### Matthew

## Chapter 21

1Well, when they got close to JeruSalem and arrived at BethPhage (on the Mount of Olives), Jesus sent two disciples ahead, 2telling them:  
  
 ‘Go into the village that’s across from us, and you’ll immediately find a burro that’s tied next to its colt. Untie them and bring them here to me.  
  
 3‘If anyone asks you about it, just tell him that the Lord needs them, and he’ll send them with you.’  
  
4Of course, the reason why this happened is so that the thing spoken through the Prophet might be fulfilled:  
  
 5‘Say this to the daughter of Zion:  
 Look! Your King is coming to you!  
 [He’s] gentle and comes riding the colt of a burro…  
 The foal of a creature that bears heavy loads.’  
 [Zechariah 9:9]  
  
6So the disciples went and did just as Jesus told them. 7They brought the burro and its colt to him, then they put their robes [over its back] for him to sit on. 8Also, many in the crowd spread their robes out on the road ahead of him, while others cut branches from trees and spread them out on the road.  
  
9So, part of the crowd walked ahead of him, while the rest followed behind him shouting:  
  
 ‘[God] save the Son of David!  
 Praise the one who comes in the Name of Jehovah…  
 Save, we pray, from the heights!’  
  
10Well, as he was entering JeruSalem, this caused quite a stir throughout the city, [for people were asking]:  
  
 ‘Who is this?’  
  
11And the crowd [that was with Jesus] replied:  
  
 ‘This is Jesus, the Prophet from Nazareth of Galilee!’  
  
12Well from there, Jesus entered the Temple and drove out all those who were buying and selling. He also overturned the tables of the money-changers and the benches of those who were selling doves, 13saying to them:  
  
 ‘It is written:  
  
 ‘My house will be called a house of prayer...’  
  
 ‘But, you’re turning it into a den of thieves!’  
  
14And after that, people who were blind and lame started coming to him in the Temple, and he cured them.  
  
15But when the Chief Priests and Scribes saw the wonderful things that he was doing and they heard all the children shouting in the Temple, ‘[God] save the Son of David,’ they became very upset.  
  
16So they said to him:  
  
 ‘Don’t you hear what they’re shouting?’  
  
And Jesus replied:  
  
 ‘Yes… Haven’t you ever read this:  
  
 ‘From the mouths of infants and babies  
 You have ordered up praises.’  
 [Psalm 8:2]  
  
17And with that, he left them… He walked out of the city and went to BethAny, where he spent the night.  
  
  
  
18Well, while he was on the way back to the city early the next morning, he was hungry. 19So he walked over to a fig tree that was growing alongside the road, but found nothing on it but leaves, so he said:  
  
 ‘Let no fruit come from you anymore throughout the rest of the age.’  
  
And the fig tree withered instantly.  
  
20Then when the disciples saw this, they wondered:  
  
 ‘How can a fig tree wither instantly?’  
  
21And Jesus said:  
  
 ‘I tell you the truth: If you have faith (and you must not doubt), not only will you be able to do what I did to this fig tree, but you could say to this mountain, Lift up and be thrown into the sea, and it’ll happen… 22You’ll receive anything you ask for in prayer if you have faith.’  
  
23Then after he’d entered the Temple and started teaching, the Chief Priests and the peoples’ elders came up to him and asked:  
  
 ‘Who authorized you to do these things… Who said that you could do this?’  
  
24In reply, Jesus said:  
  
 ‘Let me ask you something, and if you answer me, I’ll tell you who authorized me to do these things...  
  
 25‘What was the source of John’s immersing? Did it come from heaven or from men?’  
  
So they started reasoning among themselves and saying to each other:  
  
 ‘If we say from heaven, he will ask us, Then why didn’t you believe him? 26But if we say from men, we’ll have to deal with the crowd, because they think John was a Prophet.’  
27So they told Jesus:  
  
 ‘We don’t know.’  
  
And he told them:  
  
 ‘Then I’m not going to tell you where I got the authority to do the things that I’m doing.  
  
 28‘What do you think?  
  
 ‘There was once a man who had two children. He went to the first one and said:  
  
 ‘Son, I want you to work in the vineyard today.’  
  
 29‘This one answered:  
  
 ‘Yes sir!’  
  
 ‘But he didn’t [do it].  
  
 30‘Then [the man] went to the second son and said the same thing. And he replied:  
  
 ‘I don’t want to…’  
  
 ‘But later, he felt sorry and he did go [to work in the vineyard].  
  
 31‘So, which of the two did what their father wanted?’  
  
And they replied:  
  
 ‘The second one.’  
  
Then Jesus said to them:  
  
 ‘I tell you the truth; tax collectors and whores will go ahead of you into the Kingdom of God, 32because John came to you [preaching] the ways of righteousness, but you didn’t believe him.  
  
 ‘However, tax collectors and whores believed him! And although you saw this, you didn’t feel sorry later and put faith in what he was saying.  
  
 33‘Listen to another parable:  
  
 ‘There was a man – the master of his house – who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, built a tower [to protect it], and hired [people to] cultivate it before he traveled abroad.  
  
 34‘Then when the [harvest] season arrived, he sent his servants to the farm hands to collect the fruit.  
  
 35‘However, those farm hands took his slaves and beat the first one up, threw stones at the second, and killed the third one.  
  
 36‘So he then sent other slaves to them (more than the first)… But they did the same things to these.  
  
 37‘Finally, he sent his son to them, saying:  
  
 ‘They’ll show respect for my son!’  
  
 38‘But when they saw the son, the farmers said:  
  
 ‘This is the heir! Let’s kill him and get his inheritance!’   
  
 39‘So they grabbed him and threw him out of the vineyard, then they killed him.’  
  
 40‘Now, when the owner of the vineyard returns, what do you think he will do to those farm hands?’  
  
41And they replied:  
  
 ‘Because they’re so bad, he will destroy them in a painful way, then he’ll hire others who’ll cultivate the vineyard and give him the fruit when it’s due.’  
  
42And Jesus said to them:  
  
 ‘Haven’t you ever read in the Scriptures:  
  
 ‘The stone that the builders rejected  
 Has become the foundation cornerstone…  
 By Jehovah this was done,  
 And this is a wonderful thing in our eyes?’  
 [Psalm 118:22]  
  
 43‘This is why I tell you that the Kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a nation that produces its fruit. 44For the person who falls on this ‘stone’ will be shattered, and anyone it falls on will be smashed into dust!’  
  
45Well, after the Chief Priests and the Pharisees heard these parables, they realized that he was talking about them. 46Yet, although they were looking to grab him, they didn’t, because they were afraid of the crowds, since [the people] viewed him as a Prophet.