

¹¹Jesus entered Jerusalem and came into the temple; and after looking around at everything, He left for Bethany with the twelve, since it was already late.

periblepo- careful observation - 7 times in NT, 6 in Mark.

¹²On the next day, when they had left Bethany, He became hungry. ¹³Seeing at a distance a fig tree in leaf, He went to see if perhaps He would find anything on it; and when He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. ¹⁴He said to it, "May no one ever eat fruit from you again!" And His disciples were listening.

Breba crop: a smaller fig produced in late spring/early summer, showing signs that the tree has survived the winter.

¹⁵Then they came to Jerusalem. And He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves; ¹⁶and He would not permit anyone to carry merchandise through the temple.

Temple: 4 parts-- Holy of Holies, Court of Men, Court of Women, Court of Gentiles.

Herodian Court of Gentiles -- 500 yards x 350 yards. 36 acres.

¹⁷And He began to teach and say to them, "Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a robbers' den." ¹⁸The chief priests and the scribes heard this and began seeking how to destroy Him; for they were afraid of Him, for the whole crowd was astonished at His teaching.

House of prayer for all nations: A place for all to meet God, who confronts sin.

Robbers den: A place to feel secure while continuing in sin.

¹⁹When evening came, they would go out of the city. ²⁰As they were passing by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots up.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Palm Sunday 2026

GateWay Church of Visalia, Pastor Lance Ainsworth

Mark 11:1-24, March 26th & March 29th, 2026

The fig tree and the temple.

Prayer Requests:

Group Discussion: (brought back by popular demand) Who is the most famous person you have ever met?

Read Aloud: Mark 11:1-24

1. The crowd thought they were celebrating the Messiah who would overthrow Rome, but they were soon disappointed. Have you ever had expectations of what you thought God should do and felt disappointment?
2. Jesus carefully observed the activity in the temple. (periblepō) Why do you think Jesus looked around the temple and left without acting immediately? What does this teach us about how Jesus evaluates worship and spiritual life? If Jesus “looked carefully” at your life, what would He notice? When has Jesus flipped tables in your heart?
3. Where is there a danger of having the appearance of faith without real fruit? What are some modern “leaves” that can hide a lack of true spiritual life? Why does the fig tree wither “from the roots up”? What does this teach us about the seriousness of spiritual hypocrisy?
4. What does Jesus mean by “Have faith in God” in this context? How is authentic faith different from wishful thinking or presumption?