

2-2018

## The Final Week of Jesus Christ's Ministry - Monday

Harold Willmington

*Liberty University*, [hwillmington@liberty.edu](mailto:hwillmington@liberty.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second\\_person](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person)



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), [Christianity Commons](#), and the [Religious Thought, Theology and Philosophy of Religion Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Willmington, Harold, "The Final Week of Jesus Christ's Ministry - Monday" (2018). *The Second Person File*. 155.

[https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second\\_person/155](https://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/second_person/155)

This The Final Days of Jesus Christ's Ministry is brought to you for free and open access by the Theological Studies at Scholars Crossing. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Second Person File by an authorized administrator of Scholars Crossing. For more information, please contact [scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu](mailto:scholarlycommunications@liberty.edu).

## THE FINAL WEEK OF JESUS CHRIST'S MINISTRY – MONDAY

### MONDAY

The cursing of the fig tree

- **THE OUTLINE**

- A. The cursing of the fig tree (Mt. 21:18-19a; Mk. 11:12-14)
- B. Second cleansing of the temple (Mt. 21:12, 13; Mk. 11:15-18; Lk. 17:45-48)
- C. The request by some Greeks to see Jesus (Jn. 12:20-36a)
  1. He explains just why it was necessary for Him to die.
  2. He asks that the Father would be glorified by His death and was assured this would indeed be the case.
- D. Many of the key Jewish leaders had believed on Him but did it in secret for fear of being put out of the synagogue.

- **THE ANALYSIS**

One morning, a few days before His crucifixion, en route to Jerusalem from Bethany, Jesus views a fig tree. Being hungry, He approached it, only to find much foliage but no fruit. *"May you never bear fruit again,"* the Savior said to the tree, which immediately withered and dried up!

This is the only one of Christ's thirty-five recorded miracles that would cause Him great pain and sorrow. It was so important that years later the Apostle Paul took three entire chapters (Rom. 9-11) to expand upon its theological implications.

To explain the above, many believe this tree was a symbol of Israel, that divinely favored but utterly fruitless fig tree. Jesus was therefore, if this be true, setting aside the nation due to the absence of fruit. Later, that same day, He made this clear to the Pharisees, those spiritual custodians of the tree:

*"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."* (Mt. 21:42-43)

This particular kind of fig tree found in Israel is different from all other fruit trees in that it bears its fruit before its leaves. This is not the case with apple, pear, cherry, or any other fruit-bearing trees. Even though the tree was apparently blooming earlier than usual, Jesus had the right to see fruit, for the leaves were there.

This was the first of two miracles performed by Jesus during the final Passover week. See also miracle 34.

As has been previously noted, Jesus had every right to find fruit upon the tree of Israel. Its green and massive foliage was impressive indeed, for to it was given the tabernacle, the temple, the Old Testament Scriptures, plus the ministries of godly prophets, priests, and kings. But upon close inspection, it bore no fruit.

The overriding lesson from this miracle is painfully obvious—God desires fruit.

1. His chosen nation failed to bear fruit. *"Israel is an empty vine, he bringeth forth fruit unto himself: according to the multitude of his fruit he hath increased the altars; according to the goodness of his land they have made goodly images."* (Hos. 10:1)
2. His present plan is for believers to bear fruit. *"Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."* (Jn. 15:8)

Jesus later would say that He was the true vine and His followers were the branches (Jn. 15:1). The only function therefore of a branch is to bear fruit. Branch wood is never used for firewood or building material! Furthermore it must be realized a branch does not produce fruit (the vine does this), but rather bears it!

*"And they come to Jerusalem: and Jesus went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves; And he taught, saying unto them... Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves." And the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine."* (Mk. 11:15-18)

As observed, this marks the final of two temple cleansings. These two may be favorably compared.

- A. Both occurred at Passover time. The first introduced Jesus' public ministry, while the second concluded it.
- B. His death and resurrection is predicted on both occasions.
  1. First occasion – *"Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body."* (Jn. 2:18-21)
  2. Second occasion – *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit... Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour... And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me. This he said, signifying what death he should die."* (Jn. 12:24, 27, 32-33)

- C. His glory was revealed just prior to the first cleansing. *"This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him."* (Jn. 2:11)
- D. His glory was revealed just after the second cleansing. *"Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again."* (Jn. 12:28)
- E. The Father is associated with both events.
1. First cleansing – *"And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up."* (Jn. 2:16-17)
  2. Second cleansing – *"And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves."* (Mt. 21:12-13)
- F. Several factors no doubt invoked His wrath against the money changers on each occasion:
1. They were selling cattle, sheep, and doves in the court of the Gentiles, the only place where non-Jews could come and pray.
  2. They may have been selling blemished animals.
  3. They could have been overcharging.
  4. They were obviously filled with greed.
- G. John Grassmick observes:
- When Jesus arrived in Jerusalem, he went into the temple area, the large outer court of the Gentiles surrounding the inner sacred courts of the temple itself. No Gentile was allowed beyond this outer court. In it the high priest Caiaphas had authorized a market (probably a recent economic innovation) for the sale of ritually pure items necessary for temple sacrifice: wine, oil, salt, approved sacrificial animals and birds. Money from three sources circulated in Palestine in New Testament times: imperial money (Roman), provincial money (Greek), and local money (Jewish). Money changers provided the required Tyrian (Jewish) coinage for the annual half-shekel temple tax (Exod. 30:12-16) required of all male Jews twenty years of age and up. This was in exchange for their Greek and Roman currency, which featured human portraits considered idolatrous. Though a small surcharge was permitted in these transactions, dealings were not free from extortion and fraud. In addition (according to Mk. 11:16) people loaded with merchandise were taking shortcuts through this area, making it a thoroughfare from one part of the city to another. (*The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Victor Books, Wheaton, Ill., 1983, p. 157)

H. Observe Jesus' words concerning His Father's house. *"And he taught, saying unto them, Is it not written, My house shall be called of all nations the house of prayer? but ye have made it a den of thieves."* (Mk. 11:17)

Here Jesus quotes from Jeremiah's sermon delivered some six centuries earlier in the same temple area, condemning Israel for the same thing.

*"Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD."* (Jer. 7:11)

Our Lord also refers to a prophecy of Isaiah concerning Gentile people and the temple during the Millennium.

*"Even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all people."* (Isa. 56:7)

- The request by some Greeks to see Jesus

*"And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour. Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore, that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered: others said, An angel spake to him. Jesus answered and said, This voice came not because of me, but for your sakes. Now is the judgment of this world: now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."* (Jn. 12:20-32)

A. Note two phrases at this point, one referred to here and the second in John 20:

1. *"Sir, we would see Jesus"* (Jn. 12:21).

2. *"Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord"* (Jn. 20:20).

B. The wise pastor or Sunday school teacher will seek to make the first statement a reality in their presentation of God's Word, thus assuring that all those who hear them will experience the second statement!

C. It is interesting to observe the Greeks wanted Philip to show them the Son, and that, he, Philip, would later ask Jesus to show him the Father (Jn. 14:8). Jesus' response would indicate Philip still had much to learn about the Son of God!

*"Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the*

*Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works.” (Jn. 14:9-10)*

- Jesus' statement, *“The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified”* (12:23) is revealing indeed, especially the words *“hour”* and *“glorified.”* Both terms refer directly to His death. Note:

A. Regarding the word *“hour”*

1. *“Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come.”* (Jn. 2:4)
2. *“Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.”* (Jn. 7:30)
3. *“These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come.”* (Jn. 8:20)
4. *“Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.”* (Jn. 13:1)
5. *“Then cometh he to his disciples, and saith unto them, Sleep on now, and take your rest: behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of man is betrayed into the hands of sinners.”* (Mt. 26:45)
6. *“And he went forward a little, and fell on the ground, and prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him.”* (Mk. 14:35)

B. Regarding the word *“glorified”*

1. *“(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)”* (Jn. 7:39)
2. *“These things understood not his disciples at the first: but when Jesus was glorified, then remembered they that these things were written of him, and that they had done these things unto him.”* (Jn. 12:16)
3. *“Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly... He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night. Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him.”* (Jn. 13:26-27, 30-31)
4. *“The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go.”* (Acts 3:13)