

MARK Lesson 11

Mark Chapter 11

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Memory verses for this week: *1 Cor 13:4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, 1 Cor 13:5 Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; 1 Cor 13:6 Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; 1 Cor 13:7 Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.*

Introduction:

In Chapter 10, we studied about the conflict that came up after James and John expressed their desire to be seated on each side of Christ in His upcoming kingdom. Jesus taught that if one wants to be important, they must minister and be a servant unto others. We closed with the healing of blind Bartimaeus who received not only his sight, but also received salvation and followed after Christ.

I. The Triumphal Entry

Mark 11:1 And when they came nigh to Jerusalem, unto Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount of Olives, he sendeth forth two of his disciples,

Mark 11:2 And saith unto them, Go your way into the village over against you: and as soon as ye be entered into it, ye shall find a colt tied, whereon never man sat; loose him, and bring him.

Mark 11:3 And if any man say unto you, Why do ye this? say ye that the Lord hath need of him; and straightway he will send him hither.

Bethany was a city on the east side of the Mount of Olives approximately 2 miles from Jerusalem. Jesus sends two of his disciples to obtain a colt for Jesus to ride into Jerusalem that day. The colt was a young animal that had never been rode. The purpose of riding the colt into the city was to fulfill prophecy which was recorded in Zechariah 9:9.

Zec 9:9 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.

If someone was to stop them, they were to say that the Lord hath need of him and they would let them have the animal. By Jesus coming into Jerusalem on this colt, he proclaimed himself to be the long awaited Messiah. This was His public presentation to the nation of Israel. But rather than accepting Christ for who He was, the religious leaders of the people reject Him and condemn Him to death. It is interesting to note that in the last few chapters that Jesus has been

moving toward Jerusalem. While moving geographically to the city, He's moving chronologically closer to His death. This is the last week of His earthly life.

The Lord and disciples approached Jerusalem from the East. Bethphage (house of figs), Bethany (house of dates), and the Mount of Olives were all located just a short distance East of Jerusalem. From the Mount of Olives they could look down on the whole city with the temple area in the foreground. This is a breathtaking view.

Mark 11:4 And they went their way, and found the colt tied by the door without in a place where two ways met; and they loose him.

Mark 11:5 And certain of them that stood there said unto them, What do ye, loosing the colt?

Mark 11:6 And they said unto them even as Jesus had commanded: and they let them go.

Mark 11:7 And they brought the colt to Jesus, and cast their garments on him; and he sat upon him.

It is clear the two disciples obeyed the Lord in obtaining the colt. As expected, they are challenged as to why they were taking it. They answer according to the Lord's instructions. How much trouble we bring upon ourselves when we do not go where God sends and speak what He says. God had prepared the heart of the owner to allow the animal to be used. They soon return with the colt. Jesus mounts the colt and starts on his journey. It says that the disciples cast their garments on the colt, and the Lord rides the animal into Jerusalem. The garments spread on the colt made a rough saddle. However, the unbroken colt makes no trouble, but like the wind and the waves obey the Lord, so did the colt.

Mark 11:8 And many spread their garments in the way: and others cut down branches off the trees, and strowed them in the way.

Mark 11:9 And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord:

Mark 11:10 Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.

Verse 8 shows the honor bestowed on Him as he made his entry into the city.

II Kings 9:12-13, ...Thus saith the LORD, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then they hasted, and took every man his garment, and put it under him on the top of the stairs, and blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king.

As Christ travels along the road to Jerusalem, it says many spread their garments in the way while others cut down branches from the trees and strowed them in the way. And these both in front of the Lord and behind Him cry out

“Hosanna; Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest.” The word Hosanna means an exclamation of adoration. We know the night Jesus was born there in Bethlehem we have record of the angels proclaiming the great event. While they did not use this exact word, I know there was an exclamation of adoration.

Luke 2:8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

Luke 2:9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

Luke 2:10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

Luke 2:11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

Luke 2:13 And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

Much acclaim is given to Jesus by the people of the city. These words they are using are from a messianic Psalm.

Psa. 118:22-26, The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the LORD hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it. Save now, I beseech thee, O LORD: O LORD, I beseech thee, send now prosperity. Blessed be he that cometh in the name of the LORD: we have blessed you out of the house of the LORD.

Jesus made no objection to this, which indicates He approved. This event marks the termination point of Daniel's 69th week.

Dan. 9:25, Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

Christ presented Himself to this vast multitude of Jews who were gathered for the Passover. There may have been over 2 million Jews present for the Passover.

Of course in reality, Christ was about to be the true Passover sacrifice.

I Cor. 5:7, Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us.

While these openly honored Him, in their hearts they denied Him. Things are still like this today in Christendom. Lip service is easy, but living for the Lord and taking up our cross daily takes commitment and faith.

Mark 11:11 And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple: and when he had looked round about upon all things, and now the eventide was come, he went out unto Bethany with the twelve.

Jesus goes to the temple there in Jerusalem and looks around to see that all things are in place. When the evening comes, he returns to Bethany with the twelve. Remember that this is the city where Mary, Martha, and Lazarus lived.

II. The Barren Fig Tree

Mark 11:12 And on the morrow, when they were come from Bethany, he was hungry:

Mark 11:13 And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet.

Mark 11:14 And Jesus answered and said unto it, No man eat fruit of thee hereafter for ever. And his disciples heard it.

Early in the morning Christ was hungry as He journeyed from Bethany to Jerusalem. This reveals the human side of the eternal Son of God. A fruitless fig tree is what they found. It had leaves which would indicate fruit. This tree is a type of Israel.

Isa. 5:1-7, Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briers and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the LORD

of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.

This tree serves as a lesson for Christians today.

Jesus pronounces judgment on the tree. To be fruitless is a sin, so we need to learn how to be fruitful.

Psa. 1:1-3, Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

John 15:16, I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

This fig tree they found had many leaves. I know when I was growing up, some years we would have wonderful stalks of cotton, but in the end when it came time to harvest the crop, many times there would be few bolls on the stalks. So a beautiful plant is not guarantee of fruit. Jesus looks and expects to see some fruit, but finds no figs at all. The time of figs was not yet... the bible says. When Jesus finds no figs on the tree, he causes a curse upon the plant. He says that there would be no fruit ever on that tree. When Jesus looks on us, does he see a pretty looking Christian, but no fruit in our lives? I hope not. If we want to be pleasing to the Lord, we will bring forth fruit.

Mat 7:15 Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.

Mat 7:16 Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

Mat 7:17 Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit.

Mat 7:18 A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

Mat 7:19 Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.

Mat 7:20 Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

III. Jesus Purifies the Temple

Mark 11:15 And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves;

Mark 11:16 And would not suffer that any man should carry any vessel through the temple.

Mark 11:17 And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves.

This was Christ's second cleansing of the temple. He had cleansed the temple soon after He began His ministry (John 2:13-16), and now He cleanses it again near the end of His ministry. Verse 15 records the sin being conducted in the temple. Sacrificial animals and birds were sold to the Jews who came from great distances. Of course this turning of the temple into a sale barn was a profitable racket with inflated prices no doubt. It was being done in the court of the gentiles, and was not a good testimony. The half-shekel temple tax had to be paid in Jewish coin. The money changers exchanged these coins for a profit.

Note that Jesus cast them out. In doing so, He taught them the true use of His house. I'm afraid many today don't think twice to making God's house a house of merchandise. We see everything from bazaars to garage sales being held in the place that God has declared to be a place of prayer.

In the book of Luke, we find that at the age of 12 Jesus used the temple as a place of teaching.

Luke 2:46, And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions.

He revealed it as a place for His Father's business. We need to keep God's sanctuary wholly a holy place, and think about what we do and whether this brings honor and glory to the Lord. Have respect and dignity associated with the Lord's House.

Luke 2:49, And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?

Jesus taught that it was a house of prayer for all nations.

Isa. 56:7, ...for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people.

Jer. 7:11, Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.

This unholy business was conducted in the court of the Gentiles. What a testimony for the Gentiles who might come there to pray. Although the church

is not the building, we need to realize that the building is only the place where the Church meets. Nevertheless it is bought and paid for with the Lord's tithes and offerings. We believe that it is important to be careful what kind of activities are carried on there.

As people came to the temple, they had to have an animal to offer for their sacrifice. The moneychangers had come up with a money making plan where the people didn't have to bring an animal with them, but could buy one right there in the temple. Jesus comes in and sees these people who were making a profit at the Lord's house, and it stirred him up. God designed the temple for the people, and it was to be a place of prayer, not a place of merchandise. He turns over the tables and drives the moneychangers out of the temple. It speaks of him taking a band of cords to do this in John's account of the Gospel.

John 2:15 And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables;

John 2:16 And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

Many want to believe that you should never be upset as a Christian. However, we should be upset with sin just like the Lord is. We are just to not let things get carried away. The bible says God is angry with the wicked everyday. Sin should upset us too. As Christians we should love the things God loves, and hate the things He hates.

Psa 7:11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day.

Eph 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

Eph 4:27 Neither give place to the devil.

Eccl 5:6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it was an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?

Isaiah 29:13: "Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men.

Mark 11:18 And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.

Mark 11:19 And when even was come, he went out of the city.

Mark 11:20 And in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots.

Mark 11:21 And Peter calling to remembrance saith unto him, Master, behold, the fig tree which thou cursedst is withered away.

His cleansing of the temple increased the hatred of the religious leaders. When evening came He left the city. While time was drawing near, Christ's time had not yet come and He knew the evening would be the time they would seek Him.

Christ explains the judgement of the fruitless fig tree. Peter points out that the fig tree dried from the roots. In verse 18, as soon as the scribes and chief priests heard about what Christ did in running the money changers out of the temple, they sought a way to destroy Jesus. Most likely they were making money off of these people also, and Christ was messing up their arrangement. God's ways and man's ways are far, far apart. Jesus was such a great teacher that the people were astonished at his doctrine. I think it is worthy to note that even though the religious leaders sought to destroy him, they still feared him. Jesus had great power, and only a fool would not recognize that He was no ordinary man. Even Nicodemus, a priest himself, knew Jesus was a great teacher come from God.

John 3:1 There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews:

John 3:2 The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.

Peter notices that the fig tree that Christ had cursed had withered away. We are totally dependent on God in our Christian lives. Jesus takes this opportunity to teach the disciples about faith and prayer.

IV. The Lesson on Faith

Mark 11:22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

Mark 11:23 For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.

The lack of faith and obedience had brought Israel to a fruitless condition. We should not be without faith, as it is the substance that can move mountains.

Using the fig tree as an illustration, Jesus gives his disciples a lesson on faith. He began by telling them that they need to have faith in God. Nothing seems to move God like a person who has total faith in Him. We have a lot of great promises in God's Word, but this one here in verse 23 is one of the greatest. If we really believe God, He tells us that we can literally move mountains. Do you have a mountain of troubles? Trust God.. He will see you through. Got a mountain of financial trouble? Jesus will see you through it all. The key is to believe and doubt not in our heart.

J. Vernon McGee said this about prayer.

It's interesting that this discourse on the prayer of faith grew out of Peter's calling attention to the blighted fig tree. You see, the first step in prayer must be faith in God. The writer to the Hebrews stated this same principle: "But without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). If you don't believe in God, friend, then the skeptic is certainly correct when he says that prayer is a madman talking to himself. Having faith in God is the first step.

Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Mark 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Mark 11:26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

What great power there is in believing prayer. Verse 25 warns of the necessity of having a forgiving spirit. If Israel failed in these things and God judged them, then Christians and churches today should take heed that they fall not into that error.

Jesus tells us in verse 24 to pray and believe, and whatever we desire, we will receive them. Will God really do this for us? He sure will. If we don't see results, it is due to our lack of faith or the fact we are not asking for things in God's Will for our lives. God NEVER fails, and what He promises He performs. We are given an important prerequisite in verse 25.

We are to forgive others who have trespassed against us if we expect God to forgive us. Many want God to forgive them of their sins, but hold bitter resentment against a brother or a sister in the Lord. God expects us to be loving and forgiving people. An unforgiving spirit can cause a fatal roadblock in our prayer life.

Mat 6:14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

Mat 6:15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

V. Jesus' Authority Questioned

Mark 11:27 And they come again to Jerusalem: and as he was walking in the temple, there come to him the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders,

Mark 11:28 And say unto him, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority to do these things?

Christ was in the temple at this time. Both Matt. 21:23 and Luke 20:1 reveal that He was teaching at the time. These chief priests, scribes, and the elders want to know where He got His authority. No doubt "these things" they mention involved both the teaching in the temple, and the cleansing of the temple

It was the chief priests, scribes, and elders who questioned the Lord's authority. The common people were much more accepting than the religious leaders were. They first ask him by what authority did he cleanse the temple. Jesus answers them with a question of His own.

Mark 11:29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.

Mark 11:30 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men? answer me.

Mark 11:31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?

Mark 11:32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all men counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

Mark 11:33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

Jesus poses a question for them. This is an important question that cannot be ignored. They are caught on the horns of a dilemma, and after conferring with one another, they decline an answer. Of course the answer to both questions is "from heaven." How can anyone deny the validity of John's baptism without denying the authority of Christ? Jesus calls their attention to the baptism of John the Baptist. Was this baptism from heaven or from men? If these who questioned his authority could accurately answer this question, they would answer their own question. This put these men in a tight situation. If they answered from heaven, then Christ would ask them why they did not obey what John taught.

If they said of men, then they would face the wrath of the people for they knew

John was a prophet indeed. They answered in a very 'politically correct' answer. They said we cannot tell. Jesus responds "Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things." They might have thought themselves pretty smart in their answer, but they were no match to the omniscient God to whom they spoke. If you think that Jesus was not being straight on with these folk, you have to realize their motives and lack of belief.

J. Vernon McGee spoke some great comments on this verse.

They had to wiggle out of answering the question of Jesus by claiming ignorance. It might be argued that this did not afford Jesus a sufficient ground for not answering their question. My friend, they were not seeking an answer. They were trying to trap Him. They had no intention of following His teaching if He had told them. He does not answer them because He is not falling into their trap. This, to me, is one of the great proofs of His deity—the way He handled His enemies.

Remember that when men and women came to our Lord with sincere questions as sincere seekers, they received a sincere and genuine answer to their inquiries.

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Prov 4:18 But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.

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Practice Random Acts of Kindness. Each act spreads, and many will be blessed.