

The Gospel of Mark

Lesson 27: Mark 11:15-33

Jesus cleanses the temple (vv. 15-19)

- Traditionally the money changing and sale of sacrificial animals took place on the Mount of Olives (run by the Sanhedrin)
 - Only recently had this activity moved to the court of the Gentiles
 - Pilgrims needed the Tyrian shekel for the half-shekel temple tax
 - Doves were allowed as an offering by the poor
- Jesus is angered that the Gentiles are not able to worship
 - He quotes Isaiah 56:7 and alludes to Jeremiah 7:11
 - Essentially, Israel had rejected its role as a witness to the nations
- Now the scribes and chief priests actively seek to destroy Jesus
- Note: John records the cleansing at the *beginning* of Jesus' ministry

What is the challenge from this passage for us as believers today?

Matt. 21:12-17
Luke 19:45-48
John 2:13-22

The fig tree revisited (vv. 20-26)

- Jesus uses the withered fig tree to teach on faith
 - The rapid withering of the tree catches Peter's attention
- Geographically, one can see the Dead Sea from the Mount of Olives
- James 1:5-8 reflects Jesus' teaching here very closely
- Verse 26 is not in many manuscripts, leading scholars to believe it is a later scribal addition to correlate with Matthew 6:14-15

Recall intercalation. What teaching is this device highlighting here?

How is verse 24 misused by many today?

Matt. 21:20-22
Matt. 6:14-15

A question of authority (vv. 27-33)

- The Jewish leaders are bothered by Jesus' teaching as well as by how He had cleansed the temple
- Answering a question with a question was common in rabbinic discussions
- The leaders are in a "no-win" situation due to their known positions
- As the religious leaders, it is their duty to "know" about John

If the leaders say John's ministry is from heaven, what do they have to admit?

Matt. 21:23-27
Luke 20:1-8