

Mark 11:11-26 – The cursed fig tree

King Jesus has come to Jerusalem, to bring in his kingdom. He has come to bring true peace to all the nations, by giving them peace with God. Now Mark tells us what Jesus did in Jerusalem in the few days before he went to the cross.

1. The King Visits His House

In this passage we see Jesus in the temple (v11), then a fig tree (v12-14), then Jesus in the temple again (v15-19), then the fig tree again (v20-26). What does this all mean? It is easy. The fig tree is a picture for us. It helps us to understand what Jesus was doing in the temple. He had come to his people (Israel), looking for fruit. As the King of God's people, he was visiting his kingdom. Every good ruler will look at his country and make decisions and judgments. But when Jesus came, he did not find the fruit he was looking for. He found sin and wickedness. So he threw the people out of the temple. This was a sign of judgment. About forty years later, in AD70, the temple and the nation of Israel were totally destroyed. Jesus was warning them that if they remained fruitless, then God's judgment would come – and it did. As Christians we need to know that Jesus visits and judges his people. He commands that we have fruit too (John 15:1-11). Have you change since you became a Christian? Can you show us the fruit of a life following Jesus? Or are you just the same?

2. What The King Found In His House (v15-19)

The temple was meant to be a “house of prayer for all nations” (Isaiah 56:3-8). There is one God who made all men. He desires them all to worship him. This is his plan. He wants us all to seek him and become people of prayer. God's desire was that Israel should show the world God's greatness, and attract the nations to him. They were meant to bring the good news to all peoples. Is this what we are doing as a church? Is this what you are doing in your home and place of work? Are you trying to attract people to our beautiful and wonderful God?

Instead, Jesus found that the temple had become a marketplace. People had found ways to use it to make money. Really, they were worshipping wealth, not the true God. When people use holy things as a way of getting gain, they are ready for judgment. Jesus did not accept any excuses – and he will not from us either.

3. The King Tells Us To Trust Him (v20-25)

It is difficult to faithfully follow Jesus. It is too easy for us to make excuses. Jesus tells us the key – we need to have faith in God. This means believing what God has said. (Faith is not believing anything we want to be true – but what is written in God's Bible). Even if a mountain is in the way of God's kingdom, it can be removed. If we have faith, we will pray and ask. There are no excuses – the only reason we do not go forward as Christians or a church is that we fail to believe and obey. Jesus warns us that for our prayers to be heard, we must be obeying God. If we will not forgive and love each other, we cannot be heard. Who do you need to forgive today? Do it, then you can expect God's kingdom to go forward!