

## By What Authority I Do These Things

### **Matthew 20:24 – 21:17**

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~ Our last few reports from our Spiritual Safari had us marking time and feeling as if we were standing still in our so-called movement through Matthew. Well, we're on the freeway to Jerusalem in this report with Jesus and we're rolling down there at a thousand miles per hour tonight; we'll be there before this report is over. We just left the laborers in the vineyard on our way here and Jesus explained all of that to us properly, correctly and completely. If you have not read our last report and, indeed, the entire collection of twenty-eight safari reports from Matthew so far, then I highly suggest you go back and do so now. Remember, Jesus told the apostles that He was going to Jerusalem to die on the cross and the disciples and their mom could only ask who was going to be the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? The reality of what's happening still isn't being fully processed in the minds of the followers of Jesus.

The apostles knew this was the Messiah and that He was moving towards His Throne; but they could not make via crucifixion a part of their thinking! They couldn't accept it at this time. Most people today still cannot accept it. Modern liberalism has reached the place where they want to get to the Throne Room without the experience of the cross. They're in for a big surprise because we're going with Jesus to the cross in this safari. No other way will lead us home. This profound and fundamental teaching wasn't designed in a laboratory, my beloved - and it wasn't manufactured in some factory. This was not conceived in a college classroom - nor from the halls of faith! Some mortally profound and outstanding individual did not dream this up on a chalkboard. The military didn't capture this intelligence resource in some sort of reconnaissance effort. We have a simple statement – there's no other way but the way of the cross; only the way of the cross leads home – that song came from a brush arbor church somewhere at some time but the concept of the cross came from God Himself. Mankind could never have conceived of a poverty-stricken God dying in crucifixion for their sins. It's just entirely beyond man's creative and impulsive thinking. The fact that man's philosophies utterly dismiss any

notion of supernatural phenomenon reveals that man did not produce Christ as a religious theory. Indeed, when the pious man invents religion, he also goes to great lengths to dismiss the Lord Jesus Christ altogether.

We observed Jesus tell us before that the position in the Kingdom was not His to give. Every believer is going to work down here for their rewards in Heaven. It's something every genuine believer should want and desire. Friends, who you are up there is completely contingent upon what you do down here. Let's press towards the mark for the prize, people. There is a very high calling of God in the Lord Jesus Christ but there are too few that even care to try. Of course, salvation is a gift we do not work for; rewards in Heaven are what we should want to work for. I don't write these reports to be saved – I write these reports because I AM saved! You're going to have to get out on the spiritual race track if you want to win. We need to be engaged in the Lord's work here on earth. This is all very legitimate and Paul will make that clear to us later on....

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***24 And when the ten heard it, they were moved with indignation against the two brethren.***

~ And can you guess why they were moved with indignation? - Because THEY wanted the right and left hand in Heaven! When you read verse twenty-six you can replace the word "minister" with "servant." This is a new approach of greatness and service. It's STILL new today! This must be sorted out Scripturally in the minds of anyone who desires a meaningful relationship with Christ that might produce acceptable fruit in the form of Christian service. Too many people are singing for a prize but they are ruining it by walking over the other soloists. If you are a true minister of the Gospel then you aren't trying to push anyone else aside. I hope we have made this crystal clear? If you want to be great in Heaven go take the lowest place you can find in Christian service down here; and Luke will bring this back up in is Gospel....

***25 But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them.***

***26 But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister;***

***27 And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:***

***28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.***

~ This is the fifth time Jesus makes the statement that He is going to a crucifixion – His Own! If there is any verse in the Bible that should be memorized it's verse twenty-eight. You never know when you'll have the opportunity to speak to someone's heart and tell them why the Lord Jesus Christ came into this world and Who He is today! Too many so called pastors erroneously think their congregation should be doing everything under the sun. Sooner or later that church dies out. Many hang on for decades with no real growth; except for mistaking a lot of people turnover as progress. They say they are planting churches – but, friends, they're slaughtering sheep! Don't forget it and do not kid yourself about this! Jesus is making it clear what His mission and purpose was to His disciples but all they were concerned with was themselves. Moving on, we have to slow down because we're one step ahead of the crowd; we have already left Jericho on a bullet train, of course, but this says....

***29 And as they departed from Jericho, a great multitude followed him.***

~ We're going UP to Jerusalem with Jesus to die with thieves on the cross; and that is the opposite, of course, from the man who went DOWN from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell amongst thieves. We can see the other side of the freeway clearly today but we will never, ever travel that side of the road in our safari. This is a one way street. The only road we have is one on which we can come to Him Who died in our stead. On this road we'll see something most people usually don't see, too; and that is that Jesus never defended Himself at His trial. What they never even seem to contemplate

is: why not? Jesus didn't offer one word for a defense because He was dying for me and you – your sin and mine - and there is no defense for that – so there you are - guilty! Poof – we're gone....

***30 And, behold, two blind men sitting by the way side, when they heard that Jesus passed by, cried out, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.***

***31 And the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace: but they cried the more, saying, Have mercy on us, O Lord, thou Son of David.***

~ I like these two blind men because they couldn't be kept quiet. Different people are saved in different ways. It is not required that you go down an aisle or make yourself a public spectacle. You could be saved reading along at the kitchen table right now. That doesn't mean you can't be saved at a church by a very definite movement of the Spirit of God Who carries you away; but everyone there at this time would have told you these two blind men were making a public spectacle of themselves. Remember, the other woman claimed the Son of David when she had no claim on Him? – These men have a claim to Christ and they're exercising that right here....

***32 And Jesus stood still, and called them, and said, What will ye that I shall do unto you?***

***33 They say unto him, Lord, that our eyes may be opened.***

~ It was obvious what the problem was – and what they wanted - but, you see, when you come to Jesus you're going to have to confess to Him that you're a sinner; and if you don't – then you're not going to get saved! I get a little weary of all these little Jesus people running around so pompously pious saying they have no sins they need to be forgiven for when they have never come to Him as a SINNER to be saved! Jesus will say to them, "...I never knew you." You are coming to Christ on THAT basis or you're not coming to Him at all! That is the offense of the cross, friends.

Conversely, there are those who revel in coming to the cross. They bring perfume and spray it all over the place talking about their goodness and good deeds and intentions. The problem is: you and I don't have any goodness; none whatsoever to present to Him. Psychology does not sweeten human character. You can train man to go through motions and groom him to look his best and what is flesh will still be flesh tomorrow morning. You can no more sweeten human conduct by the psychological method than you can sweeten dog excrement by pouring a gallon of Chanel No. Five perfume on it! You will waste every single drop of very expensive perfume and you will lose its purpose by doing so. It's the same thing with religion; you MUST present as a sinner to receive Christ if you desire Him as your Savior....

***34 So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him every step....all the way to the cross!***

## XXI

***1 And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the Mount of Olives, then sent Jesus two disciples,***

***2 Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.***

***3 And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them.***

~ Friends, we have finally arrived at Jerusalem and it's going to get weird the rest of the way through Matthew in our Spiritual Safari. Jesus is going to condemn the Pharisees in some heart attacking statements. If you take heart medication it may be best to act preventively before we move along. This event we now encounter was prophesied of but I don't think we should necessarily turn it into a miracle, personally. I think the normal and natural way it's given here is not even supernatural. I think Jesus had friends that knew He was coming to Jerusalem, and I think they knew what

Jesus was coming for, too, by the way; unlike His disciples – but I digress. This was as simple as someone lending their car to Jesus for a trip into town. I think, very reasonably, Jesus said, “I’ll be there at Passover.” So, they were waiting for Him! It’s a whole lot more probable and wonderful when we consider the Bible realistically....

***4 All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Zechariah the prophet in his ninth chapter at versenine, saying,***

***5 Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.***

~ Zechariah doesn’t even give the full quotation when he says, “....rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass.” We went over this thoroughly in Zechariah; and a careful comparison is required to reveal the omissions made and the purpose for the omissions. “Rejoice greatly....daughter of Zion” is not here in Matthew. Why not? - Because Jesus isn’t coming to town for rejoicing right now. That refers to the return of Christ to the earth to establish His Kingdom. When Zechariah says, “....He is just and having salvation” that is also omitted by Matthew. The only reasonable hypothesis is that these will be fulfilled at His return in the future when Christ establishes His Kingdom and THAT will be the REAL “triumphal entry.”

Further, most people make the assumption that Jesus was meek and lowly because He came riding into town on this little donkey. Well, the donkey was the animal that kings rode on. The donkey has a lower center of gravity than a horse does; and if you have ever ridden on a donkey you know they are sleek, smooth moving and well-balanced. They are definitely the sports car of the animal riding world. Actually, a donkey would have been the equivalent to rolling up in a Bentley – nothing BUT class and prominence. The donkey is the animal of peace, too. Being on the donkey signified He is offering Himself as their King; and, in spite of the fact that our picture is of Royalty, the prophet says, “....He was humble.” That’s pretty important to see, friends....

**6 And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them,**

**7 And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.**

**8 And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.**

**9 And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest.**

**10 And when he was come into Jerusalem, all the city was moved, saying, Who is this?**

**11 And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee.**

~ Well, the same inquisitive crowd crying Hosanna today will also be crying, "...crucify him" in just a few days! I don't think we should call this the "triumphal entry" as it's not a proper fit. Only certain portions of the prophecy were fulfilled. Jesus is coming into the city in order that He might be their Savior and He is making His final public presentation to the people on purpose here. When we put all of our Biblical pictures of this account with the same account in other Gospels we will have a composite of something very wonderful. We will also learn, without doubt, that Jesus did this on three separate occasions – on different days. This was NOT done just this one time.

Chronologically, the first account Mark tells us of would have been Saturday and there were no money changers present in the temple on that day. Mark says Jesus just goes in and looks around. So, Mark has Him entering as the Priest of God. Sunday is the account we are looking at here in Matthew and the money changers are around. Jesus cleanses the temple. So, Matthew has Jesus entering as the King. Luke tells us about Monday, the second day of the week, and that's when Jesus wept over Jerusalem, entered the temple and taught and healed. So, Matthew has

Jesus enter the temple as the King. Luke has Jesus enter the temple as the Prophet. Mark has Jesus enter as the Priest. Jesus enters the temple as the Priest, the King and the Prophet during His earthly ministry. Interestingly, each day they packed up and left for Bethany – they do not spend the night in the city of Jerusalem until He is arrested. The so called triumphal entry ends at the cross.

Hebrews puts this all together for us succinctly in chapter nine at verse twenty-eight, as the writer says, “....so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him shall He appear the second time without sin unto salvation.” Next time Jesus is on earth we are told His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives. That’s where Christ will touch down when He returns to establish His earthly Kingdom. That will be the entry we can all call a real triumph, my friend. I don’t call going to the cross to die for my sin a victory at all! By His death, burial and resurrection salvation will be offered....

***12 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves,***

***13 And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves.***

***14 And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple; and he healed them.***

***15 And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased,***

***16 And said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?***

***17 And he left them, and went out of the city into Bethany; and he lodged there.***



~ So, we're going to end this leg of our Spiritual Safari expedition through the entire Word of God with Jesus healing everyone who came to Him as a sinner; and the chief priests resenting Him for doing so. This is the total rejection of religion as Jesus leaves, too. Jesus has left the city for this night. However, He's coming back tomorrow ~

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