

## Episode #8-46 Matthew 21 Part 2-The Lord's Peaceful Protest

I. The purpose of the gospel of Matthew is to present Jesus as the Christ, the King of Israel. It is another grand treatise like John to prove to Israel Who Jesus really is. It is the book of being "in Israel," in contrast to believers today who are "in Christ."

II. The Lord Jesus Christ was coming into Jerusalem for the final time at the end of His ministry. The disciples had brought him a donkey and a colt, and He was riding them, and the people coming into the city for Passover were celebrating His arrival.

III. The Royal Entry to Jerusalem. Matthew 21:1-11.

A. Verse 10. "Was moved" means shook, as from agitation or fear. This was the governmental, political center of Israel. They always feared some popular movement or uprising, not only because it might target them (for they were very corrupt), but also because it might stir up the Romans against them, which could be equally disastrous. They wanted to know Who this was and what was going on. Bullinger argues that this was a different, earlier entry than that listed in Mark, Luke, and John.

1. There is no reason why a glad crowd wouldn't have met Him or accompanied Him every time He went into Jerusalem that week.
2. In John 12:18, the people met Him as He came, indicating they were expecting Him. Here, they were surprised and didn't know Who He was.
3. Also, if we compare the events of the days on which He entered, they do not match up. This "triumphal entry" happened more than once, and more than on just "Palm Sunday."

B. Verse 11. "The prophet" was the crowd's assessment of Him, since He had not officially claimed to be any more than this. The disciples gave four opposing views when the Lord asked them in Matthew 16: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. The disciples, of course, believed Him to be the Christ, the Son of God (except for Judas). It seems that this last popular view, that He is one of the prophets, has become the prevailing view among the people, lacking further evidence.

IV. Zeal in the Temple. Matthew 21:12-17.

A. Verse 12. "Temple" is *hieron*, the temple courts, not the holy building in the center.

1. He cast out the sellers and moneychangers more than once. First in John 2, early in His ministry. After He cast them out here, these sellers and moneychangers did not give up, but set back up the next day, so He enforced His prohibition against this inappropriate activity several days in a row.
2. He pushed His Own authority against that of the chief priests and scribes, who authorized this market. This was bringing the contest between them to a head. They ought to have admitted His authority, or at least His rightness. Instead, they reacted by seeking to murder Him.
3. Sacrifices had to be done in the temple, and many lived too far away to drive an animal the whole distance, so they would want to buy at Jerusalem. The law allowed and even prescribed this. But that did not justify turning the great court of the temple into a stockyard! Notice He drove out both the sellers and their customers, both of whom were contributing to this.
4. The temple tax, Exodus 30:11-16, was a necessity, and they insisted it must be in temple coin, so those who came from far and wide had to change their money. There was no excuse for making the temple an exchange of money!

5. Notice He did not let the doves go. The Lord was not vandalizing or destroying property, but breaking up this inappropriate commerce.
- B. Verse 13. These are two quotations that the Lord puts together. This first quotation is from Isaiah 56:7. The second is from Jeremiah 7:11. This was not just a market, but a dishonest one. Since the priests were authorized to approve the animals for sacrifice, they were to check over every animal for blemishes. If one wanted to find one, no creature is completely without mark, and they would reject the animal. Then the offeror would be forced to buy from their market an approved animal. It is said these were often the animals that had been rejected for other offerors! Then the money, it seems, was often exchanged at an unfair rate. A true den of thieves indeed.
- C. Verse 14. The seventh and last time that literal blind men are healed in Matthew, seven being the number of perfection in God's work. Six times the religious leaders are called "blind" in Matthew, six being the number of man, one less than seven, showing that man's work always falls short of God's perfection. The last of four times the healing of the lame is mentioned in Matthew. The "temple" again is *hieron*, meaning the temple grounds, not the main building in the center. Now that He had cleansed the temple, He used it to bring glory to God, its rightful use.

VII. Conclusion. The Lord broke up the dishonest market the religious leaders had set up in the temple. He honored God's house, and wanted no inappropriate activity, not to mention dishonest commerce, going on there. Do we honor the things of God, or make them common?