

## Jesus' Triumphal Entry; Teaching in the Temple

### Matthew 21

Group <sup>1</sup>	C	V	Description
The Triumphal Entry	21	1-11	The Triumphal Entry
Cleansing the Temple		12-13	Cleansing The Temple
		14-17	Jesus heals the blind and lame
The Barren Fig Tree		18-19	Jesus curses a fig tree for being barren
		20-22	Immediately the tree withers and the disciples are amazed
Authority Challenged		23-27	Jesus' Authority Challenged
Parable of Two Sons		28-32	Jesus teaches the parable of the Two Sons
Parable of the Landowner		33-41	Jesus teaches the parable of the Landowner
		42-44	“The stone which the builders rejected”
		45-46	Pharisees understood Jesus was talking about them

### Reflections

What was Jesus' teaching His disciples by cursing the fig tree which should have been bearing fruit at that time of year? That is probably the biggest thing that stand out from this chapter. It takes place in the middle of the chapter, after Jesus' triumphal entry and before He begins teaching in the temple.

So what might Jesus be trying to teach His disciples? Consider this, Jesus the previous day had entered Jerusalem as a newly crowned king and proceeds to drive the money changers out of the temple and then heals many who are blind and lame in the temple area. He then returned to Bethany for the evening.

The next day while walking to Jerusalem they happened upon a fig tree and Jesus anticipates having a snack but finds nothing on the tree. So He curses it and it immediately withers and the disciples are amazed.

I don't know why the disciples are amazed, every miracle that Jesus does is accomplished immediately. So why should this be any different? I don't know about you but I've never seen a tree wither before my own eyes so I imagine it would be a spectacle. Jesus then teaches them about the power of believing prayer and the role of faith in whom you are praying to.

Now after this in the temple, Jesus' authority is challenged. Why? The previous day He made a great display of casting out the money changers and then healing the blind and the lame who were brought to Him. So it was probably as a result of this that the religious leaders were challenging His authority for doing the things He had done.

I think that Jesus also knew this was going to happen when He entered the temple and so Jesus used the opportunity to teach His disciples about Himself and the confidence they can have in making a request of Him in prayer, especially as they were about to see His authority challenged.

<sup>1</sup> (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

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The chapter ends with the religious leaders realizing that Jesus was speaking about them in the two parables that are included in this chapter: the two sons and the landowner, and His reference to the chief cornerstone which was being rejected, was about them and how they were going to be losing the position which God had blessed them with for being unfruitful.<sup>2</sup> The religious leaders were left powerless to seize Jesus at that time though because the people considered Jesus a prophet and that would have created a great disturbance in the city.

So for us, as Christians and benefits of being apart of God's kingdom, we ought to make sure that we are fruitless, either in action and attitude or in proclaiming the gospel concerning Jesus. What are the fruit we should be looking to produce and harvest in our lives and what should be avoid so as not to like the religious leaders of Jesus' day? The answer is simple but hard at the same time. Paul gives a good summary of this in Galatians 5. (I've separated the text up to help show what to avoid and what to pursue.)

### Galatians 5:16-26 NASB

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. 17 For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please. 18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law.

19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

24 Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit. 26 Let us not become boastful, challenging one another, envying one another.

Pretty straight forward I would say. What do you think?

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### ***There and Then: Here and Now***

Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this part of our study<sup>3</sup>: *my LOG vs others SPECK. Here are some possible responses I've identified from the text that might apply to anyone.*

S - Are there *sins* for me to avoid or confess?

•

P - Are there *promises* from God for me to claim?

•

E - Are there *examples* for me to follow or avoid?

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C - Are there *commands* for me to obey?

•

K - How has this passage increased my *knowledge* about God / Jesus / Holy Spirit?

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2 (Barnes on Matthew 21:42)

3 *Navigator Bible Study Handbook* (The Navigators), with additions & Matthew 7:1-5.

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*Key Words:* New Testament, Gospels, Matthew, Jesus, Triumphal Entry, Parables, Faith, Prayer

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