

**Teen Bible Study Notes:** Friday, January 4, 2019

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**The Life and Teachings of Jesus Christ – Lecture #20**

**Book and Chapter – Matthew – Chapters 21 & 22 (verses 1-14)**

## MATTHEW 21

### *The Triumphal Entry*

**V1** Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples,

*The Mount of Olives* was directly east of Jerusalem, across the deep ravine of the Kidron Valley. *Bethphage* was on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives.

**V2** 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.

**V3** And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.”

**V4** All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:

**V5** “*Tell the daughter of Zion, ‘Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey, a colt, the foal of a donkey.’*”

These actions fulfill **Isaiah 62:11; Zechariah 9:9**. The emphasis in these prophecies and Jesus’ actions emphasize humility.

**Isaiah 62:11** “Indeed the LORD has proclaimed to the end of the world: ‘Say to the daughter of Zion, ‘Surely your salvation is coming; behold, His reward *is* with Him, and His work before Him.’”

**Zechariah 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, a colt, the foal of a donkey.”

The *donkey* was the mount of princes (**Judges 5:10; 10:4; 12:14**) and kings (**II Samuel 16:1-2**).

**V6** So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them.

**V7** They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set *Him* on them.

**V8** And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread *them* on the road.

***Spread their clothes on the road*** – The scene was a “royal procession” (**II Kings 9:13**). Prior to this time, Jesus had steadfastly avoided such a display (**Matthew 8:4; 9:30; 12:16; 17:9**). Now He was publically presenting Himself to Israel as the nation’s Messiah and King.

**V9** Then the multitude 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!”

***Hosanna*** – was used here as an exclamation of joyous praise! ***Hosanna*** – literally means “save now” (as in **Psalm 118:25**).

**Psalm 118:25-26: V25** “Save now [*Hosanna*], I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.

**V26** Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We have blessed you from the house of the LORD.”

The words ***blessed is he who comes*** are the words the people used to bless Jesus on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem (***these words were taken from*** – **Psalm 118:26**).

**V10** And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, “Who is this?”

***All the city was moved*** – these words literally can be translated “the city was shaken.” The same verb is used in **Matthew 2:3** of Herod’s reaction to the wise men who were asking about the birth of Israel’s King.

**V11** So the multitudes said, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.”

### ***The Cleansing of the Temple***

**V12** 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.

**V13** 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.’*”

Two cleansings of the temple are recorded in the Gospels – one in **John 2:14-17** at the beginning of Christ’s ministry, and one in the synoptic Gospels at the end of His ministry (**Mark 11:15-17; Luke 19:45-46**).

***Bought and sold*** – Financial corruption ran rampant in the outer courts of the temple.

***The money changers*** – exchanged coins with pagan symbols on them for acceptable coins to be used in the temple. They charged a premium for this “service.”

***Those who sold doves*** – sold them at top prices.

***My house shall be called a house of prayer*** – is quoted from **Isaiah 56:7**.

***Den of thieves*** – The temple had become a corrupt place of business.

**V14** Then *the* blind and *the* lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them.

**V15** 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

**V16** 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*’?” (**Quoted from – Psalm 8:2**).

**V17** Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.

Jesus left Jerusalem and lodged in Bethany. Instead of welcoming their Messiah, the religious authorities had rejected and opposed Him.

### ***Cursing of the Fig Tree***

**V18** Now in the morning, as he returned to the city, He was hungry.

**V19** 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.

#### **Question: Why did Jesus curse the fig tree?**

**Answer: Mark 11:12-14: V12** “Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, he was hungry.

**V13** And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps he would find something on it. When He came to it, he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs.

**V14** In response Jesus said to it, “Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.” And his disciples heard *it*.”

At a distance, Jesus saw a fig tree with leaves, and, being hungry, He approached it hoping to find some fruit, for figs will quite often appear earlier than the leaves. Upon reaching the tree, all He found were leaves; the tree had produced no fruit. Mark – added the comment that “it was not the season for figs” (**verse 13**).

This statement is somewhat puzzling – until we understand the growing and fruiting cycles of fig trees. Notice the following interesting information about the fig season in Palestine:

“It has been asked, ‘How could our Lord expect to find ripe figs in the end of March.’ Answer, because figs were **ripe** in Judea as early as the **Passover**. Besides, the fig tree puts forth its fruit **first**, and afterwards its leaves. Indeed, this tree, in the climate which is proper for it, has fruit on it all the year round, as I have often seen” (*Clarke’s Commentary*).

Fruit tree growers know that ordinarily a small amount of fruit ripens prior to the main crop. It is referred to as the first ripe fruit or the firstfruits. When Jesus approached the tree, it was the time of the firstfruits of figs, but it was not yet time for the main harvest. **Mark 11:13** – must mean that the particular tree on which Christ expected to find figs was barren, because it had no figs on it at all. *It did not fulfill its purpose*, and, as any diligent orchardist would do, *Jesus simply eliminated an unproductive tree*, not with an axe, or a saw, but by faith. **(Compare with Luke 13:6-9).**

Jesus used this incident to teach His disciples – and all Christians today – that the outward appearance does not count with God. Instead, what really counts is whether or not one produces godly fruit in his or her life **(Luke 13:6-9; Galatians 5:22-23; John 15:8, 16)**. This miracle illustrates God’s judgment on those who profess adherence to God’s Law but produce no spiritual fruit.

**Galatians 5:22-23:** **V22** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,  
**V23** Gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.”

**John 15:8** “By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.”

**John 15:16** “You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.”

**V20** And when the disciples saw *it*, they marveled, saying, “How did the fig tree wither away so soon?”

**V21** 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 his mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea;’ it will be done.

**V22** And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”

Jesus also used the withering of the fig tree to teach His disciples that faith works miracles, and that it is the basis for answered prayer! Amazing miracles occur in the lives of God’s people when they take a positive faith-filled approach to life!

### ***Question of Jesus’ Authority***

**V23** 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?”

**V24** 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:

**V25** 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?’

**V26** But if we say, ‘From men,’ we fear the multitude, for all count John as a prophet.”

**V27** 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.

It was a common rabbinic method to answer a question with a question. The religious leaders’ response to Jesus question – *we do not know* – not only released Jesus from having to answer their question, it also disqualified them as spiritual leaders.

We know who gave Jesus Christ authority – it was His Father in heaven!

### *Parable of the Two Sons*

**V28** 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.’

**V29** He answered and said, ‘I will not,’ but afterward he regretted it and went.

**V30** Then he came to the second and said likewise. And he answered and said, ‘I go, sir,’ but he did not go.

**V31** 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.

**V32** 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.

Jesus phrase *enter the kingdom of God before you* – established that these repentant sinners – *tax collectors and harlots* – would enter the future kingdom. It also left the door open for the religious leaders to repent. But even though the self-righteous leaders saw the example of repentant tax collectors and prostitutes, they refused to believe the truth, and they did not repent.

### *Parable of the Landowner*

**V33** 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.

*The landowner* – The owner of the vineyard is God [*The Father*].

*The vineyard* – represents the kingdom of God.

**The vinedressers** – represent the chief priests, Pharisees, and others who have rejected God and who have mistreated and killed God’s servants – that were sent to them.

**V34** Now when vintage-time drew near, he sent his servants to the vinedressers, that they might receive its fruit.

**The servants** – represent God’s messengers [*the apostles and prophets and others*]  
**The son** – is Jesus Christ.

**V35** And the vinedressers took his servants, beat one, killed one, and stoned another.

**V36** Again he sent other servants, more than the first, and they did likewise to them.

**V37** Then last of all he sent his son to them, saying, ‘They will respect my son.’

**V38** But when the vinedressers saw the son, they said among themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and seize his inheritance.’

**V39** So they took him and cast *him* out of the vineyard and killed *him*.

**V40** Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those vinedressers?”

**V41** 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.”

**V42** 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?*’

The rejection of the **Son [Jesus Christ]** was predicted in – **Psalm 118:22-23: V22** “The stone *which* the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. **V23** This was the LORD’S doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.”

The rejected **stone** is Jesus Christ who became the **chief cornerstone** (**Acts 4:11; Ephesians 2:20; I Peter 2:7**).

**Rejected** – suggests that, after examining Jesus to see if He met their needs, they declared Him to be useless and undesirable. Though He was not what they wanted, He is specifically the One whom God the Father has chosen to be the foundation of His Church.

**Ephesians 2:19-20: V19** “Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

**V20** Having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone.”

**The apostles and prophets** were the foundation of the church because the early Church was established on their teaching and preaching. Yet Christ Himself is the rock foundation on which the whole Church rests.

The *Cornerstone* was the first large stone placed at the corner of a building. The builders would line up the rest of the structure to the chief cornerstone.

**I Corinthians 3:11** “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

**Acts 4:11** “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

**V43** Therefore I say to you, the kingdom of God will be taken from you and given to a nation bearing the fruits of it.

**V44** And whoever falls on this stone will be broken; but on whomever it falls, it will grind him to powder.”

This paradoxical saying indicates that people can respond to Christ [*the Stone*] in one of two ways: 1) They can be broken with repentance, or 2) They can refuse to repent which results in judgment – being ground to *powder* [*resulting in total destruction*].

**V45** Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them.

**V46** But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

## CHAPTER 22

### *Parable of the Marriage Feast*

**V1** And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:

**V2** “The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,

**V3** And sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.

**V4** Again, he sent out other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, ‘See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle *are* killed, and all things *are* ready. Come to the wedding.’”

**V5** But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.

**V6** And the rest seized his servants, treated *them* spitefully, and killed *them*.

**V7** But when the king heard *about it*, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

**V8** Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

**V9** Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.’

**V10** So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding *hall* was filled with guests.

**V11** But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

**V12** So he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless.

**V13** Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast *him* into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’

**V14** For many are called, but few *are* chosen.”

**Question: What did Jesus mean? “Many are called but few are chosen?” And how do we explain the parable of the wedding feast?**

**Answer:** Christ concluded the parable of the wedding feast in **Matthew 22** with the perplexing statement, “Many are called, but few are chosen” (**verse 14**).

Why would God call many to salvation, and then choose only a few? Are you one of the few chosen? Here’s how you can know!

### **How God Calls**

When Christ walked this earth, he personally called his disciples. After preaching the Gospel in Galilee, he called Peter and Andrew to discipleship as they were fishing: “Then Jesus said to them, ‘Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.’”(Mark 1:17).

Later that same day he saw James and John, “And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants, and went after Him.” (**Verse 20**).

When Jesus ate at Matthew’s house, he mentioned why He called people. The self-righteous Pharisees scorned him for spending time with sinners. So Jesus said: “When Jesus heard *it*, He said to them, ‘Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I did not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance’” (**Mark 2:17**).

Christ called disciples through His preaching. But Christ doesn’t walk the earth today. How does he call people today? Paul told the Thessalonians that God “called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ” (**II Thessalonians 2:14**).

God calls us today through the preaching of the gospel (**Romans 10:14-17**).

**Romans 10:14-17: V14** “How then shall they call on Him in who they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher.

**V15** And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: *‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’*

**V16** But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, '*LORD, who has believed our report?*'

**V17** So then faith *comes* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

### **The Father draws**

Christ told the Jews:

**John 6:44** "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him..."

**John 6:65** "...no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father."

While Christ was calling disciples through his preaching, God the Father was also "drawing" these disciples to Christ.

Notice how Christ explains this and ties it all together in **John chapter 17:**

**John 17:6-10: V6** I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world. They were Yours, You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

**V7** Now they have known that all things which You have given Me are from You.

**V8** For I have given to them the words which You have given Me; and they have received *them*, and have known surely that I came forth from You; and they have believed that You sent Me.

**V9** I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

**V10** And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine, and I am glorified in them."

### **Notice HOW the Father draws**

The human mind, by itself, cannot naturally understand spiritual truth.

**I Corinthians 2:9-11: V9** "But as it is written: '*Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.*'

**V10** But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.

**V11** For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God."

**I Corinthians 2:14** "But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned."

God has allowed Satan to blindfold this world spiritually **II Corinthians 4:3-4).**

**II Corinthians 4:3-4: V3** “But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,

**V4** Whose minds the god of this age [Satan] has blinded, who do not believe...”

In **Revelation 12:9** we read “that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan...deceives the whole world.”

Since God allows it, he takes responsibility for it. “Just as it is written: *‘God has given them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see and ears that they should not hear, to this very day.’*” (**Romans 11:8**).

When the Father draws us to Christ, he removes this blindness – this spiritual inability to understand.

When the Old Testament Scriptures were read in the synagogue, the Jews could not understand, Paul tells us why (**II Corinthians 3:14-15**).

**II Corinthians 3:14-15: V14** “But their minds were blinded. For until this day the same veil remains unlifted in the reading of the Old Testament, because the veil is taken away in Christ.

**V15** But even to this day, when Moses is read, a veil lies on their heart.”

So when does God take away this veil?

**II Corinthians 3:16** “Nevertheless when one turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away.”

There is the key. We must turn to God. We must respond to His calling [to the invitation]! Then He will begin to remove the spiritual blindfold. The more we respond by changing our lives, the more truth He reveals.

**II Corinthians 3:18** “But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.”

### **The wedding feast**

Now we can understand the parable of the wedding feast and Christ’s enigmatic statement, “Many are called, but few are chosen.”

Many are invited to the wedding feast to be held at Christ’s return (**Revelation 19:9**). But we must be appropriately dressed [spiritually]. Notice, in Christ’s parable, the king “saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment” (**Matthew 22:11**).

At the wedding feast at Christ's return, Christians will be in the role of the bride (**II Corinthians 11:2; Ephesians 5:22-23**).

**II Corinthians 11:2** "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present *you as* a chaste virgin to Christ."

**Ephesians 5:22-23: V22** "Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

**V23** For the husband is the head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body."

How should we be dressed?

**Revelation** tells us those who come to the marriage supper of the Lamb are clothed in fine linen, "...for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints" (**Revelation 19:8**).

**Righteous acts** – that is, a changed way of living. God expects us to start changing our lives after we begin hearing his call. To be chosen for the wedding, we must respond to God's calling by living a way that pleases Him. If we do not repent and change after we are called – we will not be chosen.

### Not chosen, but not rejected

What happens to those who were called but not chosen – those who don't respond to the preaching of the Gospel? Are they lost forever? Paul answers this in his letter to the Romans.

**Romans 10:21** "But to Israel he says: *'All day long I have stretched out My hands to a disobedient and contrary people.'*"

**Romans 11:1, 7: V1** "I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, *of* the tribe of Benjamin."

**V7** "What then: Israel has not obtained what it seeks; but the elect [*the few who responded to the preaching of the gospel*] have obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

Is this hardening – this blindness – forever?

**Romans 11:25-26: V25** "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

**V26** And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: *'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'*"

Here we have a prophecy of Christ's return to earth. After setting up the Kingdom of God on earth, God will remove the blindness of all peoples.

God will ultimately save most of mankind after Christ's return – not now. Most are not responding to the preaching of the gospel. Only the few who do respond are being chosen now.

### **Called, chosen and faithful**

If you understand the truth, God is calling you now [you've received an invitation]. However, will He choose you now? Well, that depends on what you do. If you act on the knowledge God is revealing to you, He will communicate more understanding. The more we act, the more He reveals.

Christianity is not just about learning. It's about living – putting into practice what we learn.

**James** writes:

**James 1:22, 25: V22** “But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

**V25** “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues *in it*, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

And what if we have already become doers of God's Word?

Then God is choosing us, and we must remain faithful to our calling. Peter exhorts us:

**II Peter 1:10-11: V10** “Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure [*or “choosing”*], for if you do these things you will never stumble;

**V11** For so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”

Christ tells us that “But he who endures to the end shall be saved” (**Matthew 24:13**).

God has chosen us and delivered us from “this present evil age” (**Galatians 1:4**), but our salvation is not yet completed. That will occur at Christ's return – if we remain faithful to our calling.

To rule with Christ in his kingdom, we must *hear* God's calling, *respond* to the calling with a changed life and *be faithful* to that calling until the end of life. In **Revelation 17:14** we read that when Christ returns, “...those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.”

The question remains: *Will you, and will I, be among those who are called, chosen and faithful?*