY GREAT MULTITUDE SPREAD THEIR GARMENTS IN THE WAY; OTHERS CUT DOWN BRANCHES FROM THE TREES, AND STRAWED THEM IN THE WAY—"At the Feast of Tabernacles the people carried branches in their hands, chanting sentences from the Messianic Psalms (Psalms 118.25-26). This was their way of expressing their desire for the coming of the Messiah (Lev 23.40). The multitude now by this act expressed their belief that Jesus was the Messiah. John tells us that the branches of the trees were of the palm trees (Jn 12.13). The long branches of the palm tree were strictly used during the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23.40). The people dwelt during this feast under booths or tabernacles; there may be a reference to this when John says, 'The Word became flesh, and dwelt' or tabernacled 'among us' (John 1.14)" [H. Leo Boles, p. 412].

Matthew 21.11... THIS IS JESUS THE PROPHET OF NAZARETH OF GALILEE—"There can be no surprise that ignorant people should provide such a grossly limited evaluation of our Lord, i.e. was He no more to them than merely *the prophet*?! Our surprise arises, rather, from the fact that Matthew himself just leaves this answer uncorrected on the lips of the crowds. Is not Jesus so much more?! But, argues Matthew, let men ponder the glorious truth that, after 400 years of Heaven's silence in which no true prophet ever arose in Israel, God has finally sent to His people, not only John the Baptist, but *THE Prophet*" [Harold Fowler, Bible Study Textbook Series, College Press, An e-Sword Module]. ||||| THE PROPHET, being that prophet Moses spoke about that Israel was to listen to (cf., Deut 18.15; Acts 3.22-23). ||||| "The whole city was stirred; the multitude filled the city with their cries of gladness; the rulers were filled with rage and envy. No wonder the Lord's enemies said on this occasion, "The world is gone after him" (John 12:19). Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this experience is the great change of heart the populace had within the next few days: today they gave him a king's welcome; before the week was out they were calling for his crucifixion! This change was effected by the devious work of the religious leaders who manipulated the people to work up a frenzy of hatred toward Christ. False teachers are powerful in ability to deceive and destroy; their power is not to be underestimated" [Bob Winton, p. 250].

Matthew 21.12... JESUS WENT INTO THE TEMPLE OF GOD, AND CAST OUT ALL THEM THAT SOLD AND BOUGHT IN THE TEMPLE, AND OVERTHREW THE TABLES OF THE MONEYCHANGERS, AND THE SEATS OF THEM THAT SOLD DOVES—"This is the second time Jesus cleansed the temple, the first being at

the beginning of His ministry (John 2:13-17). That first time He remarked that the money changers and animal merchants had turned the temple into a "house of merchandise." This time His accusation was stronger in saying that they had made it "a den of thieves" (Matt. 21:13). The next verse shows a striking contrast in that Jesus was healing the blind and lame, and doing it without charge" [Tim Ayers, p. 143].

Matthew 21.13... MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED THE HOUSE OF PRAYER; BUT YE HAVE MADE IT A DEN OF THIEVES—"Nothing could sting the holders of religious power more than this public accusation that exposed them as flagrant violators of the very Word of God of which they claimed to be the only authorized defenders and interpreters. Worse yet, even outsiders—the non-Jews—knew that this area of the temple had been designed by God as a quiet, orderly place for their prayers, but that it had been sabotaged! (Study 1 Kgs 8:29 f., 1 Kgs 8:33, esp. 1 Kgs 8:41-43; Ps 27:4; Ps 65:4). The avaricious and corrupt high priestly family stood before God and man as guilty of gross violation of God's original intent behind the temple's original function" [Harold Fowler].

Matthew 21.15... THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND SCRIBES SAW THE WONDERFUL THINGS THAT HE DID, AND THE CHILDREN CRYING IN THE TEMPLE, AND SAYING, HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID; THEY WERE SORE DISPLEASED—"These chief priests and scribes seem to be astonished that Jesus, a meek Galilean, should allow them to proclaim his praises as the Messiah. Jesus stood in their midst meek and lowly, only seeking to do good and to heal the diseases of body and soul; he received the praises of the multitude, but showed no signs of any intention of seizing the supreme power and setting the Jews free from the Romans, but now of the perfect praise, praise which came from the purity and innocence of the hearts of the children, Jesus said, in reply to the Pharisees when they rebuked the multitude, **'I tell you that if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out'** (Luke 19:40)" [H. Leo Boles, pp. 415-416].

Matthew 21.16... YEA; HAVE YE NEVER READ, OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND SUCKLINGS THOU HAST PERFECTED PRAISE?—"...instead of agreeing with them, Jesus endorses the children—what they were saying needed to be said. **'Have ye never read'** implies that if these scholars knew the Scriptures they would have seen Psalm 8.2 reflected in the children's cries. 'If grown men would not respond, God "will perfect praise" for Himself' out of the mouths of little children and babies' (Vos, 146). At every step of the way—including His entry into Jerusalem, cleansing the temple, healing the sick, and accepting praise—Jesus' actions stamped Him as the Christ" [Kenneth L. Chumbley, pp. 372-373].

Matthew 21.17... AND HE LEFT THEM, AND WENT OUT OF THE CITY INTO BETHANY; AND HE LODGED THERE—"When Jesus leaves the temple he heads out of Jerusalem to the town of Bethany to spend the night. It is presumed that he would have stayed with Mary, Martha, and Lazarus, but we are not specifically told" [Adam Cozort, *You Shall Call His Name Jesus: A Guide to Matthew*, Kindle Edition, loc2402].

Matthew 21.17-19... LET NO FRUIT GROW ON THEE HENCEFORWARD FOR EVER—"In this section we find the only miracle of judgment that Jesus ever performed. He was traveling from Bethany (where He had spent the night, Matt. 21:17) to Jerusalem, and on the way saw a fig tree with leaves. Being hungry, He checked for figs but found none; so He cursed the tree (Matt. 21:18-19). Mark noted: **"And his disciples heard it"** (Mark 11:14). Matthew gave no details on the time, but from the parallel accounts we know that it was the next morning when the disciples saw the fulfillment of the curse. Some object to these actions of Jesus, but let us note first that as

Deity He has the right to do what He wishes with His creation, consistent with His will. Second, perhaps one reason the fig tree was cursed was that it was a hypocrite -- indicating it had fruit by the leaves but having none. The main reason He cursed the tree, of course, is indicated in the context: Jesus wanted to teach His disciples about faith” [Tim Ayers, p. 144]. ||||| “The Lord had related a parable in Luke 13:6-9 about a certain man who had a fig tree in his vineyard which produced no fruit. He ordered that it be cut down since it had borne no fruit for three seasons. His vine-dresser asked that he be allowed to dig around it, and dung it, and if it then did not produce, to cut it down. This parable was given immediately following the exchange recorded in the first five verses of the chapter, in which the Lord showed that all would perish unless they repented. The nonproducing fig tree in this parable describes those people in the context who were guilty of sin but would not repent. Vineyard and fig tree illustrations were often used to teach spiritual lessons to Israel (Isa. 5:1ff; 28:1ff; 42:1-4; 61:1-3; Matt. 11:15-21; Luke 13:1-9; Matt. 21:18-22)” [Bob Winton, p. 253].

Matthew 21.21... IF YE HAVE FAITH, AND DOUBT NOT, YE SHALL NOT ONLY DO THIS WHICH IS DONE TO THE FIG TREE, BUT ALSO IF YE SHALL SAY UNTO THIS MOUNTAIN, BE THOU REMOVED, AND BE THOU CAST INTO THE SEA: IT SHALL BE DONE—“The statements Jesus made concerning faith and prayer in these verses must be understood in light of the miraculous age in which the Lord and His apostles lived, the power and authority that was to be given to the apostles, and the general Biblical teaching on prayer. If the cause of Christ could be furthered in no other way but for a mountain literally to be moved, then certainly the power of God would be able to do it; but it would seem more likely that Jesus was using hyperbole here as He did at other times (e.g., Matt. 19:24). He was saying that the apostles, if they had a strong faith, would have the power of God to do whatever needed to be done to accomplish their mission of preaching the gospel. The promise of receiving whatever they asked in prayer is no assurance of our receiving anything contrary to God's will (cf. 1 John 3:22; 5:14)” [Tim Ayers, p. 144].

Matthew 21.23... BY WHAT AUTHORITY DOEST THOU THESE THINGS? AND WHO GAVE THEE THIS AUTHORITY?—“For the third time in as many days Christ visits the temple. While engaged in teaching and preaching (Lk 20.1), a delegation of chief priests (Sadducees, 2.4) and elders (eminent laymen who were probably members of the Sanhedrin, 15.2; 26.3-5) challenge His right ('authority,' *exousia*, the right to say or do) to act as He did the day before (vv. 12-16). This wasn't the first time Jesus' authority had been questioned (9.33-34; 12.23-24, 38; 16.1), but this time was especially 'ominous, since it is posed by those who will constitute the court that will sentence Him to death (see 26.3, 47; 27.1)' (Hare, 245)” [Kenneth L. Chumbley, p. 376].

Matthew 21.24... I ALSO WILL ASK YOU ONE THING, WHICH IF YE TELL ME, I IN LIKE WISE WILL TELL YOU BY WHAT AUTHORITY I DO THESE THINGS—“Jesus never disagreed with their right to ask the question, and, in a sense, answered them when He responded with a question for them (Matt. 21:24-25a). He asked about the baptism of John, by which He meant all of John's ministry which was characterized by 'the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins' (Mark 1:4). Jesus had been baptized by John, after which the Holy Spirit had descended on Him and the Father's approval had been spoken (Matt. 3:13-17). So, in a sense, Jesus was tying the two together -- His authority came from the same source as John's. If they could answer His question, then they would have already answered their own” [Tim Ayers, p. 144].

Matthew 21.27... AND THEY ANSWERED JESUS, AND SAID, WE CANNOT TELL, AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, NEITHER TELL I YOU BY WHAT AUTHORITY I DO THESE THINGS—“Their answer was: 'We cannot tell.'”

Those who love truth will recognize it and accept it. Those who have pleasure in their own wisdom, or in a system they love, or in unrighteousness, will try to escape the truth in some manner. Some will design some argument against it, which will always be contradictory to some other truth; some will change their arguments to suit the changing situations even though the latter positions contradict what they formerly affirmed; and some will try to plead ignorance. This is seen often when the truth on baptism, the identity of the church, the kind of music God has ordained for worship, faith, unity, etc., is presented. Cf Matthew 13:13-16; Mark 3:1-6; John 5:45-47; 8:43-45; 9:39-41; Acts 13:44-51). They answered by saying that they did not know. This is a foolish position, for these were learned men; the common people who had little or no education could see that John was a prophet, but these of the educated elite did not know! Actually, they pleaded ignorance as the only "out" they could see; but their answer showed either they were stupid or ignorant, or else they were hypocrites. They were neither stupid nor ignorant! They could not tell because they would not tell. Having exposed their hypocrisy, Jesus saw no need to answer their question. He had demonstrated his identity many times by his miracles, which also revealed his source of authority; but they had refused to accept that positive, absolute proof. They could not disprove or logically deny his miracles; and his miracles proved his claims to be true. These men were not sincere in their question; they were trying to find fault with Christ, and to discover some basis on which to nullify his influence. Thus the Lord refused to give them an answer. Cf. Matthew 12:1-30" [Bob Winton, p. 256].

Matthew 21.28... A CERTAIN MAN HAD TWO SONS—“**But what think ye?** Although Jesus had honorably and effectively bested His challengers psychologically, He is not satisfied to let them leave without help. Before they disperse, He presses them for further, possibly life-changing, decisions. **What think ye?** is His engaging way of eliciting their opinion. He invites them to THINK about a story that apparently has nothing to do either with their frustration and dishonorable failure in the face of His dilemma or with His consequent refusal to submit to their pretended authority. This masterful approach defuses the tension by concentrating their attention on an interesting illustration. (Cf. **Mt 7:25; Mt 18:12; Mt 22:42.**) The well-turned story has special value especially because of its decision-demanding question at the end. The Scripture records other highly effective illustrations built on his pattern (**2 Sam 12:1-13; 2 Sam 14:1-24; 1 Kgs 20:35-43; cf. Mt 21:33-45**)” [Harold Fowler]. ||||| “Jesus now exposes the hearts of his enemies by a series of parables; in them he lays bare the evil thoughts which they had against him at this time. They had fully determined to destroy him, and had set themselves in opposition to the common people (John 7.49)” [H. Leo Boles, p. 420]. ||||| “The parable, in the context in which it was related, describes the religious and civil leaders in Israel (the 2nd son), and the publicans and harlots (the 1st son). In a broader sense, it can also picture Jews and Gentiles” [Bob Winton, p. 256]. ||||| “**THE FATHER'S INVITATION: ‘Son, Go work today in the vineyard,’** is a marvel of tenderness and reasonableness. It is **IMPARTIAL**, being addressed to both alike; it is loving and tender, being prefaced by a term of endearment, “**Son.**” It is **REASONABLE**, since nothing could be more proper than for a son to work in the vineyard he himself may inherit; it is **SPECIFIC**, not any vineyard, but **THE** vineyard being indicated; it is **URGENT**, work being required not tomorrow, but today; it is **NECESSARY**, because without work which was commanded, the vineyard would perish. All of these characteristics of the

father's command have an application today in God's command, or invitation, for men to work in his vineyard, the church" [Burton Coffman].

Matthew 21.29-30... HE ANSWERED AND SAID, I WILL NOT BUT AFTERWARD HE REPENTED, AND WENT... AND HE ANSWERED AND SAID, I GO, SIR; AND WENT NOT—"The father's two commands and the responses of the two sons are exactly parallel in terms of literary structure but exactly opposite in terms of ethics. The first son initially agrees to work but eventually does not. The second initially refuses but eventually does work. This is the first of a set of three parables that rebuke the religious leaders for their unbelief (21:28–32, 33–44; 22:1–14)" [Turner, D., & Bock, D. L. (2005). *Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, Vol 11: Matthew and Mark* (p. 272). Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers].

Matthew 21.31... WHETHER OF THEM TWAIN DID THE WILL OF HIS FATHER? THEY SAY UNTO HIM, THE FIRST ... THAT THE PUBLICANS AND THE HARLOTS GO INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD BEFORE YOU—"The chief priests and elders correctly answer: 'the first,' and in doing so condemn themselves. Jesus then makes the point that the tax collectors and prostitutes will enter the kingdom ahead of these religious leaders. These sinners heard John's preaching and believed him, changing their lives; but the religious leaders would not believe, even though they claimed to be servants of God" [Adam Cozort, loc2435-2439].

Matthew 21.33-39... HEAR ANOTHER PARABLE. THERE WAS A CERTAIN HOUSEHOLDER, WHICH PLANTED A VINEYARD—"This parable is one of the easiest to interpret. In this story Jesus proceeded from Israel's past to His and their generation, ending with a prediction of His death and the judgment of the Jewish nation. He again caused the Jewish leaders unwittingly to pronounce their own doom, although even they could not escape the force of the parable. The "**HOUSEHOLDER**," as in Matthew 20:1, is God. The vineyard He planted represents the nation of Israel. This probably brought to mind a similar parable in Isaiah 7. God had made more than adequate provisions for His people, represented by the hedge, the winepress, and the tower. The "**HUSBANDMEN**," or tenant farmers, are the leaders of the Jews, primarily the priesthood, but including other leaders. These had the responsibility of nurturing the vineyard and paying the owner in produce. The owner went into another country, leaving the vineyard to the husbandmen. 'Absentee landlordism was common in first-century Palestine.' The parable continues with the owner's repeatedly sending servants to receive his portion of the produce. These would be the prophets that God sent to His nation to bring them to righteousness and holiness (Isa. 1:11-17; Jer. 7:21ff; Hos. 4:1; 6:6; Mic. 6:8). But the husbandmen treated the servants shamefully, as did the Israelites the prophets (2 Chr. 24:21; Jer. 37:15). The owner decided '**LAST OF ALL**' to send his son, thinking that the husbandmen would surely show respect to him as his own representative (Matt. 21:37). However, those wicked men thought that if they killed the son, they would receive his inheritance, and thus the vineyard would be theirs (they were already acting as if it were theirs, Mt. 21:38). This is too clear to miss: The son is Christ, whom God sent as His final Spokesman (Heb. 1:1-2). Thus Jesus exposed the evil Jewish leaders' plot to kill Him" [Tim Ayers, p. 145].

Matthew 21.41... HE WILL MISERABLY DESTROY THOSE WICKED MEN, AND WILL LET OUT HIS VINEYARD UNTO OTHER HUSBANDMEN, WHICH SHALL RENDER HIM THE FRUITS IN THEIR SEASONS—"Their answer is clear and to the point: He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and let out his vineyard to others who will render him his due. The Lord had accomplished what he set out to

do: to get these men to see their sin by giving them a parallel case. Since they could see the sin involved in the story on the part of the husbandmen, they would be able to see their own sins. This is another case similar to that proposed by Nathan to David (2 Samuel 12)” [Bob Winton, p. 259].

Matthew 21.42... DID YE NEVER READ IN THE SCRIPTURES, THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED, THE SAME IS BECOME THE HEAD OF THE CORNER: THIS IS THE LORD’S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELLOUS IN OUR EYES?—“The parable which he had given them about the wicked husbandmen was so simple and clear that they could not misunderstand his meaning; it pictured their wicked thoughts and plots to them even better than they could have done it themselves. In the parable the son is killed, and cannot punish the husbandmen himself; but, as the Son of God he is to be raised from the dead and will inflict the punishment. The ‘rejecting the stone,’ or ‘the stone which the builders rejected,’ was done in casting out the Son and killing him; now the same Son, under the similitude of a stone, becomes the destruction of his enemies” [H. Leo Boles, p. 425].

Matthew 21.43... THE KINGDOM OF GOD SHALL BE TAKEN FROM YOU, AND GIVEN TO A NATION BRINGING FORTH THE FRUITS THEREOF—“This verse contains the application of the parable, and the key to its interpretation. The vineyard represents all of the religious privileges granted to the Jews who are the husbandmen, from the beginning of their history until the kingdom itself was offered to them by Jesus and afterward by the apostles. The prophets, from Samuel down to John, are the messengers sent to demand the fruits of righteousness; the son who was sent last is Jesus; the destruction of the husbandmen is the final destruction of the Jewish nationality; and the transfer of the vineyard to other husbandmen, the transfer of the kingdom of heaven to the Gentiles. The kingdom of heaven was chiefly Jewish before the destruction of Jerusalem, but it became, after that event, almost exclusively Gentile, both in its membership and in the predominant characteristics of its membership; and thus it was taken away from the Jews and given to a nation which would bring forth the fruits thereof” [J.W. McGarvey, *New Testament Commentary*, Vol I—Matthew and Mark, Gospel Light, p. 185f].

Matthew 21.44... AND WHOSOEVER SHALL FALL ON THIS STONE SHALL BE BROKEN: BUT ON WHOMSOEVER IT SHALL FALL, IT WILL GRIND HIM TO POWDER—“This may be a case of parallelism in which Jesus warns that those who oppose Him will be pulverized. Morgan, however, sees a difference: ‘Fall on it—and there is a touch of mercy even here—and you will be broken, but the broken man can be healed. But let it fall on you, and you will be ground to dust, and there is no healing then’” [Kenneth L. Chumbley, p. 382].

Matthew 21.45-46... THEY PERCEIVED THAT HE SPAKE OF THEM. BUT WHEN THEY SOUGHT TO LAY HANDS ON HIM, THEY FEARED THE MULTITUDE—“With a genius surpassing that of any mortal, Christ wove eternal truth into the fabric of the parables. He held the completed picture up before his enemies, as one might hold up a mirror; and at last, confronted with a likeness of themselves as plain as any photograph, they got the point! Their fury was unbounded. No longer would they seek any accommodation with him. They probably would have rushed upon him to kill him then and there, but the Master had too carefully laid the plan for that to happen. The popular support of Christ was so great that they simply dared not to touch him in front of the people. Two courses were open to them: (1) They could secretly assassinate him, or (2) they could contrive his legal condemnation and death. The Providence from on high had closed the first alternative, although they did not know it; and without doubt that would have been their favorite method of disposing of him. God’s plan called for the tribunals; and the manner in

which they found themselves maneuvered into doing it God's way is recorded in **Matthew 26:4,14** [Burton Coffman].

V. Lessons & Applications.

Matthew 21.4... **ALL THIS WAS DONE THAT IT MIGHT BE FULFILLED WHICH WAS SPOKEN BY THE**

PROPHET—“**The Importance of Prophecy.** Prophecy made and fulfilled is a vital element in the totality of evidence which God has given to show that the Bible really is his word. Deuteronomy 18.21-22... **And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.** The proof of the inspiration of the Bible could stand upon the single point of prophecy made and fulfilled. It is simply not possible that mere men (without the aid of the Holy Spirit) could have written the prophecies which were written hundreds of years before their fulfillment. The details involved demand divine inspiration as the only adequate explanation (Study 2 Peter 1.20-21; 2 Timothy 3.16-17)” [Thomas B. Warren, *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1973, p. 143].

Matthew 21.19-22... **AND WHEN HE SAW A FIG TREE IN THE WAY**—“**Topics for Discussion:** (1) Our

Lord expects us to be fruitful in every good work. There is no place in the kingdom of Christ for non-producers. The lazy, indolent, and indifferent need not entertain hope of reward in this life or that which is to come. (2) Profession may cover up in the sight of men, but God looks through the thin covering of hypocritical profession to see us as we actually are. The thought that God sees and knows us for what we actually are should sober us and move us to ever increasing activity in his work. (3) As Jesus cleansed his Father's house, so he has power and authority to drive out of his kingdom all who do not meet his approval. It is our task, by the help of his grace, to bring ourselves into harmony with his will so that we will not be a part of that which is displeasing to him” [Roy H. Lanier, Sr., *Teacher's Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1952, p. 193].

Matthew 21.28-31... **A CERTAIN MAN HAD TWO SONS**—“Jesus told the story about two sons whose father told each to go work in his vineyard. The first son acted in an ugly, churlish manner and refused to respect his father's command. **‘But afterwards he repented himself, and went.’** Jesus is not painting a complimentary portrait of either son. Which person among us is there who has not been churlish and rebellious at some time or another? The first son was a better person than he pretended to be. They each represent two classes of people with their own imperfections. The one obeyed in the end, the other never did. The joy the father would have experienced in the obedience of both sons was spoiled by the ugly attitude of the first and the complete failure of the second. The parable has a primary meaning easily understood. Jesus meant to say that the pious formalism of the Pharisees was insincere: **‘for they say, and do not’** (Mt 23.3). The Sadducees were the custodians of the temple. They were ever teaching, but never obeying. The forms of their priestly services were correct, but not their hearts. Jesus told them that the publicans and the harlots would go into the kingdom before them. The first son, after his ugly display, **‘repented himself and went.’** He changed his mind and obeyed his father. This is repentance. The fruit of repentance is seen when he did go work in the garden. Paul wrote (2 Cor 7.10), **‘For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation.’** Repentance is the change of a man's mind, produced by godly sorrow resulting in a reformation of life. Repentance is not the

ground of salvation; but it is a condition of salvation” [Thomas B. Warren, *Teacher’s Annual Lesson Commentary*, 1974, PP. 148-149].

VI. Questions.

True or False

- 01. ____ The fig tree that withered away had nothing at all on it.
- 02. ____ The PARABLE of the Two Sons was told for the benefit of the chief priests and elders of the people.
- 03. ____ The religious leaders had a certain amount of fear of the people.
- 04. ____ Prophecies of the Messiah even extended to the kind of animal He would ride into Jerusalem.
- 05. ____ When the chief priests and scribes heard the words: **HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID**, they were not pleased.

I Found it in Verse(s)

- 06. ____ Jesus refuses to answer a question immediately.
- 07. ____ Beating, killing, and stoning.
- 08. ____ Good perception from the scribes and chief priests.
- 09. ____ The multitude at Jerusalem spreading their garments in the way before Jesus.
- 10. ____ Jesus got hungry.

Short Answer

- 11. All the people believed John the Baptizer to be one:

- 12. Describe how John came:

- 13. The householder’s confidence about how his son would be treated:

- 14. What was to be done if someone objected to the disciples taking the donkey:

- 15. The only town of Galilee mentioned in this chapter:

Each Question is worth 7 Points

My Score is: _____

Answers will be found on next week's handout

ANSWERS to Matthew 21 Questions... **01**—False (6-7); **02**—True (28); **03**—True (24); **04**—True (18); **05**—False (9); **06**—4; **07**—34; **08**—26; **09**—15; **10**—12; **11**—A penny a day (2); **12**—the multitude (31); **13**—Let him be your servant (27); **14**—Worshipping Him and desiring a certain thing of him (20); **15**—last unto first (8).

VII. Seek-A-Word Puzzle. The words may be backwards, diagonal, upside down, etc. See if you can find them all. The more you use the words of the Bible, the greater blessed you will be! You might be surprised at how much this little exercise will help you retain important truths. THANK YOU for the good effort you are putting forth in Bible study. -DRL

J S G S E N T H I N G B
 W E N T G L S C A M E F
 T R E E I O T E C O M E
 O B O O P R O P H E T A
 F R U I T D I V U M E R
 V I N E Y A R D S U M R
 W N S T B N P A B L P J
 S G A E E S A W A T L E
 T K I L L W R H N I E S
 O T D L I E A E D T F U
 N O T H E R B N M U D S
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|----------|---------|-----------|------------|----------|
| ANSWERED | BELIEVE | BRING | CAME | COME |
| CRIED | FEAR | FRUIT | HUSBANDMEN | JESUS |
| KILL | LORD | MARVELLED | MULTITUDE | OTHER |
| PARABLE | PROPHET | SAID | SENT | STONE |
| TELL | TEMPLE | THING | TREE | VINEYARD |
| WENT | WHEN | | | |

IX. EXTRA CREDIT FOR “SUPER” Bible Students...

Will you please consider answering these three SIMPLE questions based on the Bible text of this chapter? I will try to make use of your answers. Bring them with you next week. Tear out this last sheet from the Study Guide and be prepared to put it in a basket. I think it will be a great help to all of those in the class if you will do so. Thank you in advance for your marvelous cooperation!

W O R D: What word would you like to know more about in this chapter?

W O N D E R: I wonder what this phrase, verse, or series of verses means...

W I S H: I wish myself—or others whom I know or even don’t know—would understand this fact, principle, or concept from this chapter...