

3ABN SABBATH SCHOOL PANEL
009 - MONDAY – AUGUST 26, 2024

A CURSED TREE AND A CLEANSED TEMPLE

Mark 11:12–26 (NKJV) “(12) Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. (13) And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. (14) In response Jesus said to it, “Let no one eat fruit from you ever again.” And His disciples heard it. (15) So they came to Jerusalem. Then Jesus went into the temple and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. (16) And He would not allow anyone to carry wares through the temple. (17) Then He taught, saying to them, “Is it not written, “My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations’? But you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’ ” (18) And the scribes and chief priests heard it and sought how they might destroy Him; for they feared Him, because all the people were astonished at His teaching. (19) When evening had come, He went out of the city.

(20) Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. (21) And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.” (22) So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. (23) For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, “Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. (24) Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them. (25) “And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive you your trespasses. (26) But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father in heaven forgive your trespasses.””

What is the significance of the events depicted here?

This is the “**Sandwich**” Stories that include components that seem to be ironically placed.

1. **JESUS CURSES THE FIG TREE:** Mark 11:20–21 (NKJV) “(20) Now in the morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots. (21) And Peter, remembering, said to Him, “Rabbi, look! The fig tree which You cursed has withered away.””
 - I. **The Fig Tree Represent Israel in Rebellion:** Instead of being a branch of nourishment, they become a tree of ill-repute. Rather than being the nation that shares the gospel they become a nation consumed in self-gratification and abominations.
 - a. Jeremiah 8:12–13 (NKJV) (12) “Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? No! They were not at all ashamed, nor did they know how to blush. Therefore they shall fall among those who fall; In the time of their punishment they shall be cast down,” says the LORD. (13) “I will

surely consume them,” says the LORD. “No grapes *shall be* on the vine, Nor figs on the fig tree, And the leaf shall fade; and *the things* I have given them shall pass away from them.”

II. The Spiritual Decline of Israel reached its apex during the ministry of Jesus:

- a. Matthew 23:37–38 (NKJV) “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! **(38)** See! Your house is left to you desolate.”
- b. Acts 13:46 (NKJV) “Then Paul and Barnabas grew bold and said, “It was necessary that the word of God should be spoken to you first; but since you reject it, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles.”

2. JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE:

- a. The Temple represents the place of ministry—
 - i. **House of Prayer for all people:** Luke 18:10 (NKJV) “Two men **went up to the temple to pray**, one a **Pharisee** and the other a **tax collector**.”
 - ii. **Place of Salvation:** Acts 2:47 (NKJV) “Praising God and having favor with all the people. And the **Lord added to the church** daily those who were being saved.”
 - iii. **Place of Gospel Work:** Acts 5:42 (NKJV) “And **daily in the temple**, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus *as* the Christ.”
 - iv. **Fit Vessel for Service:** 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 (NKJV) “**(19)** Or do you not know that **your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit** *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? **(20)** For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”
 - v. **The life that must be kept holy:** 1 Corinthians 3:16–17 (NKJV) “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? **(17)** If anyone **defiles the temple of God**, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, **which temple you are**.”
 - vi. **The Place that must be free from idolatry:** 2 Corinthians 6:16 (NKJV) And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “*I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.*”

1 John 5:21 (NKJV) “Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.”

What things in your life do you need Jesus to clean? How does this happen?

INTROSPECTION: 2 Corinthians 13:5 (NKJV) “Examine yourselves *as to* whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Do you not know yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you are disqualified.”