

FEBRUARY 25, 2024

# "The Wilderness of Anger"

Scripture: Mark 11:11-17



## The Wilderness of ANGER

2nd Sunday in Lent

### CONTEXT

As our scripture passage opens, Jesus has made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and now goes into the temple to have a look around before heading out to Bethany to spend the night.

Fig trees were a common food source in Israel. From the time a tree was planted to the time it could bear fruit was 3 years. Fig trees yielded a lot of fruit twice a year, in late spring and early autumn. The incident with the fig tree took place early in the spring when the leaves were beginning to bud. The figs normally grew as the leaves filled out, but this tree, though full of leaves, had no figs. The tree looked promising but offered no fruit.

The money changers and merchants did a lot of business during Passover. People from other countries had to have their money changed into temple currency because this was the only money accepted for the Temple tax and for the purchase of sacrificial animals. The inflated exchange rates and price of animals made money changers and merchants wealthy. Stalls were set up in the Temple's Court of the Gentiles, which made it difficult for non-Jews to spend any time in worship.

### ENCOURAGEMENT

Engaging in spiritual practices such as reading and studying the Bible helps us to connect to God on a deeper level and grow spiritually.

### AUTHOR

John Mark is the author. He accompanied his cousin, Barnabas, and the apostle Paul on their 1st missionary journey but left at the second stop, returning to Jerusalem. Two years later Barnabas suggested Mark as a traveling companion for their 2nd missionary journey but Paul refused. Barnabas took Mark with him and Paul chose Silas. Paul and Mark reconciled later and became close friends. Mark is also thought to have been a friend of Peter, one of Jesus' twelve disciples.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think Jesus cursed the fig tree? What was its condition? Can you draw a parallel between the fig tree and Israel's spiritual condition?
2. What were the people doing in the temple? What was Jesus' response?
3. What did Jesus quote from scripture? (see verse 17)
4. Why was Jesus angry?
5. Do we sometimes get more angry over personal insults, comments, and petty words (social media comments for example) than we do an injustice we should speak out against?

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