

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

FIFTH DIVISION

V. 10:1-13:37 *WHEN WILL THE MESSIAH ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM?*

THIRD SECTION: FRUIT AT HARVEST TIME

Mark 11:12 - 12:12

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V. 10:1-13:37 WHEN WILL THE MESSIAH ESTABLISH HIS KINGDOM?

FROM ... UNTIL	RIGHT ORDER	HARVEST TIME	NOW AND THEN	UNKNOWN HOUR
<p>10:1 The Crowds</p> <p>They gathered to him and Jesus taught as his custom was</p>	<p>10:32-34 To Jerusalem</p> <p>Jesus taught the 12:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Death 2. Resurrection 	<p>11:12-14 The fig tree</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Leaves 2. Fruitless 3. Cursed 	<p>12:13-17 Tribute? Do we pay Caesar? Whose image is on the coin?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To Caesar 2. To God 	<p>13:3-13 The Signs</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When 2. What sign? <p>Watch out!</p>
<p>10:2-12 The Pharisees</p> <p>Divorce?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Moses? 2. In the creation? 	<p>10:35-40 2 disciples request to be seated either side of him in his kingdom</p> <p>Baptism and cup</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Suffering 2. Glory 	<p>11:15-19 The temple cleansing</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "House of prayer" or 2. "Den of thieves"? <p>Jesus cleansed the temple</p>	<p>12:18-27 Marriage? Whose will she be in the resurrection (future)?</p> <p>Ignorance of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Scriptures 2. God's power and life 	<p>13:14-23 The Great Tribulation</p> <p>When you see ...</p>
<p>10:13-16 The Children</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jesus blessed them 2. Receive the kingdom as a child 	<p>10:41-45 The 10</p> <p>They were angered by the request of the 2 disciples</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Servant-great 2. Slave-first 	<p>11:20-26 The dried up fig tree</p> <p>From the roots!</p> <p>Our roots:</p> <p>Prayer mixed with</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Faith and 2. Forgiveness 	<p>12:28-34 Commandments?</p> <p>The greatest command:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Love God 2. Love neighbor <p>Present wisdom brought scribe near future kingdom</p>	<p>13:24-27 The Coming</p> <p>In those days after ... men will see ...</p>
<p>10:17-22 A Rich Man</p> <p>Why call Jesus good?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All the commandments 2. Give all and follow me <p>The rich man</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Goes away 2. Sad 	<p>10:46-52 Blind Bartimaeus</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The popular Jesus cared for 2. The despised Bartimaeus who rose and followed 	<p>11:27-33 The temple challenge</p> <p>Authority:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Human or 2. Heavenly <p>Who had it?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The priests, or 2. John and Jesus? 	<p>12:35-40 Jesus taught in the temple</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Messiah 2. Lord <p>The Scribes' present actions and future condemnation</p>	<p>13:28-31 The Fig Tree</p> <p>When you see leaves come out, summer is near</p>
<p>10:23-31 The Disciples</p> <p>How hard for the rich!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forsake all 2. Rewarded in this life and coming age <p>The correct order</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First to be last 2. Last to be first 	<p>11:1-11 Jesus' Triumphal Entry</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. He rode humbly on a donkey 2. They exalted him in praises 	<p>12:1-12 The vineyard</p> <p>The owner sent for the fruit</p> <p>The tenants rejected the servants and son of the owner</p> <p>The vineyard would go from the evil tenants to others</p>	<p>12:41-13:2 Jesus observed the people and the present temple buildings and stones</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A widow gave all 2. The rich gave little <p>No stones to be left of the temple in the future</p>	<p>13:32-37 The day and the hour</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Be on guard! 2. Be alert! <p>Watch!</p>

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Mark 11:12 - 12:12

Corresponding PowerPoint® presentation:

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The Outline:

Bowls of fruit

A disappointing harvest time

I. The fig tree 11:12-14

Desperately hungry

No breakfast for Jesus

II. The house of prayer for the nations 11:15-19

A den of thieves

IHOP = International House of Prayer

Am I a temple of prayer?

III. How to pray 11:20-26

Oh, go throw a mountain into the sea!

Mixing faith and forgiveness

IV. Divine authority 11:27-33

V. The owner of a vineyard, the evil tenants and the harvest 12:1-12

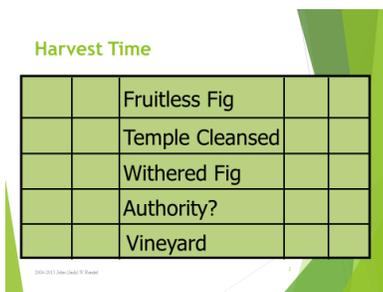
Questions to aid in the study of Mark 11:12-12:12

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL



Bowls of fruit

One of the foods I enjoy the most is a bowl of various kinds of fruit cut up and topped with ice cream! When we look out our back window at the apple tree it is wonderful to see the white blossoms followed later by the dark red apples. Fruitfulness! It is a wonder. The first chapters of Genesis tell us that God created a fruitful world, a garden, and placed man in the middle of it. Man's rebellion against God spoiled all that and led man into a fruitless spiritual existence, and a world in which it was difficult to produce fruit, and in which harvests would be gathered with difficulty (Genesis 3:17-19).



A disappointing harvest time

The five stories we will look at now have to do with fruitfulness, or the lack of it, both physically and spiritually. I call it "Harvest time". Harvest is when the fruit is gathered in. Jesus visited the temple, the center of religious life in Israel, looking for evidence of spiritual fruit, but the visit was disappointing. There was no spiritual harvest to gather in. The stories begin with a fruitless fig tree; then move on to the temple which needed cleansing from a fruitless spiritual existence; then back to the fig tree which Jesus had cursed for its fruitlessness; then on to the temple where Jesus' authority is questioned; and finally Jesus' parable which accused the religious leaders of stealing the spiritual life of Israel from the Lord.

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

I. The fig tree 11:12-14

Harvest Time

The Fig Tree

- ▶ 11:12-14
- ▶ Jesus was hungry
- ▶ A fig tree with leaves
- ▶ No **FRUIT**
- ▶ May no one ever eat **FRUIT** from you again



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Desperately hungry

I always enjoyed the custom, when we lived in Spain, of eating fruit for dessert. It is healthy! We see in Mark 11:12-14 that the Lord was looking for fruit from a fig tree which he saw on the way into Jerusalem. The text says that he was hungry. Do you and I know what is to be truly hungry?

Dress in Mourning for Me is the story of the famous torero “El Cordobés”. He was of a very poor family in the province of Córdoba, Spain. The book is a story of the perseverance of a young person who sought for an opportunity to bull fight in the big rings.

Bull fighting is controversial and in some areas of Spain it is illegal now. It’s a horrific way to treat an animal! The book was part of my orientation to the way of life in some areas of the country. So please concentrate on the part of the story I am telling.

The four brothers and sisters spent their last Christmas together, after their parents died, at 40 years of age, following the Spanish War, 1936-39.

The 3 older children slept in their parents' bed. In order to eat they had to sell the furniture. That Christmas the only pieces that remained were the bed, a table and two chairs. Benito, the smallest of them, and the one who became “El Cordobés”, had a bed, by placing the two chairs together.

That Christmas they didn't even have strength to get up. Hunger left them too faint to leave their beds. They spent the day at home looking at each other almost without saying anything, a gray day, without parties, presents or parents.

No breakfast for Jesus

Although the hunger we have experienced may not be of the same intensity that the four children suffered, we know what it is like to need or want to eat. That day Jesus was hungry, physically hungry. But he was not only hungry physically. He was also hungry to see spiritual fruit in the life of his people, the Jews. He was looking for spiritual fruit in his visit to the temple in Jerusalem.

The fig tree first appears in the Garden of Eden. After eating of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil Adam and Eve realized they were naked and made themselves loincloths of fig leaves (Genesis 3:7). God replaced those fig leaves with skins of animals (Genesis 3:21). Both then and in this story the leaves were not enough. Then an animal sacrifice was important to

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

cover them because the covering was both literal and figurative, and in this story fruit was important both literally and figuratively.

In the end what Jesus was doing was using a fig tree for an object lesson. Mark says it was not the time for figs, so if left alone this tree would have produced fruit in all likelihood. Jesus used this tree and this one only to teach a lesson. He was not cursing all fig trees. He was not cursing this one because it would not produce fruit in the future. Mark strongly implies that it would produce fruit in its time. So Jesus used this tree for something it was not usually used for, an object lesson.

Many of us have used objects for things for which they are not usually used. Let's take for example, the chair. They are designed for sitting, but sometimes we use them for standing. Have you ever had to change a light bulb and could not reach the bulb in the ceiling? If there were not a ladder available I might pull a chair under the light fixture, climb on the chair, and change the bulb. I do not normally stand on a chair but this would be an exception.

Jesus used the fig tree for something it was not usually used for, teaching a spiritual lesson.

II. The house of prayer for the nations 11:15-19



A den of thieves

What did Jesus find in the temple? Verses 11:15-19 explain. That day when he arrived at the temple he found there what he called “a den of thieves”. What were they doing in the temple that Jesus should speak so forcefully and negatively?

Alfred Edersheim explains it all very clearly. People coming to worship and sacrifice at the temple could bring the animals they brought from home or buy from stock sold on the Mount of Olives but they ran the risk of having their animals rejected because of some fault in the animal. The temple offered animals which were already inspected and accepted. The price on the inspected animal tended to be higher and one can easily see the abuse that this system could lend itself to. Besides this the Jews and proselytes, who arrived from other lands, had to exchange their money for the local currency of the temple in order to buy many things connected with the purification and sacrifices, and the High Priests, especially the family of Anas, gained enormously, with all the abuses. They controlled the business and so did what they pleased. Alfred Edersheim also contends that the market they had set up was occupying the court of the Gentiles. Other rabbis had objected to the practices as well, but Jesus did his objecting in

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

dramatic and effective fashion. (La vida y los tiempos de Jesús el Mesías, Tomo 1 [The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, Volume 1], pp. 416-425, Alfred Edersheim, CLIE 1988)

Jesus cleansed the temple by tossing the sellers, animals and money out, and taught them what the purpose of that house was. He said, quoting Isaiah, "*My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations*" (ESV, Cf. Isaiah 56:7).

International House of Prayer

Did you know you and your church (the congregation, not the building) should be International Houses of Prayer? The temple was supposed to be, and we and our churches should be, "houses of prayer for all the nations" in two ways:

1. A house from which the knowledge of God would spread into all the world. For us, the church, it is the same today. We should be praying for all the nations in our churches. From our churches and through our churches the Lord's message should go out into all the earth.
2. A house into which people from all the nations could come to know and to worship God having seen and heard the testimony of the people of God. This should be true for us and our churches today.

Am I a temple of prayer?

You yourself, personally, are the temple of God, according to *1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Do you not know your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body (NIV).*

What is my reaction to these things? Do I reject the Lord as they did? Verse 18 says that they sought to kill him. Am I willing to put aside my own desires, and embrace the Lord, and his will for my life, of being a temple, a church, dedicated to the purpose of being a ***house of prayer for all the nations?***

One of the missionary movements declared June 24, of one the years towards the end of the 1990's, as a special day of prayer to pray, above all, for the unreached. October of that year was to be a month dedicated to prayer for certain nations. In reality every week, if not every day, should be a week of prayer because we ***are*** a house of prayer!

But how should we pray?

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

III. How to pray 11:20-26



Oh, go throw a mountain into the sea!

In the third scene (11:20-26), Jesus taught his followers how to pray.

Peter saw that the fig tree had dried up from the roots and said so. Jesus responded to Peter in a surprising way. He spoke of throwing a mountain into the sea by faith. I do not know of any apostolic case of literally “throwing a mountain into the sea”. When Jesus spoke about mountains he was speaking about the religious and political authorities of his day. The apostles were going to face these authorities in the establishment of his kingdom, his people.

Later Peter and John had to appear before the Jewish council, the Sanhedrin. They were threatened and persecuted. To preach to the people in “that name of Jesus” was prohibited. Through their *faith* in the Lord, they gained huge victories in the middle of those frightening circumstances. They continued preaching. Thousands believed and were baptized.

Sometimes in the Scriptures mountains represent temporal and eternal authorities.

24 "I will repay Babylon and all the inhabitants of Chaldea before your very eyes for all the evil that they have done in Zion, declares the LORD. 25 "Behold, I am against you, O destroying mountain, declares the LORD, which destroys the whole earth; I will stretch out my hand against you, and roll you down from the crags, and make you a burnt mountain. 26 No stone shall be taken from you for a corner and no stone for a foundation, but you shall be a perpetual waste, declares the LORD (Jeremiah 51:24-26 ESV).

And in the prophet Zechariah 4:6-7 we find the following,

6 Then he said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the LORD of hosts. 7 Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain. And he shall bring forward the top stone amid shouts of 'Grace, grace to it (ESV)!'"

The Jews had returned from Babylon and were rebuilding the temple but after laying the foundation and erecting the altar, their enemies discouraged them, and they abandoned the work for sixteen years. Darius the emperor had proclaimed a decree denying them the permission to continue with the construction of the temple. Under the preaching of Haggai and Zachariah they returned to the job and the Lord opened the way, changing the heart of Darius.

The prophet Daniel in 2:34-35 speaks about the kingdom of God. The kingdom is compared to a great mountain that fills the earth. Daniel was explaining the dream that Nebuchadnezzar had

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

had, and what the God of heaven was going to do in the last days, destroying the kingdoms of this world and establishing his own.

34 As you looked, a stone was cut out by no human hand, and it struck the image on its feet of iron and clay, and broke them in pieces. 35 Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver, and the gold, all together were broken in pieces, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, so that not a trace of them could be found. But the stone that struck the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth (ESV).

And now what was Jesus going to do? Well he simply continued to establish his kingdom through the disciples, the ones that had believed in him, without the disciples having any earthly authority, but how did he do it? He did it with the authority that comes from heaven. Look what Psalm 125:1 says,

Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever (ESV).

Mixing faith and forgiveness

But here we find something else as well. It is forgiveness. Together with the subject of faith Jesus taught forgiveness. If we are not willing to forgive our neighbor, our faith will not get us very far at all.

When we think about the evangelization of the nations, we have to accept that we have things against some of them. The Jews, at that time, held things against the Romans! To evangelize the Romans the Lord had to do an enormous work in the heart of his Jewish disciples. If we are US citizens are we harboring hatred for any nation in the Middle East, for example? I hope not. How will we share the gospel of the Lord Jesus, let alone anything else, with those we hate? Remember that just as all Americans are not alike neither are all Iranians or Arabs alike. Many Arabs and many Iranians want American or British friends. How will Armenians share the Good News with Turks, or Spaniards share the gospel with North Africans, or Hausas reach out to Fulanis, or southerners tell northerners in Sudan about Christ unless they forgive them?

What about forgiving our neighbors? Does your neighbor's dog leave his mess near your house? Is your neighbor a person who loves to turn up the volume on his stereo and bombard your ear drums? Go speak to him or her firmly and lovingly about it. Pray for them. You may have to take further steps, or even just leave it with the Lord, but don't hate them! Look for opportunities to love them and share Jesus with them in both the way you act and the way you talk.

We will also need to forgive our coworkers. In the ministry we will have disagreements with our colleagues, and some can erupt into very tense situations. We will be tempted to become very angry. We may want to accuse them of terrible acts and attitudes. These battles may disrupt a missionary team quite badly. They can be devastating. Can we take the humble road and admit we were at fault even when it seems the other party was more fault than we were. When our emotions are stirred it is hard to see things objectively.

Sometimes these battles lead to people leaving a team, a mission or a field of service. They could not accept what people have said about them or done to them. They have found it impossible to

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

receive rebuke, especially if they believe others are in the wrong. They find it impossible to forgive others.

But Jesus insists on forgiveness, because he has forgiven us, and because without this crucial element his work in us and in others will go nowhere.

IV. Divine authority 11:27-33



The theme of the fourth scene is authority.

The priests approached Jesus and challenged him. They asked, “By what authority do you do these things?” He answered with the same question and applied it to John the Baptist. They would not want to answer him for their fear of the people.

In this scene we see the two options that we have. Our authority either comes from heaven or from men. Which will it be? As local churches, as missions, as families, as individuals, where does our authority come from, from heaven or from men? We have to decide. If it is from men the one who wins will be the one who is most impressive, who is most intelligent, who has the most money, who is the brashiest, who is most influential, or who has the best army.

Forty years later the Jews had to suffer under a Roman siege, when they watched the destruction, stone by stone, of their temple.

So much for human authority!

V. The owner of a vineyard, the evil tenants and the harvest 12:1-12



MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

Then to help the religious authorities understand their situation before God, Jesus told them the parable that is given in 12:1-12.

It was the story of a man who had a vineyard, who sent his servants to the tenants in order to receive *the fruit of the vineyard* from them.

Here we return to the theme of the fruit that God looked for in his people, and now in us.

Galatians 5:22-23 says, *22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law (ESV).*

The owner of the vineyard sent his servants looking for fruit from his vineyard. They were badly treated and killed. At last he sent his son. But they said, “Here comes the heir, let's kill him and we'll keep the vineyard.” What will the Lord of the vineyard do? He will destroy them and he will give his vineyard to others. This is what the Lord did. He took his vineyard, his kingdom, from the chief priests, scribes and elders of Israel, and he gave it to his disciples.

For me this is a warning! Am I allowing God to produce in me the spiritual fruit that he would produce? Am I hindering him?

Fortunately not all priests were of the same ilk as those chief priests. We see later in Acts 6:7 that even many of the priests obeyed the faith, but the chief priests had lost their authority with God and their testimony amongst the people of God. They feared both Jesus, in the wrong way, and the people. There is no testimony of their fearing God. *And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. (Mar 11:18 ESV). —they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet (Mar 11:32). And they were seeking to arrest him but feared the people, for they perceived that he had told the parable against them. So they left him and went away (Mar 12:12).*

Jesus said:

1. “Have faith in God!”
2. “Forgive others!”

In this way God will be able to produce his fruit in our lives, and thus we will be able to be a house of *prayer for the nations*. For example, thousands of people in a country in Asia are showing an interest in following Jesus. We need to pray that they will be disciplined by the churches and missions in that land, that they may truly know what it means to follow Jesus and bear fruit.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord comes looking for fruit in our lives.

Questions to aid in the study of Mark 11:12-12:12

1. Jesus cursed the fig tree, but he did not curse the temple or people who oversaw it (At least not until later did he prophesy its destruction [13:1ff.]). What did he do instead, and why (11:15-19)?

MARK: OUR PREACHING MANUAL

2. Why was Jesus so concerned about the buying and selling in the temple? In which part of the temple was this market held? How did this market not fulfill the purpose of the temple?
3. What did Jesus mean by throwing a mountain into the sea? Is this literal or figurative? Explain why (11:20-26).
4. What is difficult to do if you do not forgive others? Explain (11:20-26).
5. How did the Chief Priests and other leaders attack Jesus at that moment? What did they not yet think they could do because of the people (11:20-12:12)?
6. When the owner of the vineyard sent his servants and eventually his son what was he looking for in the vineyard (12:1-12)? When the Lord looks at my life and your life what is he looking for?