

Mark 11:1-26 - The Son of David

Pastor Chris Bove

Introduction - In the last chapter, blind Bartimaeus cried to Jesus, “Son of David!” Now we see the Son of David entering the City of David. Should Israel have expected her Messiah? Yes indeed. But she was not ready. Jesus arrived as the Messiah, but His people ultimately do not receive Him and lack faith. We should be prepared to receive Jesus, serve Him expectantly awaiting His return, and have faith in Him.

v1-11 - Praise His arrival - [Matt 21:1-17; Luke 19:29-44; John 12:12-19] All four gospels mention the Triumphal Entry. We celebrate Palm Sunday in remembrance of this day. Jesus goes through Bethany on His way to Jerusalem, drawing crowds who witnessed the raising of Lazarus (Jo 11). The Mount of Olives is where Jesus will one day return (Zech 14:4; Lu 24:50-51; Act 1:11). Jesus’ entrance is one of the few events He carefully orchestrates. His riding in on a donkey symbolizes a king coming (1 Ki 1:33) and fulfills prophecy (Zech 9:9; Is 62:11). Matt 21 mentions the colt’s mother, more closely paralleling Zech 9:9. The people prepare the way of the king by placing their (expensive) clothing and branches on the ground. The disciples and people cried, “Hosanna!” or “Save now, we pray!” They sing Ps 118:22-29, sung for Passover. Luke 19:39-44 and Matt 21:15-16 record the religious leaders rebuking Jesus to quiet the children and people, but Jesus replies this must occur. After examining the temple, He leaves the city, likely returning to Bethany.

v12-19 - Make Ready the Temple of God - [Matt 21:12-13, 18-19; Luke 19:45-48] The following day, on the way to Jerusalem, He spots a fig tree with leaves and goes to get a fig from it. In that climate, the first figs normally come before the leaves are fully in around Mar/April, then later in the summer the fig season truly arrives. These first ripe figs are referenced in Mic 7:1 as something the prophet craves. However, Jesus finds no fruit on the tree, even though it gave every indication it should have some. He curses the tree. Mark comes back to this in v20, sandwiching the narratives.

This is likely the 2nd time He cleanses the temple (Jo 2:13-17) - at the beginning and end of His ministry. He rebukes the commercialization of God’s “house of prayer for all the nations.” These events transpire in the Court of the Gentiles, where all people could have access to pray to God. Jesus quotes from Is 56:7 and Jer 7:11. Profiteering money changes (exchanged to the temple currency at exorbitant rates) and “approved” sacrificial animals were sold at outrageous prices. Jesus interrupts the ungodly activity in the temple court to return it back to God’s intended purpose: a place of worship for all nations. Jesus came to His temple, but it was not made ready for Him (Mal 3:1). The Pharisees had already commanded Jesus be turned in (Jo 11:55-57), but they feared taking any action at this time.

v20-26 - Have faith in God - [Matt 21:19-22; Lu 21:37-38] The next day, the disciples notice the fig tree completely withered up. Because of the sandwiching of this story with the temple story, it is clear that Jesus was teaching His disciples that He has come to Jerusalem and His people received Him not (Jhn 1:11). They were not ready. They are distracted by the things of the world that have a form of godliness, but deny Him. Peter expresses surprise the fig tree withered. Jesus encourages them to “have faith in God,” and tells them they should have full confidence in God’s ability to answer their prayers. Jesus’ words to them presuppose the disciples pray in accordance to God’s will (Jo 14:12-15), not that unanswered prayer is due to a lack of faith (2Ti 4:20). Jesus concludes with a teaching about forgiveness (Mat 18:21-35; 6:7-15). Unrepentant sin and unforgiveness hinder our prayers and work God would do through us (1Pe 3:7).

So, what? Now, what?

- How can my heart live in greater praise to Jesus? Do I praise His arrival in every area of my life?
- Have we cleansed our temples (bodies) to receive the King? What remains in us in our lives we must clean out?
- Do we bear fruit in accordance with the Holy Spirit’s working in our lives? Or do we just look fruitful?
- Is there someone you need to forgive? Why not let that burden down at the foot of the cross, where Jesus paid for that person’s sin, just like He did yours? 1 Jo 1:9
- For further reflection, read Matt 18:21-35.

Additional Resources: *Forgiving What You Can’t Forget* by Lysa TerKeurst, Pastor Ed Conway’s [Five Steps of Forgiveness](#)