

“When they arrived back in Jerusalem, Jesus entered the Temple and began to drive out the people buying and selling animals for sacrifices. He knocked over the tables of the money changers and the chairs of those selling doves, and he stopped everyone from using the Temple as a marketplace. He said to them, “The Scriptures declare, ‘My Temple will be called a house of prayer for all nations,’ but you have turned it into a den of thieves.” Mark 11:15-17 NLT

lectio // Mark 11:12-25

Why does Mark put the “temple cleansing” story right between the fig tree story? Because they are related, they are tied to each other. There is a deeper, well known understanding of the figs and their “proper,” and regular cycle of growth, producing buds and then fruit. Think about this fig trees ARE fruit trees! If the tree is supposed to make fruit and it doesn't - what's wrong with it? It's NOT healthy. And what if it continues to BE fruitless? It is no longer a fruit tree, it's just a sad decoration. If it's purpose was to be decorative, that's fine, but if it's supposed to give fruit and never does.... then it should be uprooted to allow a fruit producing tree to take its place. So what's that got to do with the temple? If the temple was supposed to be about God's people gathering to worship and pray, yet it's no longer serving that function, well it's NOT healthy. And if it continues to not fulfill its purpose, it too must be uprooted and replaced with something that will produce a place for worship and prayer - and that happens to be US.

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Dad,

I really would have loved a “building” to BE the place where worship and prayer are centralized and “fruitful” fulfilling its purpose, but it was NEVER going to happen. Now we, together, make up the fruitful gathering of worship and prayer. We embody the best of what the temple was just a temporary symbol, a placeholder for a more permanent solution. We are your temple! Help us fulfill our purpose to be fruitful as you intended us to be.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root