

# 2019-2020 Bible Study

## #26

3/31/20

# Matthew 21

3/31/20

# A Prayer to be recited before reading the Sacred Scriptures

- Come, Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of Thy faithful and enkindle in them the fire of Thy love.
- Send forth Thy spirit and they shall be created.
- And thou shall renew the face of the earth
- *Let Us Pray*
- O God, Who didst instruct the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit, grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things and ever to rejoice in His consolation.
- Through Christ our Lord

# Outline for Matthew 21

- **Matthew 21**
- Jesus' Entry into Jerusalem
- Jesus Cleanses the Temple
- Jesus Curses the Fig Tree
- The Authority of Jesus Questioned
- The Parable of the Two Sons
- The Parable of the Wicked Tenants
- The Stone Which the Builders Rejected
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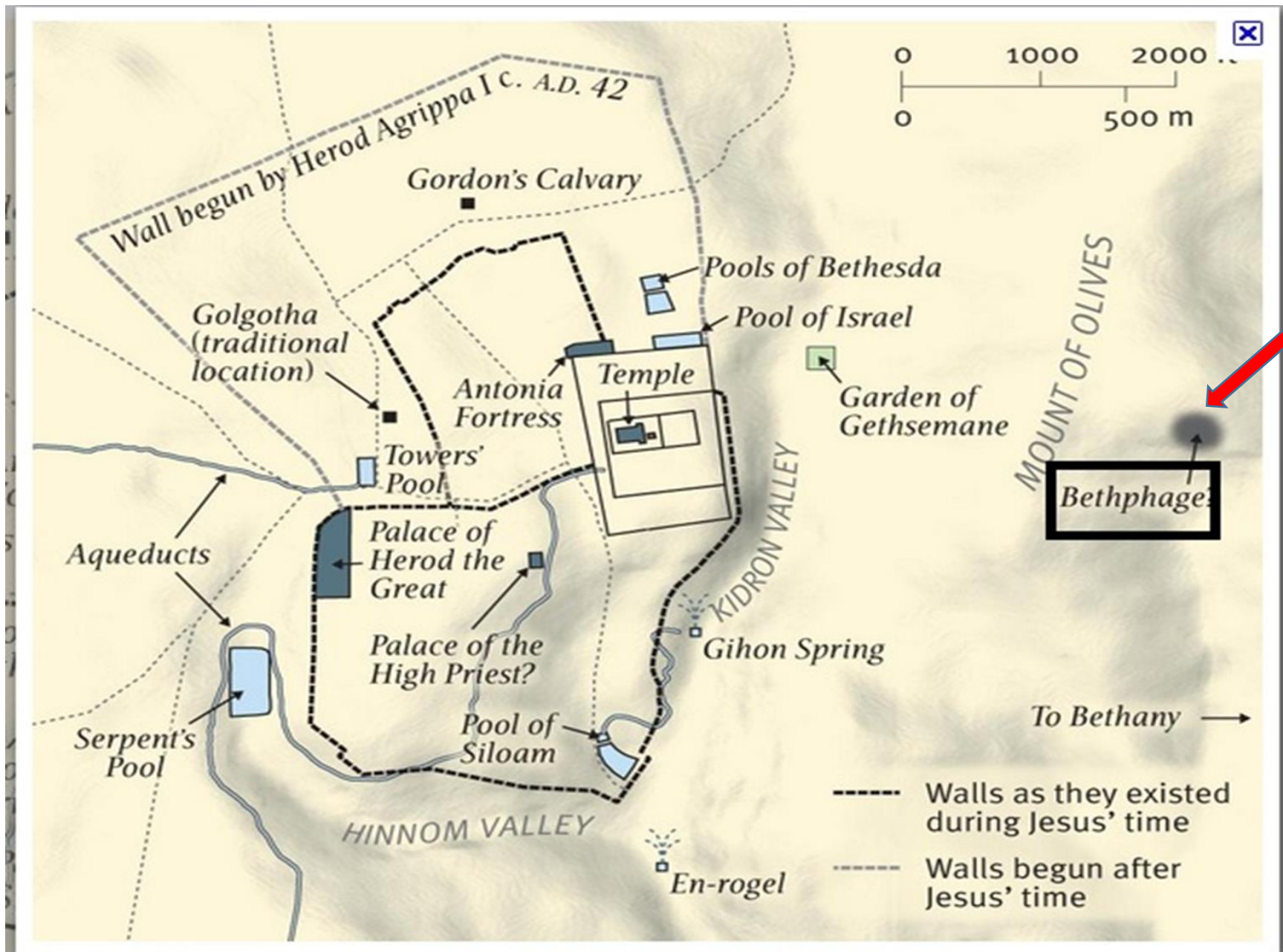


The New Moody Atlas of the Bible, By Barry J. Beitzel  
Moody Publishers, Chicago IL



Bible Atlas ([bibleatlas.org](http://bibleatlas.org))





# Matthew 21

- **Matthew 21:1-5** *“And when they drew near to Jerusalem and came to Bethpage...and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass”*
  - This is the story of “Palm Sunday” (**Matthew 21:1-11**)
  - Suddenly, Jesus and His disciples were on the outskirts of Jerusalem on the Mount of Olives near the town of **Bethpage**
  - Jesus directed His disciples to go into the village and procure a donkey (ass) on which He could ride triumphantly into the city of Jerusalem in a royal procession
  - Father Sebastian provided an interesting technical explanation as to what the ending of the passage meant in Aramaic



# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- Obviously, Jesus was only seeking one animal to ride on, yet Matthew presented two animals in this passage (1. an ass, and 2. a colt, the fold of an ass)
- Often Matthew used a duplet in his stories while Mark and Luke only present one:
  - Two blind men in Jericho
  - Two demoniacs in Gergesenes
  - Two animals in Bethpage
- There is much debate about this among scholars, but Father pointed out that this had to do with the use of the plural in Semitic languages where one finds the use of the singular, dual, and plural

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- The dual or duplet was used to depict something very important or big
- It is a way of speaking about the gravity of a situation
- The reason for the two animals in the passage is that Matthew is translating the Aramaic phrase into Greek
- Of interest here is that this phrase was actually taken from **Zachariah 9:9**. where it says, *“Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted on an ass, and on a colt, the foal of an ass”*

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:6-11** “The disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them;...’this is the prophet Jesus from Nazareth of Galilee’”
  - In this section, we see the celebration of **Psalms 118** which commemorated the safe return of King David to Jerusalem after victory in battle
  - The first thing King David did was to go to the temple (Tent of Meeting) to pray and thank God for salvation
    - David said to the Levites, “Open the gates of righteousness”
    - They responded with “who shall enter but the king of glory”
  - Thus, when Jesus comes to the temple, he initiates a conversation with the Levites which does not work out as planned

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- We see Jesus (the king) riding on an ass as described in **Zachariah 9:9** <sup>a</sup>
- The Psalmist asked, “How are we to be saved?”
- The response was “not by chariots and horses, but in the name of the Lord”
- In the Law (**Deuteronomy 17:16**), the king was not to purchase (ride on) a war horse (which was reserved for war and speed in military service)
- Donkeys were used for strength, pack animals, and things like that
- Thus, the King of Israel was always supposed to ride on a donkey (**Deuteronomy 17**)

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- This was because the King of Israel was to trust in the power of God in battle (not his army or horses)
- Thus, Jesus enters Jerusalem riding on a donkey
- It must have seemed very odd to the Romans who always went into battle with trained war horses to see people waiving palm branches and crying, “Hosanna” to a guy riding on a donkey
- Jesus certainly know what He was doing as king in accordance with **Zechariah 9:9**
- Thus, He came riding on a donkey in the name of the Lord who will destroy His enemies
- Here, we see Jesus, the son of David, coming in accord with **Psalms 118** as the Messiah

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:12-14** *“And Jesus entered the temple of God and drove out all who sold and bough in the temple,...and he healed them”*
  - Jesus went straight into the temple (just as David had done in **Psalms 118**)
  - But, Jesus found the temple precinct not to be properly prepared as it was filled with money-changers
  - This was the area where the Gentiles were supposed to come and pray to the God of Israel (an area similar to the Narthex in our churches)



# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- So, Jesus chased the money-changers out of the area and said, *"My house shall be called a house of prayer; but you make it a den of robbers"*
- In this passage, Jesus combined **Isaiah 56:7** and **Jeremiah 7:11**
- What Jesus was doing here was splicing two texts together which was a common practice by exegesis at the time
  - Jeremiah contains a prophecy that the temple is going to be destroyed
  - As soon as the people heard Jesus say this, they understood that there was going to be a problem
- Jesus was saying that the court of the Gentiles was supposed to be a house of prayer for their conversion, but they had made it a place for money-changers (most of whom were thieves)

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- This meant that Jesus was saying that the House of God was again forsaken
- From the court of the Gentiles, Jesus would have gone into the court of men where only Jewish men could go
- There, He interacted with the Levites just as David had done according to **Psalms 118** in his day as he said:

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:15-17** *“But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did,...he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there”*
  - At this point, we see the chief priests reject Jesus just as the scribes and Pharisees had done
  - The chief priests asked Jesus if he could hear what the children were crying out to him, if so, he should tell them to be quiet
  - Jesus asked them had they not read that “out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou has heard perfect praise”
  - Father reminded us that at this point there was no longer a messianic secret

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:18-22** *“In the morning, as he returned to the city,...if you have faith”*
  - Most likely, this fig tree was growing in the Kidron Valley
  - While in Jerusalem, Jesus would usually spend the night on the Eastern side of the Mount of Olives in the house of Martha, Mary, and Lazarus in the village of Bethany
  - Father pointed out that there are several great books by a scholar named *Bargil Pixner* who has written some really great stuff about the Essenes, and the historical nature of what was going on in the first century
  - At issue here is the reason Jesus cursed the fig tree

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- On His way to the temple in the morning, He passed this fruitless fig tree
- When he came to the city of Jerusalem and entered the temple, He also found them fruitless
- Neither had born the fruit that was expected of them
- Jesus then presented his audience with a parable from **Isaiah 5**
- The return of Jesus to the temple meant that God had returned to His vineyard and found those (tenant farmers) in charge had not produced the fruit they were supposed to have produced
- This was a problem, not so much with the people of God, but with the priestly clan who were in charge of them (tenant farmers)

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:23-27** *“And when he entered the temple,...’Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things’”*
  - Jesus responds to the chief priests by stating that if they wanted Him to answer their questions He would ask them a question first
  - When they agreed, He asked them if the baptism of John the Baptist was from heaven or earth?
  - The Jewish leaders were afraid to answer this because if they said it was from men, those who believed in John would reject them as teachers



# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- But, if they said it was from heaven, then Jesus would be able to ask them why didn't they go and be baptized
- Father pointed out that Jesus trapped them in a "conundrum"
- So, Jesus told them that since they would not give Him an answer, He would give them another parable

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:28-32** *“What do you think?...you did not afterward repent and believe in him”*
  - Father asked that we highlight the theme of “the vineyard”
  - He said that we get the whole thing here, the fruit tree, the fig tree, and the vineyard
  - Jesus used a great deal of agrarian references
  - A vineyard or fruit tree could give good fruit, bad fruit, or no fruit at all
  - In the next parable, Jesus asked those leaders which of the two sons did the will of the father?

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- They replied, “The first”
- Father explained that we may find many modern Catholic theologians (and sometimes bishops) who believe that Jesus came and opened His arms to all sinners
- But, that was not what Jesus was saying here
- What happened when Jesus went out and called prostitutes and tax collectors (like Matthew) was that **they repented**
- Thus, in fact, Jesus ate with former tax collectors and harlots

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- They were people who had recognized their wrong ways by hearing Jesus' words, repented and then followed Him
- This image of Jesus gathering all sorts of sinners into a big net like a fisherman is not the true image
- Jesus gathers into his net those who were righteous, and who having listened to the gospel, and had repented from their wickedness

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:33** *“Hear another parable. There was a householder who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge around it, and dug a wine press in it, and built a tower, and let it out to tenants, and went into another country”*
  - Once again, we see the theme of the vineyard as in **Isaiah 5**
    - The man in this parable selected the choicest grapes, protected them with a hedge, built a winepress, and set up a tower to protect them
    - Then, he waited for the harvest
    - When he tasted the grapes, they were sour (wild) grapes

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- The parable then asked what should the owner do with this vineyard?
- The response was to destroy it so that the owner could start over
- This parable in **Isaiah 5** was about the people of Israel
- At this point in Matthew, Jesus added a little detail to the story
- Jesus told the chief priests that these were “tenant farmers” who had been placed in charge of the vineyard and caused the problem
- The master of the vineyard in **Isaiah 5** was God the Father, but in this parable, it was Jesus who had come to Jerusalem and found that it did not have what it was supposed to have in place



# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:34-41** *“When the season of fruit drew near,... ‘who will give him the fruit in their seasons’”*
  - Father called us to look at the season for the fruit,
  - When the master sent his servants to collect the fruit the tenant farmers killed some of them and finally they killed the son who had been sent as the last resort
  - Jesus then asked the leaders what would the master do to those tenant farmers?
  - They replied that he would put them to death and lease the vineyard out to other tenants who would give him the fruit in their seasons

# Matthew 21 (Cont)

- **Matthew 21:42-46** *“Jesus said to them,...because they held him to be a prophet”*
  - The Jewish leaders refused to accept Jesus as the Messiah when he came to the temple
  - Again, that was from **Psalms 118**
  - Over and over, Matthew gave us references from this psalm
  - There is also a reference from **Daniel 2** relating to the stone that will destroy all of the pagan powers
  - At this point, we will continue the story in **Matthew 22**

# The Saint Raymond Prayer

- Glorious Saint Raymond of Peñafort, wise and holy patron,  
come to the aid of those entrusted to your care,  
and all who flee to your protection.  
Intercede for us in our need,  
and help us through your prayers, example, and  
teaching,  
to proclaim the truth of the Gospel to all we meet.  
And when we have reached the fullness of our years,  
we beseech you to guide us home to heaven,  
to live in peace with you, Our Mother Mary, and Our  
Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

# Hail Mary Prayer

- Hail Mary,  
Full of Grace,  
The Lord is with thee.  
Blessed art thou among women,  
and blessed is the fruit  
of thy womb, Jesus.  
Holy Mary,  
Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners now,  
and at the hour of death. Amen.