

THIS WEEK'S STUDY: 11/29-30/2021 *Matthew Chapter 21*

PLEASE NOTE WE WILL CONTINUE TO NEED A PASSCODE TO JOIN THE STUDY!

MONDAY 7 PM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

THE MONDAY NIGHT STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN CLASSROOM HS107, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 87858644763 Passcode: 087484

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TUESDAY 7 AM Bible Study - Time: 07:00 AM Pacific Time (US and Canada).

THE TUESDAY MORNING STUDY HAS RESUMED MEETING IN THE FAMILY ROOM, CCCM, AS WELL AS CONTINUING IN ZOOM!!

MEETING ID# - 85309150746 - Passcode: 715340

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Phil Twente ptwente@gmail.com cell 714 425 9221 For Audio & notes from previous studies - www.ptwente.com

OPENING PRAYER

Matthew Chapter 21

The Triumphal Entry – (vs. 1-11); Jesus Cleanses the Temple - (vs. 12-17); The Fig Tree Withered – (vs. 18-19); The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree – (vs. 20-22). Jesus' Authority Questioned – (vs. 23-27); The Parable of the Two Sons - (vs. 28-32); The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers – (vs. 33-46).

Let us turn to Matthew's gospel chapter twenty-one, a fascinating chapter, which includes three parables.

The Triumphal Entry

Mat 21:1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage (house of figs, fig house), at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

Mat 21:2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied, and a colt with her. Loose them and bring them to Me.

Mat 21:3 And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."

Mat 21:4 All this was done that it might be fulfilled (15X in Matthew, most in the Bible) **which was spoken by the prophet, saying:**

Mat 21:5 "TELL (REJOICE GREATLY) **THE DAUGHTER OF ZION, 'BEHOLD, YOUR KING IS COMING TO YOU, LOWLY (HUMBLY, MILD), AND SITTING ON A DONKEY, A COLT** (in all four gospels), **THE FOAL OF A DONKEY.'** "

- **Here again, Jesus, is showing His miraculous knowledge and understanding of things.** Jesus, exercising this divine knowledge, tells the disciples the exact corner upon which they will find this donkey tied with its colt. He told them what the owners would say. He told them how to respond and He said he will let them come. So, they went as He had commanded, and they found as He had said. They brought the donkey and the little colt to Jesus.
- **Thus, as Matthew points out, an important prophecy was fulfilled, (Zec 9:9)** "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, God had commanded the kings of Israel not to multiply horses. The kings who broke this command were miserable themselves, and scourgers to their people.
- **Jesus came to fulfill the law.** Had He, in His title of king, ridden upon a horse, it would have been a breach of a positive command of God; therefore, **He rode upon a donkey, and thus fulfilled the prophecy,** and kept the precept unbroken.
- **Not only was that prophecy fulfilled, but according to the prophecy of (Dan 9:25)** "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. Sixty-two and seven weeks, or 483 years. The commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem was given to Nehemiah, chapter two, by Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. Four hundred and eighty-three years later, corresponds to this time where we are now in *Matthew 21*.
- **Sir Robert Anderson in his book, *The Coming Prince*,** does a masterful job in research showing that the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem actually was given on March 14, 445 B.C. Because Daniel was prophesying during the Babylonian era and they were using the Babylonian calendar of 360 days, he transposed **the 483 years of 360 day-years, which gives you 173,880 days!** That is **when Jesus made His triumphant entry, on April 6, according to the Jewish calendar, in 32 A.D.** It works out exactly mathematically to the day!
- **The Psalmist declared the coming of the Messiah also, (Psa 118:24-26)** *This is the day* the LORD has made; We will rejoice and be glad in it. [25] Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity. [26] **Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD!** We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.
- **Three important prophecies of the Old Testament.** The King is coming! He is lowly, riding on a donkey. He will come 173,880 days after the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem. They will be shouting "Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the King." And then, of course, (Psa 118:22) *The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone.* So, the rejection of Jesus according to *Psalm 118*.
- **It is interesting that when Jesus made this entry into Jerusalem,** that as He looked at the city, He wept over it. Luke's gospel tells us (Luk 19:41-44) *Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, [42] saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. [43] For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, [44] and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."* This is a special day! This is the day the Lord has made! Then He predicted the judgment and the destruction of Jerusalem that would take place by the Roman army in forty years. It, of course, did happen just as Jesus predicted, with Rome capturing Jerusalem and burning the temple in 70 AD.
- **Thus, the prophecies were fulfilled. This is a momentous day** in the history of man! Really, it is the day that Israel had looked forward to from the beginning! The day of God's promise, the day of salvation, the day the King would come, the promised Messiah! They had been looking forward to this day for hundreds of years. How tragic that when the day came, they missed it!

Mat 21:6 *So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them.*

- Note the beautiful and faithful demonstration of obedience, by the disciples! How typical is that of my behavior?

Mat 21:7 *They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them (thereon - KJV; for Jesus to sit on – NIV) .*

Mat 21:8 *And a very great multitude (only time used in NT) spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road.*

Mat 21:9 *Then the multitudes who went before and those who followed cried out, saying: "Hosanna to the Son of David! 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!' Hosanna in the highest!" (Psa 118:26) Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.*

Mat 21:10 *And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"*

- The word translated “moved” there, *seio*, which is the same Greek word from which we get our English word, “seismic, earthquake.” The whole place was moved, it was shaken. It rocked, vibrated, sideways or to and fro. They said, *Who is this?*

Mat 21:11 *So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."*

- The other gospels tell us how that the Pharisees, when they heard them shouting “Hosanna, blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,” recognizing that that was prophesied of the Messiah, they said, Lord, quiet your disciples, that is blasphemous. Jesus answered, You remember I tell you that if they would hold their peace, these stones immediately would cry out.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

Mat 21:12 *Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. (Mar 11:16) And He would not allow anyone to carry wares (skeuos – vessel, merchandise, anything) through the temple.*

- **Jesus went into the temple of God.** Jesus went into the temple, which could have been on the following day when He cursed the fig tree, that is the order that Mark has it. If all the gospels were perfectly in line, you would say, Oh, they were in collusion, they all got together and they planned it all out! Look how perfect it is. The very fact that it is not in the same order exactly shows that they were not copying each other, nor did they get together in collusion on the story. They are each of them bearing witness to the story as they recalled it and as they saw it and as they remembered it.
- **He cast out all of them...., He overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves.** There was quite a profitable little business going on in the temple precincts. They had these concessions where they sold certified animals and doves, to offer as sacrifices. When you brought a sacrifice to the temple to offer to God, the priest would examine the sacrifice to make certain there were no flaws in the sacrifice. You could not offer to God anything that was defective in any way. God did not want defective sacrifices. (**Mal 1:13b**) *you bring the stolen, the lame, and the sick; Thus, you bring an offering! Should I accept this from your hand?"* Says the LORD. God said, I do not want it!
- **The sacrifice had to be perfect!** The priest would examine the sacrifices that were brought and if they were not purchased with the little certificate, certified, banded, this has been approved by the Rabbis, they would usually reject them. They would search and they would then point out some flaw and say you cannot offer this to God. You will have to go out there and buy one of the doves out there in these concessions. You could buy a dove out on the street for just a few cents. But from these concessions, they were much more expensive. They were gouging the people who were wanting to worship God, who were wanting to offer a sacrifice to God. They were gouging them, overcharging them horrendously! It was a racket.
- **The temple would not accept offerings in Roman coinage.** They declared it was unclean. The only place you could get the temple shekel was at the moneychanger there within the temple precincts. Again, they would charge an exorbitant rate of exchange. For a dollar in Roman coinage, you get about fifty cents worth of the temple shekel. They were ripping the people off. It made Jesus angry to see them taking advantage of people who were desiring to serve the Lord and profiteering off of that desire to worship God. It angered Jesus. Anytime a person seeks to profit off of the desire of people to worship God, you can be sure that it makes Him upset! It angers Him. According to Josephus, the booths, these concessions were

owned by the family of the high priest. They had become extremely wealthy by taking advantage of the people and their spiritual desire to know and worship God.

Mat 21:13 *And He said to them, "It is written, 'MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER,' but you have made it a 'DEN OF THIEVES.'" (Isa 56:7) Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations."*

Mat 21:14 *Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.*

- **Then we see something extremely beautiful!** In the midst of these scattered tables and in the disarray as Jesus had driven out the animals that they had and all, and overturned the tables, we see that *the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple; and He healed them!*
- **This is what the temple was to be about!** This is what God desired that people could come into the temple, not be ripped off, but could be touched by God and healed by God! We see Jesus really, this is the purpose! You have made My Father's house a den of thieves. Then, as He drove them out, the purpose of the temple was fulfilled as the blind and the lame came, He healed them there in the temple! How wonderful! The contrast there, is just thrilling!

Mat 21:15 *But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying out in the temple and saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant*

- *When the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, that is, the healing of the blind and the lame, there probably was something in their heart that was drawn to that! Yet, their greed, their avarice, had so taken control, there were probably mixed emotions. They saw the wonderful things that He did.*
- *The children were calling out to Him, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David!* Salvation to the Son of David, said the little children. What a beautiful scene that must have been! Here is the Messiah. He is standing in His temple. He said, the scripture said, It is written, My house... the Messiah is now in His house. They have turned it into a den of thieves, but He has driven them out. Now, He is in the house of God, there fulfilling the purposes in healing those that were in need. The little children were saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Salvation, save now, Messiah! But when they saw this, the chief priests, and scribes, they were angry!

Mat 21:16 *and said to Him, "Do You hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'OUT OF THE MOUTH OF BABES AND NURSING INFANTS YOU HAVE PERFECTED PRAISE'?" (Psa 8:2) Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.*

- **Jesus said, Yes, I hear them! Haven't you read the scripture?** *Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants, God has perfected praise?*

Mat 21:17 *Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.*

Jesus Curses the Fig Tree

Mat 21:18 *Now in the morning, as He returned to the city, He was hungry.*

Mat 21:19 *And seeing a fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it but leaves, and said to it, "Let no fruit grow on you ever again." Immediately the fig tree withered away.*

- **There are some who find fault with Jesus for cursing this fig tree** because it had no fruit. It had leaves but no fruit. With the fig tree, they have what they call the first ripe figs. They actually appear before the leaves. They really are better than the later figs. The first ripe figs become fully ripe in June. The second crop ripens around August or so. It is interesting that the time of the year is coincident with the time of year right now, of the date of His triumphal entry, which on the Julian or Gregorian calendar, is Sunday, April 10. It was April 6 on the Julian calendar, but it was April 10 on the Jewish calendar, which means that He was crucified on the April 14, the day of Passover.
- **Fig trees, having figs, even unripe, are edible** for someone who is really hungry. If there are no figs on it, the leaves are already there, it means it is not bearing fruit. The figs should be there if it is a fruit-bearing tree.
- **Now the whole issue, as far as God is concerned, is that we bear fruit!** That is the purpose, bearing fruit! The fig tree is symbolic through the scripture of the nation of Israel. The cursing of the barren fig tree that is not bearing fruit is a symbolic action as much as anything else. Here is Israel, not bearing fruit! They are to be cursed! They are to wither and die. It was actually a picture of what was going to happen to

the nation of Israel that was not bringing forth fruit.

- **Here is the Master coming to the tree desiring fruit.** He is hungry for fruit. He finds none. He does not find it in the nation of Israel. The rest of the chapter is going to deal with the subject of the desire for fruit. How that the nation that does not bring forth fruit will be rejected. The vineyard will be given to a nation that will bring forth fruit. So, the whole part of this chapter is tied together. The fig tree that Jesus said, ***Let no fruit grow on you ever again.*** They had leaves, but no fruit. It is interesting, it is like a lot of people. There is a lot of show but there is no fruit! There is the appearance of life, but there is no fruit. There are only leaves!
- **Immediately, right while they were watching,** the fig tree just withered. Branches flipped over and the thing just died.

Mat 21:20 And when the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree wither away so soon?"

- **They marveled at the instant withering of the tree** as Jesus pronounced upon it that curse.

Mat 21:21 So Jesus answered and said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith and do not doubt, you will not only do what was done to the fig tree, but also if you say to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done.

Mat 21:22 And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

- **Whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive. What an extremely broad promise that Jesus gives to whom?** Who's He talking to? Was He talking to the multitudes? No, He was talking to His disciples. It is important to know that and to note that, because this promise that Jesus is giving is not just a broad promise to anybody concerning prayer. It is to a specific group, that is, to His disciples. What does it take to be a disciple? "If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." So, that the man who has denied himself is not going to try to use this faith to put a Mercedes in his driveway. He is not going to use this for his own enrichment, or he will be as bad as the chief priests who were using the concessions to sell the certified animals for their own enrichment.
- **This promise is only to those who have renounced the self-life, who have denied self,** have taken up the cross to follow Jesus. Oh, what power that God has given and made available to those who are fully aligned with Him! Not zealous for their own ambitions but zealous for the kingdom of God. The prophet came to Asa, (***2Ch 16:9a***) *For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.* Those who have denied themselves and have taken up their cross to follow Him. God is looking for those people that He might show Himself strong on their behalf, because their desires are for the work of God and the kingdom of God and not for self.
- **Let him deny himself and have faith in God, which means that this is the way to live!** What Jesus is saying is, The great hindrance to having faith in God is pride, which is like a mountain which fills up your whole life. All you can see is that big mountain looming before you, and that is blocking the life of God in your life. You have the power to have that removed if, when you stand and pray, you will forgive those who have offended you." That, Jesus says, "***this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' it will be done,*** for it is blocking the flow of the life of God to your faith." So, when you stand and pray, life will flow from God when you are able to recognize that you, too, need forgiveness.

The Authority of Jesus Challenged

Mat 21:23 Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"

- **When He came into the temple.** It is interesting that Jesus came right back to the temple where He had cleansed it.
- **The chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching.** He is being challenged by the religious authorities. Although they had that right to do that because they were in charge of the temple and in the charge of the worship, this is directly confrontational. They could have taken Him aside, without interrupting His teaching.
- **They said to Jesus, By what authority do you do these things?** They are challenging, Who authorized you to upset those tables and all yesterday?
- **Who gave you this authority?** By what authority do You do it? Who gave You the authority?

Mat 21:24 But Jesus answered and said to them, "I also will ask you one thing, which if you tell Me, I likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things:

Mat 21:25 *The baptism of John—where was it from? From heaven or from men?" And they reasoned among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Why then did you not believe him?'"*

Mat 21:26 *But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet."*

- **The chief priests and the elders of the people were now in a Catch 22 situation.** They were in a dilemma or difficult circumstance from which there is no escape because of the mutually conflicting or dependent conditions..

Mat 21:27 *So they answered Jesus and said, "We do not know." And He said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.*

- **He was doing it by the same authority that John was ministering!** If you will not accept John's authority, you are not going to accept the authority that I come with. They came to John. They asked him the same question. By what authority do you do this? By what authority are you baptizing all these people? Now, they are asking Jesus. If you tell Me that John's authority was from God, then I will tell you that My authority is from God.
- **They could not say that because John attested to Jesus. He testified concerning Jesus.** John said, "Behold, the Lamb of God that takes away the sins of the world." So, if they acknowledge that John's authority was from God, then they would have to acknowledge that Jesus' authority is from God because John pointed people to Jesus. (Mat 3:11a) *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry.* This is the One. This is the Lamb of God. So, when Jesus asked them the question, He was willing to tell them the authority but, if they did not recognize John's authority, they would not recognize His either. That is why He said, I will not tell you. If you do not answer My question, and then I do not answer yours!

The Parable of the Two Sons

Mat 21:28 *"But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.'*

- **He gave them two parables,** both of which, were both directed against the chief priests and the religious rulers of the people.
- **What do you think? Two sons...Work in my vineyard.** Now we are introducing the vineyard. Again, the nation of Israel, God's vineyard, let us see what Jesus is going to say in these two parables, relating to (Isaiah 5:1-7) *Now let me sing to my Well-beloved A song of my Beloved regarding His vineyard: My Well-beloved has a vineyard On a very fruitful hill. [2] He dug it up and cleared out its stones And planted it with the choicest vine. He built a tower in its midst, And also made a winepress in it; So He expected it to bring forth good grapes, But it brought forth wild grapes. [3] "And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge, please, between Me and My vineyard. [4] **What more could have been done to My vineyard That I have not done in it?** Why then, when I expected it to bring forth good grapes, Did it bring forth wild grapes? [5] And now, please let Me tell you what I will do to My vineyard: I will take away its hedge, and it shall be burned; And break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. [6] I will lay it waste; It shall not be pruned or dug, But there shall come up briers and thorns. I will also command the clouds That they rain no rain on it." [7] For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant. He looked for justice, but behold, oppression; For righteousness, but behold, a cry for help.*
- **Plainly, the vineyard is the house of Israel.** Jesus is picking up now from this analogy of Isaiah, something that they would immediately relate to. *A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go, work today in my vineyard.'*

Mat 21:29 *He answered and said, 'I will not,' but afterward he regretted it and went.*

- **After the first son thought over his initial negative response, he was sorrowful,** realizing his response was not right. So, being sorry, he went out and worked in the vineyard.

Mat 21:30 *Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, 'I go, sir,' but he did not go.*

- **The second son gave a polite and positive response!** But he did not go. This represented the conduct of the scribes and Pharisees. They professed to obey God. They observed the external rites of religion, but, in reality, they were opposed really to the kingdom of God. Now, they were plotting to put His Son to death.

Mat 21:31 *Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said to Him, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Assuredly, I say to you that tax collectors and harlots enter the kingdom of God before you.*

- **Which of the two did the will of his father?"** "They said to Him "The first." This answer was correct; but it is strange that they did not perceive that it condemned themselves.

Mat 21:32 *For John came to you in the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him; but tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.*

- **Going back to John now, what was his ministry?** Was his ministry from heaven or from man? They would not answer but Jesus is saying, well, you did not believe him. If you said it was of heaven then you did believe him, but you cannot answer that! You know you cannot; therefore, showing that you did not believe him.
- **But tax collectors and harlots believed him; and when you saw it, you did not afterward relent and believe him.** Here's John's ministry. Those who had said, No way! I will not follow God, repented at the preaching of John. They were baptized. They began to follow the Lord.
- **Here were the religious leaders that were saying, we have submitted to God.** But they have not done so! They are the second brother who said, Yes, sir, but did not do anything. So, Jesus goes back to John's ministry and there the publicans, the sinners, the harlots came out, their lives were transformed and changed, and **they were the ones who truly did the will of God.** One making a show of it. The other actually doing it. (Jas 1:22) *But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.* A lot of people agree with the Word of God. It is not just hearing and agreeing to the Word of God, it is doing the Word of God that is important! Which one did the will of the Father? The answer of course, is those who actually repented, were sorrowful, and then they went out and did work in the vineyard.

The Parable of the Tenants

Mat 21:33 *"Hear another parable: There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard and set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.*

- **Hear another parable: We got you on that one.** Now, I will give you another one. *There was a certain landowner who planted a vineyard.* Yes, we are back to Isaiah 5, in full force!
- **He set a hedge around it, dug a winepress in it and built a tower. And he leased it to vinedressers and went into a far country.** In order that he might receive the fruits of it, He put these religious leaders, the priesthood of Aaron and all, over it, in order that they might cultivate it and develop it. This was done so that they might bring forth fruit unto him as the owner, the householder,

Mat 21:34 *Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit.*

Mat 21:35 *And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another.*

Mat 21:36 *Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.*

Mat 21:37 *Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'*

Mat 21:38 *But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.'*

Mat 21:39 *So they took him and cast him out of the vineyard and killed him.*

- **The application of the parable is quite obvious.** The vineyard again is the nation of Israel. The husbandmen are those religious leaders that the Lord put over the people to cultivate the vineyard, to watch over it, to bring fruit. Those that God sent were the prophets who were persecuted, who were imprisoned, who were killed, stoned. When Stephen was facing the religious council, there in the book of Acts, he said, Which of the prophets of God has not your fathers persecuted? They rejected the prophets of God. Over and over, God sent His prophets, but they persecuted, rejected, killed, stoned, until finally God sent His Son. I will send My Son!
- **Now Jesus was a threat to the religious leaders.** They had said among themselves, do not you know we are got to get rid of this guy or we are going to lose our place. We are going to lose our position. We are going to lose our money! We have a lot invested here! We are going to lose it all if this fellow prevails. Jesus was a threat to the religious leadership of that day. So, they said, We have to kill Him. Then, we will take the inheritance. It will be ours. We can continue on in this lavish lifestyle to which we have become accustomed, as we are ripping off the people.

Mat 21:40 *"Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"*

- **But Jesus, having given them this parable, then He asked them the question, "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?"** They killed his son. They killed his other servants that he had sent to gather the fruit.

Mat 21:41 *They said to Him, "He will destroy those wicked men miserably, and lease his vineyard to other vinedressers who will render to him the fruits in their seasons."*

- **How out of their own mouths they condemned themselves!** Jesus let them, right out of their mouths, pronounce their own judgment. We are fortunate, we do not judge ourselves. You would be in big trouble. That is, if you judged yourself in the same way as you judge others. Look at David. "That man shall surely be put to death." David, you are the man!
- **If someone else is doing my sin, that is when I judge it.** I do not judge it with myself. I have a good excuse. I can rationalize my sin away. There was a reason why I did it! There was pressure and all this kind of stuff. But if you do it, that is terrible, kill him! That is awful, get rid of him! David said, Kill him. Nathan said to David, Hey, you are it though, man!
- **Here they are saying, He will get rid of those wicked servants!** The landowner will utterly, miserably destroy those wicked servants. But, Hey man, you are it! You are the wicked servants!

Mat 21:42 *Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: 'THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE. THIS WAS THE LORD'S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES' ? (Psa 118:22-23) The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone. [23] This was the LORD's doing; It is marvelous in our eyes.*

- **Which you rejected! You are the builders. You have rejected the Stone.** Throughout the Old Testament the Rock and the Stone are used as the symbols of God. He is our Rock. He is our fortress. He has lifted me out of the miry clay! He has set my feet upon a rock. He has lead me to the Rock that is higher than I! All the way through the Old Testament, you find the rock used as the symbol for God, and the stone, a symbol for Jesus Christ. Remember Jesus said, Upon this rock I will build My church. The rock, solid foundation.
- **When Moses was coming through the wilderness with the children of Israel,** came and said that we are thirsty! We do not have any water! It is arid! We are going to die of thirst if we do not get water quickly! Moses went to the Lord and said, Lord, what shall I do? The Lord said, Take your rod and smite the rock that water might come forth! Moses smote the rock. The water gushed out and the people drank, and they survived. Paul said, **(1Co 10:4b)** *For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ!*
- **Later on, you remember towards the end of the wilderness journey, again they came to Moses,** saying, we are thirsty! We are going to die of thirst! Why did we ever follow you? You did not bring us into the land anyhow. Moses was so angry with them. He went to God and said, God, they are going to kill me! I cannot take it anymore! I have had forty years of nothing but griping! I am through! I quit! God said, Moses, they are thirsty. Go out and **speak** to the rock that water might come forth. Moses went out and he said, You rebels, how long do I have to put up with you, must I smite this rock again? He **smote** the rock! The water gushed out and the people survived.
- **But God said, Moses, come here, son. What did I tell you to do? Speak to the rock.** Moses, why did you smite it? I was mad! Moses, I got some bad news for you. You cannot lead the people into the promised land! Oh, come on, Lord, that's not fair, forty years I have been putting up with the people. What do You mean? The Lord said, Do not talk to Me anymore about it, Moses, it's a done issue.
- **Because you failed to represent Me.** You see, you destroyed, Moses, the whole picture, the rock is Jesus. He was smitten once and by His being smitten, water of life flows freely to all who are thirsty and will come and drink. But you do not have to smite the rock again. All you have to do is speak to the rock and the water flows freely. Moses had just sort of upset the whole beautiful analogy that God was setting up. He blew the whole thing. It was so serious, God said, Sorry, you cannot lead them into the land of promise.
- **The law can never bring you into the full rich promised land of God.** The law can lead you to it, as a schoolmaster to bring you to Christ, but it takes Christ to bring you into the land! So, Joshua, (Jesus, Joshua), look how God set it up so perfectly! It was Joshua, the Hebrew name for the Greek name, Jesus. The law could not bring them in, **but Jesus does!** He brings us into the glorious, rich full life of the Spirit, which is something the law cannot do.
- **THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED!** Jesus said, Haven't you ever read in the scriptures, The stone, which was rejected by the builders, the same is become the chief Cornerstone? **THIS WAS THE LORD'S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES' ?**

Mat 21:43 *"Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.*

- **The kingdom of God will be taken from you.** No longer the vineyard, but the kingdom of God is going to be taken from you! It shall be *given to a nation bearing the fruits of it*. God's greatest desire is that you bring forth fruit, which He summarizes so well in John 15 to His disciples. They are to be the new husbandmen.
- **Jesus said, (Joh 15:1-8)** *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. [2] Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. [3] You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. [4] Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. [5] "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing. [6] If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw them into the fire, and they are burned. [7] If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. [8] By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so, you will be My disciples.*
- **Fruit is what the Lord wants!** He does not want fruitless life. He does not want just pretty leaves. He wants fruit! He wants fruit from your life! And what is the fruit that God is seeking? The fruit of the Spirit is love. It is manifested in joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, temperance, and meekness! That is what God is looking for -- the fruit of the Spirit! Love! When the Lord comes into His garden, to His vineyard, He wants fruit! He wants to enjoy the fruit. He wants to enjoy the love, the praise, the adoration! Let us offer unto Him the sacrifice of praise, the fruit of our lips unto God. So, He comes into His church, His vineyard, desiring and looking for fruit. May He find always that fruit that He desires as He comes and joins in our fellowship! As He is here, may our hearts just be lifted in praise and worship and adoration of our Lord May we let love just flow so that He is pleased.

Mat 21:44 *And whoever falls on this stone will be broken (soon-thlah'-o, to crush, dash together, shatter, break) but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder." (Dan 2:44) And in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed; and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. (Isa 8:14-15) He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. [15] And many among them shall stumble; They shall fall and be broken, Be snared and taken."*

- **Jesus, the stone, which the builders rejected!** If you just cast yourself on Jesus, you will be broken, the kind of breaking that He is. But if you resist Him, if He falls on you, you will be ground to powder! You are dust! You are wiped out if He falls on you. But falling on Him, that breaking, that being broken, how beautiful it is!

Mat 21:45 *Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived (ginosko, knew, absolutely) that He was speaking of them.*

- **Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables,** the light went on, they said, Uh-oh!
- **They perceived that He was speaking of them.** It really had sunk in! It really hit them! You got me!

Mat 21:46 *But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.*

- **The multitudes accepted Him as a prophet! The chief priests and Pharisees were in a dilemma!** They wanted to arrest Him, but they knew they could not do it publicly because the people, the general public were excited about Him. They were seeing the healing. They were looking at Him as a prophet. They had a real dilemma. Of course, that's where Judas comes in, telling them, I will show you where He is in a private place. You can arrest Him there, without the public and before the people even wake up and realize what is going on. You can get Him on the cross before they even find out and when they do, it will be too late. That is why the midnight trial and the early morning trial with Pilate. By nine o'clock in the morning before people really realized what was going on, Jesus was hanging on a Roman cross.
- **But here they are. They are in a dilemma as to what to do.** They wanted to arrest Him, but they were afraid to do it. This is the beginning of a face-off between Jesus and the religious rulers. It will end in chapter twenty-three with one of the most scathing denunciations upon any group of people ever uttered at any time in history as Jesus just takes them to task! So, Jesus will be dealing now in the next couple of chapters with the Pharisees and the Sadducees and these religious leaders. They will be challenging Jesus with questions, and He will be challenging them with questions. Then, He will write them off in chapter twenty-three.

KEY PRINCIPLES - Matthew Chapter 21

- **The Triumphal Entry** – This momentous day, announcing the Messiah’s entry, came and was missed by the Jewish people! We note the three prophecies being fulfilled from (*Zec 9:9*); (*Dan 9:25*) and (*Psa 118:24-26*)!
- **Jesus Cleanses the Temple** - *My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves!*
- **The Fig Tree Withered** – Jesus wants abundant fruitfulness; not just showy leaves! Is my life fruitful or just producing leaves?
- **The Lesson of the Withered Fig Tree** – If you have faith and not doubt, whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive!
- **Jesus’ Authority Questioned** – Jesus, so brilliantly, answered using the example of accepting or rejecting John the Baptist’s authority as being from God.
- **The Parable of the Two Sons** - It is what you do, not what you say, that counts! It is not what you promise to do, but what you actually do in the end! The tax collectors and harlots were like the first son, they believed in the end. The chief priests and elders were like the second son. They did not believe in the end!
- **The Parable of the Wicked Vinedressers** – Rejection of Christ through unfaithfulness in your calling, through greed and corruption will lead to your eternal destruction (ground to powder – lost!). But falling on Him, that humble breaking, that being broken, how beautiful it is – saved forever!!!
- **May I be faithful and fruitful in my life! May Christ be My CORNERSTONE!**

CLOSING SONG:

"CORNERSTONE" (MY HOPE IS BUILT ON NOTHING LESS) Hillsong (3:28)

Mat 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: **THE STONE WHICH THE BUILDERS REJECTED HAS BECOME THE CHIEF CORNERSTONE. THIS WAS THE LORD'S DOING, AND IT IS MARVELOUS IN OUR EYES** ?

My hope is built on nothing less Than Jesus' blood and righteousness I dare not trust the sweetest frame But wholly trust in Jesus' name (2X)

Christ alone; cornerstone Weak made strong in the Savior's love. Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all! When Darkness seems to hide His face I rest on His unchanging grace In every high and stormy gale My anchor holds within the veil.

Christ alone; cornerstone Weak made strong in the Savior's love Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all! He is Lord! Lord of all!

Christ alone; cornerstone Weak made strong in the Savior's love Through the storm, He is Lord! Lord of all! Lord of all!!

CLOSING PRAYER:

Assignment for next week: Read *Matthew Chapter 22*