

Matthew 21

Triumphal Entry

In the first study of Matthew we saw that the line of Jesus went back to his Jewish Ancestors

Matthew 1 v 1-16

1 The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham: 2 Abraham fathered Isaac, Isaac fathered Jacob, and Jacob fathered Judah and his brothers. 3 Judah fathered Perez and Zerah by Tamar, Perez fathered Hezron, and Hezron fathered Ram. 4 Ram fathered Amminadab, Amminadab fathered Nahshon, and Nahshon fathered Salmon. 5 Salmon fathered Boaz by Rahab, Boaz fathered Obed by Ruth, and Obed fathered Jesse. 6 Jesse fathered David the king. David fathered Solomon by her who had been the wife of Uriah. 7 Solomon fathered Rehoboam, Rehoboam fathered Abijah, and Abijah fathered Asa. 8 Asa fathered Jehoshaphat, Jehoshaphat fathered Joram, and Joram fathered Uzziah. 9 Uzziah fathered Jotham, Jotham fathered Ahaz, and Ahaz fathered Hezekiah. 10 Hezekiah fathered Manasseh, Manasseh fathered Amon, and Amon fathered Josiah. 11 Josiah fathered Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. 12 After the deportation to Babylon: Jeconiah fathered Shealtiel, and Shealtiel fathered Zerubbabel. 13 Zerubbabel fathered Abihud, Abihud fathered Eliakim, and Eliakim fathered Azor. 14 Azor fathered Zadok, Zadok fathered Achim, and Achim fathered Eliud. 15 Eliud fathered Eleazar, Eleazar fathered Matthan, and Matthan fathered Jacob. 16 Jacob fathered Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

The scripture also showed us His Kingly line from David to Joseph. **Matthew 1 v 1-6.**

This was also the fulfilment of Moses' words in **Deuteronomy** that God will bring up a Prophet from their own brothers.

Deuteronomy 18 v 15

15 "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen; to him you shall listen.

The Triumphal Entry

Matthew 21 v 1-11.

21 When they had approached Jerusalem and had come to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, Jesus then sent two disciples, 2 saying to them, "Go into the village opposite you, and immediately you will find a donkey tied there and a colt with it. Untie them and bring them to Me. 3 And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord needs them,' and he will send them on immediately." 4 Now this took place so that what was spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled: 5 "Say to the daughter of Zion, 'Behold your King is coming to you, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.'" 6 The disciples went and did just as Jesus had instructed them, 7 and brought the donkey and the colt, and laid their cloaks on them; and He sat on the cloaks. 8 Most of the crowd spread their cloaks on the road, and others were cutting branches from the trees and spreading them on the road. 9 Now the crowds going ahead of Him, and those who followed, were shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David; Blessed is the One who comes in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest!" 10 When He had entered Jerusalem, all the city was stirred, saying, "Who is this?" 11 And the crowds were saying, "This is Jesus the prophet, from Nazareth in Galilee."

A Donkey is an animal that is symbolic of humility, peace, and Davidic Royalty.

Zechariah 9 v 9.

9 Rejoice greatly, daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is righteous and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

Hosanna means Save; we pray to the Son of David. The Son of David was the name that the Jews gave to the coming King, (the Messiah) God's anointed one. The Jews did not and still do not recognise Jesus as the Messiah.

The Temple of God

Matthew 21:12-17

12 And Jesus entered the temple area and drove out all those who were selling and buying on the temple grounds, and He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. 13 And He said to them, "It is written: 'My house will be called a house of prayer'; but you are making it a den of robbers." 14 And those who were blind and those who limped came to Him in the temple area, and He healed them. 15 But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He had done, and the children who were shouting in the temple area, "Hosanna to the Son of David," they became indignant, 16 and they said to Him, "Do You hear what these children are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'From the mouths of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise for Yourself?'" 17 And He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and spent the night there.

There are two aspects to this scripture; one is the place of worship that was being abused in the Outer Court and the second the second Temple is the one that Jesus will inhabit after His death and resurrection. This first part is mentioned by the prophet Jeremiah. God is not pleased with their behaviour and threatens to *hurl you out of My sight (Jeremiah 7 v 15).*

Jeremiah 7 v 9-16

9 Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, offer sacrifices to Baal, and follow other gods that you have not known, 10 then come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, 'We are saved!'—so that you may do all these abominations? 11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight? Behold, I Myself have seen it," declares the Lord. 12 "But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I made My name dwell at the beginning, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel.

13 And now, because you have done all these things," declares the Lord, "and I spoke to you, speaking again and again, but you did not listen, and I called you but you did not answer, 14 therefore I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, just as I did to Shiloh. 15 I will hurl you out of My sight, just as I have hurled out all your brothers, all the descendants of Ephraim. 16 "As for you, do not pray for this people, and do not lift up a cry or prayer for them, and do not plead with Me; for I am not listening to you.

In the account in Matthew, Mark and John the people do not seem to have changed very much. History repeats itself and Jesus drives out the Tradesmen from the outer court which is where the Gentiles were selling their goods.

Mark 11 v 15-16

15 Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple area and began to drive out those who were selling and buying on the temple grounds, and He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; 16 and He would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple grounds.

The blind and the lame were healed after Jesus had driven out the money-makers and the children recognised who Jesus was and the chief priests and the teachers of the law didn't like it. The second aspect of the temple (not mentioned in the accounts of Matthew, Mark or John) is that the place that God will now dwell after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus is in imperfect human vessels.

Acts 17 v 22-34

22 So Paul stood in the midst of the Areopagus and said, "Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious in all respects. 23 For while I was passing through and examining the objects of your worship, I also found an altar with this inscription, 'to an unknown god.' Therefore, what you worship in ignorance, this I proclaim to you.

24 The God who made the world and everything that is in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made by hands; 25 nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things; 26 and He made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their habitation, 27 that they would seek God, if perhaps they might feel around for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; 28 for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His descendants.' 29 Therefore, since we are the descendants of God, we ought not to think that the Divine Nature is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by human skill and thought. 30 So having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now proclaiming to mankind that all people everywhere are to repent, 31 because He has set a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all people by raising Him from the dead." 32 Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some began to scoff, but others said, "We shall hear from you again concerning this." 33 So Paul went out from among them. 34 But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Paul is in Athens; he charges them with being religious in every respect, worshipping objects, dead things, altars with inscriptions 'to an unknown god. He goes on to explain that his living God does not live in temples built by human hands. So where does He live then?

1 Corinthians 3 v 16-17

16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If anyone destroys the temple of God, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.

2 Corinthians 4

4 Therefore, since we have this ministry, as we received mercy, we do not lose heart, 2 but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in trickery nor distorting the word of God, but by the open proclamation of the truth commending ourselves to every person's conscience in the sight of God. 3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they will not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 5 For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants on account of Jesus. 6 For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 7 But we have this treasure in earthen containers, so that the extraordinary greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves; 8 we are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not despairing; 9 persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed; 10 always carrying around in the body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. 11 For we who live are constantly being handed over to death because of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our mortal flesh. 12 So death works in us, but life in you. 13 But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written: "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak, 14 knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will also raise us with Jesus, and will present us with you. 15 For all things are for your sakes, so that grace, having spread to more and more people, will cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God. 16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer person is decaying, yet our inner person is being renewed day by day. 17 For our momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

This whole chapter confirms that He has put His life in us, unholy vessels, He has faith towards us and for this we should give thanks to God. **2 Corinthians 4 v 7- 10** stands out in particular.

2 Corinthians 6 v 14-18

14 Do not be mismatched with unbelievers; for what do righteousness and lawlessness share together, or what does light have in common with darkness? 15 Or what harmony does Christ have with Belial, or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? 16 Or what agreement does the temple of God have with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, "I will dwell among them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 17 Therefore, come out from their midst and be separate," says the Lord." And do not touch what is unclean; And I will welcome you. 18 And I will be a father to you, And you shall be sons and daughters to Me," Says the Lord Almighty.

Sanctified people or sanctified buildings, objects, things, silver or gold? How much of our religion is lifeless? What counts with God?

Returning to Matthew 21.

The Fig Tree Revelation

Matthew 21 v 18-22

18 Now in the early morning, when He was returning to the city, He became hungry. 19 And seeing a lone fig tree by the road, He came to it and found nothing on it except leaves alone; and He said to it, "No longer shall there ever be any fruit from you." And at once the fig tree withered. 20 Seeing this, the disciples were amazed and asked, "How did the fig tree wither all at once?" 21 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly 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 even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will happen. 22 And whatever you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive it all."

Matthews account says that the fig tree was by the road, all on its own or at best on the margin of the road. It looked healthy probably as far as its leaves were concerned. Jesus was looking for fruit, even though it was not the season for fruit.

John 15:16

16 You did not choose Me but I chose you, and appointed you that you would go and bear fruit, and that your fruit would remain, so that whatever you ask of the Father in My name He may give to you.

The fig tree event shows how powerful the word of prophecy can be. Jesus cursed the fig tree and it died. In Marks fuller account we read that the disciples were listening, perhaps at other times Jesus felt that they didn't listen? We have seen ourselves how effective words of prophecy can be when accompanied by faith towards God and obedience to what He has said.

The Question of Authority

Matthew 21 v 23-27

23 When He entered the temple area, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to Him while He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things, and who gave You this authority?" 24 But Jesus responded and said to them, "I will also ask you one question, which, if you tell Me, I will also tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 The baptism of John was from what source: from heaven or from men?" And they began considering the implications among themselves, saying, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say to us, 'Then why did you not believe him?' 26 But if we say, 'From men,' we fear the people; for they all regard John as a prophet." 27 And answering Jesus, they said, "We do not know." He also said to them, "Neither am I telling you by what authority I do these things.

The demonstrations and the teachings of Jesus brought with them criticism. It is just the same today. It didn't matter what Jesus did, it always upset the hierarchy of the church leaders of the day. He cleverly avoids the wrangling, perhaps that is what we should do too?

The authority that Jesus used was given to Him by His Father; our authority is given by the Holy Spirit of God and is in line with His word, the scriptures.

The Two Sons

Matthew 21 v 28-32

28 "But what do you think? A man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in the vineyard.' 29 But he replied, 'I do not want to.' Yet afterward he regretted it and went. 30 And the man came to his second son and said the same thing; and he replied, 'I will, sir'; and yet he did not go. 31 Which of the two did the will of his father?" They said, "The first." Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you that the tax collectors and prostitutes will get into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came to you in the way of righteousness and you did not believe him; but the tax collectors and prostitutes did believe him; and you, seeing this, did not even have second thoughts afterward so as to believe him.

It is better to say no first and then obey the Lord, than to say yes and disobey Him. The Pharisees and the Sadducees were the leaders of the churches in those days yet they refused to acknowledge Jesus, the Messiah sent by God. The tax gatherers and the prostitutes had said no to Jesus but changed their minds on seeing His works. Repentance is simply a change of mind followed by active obedience to God's word.

The Tenants

Matthew 21 v 33-41

33 "Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard and put a fence around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and he leased it to vine-growers and went on a journey. 34 And when the harvest time approached, he sent his slaves to the vine-growers to receive his fruit. 35 And the vine-growers took his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. 36 Again, he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they did the same things to them. 37 But afterward he sent his son to them, saying, 'They will respect my son.'

38 But when the vine-growers saw the son, they said among themselves, 'This is the heir; come, let's kill him and take possession of his inheritance!' 39 And they took him and threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. 40 Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vine-growers?" 41 They said to Him, "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end and lease the vineyard to other vine-growers, who will pay him the fruit in the proper seasons."

The tenants are the Jews, or their leaders. The servants are the Old Testament prophets, many of whom were killed. The son represents Jesus Christ, who was to be condemned to death by the religious leaders. The other vine-growers were the Gentiles to whom Paul turned when most of the Jews rejected Jesus and His gospel of good news.

The Stumbling Block

Matthew 21 v 42-46

42 Jesus said to them, "Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'A stone which the builders rejected, This has become the chief cornerstone; This came about from the Lord, And it is marvelous in our eyes'? 43 Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruit. 44 And the one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and on whomever it falls, it will crush him." 45 When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard His parables, they understood that He was speaking about them. 46 And although they sought to arrest Him, they feared the crowds, since they considered Him to be a prophet.

Jesus was the stone that the people rejected and who still do today, but He became the cornerstone, the shaper of things to come. Jesus is the stumbling block to all unrighteousness, falsehood and pride no matter where it comes from.