

MATTHEW 21

PALM SUNDAY (21:1-11)

St. Romanos the Melodist on Christ's entrance into Jerusalem:

Thou hast shown Thy strength in choosing the humble, for it was a sign of poverty For Thee to sit on the ass; but as Glorious, Thou dost shake Zion. The cloaks of the disciples pointed to frugality; But the song of the children and the throng of people was a sign of Thy strength, As they cry out, "Hosanna in the highest," that, Save! Thou Who art on high, save the humbled; Heeding the palm branches, take pity on us, Look upon those who cry out: "Thou art the blessed One Who comest to call up Adam."

CHRIST CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE (21:12-17)

Blessed Theophylact on seeing whether your mind should be cleansed like the Temple:

Look and see whether perhaps you have made God's temple, that is, your mind, a den of thieves, that is, the demons' lair. It will be such a den if we have thoughts full of the desire for material things, of buying and selling...If we mix spiritual teaching with thoughts of material gain, we have made ourselves a den of thieves.

THE WITHERED FIG TREE (21:18-22)

An early Christian commentary on the relationship between faith and grace:

'And whatever you ask in prayer with faith, you will receive.' God gives the grace of faith, but humanity nourishes and strengthens it. Faith then causes one to abstain from evil and to do good works. The more you abstain from evil and follow the good, the stronger you will make your faith. The less you abstain from evil, however, and the more you neglect good works, the weaker your faith will become.

THE PARABLES OF THE TWO SONS AND THE TENANTS IN THE VINEYARD (21:23-46)

St. John Chrysostom on what we can learn from the parable of the two sons:

How many other such changes would you see, both to have taken place of old, and now taking place every day? For this reason then I say, neither let him on the stage despair, nor let him in the church be confident.

Blessed Theophylact on what we can learn from the parable of the tenants:

Understand the vineyard to mean also the Divine Scriptures in which the hedge is the letter, and the wine-press that is dug the depth of the Spirit; the tower is theology, lofty and exalted. These Scriptures, then, were first possessed by bad husbandmen, the Pharisees, but God has let them out to us who cultivate them well.

Find more study guides and other resources online at orthodoxyouth.org/matthew.

Quote Sources: Manlio Simonetti, editor. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture: Matthew 1a and 1b* (IVP)
Blessed Theophylact. *The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Chrysostom Press)

© 2010 Jason J. Barker and the Department of Youth Ministry—Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America.