

**"Go!!!"**

**A Verse-by-Verse Study of the Book of Matthew**

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Bible Studies

## **Like Flashbulbs Popping at a Celebrity Photo-Shoot**

Matthew 21:1-17

### **Israel**



### **In Chapter 21**

Jesus enters Jerusalem at the beginning of Passover week, riding on a donkey.

He sleeps in Bethany each night—a little village just outside of Jerusalem—at the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus.

Wikipedia map

All throughout the book of Matthew, we have seen how Jesus fulfilled prophecy after prophecy – and proved He was Who He said He was: The King of Kings, the Messiah, the Savior of Israel, and the Hope of the World.

As Jesus enters Jerusalem, in this event we now call the “Triumphal Entry”, and “Palm Sunday”, all kinds of prophecies are being fulfilled. It’s nearly blinding - like flashbulbs popping at a celebrity photo-shoot.

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## **Matthew 21:1-5**

**21:1** *Now when they drew near Jerusalem, and came to Bethphage, at the Mount of Olives, then Jesus sent two disciples, <sup>2</sup>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. <sup>3</sup>And if anyone says anything to you, you shall say, 'The Lord has need of them,' and immediately he will send them."*

<sup>4</sup>*All this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying:*

<sup>5</sup>*"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.'"*

What prophecy does Matthew tell us is being fulfilled as Jesus finds a donkey to ride into Jerusalem?

**Zechariah 9:9** : *"Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your King comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey."*

You see...the Old Testament scriptures were very clear about the fact that the Messiah would come some day in judgment and war, to destroy the enemies of Israel. He would arrive on a glorious white horse to be the King of the world.

But Zechariah lets us in on a little mystery: before the King of Israel would come to wage war against His enemies and reign victoriously and rescue His chosen people, He first would come humbly to give Himself as the Savior of the whole world. Before He would swing Himself up onto a glorious white horse and arrive with majesty, He would first ride slowly up to Jerusalem on a borrowed donkey (which Bible scholars tell us was the chosen mount of King David) so that He could be our servant and bring us peace. The King of the whole world would come first on a donkey, offering salvation and love to both Jews and Gentiles.

He never intended to save just one group of people, the ones He called His "chosen" people...He never intended to give the truth to only them...He never

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intended to defeat only their enemies...Or to restore only their fortunes...He never planned to end up with only one jewel in His crown.

He planned all along to be the Savior of the world. He chose the Jews to carry that message to the world. And He chose the Jews to carry the precious seed of life within them through thousands of years until the Savior could be born in God's time. The Savior of the world.

He chose a small group of Jewish men to listen to and respond in faith to Him as He appeared in a humble body, taught angry crowds, and entered His own city as a gentle King on a donkey....so that He could save the whole world.

The donkey ridden by the LORD of the earth into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday almost 2,000 years ago was a sign from God for Jews...and (this is important) also for Gentiles – that He was arriving in mercy....for everyone. The King of Israel on a donkey meant that there would be time for all to come to worship Him before He someday arrived on that white horse.

Here's what that little donkey means to me: The King of the Jews and of the world – who entered Jerusalem on that donkey 2,000 years ago - Has told me He will come again. For me. For the Jews. For Gentiles the world over. All of us who believe in Him should have no doubt He will do what He has said he will do. He has fulfilled every prophecy so far, and He will not fail to fulfill every prophecy still waiting to come to pass. He will keep every single promise He has made to me. I will be mounted on a white horse somewhere behind Him as He destroys the enemies of Israel. But I only get that privilege because over 2,000 years ago he decided to arrive first on a donkey.

### **Matthew 21:6-9**

*<sup>6</sup>So the disciples went and did as Jesus commanded them. <sup>7</sup>They brought the donkey and the colt, laid their clothes on them, and set Him on them.<sup>8</sup>And a very great multitude spread their clothes on the road;*

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*others cut down branches from the trees and spread them on the road. <sup>9</sup>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!"*

What prophecy is fulfilled as Jesus enters Jerusalem with the crowds wildly cheering for Him?

*Daniel 9:24-27:*

*<sup>24</sup> " Seventy weeks are determined  
For your people and for your holy city,  
To finish the transgression,  
To make an end of sins,  
To make reconciliation for iniquity,  
To bring in everlasting righteousness,  
To seal up vision and prophecy,  
And to anoint the Most Holy.*

Daniel, who was a captive in Babylon along with many other Jews over 500 before this moment in time, was promised that there would still be 70 "weeks" left in Jewish history....and that that 70-week-period would begin at the time the Jews of Daniel's time would be given the freedom to return to their home, Israel, and would end with the anointing of their Messiah as King of the world.

When this prophecy says 70 "weeks", it is talking about 70 groups of 7 years each, therefore, 70 "7's" = 490 years. The prophecy is saying that the Jews of Daniel's day would return home to Israel, and 490 years later their Messiah would be a victorious King, and their sin problem would be solved forever. Wow!

*<sup>25</sup> " Know therefore and understand,  
That from the going forth of the command  
To restore and build Jerusalem  
Until Messiah the Prince,  
There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks;*

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*The street shall be built again, and the wall,  
Even in troublesome times.*

They are promised that a certain amount of time would pass after their return to Jerusalem, and then they would see the first coming of their Messiah. How much time would pass between their return and His first coming? Answer: 7 weeks + 62 weeks.

This takes a little addition.

7 "7's"	=	49 years
62 "7's"	=	<u>434 years</u>
TOTAL		483 years

In other words, the Jews of Daniel's time were being told they would be able to return to Jerusalem from Babylon, and then 483 years later the Messiah would appear. And so He did. The Jews of Daniel's time returned to Jerusalem and 483 years later Jesus Christ entered the city of Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, to the shouts and cries of Jewish people saying "Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord." Really. Exactly 483 years.

<sup>26</sup> *"And after the sixty-two weeks  
Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself;*

What was prophesied to happen after that? The prophecy (above) promised that after the Messiah would come for the first time, He would be "cut off". And indeed, He was. He entered Jerusalem to the praise of the Jews, and a few days later He died on a Roman cross just outside the city.

*And the people of the prince who is to come  
Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.  
The end of it shall be with a flood,  
And till the end of the war desolations are determined.*

The prophecy continues...sometime after the Messiah would be "cut off", the city of Jerusalem would be destroyed once again. ( In 70 AD the city of Jerusalem was, indeed, completely destroyed – by the Romans).

The prophecy specifies that Jerusalem would be destroyed by a group of people who would be servants of a "prince who will come" – meaning, the

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anti-christ, and desolations (horrible things) would be poured on Jerusalem and on its people from that time until today. (and so they have).

Then...sometime after Jerusalem would be destroyed.....

*27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week;*

OK – so remember - Daniel was told it would take 490 years for the Messiah to be anointed as King of the earth. And that same Messiah would be “cut off” after 483 years. Therefore, after that 483 years, there would still be 7 more years (one week of years) yet to come before the Messiah returned (the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming) and would be anointed King of the earth. That 7 years is the final 7 years (some call it the “tribulation”, or “end times”) that we are still looking forward to.

The “he” in verse 27 is the anti-christ, the evil ruler who will come at the beginning of that last 7 years. He will make a covenant – a 7 year covenant – with the Jews and with the whole world. It will be a peace treaty – bringing peace to the whole world.

*But in the middle of the week  
He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering.  
And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate,  
Even until the consummation, which is determined,  
Is poured out on the desolate.”*

But in the middle of that 7 year covenant, he will put an end to all the peace he had promised, he will take away the right of the Jewish people to worship in their temple, and will set up an abomination in that temple. His reign of terror will continue until the end of the 7 years, when the wrath of God will be poured out on him (the anti-christ) and on all who will chose to rebelliously follow him instead of believing in the One, True God.

Now...back to the Triumphal Entry....as Jesus enters Jerusalem, described here in Matthew 21. 483 years of the 490 was up. The big stopwatch in God’s hand went “click” (stop!) – and for some reason the last 7 years would have to wait. The Jewish people would, at the end of this Passover week, reject their Messiah, and would kill Him. That big stopwatch will not “click” again until Jesus is ready to return. And when that stopwatch “clicks”, the last 7 years will commence, and Jesus Himself will give the anti-christ the

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freedom to put a worldwide peace treaty in place. He (antichrist) will have great power for those 7 last years, but then be destroyed, once and for all.

### **Matthew 21:10-17**

*<sup>10</sup> And when He had come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, "Who is this?"*

*<sup>11</sup> So the multitudes said, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee."*

*<sup>12</sup> 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. <sup>13</sup> 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.'"*

*<sup>14</sup> Then the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple, and He healed them. <sup>15</sup> 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 <sup>16</sup> 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'?"*

*<sup>17</sup> Then He left them and went out of the city to Bethany, and He lodged there.*

What prophecy is fulfilled as Jesus once more clears the temple of money-changers and is praised by even the children?

*Isaiah 56:7 "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."*

*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."*

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*"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."*

You see, even in Isaiah's time, over 500 years before this Triumphal Entry, the Jews knew the house of God was for all nations. But they had corrupted the purpose of God. The temple of the Lord in Jerusalem had become a stone of stumbling for Jews and Gentile alike.

At the Triumphal Entry in Matthew 21, throngs of people were ready to worship Jesus, to praise Jesus, and to honor Him as their leader, but they had no intention of repenting. They fell short of humbling their hearts to Him and admitting their sin. There really is no true praise until there is repentance. Only true praise will eventually silence the enemy.

In falling short of true repentance and true praise, they brought down 2,000+ years of desolations on their shoulders...but (because God can take that which is intended for evil and use it for good) this also opened up a door of hope for the whole rest of the world. The temple of God would indeed become a house of prayer for all nations – as the Spirit of God would come to live within each individual believer in Jesus – and each believer would be the temple of God to the sinful world around him. (Colossians 1:27)

The flashbulbs popping – prophecies being fulfilled at this unprecedented time in history – were rejected by the Jews. So....was this the end for the Jews? Were they set aside forever as the church entered the scene and began to minister God's truths from this point on? Next week....

### **In Summary, Discussion Questions:**

1. 21:5 What prophecy does Matthew tell us is being fulfilled as Jesus finds a donkey to ride into Jerusalem?
2. 21:6-9 What prophecy is fulfilled as Jesus enters Jerusalem with the crowds wildly cheering for Him?
3. 21:10-17 What prophecy is fulfilled as Jesus once more clears the temple of money-changers and is praised by even the children?