

Second Wednesday of Lent – 2024
Wednesday, February 21 at 11 am & 7 pm



The Holy Week Journey

Tree Cursed

Temple
Cleansed

Tree Withered

Based on the Booklet, Days 3-5

Text: Mark 11:12-26 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: As we continue **The Holy Week Journey**, this is sermon **2 of 14**.

- **Part 1:** On Palm Sunday, Jesus was anointed *early on Sunday (our Saturday evening)* with an expensive perfume in preparation for His burial; then, *on Sunday morning*, He made His triumphal entry into Jerusalem.
- **Part 2 – Today:** On Monday of Holy Week, Jesus cursed a tree and took radical action to rid the temple of various evil practices. Then, on Tuesday morning, Jesus taught His disciples *how to move a mountain!*

Day 3 (Fr, 2/16) – Jesus Curses the Fig Tree: 11:12 On the next day [*Monday morning*], when they had left Bethany [*apparently without eating, and where they had stayed overnight*], [Jesus] became hungry. ¹³ Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴ He said to it, “May no one ever eat fruit from you again!” And His disciples were listening.

- On the Surface: Jesus was hungry and expected to find something to eat on **a fig tree with leaves** but found nothing.
- The Deeper Meaning: The *fruitless* fig tree pointed to the *faithless* people in Israel: they looked good from a distance – *like a fig tree with leaves*, but upon taking a closer look, *they had no fruit!*
- Jesus Wrote to the Pastor of the Church in Sardis:
 “I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead” (Rev. 3:1 NIV). When a pastor is spiritually dead, *he has no awareness of whether his church members are dead*. At Jesus time, many of the Jewish leaders *were like the fruitless fig tree*. When we have saving faith, **we will have the corresponding fruit!**

Day 4 (Sa, 2/17) – Jesus Cleanses the Temple: 11:15 Then [as they continued walking] they came to Jerusalem. And [Jesus] entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; ¹⁶ and He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple. ¹⁷ And He *began* to teach and say to them, “Is it not written [in Isaiah 56:7], ‘MY HOUSE SHALL BE CALLED A HOUSE OF PRAYER FOR ALL THE NATIONS’? But you have made it a **ROBBERS’ DEN** [Jer. 7:11].” // “**FOR ALL THE NATIONS**” – The temple proper provided a sacred place for the Jews to pray, but the Court of the Gentiles, the area outside of the temple proper, *had become a den of robbers* – SO JESUS TOOK RADICAL ACTION! Here at BLC, **let us attempt to do ALL THINGS to God’s glory!**

¹⁸ The chief priests and the scribes heard *this*, and *began* seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching. ¹⁹ When evening came, they would go out of the city.

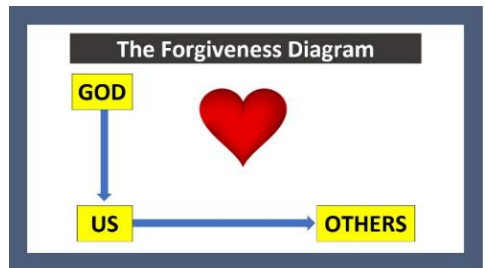
- The Rage of the Jewish Leaders: On the day that Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead, the Bible tells us that the Jewish leaders, “...from that day on... planned together to kill [ἀποκτείνωσιν] Him” (John 11:53). Then, on *Holy Monday*, they were even **MORE ENRAGED** and sought to “destroy [ἀπολέσωσιν] Him”! The truth is good, *it sets free from sin and death* 😊, **but many HATE THE TRUTH** 😞!
- “out of the city” – They probably returned to Bethany for the night – to the home of Lazarus, Mary, and Martha.

Day 5 (Mo, 2/19) – The Lesson from the Withered Fig Tree:

11:20 As they were passing by in the morning [on Tuesday], they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up [most die from the top down]. ²¹ Being reminded, Peter said to Him, “Rabbi, look, the fig tree which You cursed has withered.” ²² And Jesus answered saying to them, “Have faith in God. ²³ Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says is going to happen, it will be *granted* him. ²⁴ Therefore I say to you, all things for which you pray and ask, believe that you have received them, and they will be *granted* you.

²⁵ “Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in heaven will also forgive you your transgressions. ²⁶ *But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in heaven forgive your transgressions.*”

- Amazed at the Withered Tree: Jesus cursed it on *Monday morning*; then, when they saw it on *Tuesday morning*, it was withered! Jesus used the occasion to teach about the *POWER OF PRAYER*.
- Key Ingredient of Prayer: ***Complete trust in God!*** Kretzmann explained: “the confidence must be absolute, unqualified, not tinged by the slightest doubt” (see [James 1:5-7](#)).
- Key Hinderance of Prayer: ***Refusal to forgive!*** Kretzmann explained: “There cannot be, in the heart of a praying person, [hostility], hatred, [anger], ill will, or any other unfriendly feeling which is [different than] the demand of God that a forgiving spirit must dominate our actions. No matter whether Christians have been wronged with or without reason, whether they feel hurt rightfully or wrongfully, their hearts must be filled with forgiveness toward all men.” As we have freely received God’s gift of forgiveness, ***let us freely offer our forgiveness to others!***



Let Us Pray: Father in heaven, the great deceiver is great, *but You are greater!* Grant us spiritual eyes, saving faith, and the evidence of fruit. We also ask for unwavering trust in You and a free-flowing of forgiveness from us to others!

Website: www.BLC7500.com; **YouTube and Podcast:** “Benefit from the Bible”
Facebook: “Bethlehem Parma” / **Pastor:** RevRLGreen@aol.com; 440-292-5915
 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134 / 440-845-2230