

Bible study Mark 11

Mark 11:1–11 The Triumphal Entry

Observation & Interpretation

1. Why does Jesus deliberately arrange to ride a colt? What does this communicate considering Zechariah 9:9?
2. The crowd shouts “Hosanna.” What does this word mean (Hebrew: *hoshi ‘ah na*, “save now”)? What are they expecting Jesus to do?
3. How does this moment fulfill Messianic expectations and how does it subvert them?

Greek Insight

- *Hosanna* (ὡσαννά) originally a plea, later a praise.
How does this shift reflect misunderstanding or partial understanding?

Theological Reflection

4. What kind of king is Jesus presenting Himself to be here?
5. Why does Jesus enter Jerusalem and then simply leave (v. 11)? What might Mark be emphasizing?

Mark 11:12–14, 20–25 The Fig Tree (Cursing & Withering)

Observation

7. Why does Jesus curse the fig tree even though it was not the season for figs?
8. Why does Mark “sandwich” this story around the temple cleansing (a literary technique called *intercalation*)?

Interpretation

9. In the Old Testament, fig trees often symbolize Israel (e.g., Jeremiah 8:13). How might that shape our understanding?
10. What does the tree’s outward appearance vs. inward fruitfulness represent?

Greek Insight

- *Faith* (πίστις) and *doubt* (διακρίνω “to waver, be divided”)
11. What does it mean to have “faith without doubting” in this context?

Mark 11:15–19 Cleansing the Temple

Observation

14. What specifically is Jesus condemning in the temple practices?
15. Why does Jesus combine Isaiah 56:7 and Jeremiah 7:11?

Interpretation

16. The phrase “den of robbers” implies more than dishonesty what does it suggest about false security in religion?
17. How does this act challenge both religious corruption and nationalistic exclusivity (“house of prayer for all nations”)?

Theological Reflection

18. What does this reveal about Jesus’ authority over the temple?

Application

19. In what ways can modern worship become performative or empty?
20. How can we ensure our “temples” (our lives, churches) are aligned with God’s purpose?

Mark 11:22–25 Faith, Prayer, and Forgiveness

Observation

21. What does Jesus mean by telling the disciples to “have faith in God”?
22. How should we understand “moving mountains” literal, metaphorical, or both?

Greek Insight

- *Forgive* (ἀφίημι “to release, let go”)
23. How is forgiveness connected to effective prayer?

Mark 11:27–33 Questioning Jesus’ Authority

Observation

26. Why do the religious leaders question Jesus’ authority?
27. What is the significance of Jesus countering with a question about John the Baptist?

Interpretation

28. What does their inability to answer reveal about their motives?
29. How does this exchange expose fear of people vs. fear of God?

Big Picture Questions

32. How do the fig tree and temple cleansing interpret each other?
33. What does Mark 11 reveal about true vs. false worship?