

09/13/2026

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MATTHEW

BEHOLD YOUR KING MATTHEW 20:29-21:16

- I. The Parable and the Suffering Messiah
 - a. What does it mean to become like Jesus?
 - i. The Parable of the Workers revealed the giant gulf between the carnal mind's greed and God's grace – entitlement mixed with comparison and envy contrasted with a heart that moves towards unmerited to favor – are these not my things to do with what I wish? What God wishes to be generous with the undeserving
 - b. How do we become more like Jesus?
 - i. Then Jesus explicitly maps out His road to the cross, the grave, and to the empty tomb – showing us how that transformation actually takes place
 - ii. Sharing in His death, His suffering, laying down our lives for the good of others and the glory of God – always looking to Jesus the pioneer and finisher of our faith
 1. He has gone first, He is the forerunner – we follow Him
 - c. This study, the question is what does this look like lived out?
 - i. And Matthew's answer begins, deliberately, with two men on the side of the road that nobody else thought was worth stopping for
 - ii. Their story is an aside or random event on the way to the Triumphal Entry – it is Matthew's deliberate introduction to it

Mat 20:29 Now as they went out of Jericho, a great multitude followed Him. 30 And behold, two blind men sitting by the road (Jerico produced large quantities of balsam, shrub thought to have healing properties) when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" 31 Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" 32 So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" 33 They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." 34 So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

- II. The Blind Men – True Sight at the Edge of the Crowd
 - a. ***Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David***
 - i. Exactly what two other blind men said in ***Matt 9:27 When Jesus departed from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out and saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us!" 28 And when He had come into the house, the blind men came to Him. And Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." 29 Then He touched their eyes, saying, "According to your faith let it be to you." 30 And their eyes were opened. And Jesus sternly warned them, saying, "See that no one knows it." 31 But when they had departed, they spread the news about Him in all that country.***

- ii. This is the first time Jesus is called “Son of David,” acknowledging Jesus as the Messiah
 - 1. Irony that blind men saw Jesus for who He was better than those who could physically see
 - iii. And now, two men, again with nothing to offer, no social status, no place in the inner circle of Jesus, but this time their story comes right after James and John asking to be greatest in the Kingdom
 - iv. One commentator writes – “one wonders whether there might not be a lesson intended in the juxtaposition of 20:20-28 and 20:29-34. In the former, two privileged insiders make a request through a third party; in the latter, two marginalized outsiders cry out for themselves”
- b. This is the last of the “blindness” scenes that started back in chapter 18
 - i. Peter, blind to the depth of forgiveness required of followers of Jesus
 - ii. The Pharisees, blind to who is standing in front of them
 - iii. The disciples, blind to the position of children in the Kingdom, discouraging them from coming to Jesus
 - iv. The rich young ruler, blinded by his riches, unable to see his great need
 - v. James and John, blind to what is truly great in the Kingdom of God
 - vi. And now – two men who physically can't see are the only people out of all these examples who know who Jesus is and what they should do of Him
 - vii. And the crowds blind to the manner man Jesus was – they were perfectly satisfied to share in His presence but, like the disciples, didn't share in His compassion
- c. ***The multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more***
 - i. Echoes of our present culture – discourages us from crying out to Jesus
 - ii. Jesus never seems put out or bothered by interruptions – but the multitude are
 - 1. Why? There's things to do, the King is here – He has a Kingdom to establish
 - 2. What we miss is for Jesus, the people are the Kingdom – we are the living stones that make up the Kingdom - when the processes of ministry become more important than the people we have lost sight of what Jesus is doing
 - iii. This is the literal reality of the evil eye in Jesus' parable – deciding someone else doesn't deserve Jesus' attention
- d. ***What do you want Me to do for you?***
 - i. The identical question Jesus asked James and John – Matthew ties these two events together
- e. ***Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes... and they followed Him***
 - i. Crying out, compassion, healing, then following – Jesus, I am blind, only you can open my eyes! – and they immediately received sight and they followed – this time Jesus didn't discourage them from spreading the news
 - ii. There is discipleship – no class, no conference – just compassion meeting desperation
 - iii. This marks the end of Jesus' traveling ministry – going from town to town, preaching, teaching, and displaying through the miraculous that the Kingdom of God has arrived
 - iv. The fact that Matthew includes this miracle means the blind men are not just a random miracle before the Triumphal Entry – they purposefully lead us into it

21:1 Now when they drew near Jerusalem, (Roman road to Jericho was about 17 miles long and climbed 3,000 feet) and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, 2 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. 3 And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, ‘The Lord has need of them,’ and immediately he will send them.” 4 All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: 5 “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.’” 6 So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. 7 They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them. 8 And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. 9 Then the multitudes 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!” 10 And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, “Who is this?” 11 So the multitudes said, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.”

III. The King Enters – Behold, Your King Is Coming

- a. Jesus sends for the donkey – reminder that Jesus is in control of all of these events
 - i. The same certainty that named every stage of His own betrayal and death in 20:18-19
 - ii. Now directing every detail of His own coronation – this is exactly what He had planned before the creation of the World
- b. **Behold, your King is coming to you, lowly, and sitting on a donkey**
 - i. **Zech 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.**
 - ii. Mark and Luke point out that it had never been ridden, meaning the colt had never been broken in – but this colt doesn’t seem to mind
- c. Ancient kings rode war horses into conquered cities – a king coming in peace rode a donkey
 - i. About two hundred years earlier, Judas Maccabeus rode into Jerusalem on a war horse after a military victory
 - ii. There is no doubt that this was the crowd's expectation
 1. Another political liberator had arrived
 - iii. But Jesus presents Himself as the Prince of Peace
- d. **A very great multitude spread their clothes on the road; others cut down branches**
 - i. Jehu Anointed King – **1 Kings 9:13 Then each man hastened to take his garment and put it under him on the top of the steps; and they blew trumpets, saying, “Jehu is king!”**
 1. Spreading garments before a king is an established gesture of honor and respect
 2. This was a coronation
- e. **Hosanna to the Son of David... Hosanna in the highest**
 - i. “Hosanna” **Psalm 118: 25 Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity. 26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord! We have blessed you from the house of the Lord.**
 - ii. A plea for deliverance joined with praise, the crowd is quoting (unknowingly) this Passover psalm about a coming deliverer, five days before He becomes the Passover Lamb

f. ***Who is this?***

- i. “The whole city was moved” – the Greek word is the same one used for an earthquake
- ii. And the crowd's answer – “this is Jesus, the prophet” – the colt and the prophetic fulfillment of Zechariah and the people crying out Hosanna, and pronouncing the King has arrived, the Son of David, the LORD Himself coming to His people, all of this prophetic fulfillment and the best the crowds can come up with – this must be a prophet
- iii. The same blindness that we have seen throughout chapters 18-20 – they still miss Jesus for who He truly is
- iv. ***Luke 19:39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, “Teacher, rebuke Your disciples.” 40 But He answered and said to them, “I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out.” 41 Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.***

12 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. 13 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.’” 14 Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. 15 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 16 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’?”

IV. The King Cleanses His House

- a. Jesus riding into Jerusalem and then cleansing the temple are not two separate unrelated stories
 - i. They are one single prophetic act, the King riding in to and restoring His house – pronouncing judgement on those who did not belong
 - ii. Mark's Gospel shows us that this isn't just an emotional reaction to what was happening in the temple
 1. Jesus enters, takes a look around the temple, and returns the next day
 2. Fashions a whip and then drives out the money changers
- b. ***My house shall be called a house of prayer... but you have made it a den of thieves***
 - i. Two Old Testament texts – ***Isaiah 56:6 “Also the sons of the foreigner Who join themselves to the Lord, to serve Him, And to love the name of the Lord, to be His servants— Everyone who keeps from defiling the Sabbath, And holds fast My covenant— 7 Even them I will bring to My holy mountain, And make them joyful in My house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices Will be accepted on My altar; For My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations.”***
 - ii. ***Jeremiah 7: 11 Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it,” says the Lord.***
 - iii. The issue was not primarily that the merchants were exploiting people (which they were) – it's where this was all being carried out

- iv. This was in the Court of the Gentiles, the one place on the entire temple grounds where a non-Jew could come and pray and worship, it had been turned into a den of thieves
 - 1. What did that communicate about the God of the Jews?
 - 2. One commentator writes *“The temple was not fulfilling its God-ordained role as witness to the nations but had become, like the first temple, the premier symbol of a superstitious belief that God would protect and rally his people, irrespective of their conformity to his will.”*
 - 3. Heartbreaking to know that this very thing happens today – people walk into churches looking for answers, looking for purpose, looking for healing, looking for God to make Himself known and what they find is a corporation looking for creative ways to separate them from their money
 - 4. Ultimately the temple was destroyed and in Revelation Jesus of removing the churches lampstands
 - a. He will not sit idly by while His name is misrepresented
- c. ***The blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them***
 - i. This is what the King and His Kingdom is all about – in the central location of Israel's worship - it is the fulfillment of exactly what Jesus just quoted from Isaiah, and it's the model for our gatherings
- d. ***The children crying out in the temple, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David***
 - i. What actually bothers the chief priests and scribes is not Jesus overturning tables – it's the praise of children
 - ii. Once again, the evil eye – resentment that the wrong people (children, beggars, the marginalized – THE LAST) are receiving the unmerited grace of God
 - iii. Jesus' answer – “have you never read”
 - iv. ***Psalm 8:2 Out of the mouth of babes and nursing infants You have ordained strength, Because of Your enemies, That You may silence the enemy and the avenger.***
 - 1. A critique of the religious leaders who know their Scriptures and have never once let those Scriptures change them
 - 2. Interesting how often Jesus uses the scriptures to respond to critics

V. Closing

- a. The blind men, the triumphant entry, the cleansing of the temple – they are not disjointed events
 - i. Matthew is showing us exactly what Jesus has been teaching us
 - ii. The King who taught that greatness is measured by how many you serve lives it out - stopping for two men nobody else thought were worth stopping for, and healing them
 - iii. Then He cleanses His house and returns it to a place of healing. A place that truly reflects the heart of God
 - 1. That is exactly what He desires to do in us