

What Kind of Tree Are We?

Mark 11:12-25

Introductory Teaching → The fig tree is a _____ in action!

- * It represents _____ - all _____ no _____
- * Withered tree represents a withered _____ after 70 AD
- * The _____ is the showcase evidence of this.

1. Bear the Fruit of _____
 - a. The _____ at the Court of Gentiles
 - i. Size – nearly _____ square football fields
 - ii. Annas' (or Caiaphas') _____
 - iii. Moneychangers providing _____ shekels
 - b. The _____ of the temple's holiness
 - i. The high priestly "_____ " in the market
 - ii. The use of the court for a "_____ "
2. Bear the Fruit of the _____
 - a. Nature of the Court of the _____
 - i. A house of _____
 - ii. For _____ peoples (or nations)
 - b. Quotes of Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11
 - i. Prophecy of _____ coming to worship
 - ii. Prophecy of _____ for misusing temple
 - c. Recollection of _____'s blessing
3. Bear the Fruit of Effective _____
 - a. Full on plot due to the _____ of the leaders
 - i. At Jesus' _____ for house of the LORD
 - ii. At Jesus' _____ of the blind and lame
 - iii. At the response of the _____
 - b. Full on picture of the _____ tree
 - i. Lack of _____ (John 15:5)
 - ii. Lack of _____ (both ways – Ps 66:18)

When I would gather them, declares the LORD, there are no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree; even the leaves are withered, and what I gave them has passed away from them.
Jeremiah 8:13

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' they were indignant, and they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?" And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouths of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise'?"
Matthew 21:12-16

Quote on the Meaning of the Cursed Fig Tree

"The unexpected and incongruous character of Jesus' action in looking for figs at a season when no fruit could be found would stimulate curiosity and point beyond the incident to its deeper significance. His act was an example of prophetic realism similar to the symbolic actions of the OT prophets (e.g. Isa. 20:1-6; Jer. 13:1-11; 19:1-13; Ezek. 4:1-15). The prophets frequently spoke of the fig tree in referring to Israel's status before God (e.g. Jer. 8:13; 29:17; Hos. 9:10,16; Joel 1:7, Micah 7:1-6), while the destruction of the fig tree is associated with judgment (Hos. 2:12; Isa. 34:4; cf. Lk. 13:6-9). In this context the fig tree symbolizes Israel in Jesus' day, and what happens to the tree the terrible fate that inevitably awaited Jerusalem. The explanation was already put forth by Victor of Antioch, in the oldest existing commentary on Mark, that Jesus had "used the fig tree to set forth the judgment that was about to fall on Jerusalem." This is certainly the evangelist's understanding of the episode, for in the Gospel of Mark Jesus' action in the Temple is firmly embedded within the fig tree incident. The a-b-a structure of Ch. 11:12-21 (fig tree-cleansing of the Temple-fig tree) serves to provide a mutual commentary on these two events. Just as the leaves of the tree concealed the fact that there was no fruit to enjoy, so the magnificence of the Temple and its ceremony conceals the fact that Israel has not brought forth the fruit of righteousness demanded by God."

(William Lane, *The Gospel of Mark (NICONT Series)*, 1974, p. 400)