

(2) Fig Tree Cursed and Temple Cleansed (Mt. 21:10-19; Mk. 11:12-18; Lk. 19:45-48)

(4) Withered Fig Tree Testifies (Mt. 21:20-22; Mk. 11:19-26)

1. On Tuesday morning, Nisan 11, Jesus cursed a fig tree (Mk. 11:12-14; Mt. 21:18-19).
 - a. Jesus desired its fruit but it was bearing no fruit. Being out of season (Mk. 11:13) is no excuse when we are commanded to be ready in season and out of season (2nd Tim. 4:2).
 - b. In the fruitless fig tree Jesus saw the nation of Israel.
 - 1) Cursing the tree allowed its message to match the pronouncement of destruction already decreed against Israel (Lk. 13:35; 19:44).
 - 2) The millennial blessings of vine and fig tree fruitfulness will have to wait for 2nd Advent fulfillment (Mic. 4:4; Zech. 3:10).
 - c. The illustration of the withered tree is not an occasion for Jesus to teach regarding first advent and second advent. The withered tree allows Jesus to reinforce previous teachings related to prayer (cf. Mt. 17:20; Lk. 17:6).
 - 1) The struggle in prayer is faith/believing contrasted with unbelief (doubting) (Mt. 21:21-22; Mk. 11:23; Jas. 1:6).
 - 2) Faith is placed in an object. It is a response to a message (Rom. 10:14). It is the action of trusting the One who is Faithful (Heb. 10:23).
 - 3) A faith-prayer is not uttered on one's own initiative (Jn. 5:30; 8:28; 14:10). Believing is not willing something into existence (Matt. 26:39,42; Mk. 14:36; Lk. 22:42; Jas. 4:13-15).
 - 4) A faith-prayer is a confident response to conviction as to God's Will (1st Jn. 5:14-15), as we abide in Him and His words abide in us (Jn. 15:7).
 - 5) Selfish prayers are never answered (Jas. 4:3).
2. As He had done three and one half years ago (Jn. 2:13-17), Jesus physically and aggressively halted the robbers den activity (Mt. 21:12-13; Mk. 11:14-17; Lk. 19:45-46).
 - a. What was supposed to be an international house of prayer (Isa. 56:7) had become a reflection of Satan's downfall (Ezek. 28:16,18).
 - b. The remainder of Isaiah's prophecy comes into context and focus (Isa. 56:1-12).
3. Jesus also engaged in a daily teaching & healing ministry Monday through Thursday of the Passion week (Mt. 21:14-17; Mk. 11:18; Lk. 19:47-48).