

WEEK 17: MARK 11 - MESSIAH MADE MANIFEST: AS KING, AS HIGH PRIEST, AS PROPHET

HIGH SCHOOL

GOAL

To develop a better understanding of Mark 11

LESSON

Materials Needed: Orthodox Study Bible

Extended Learning Opportunities:

The Explanation by Blessed Theophylact of the Holy Gospel According to St. Mark pages 94-100

The Gospel of Mark the Suffering Servant by Fr. Lawrence Farley pages 179-189

GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 11

Read verses 1-11 and then discuss: Palm Sunday

What is Palm Sunday? It is the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and the people publicly proclaimed He was the Messiah. Jesus was the Messiah all of the prophets were pointing to in the Old Testament and the One who would save them. Granted, they were still under the impression Jesus would have a kingdom here on earth. They didn't fully understand the enormity of what was about to happen in the coming days.

As Jesus rode into the city, the people were laying down their outer garments or clothing onto the ground to create a royal entry for Him into the city. (Think about a red carpet entry or special entrance for a king) Those who didn't have an outer garment to lay along Jesus' path quickly ran to cut down palm branches off the nearby trees and laid those down instead. These were what were readily available to them in the moment and why we receive a palm cross today on Palm Sunday. For areas of the world that do not have any palm trees, they use pussy willows on Palm Sunday because it is the first plant in their area to grow in the spring and readily available to them.

This whole moment is a really huge deal. Not only is Jesus publicly making His entrance into Jerusalem as the Messiah, there is also still the misunderstanding that the Messiah will establish a new kingdom here on earth. This understanding makes Jesus a direct threat to the current king's throne! Therefore, Jerusalem is not a safe place for Jesus and

His disciples. Despite knowing the danger, Jesus voluntarily enters Jerusalem because He is not just there to save the people of that time, but will be crucified and Resurrect for the salvation of every single person, ever.



"Palm Sunday Icon" by [bobosh_t](#) is marked with [CC BY-SA 2.0](#).

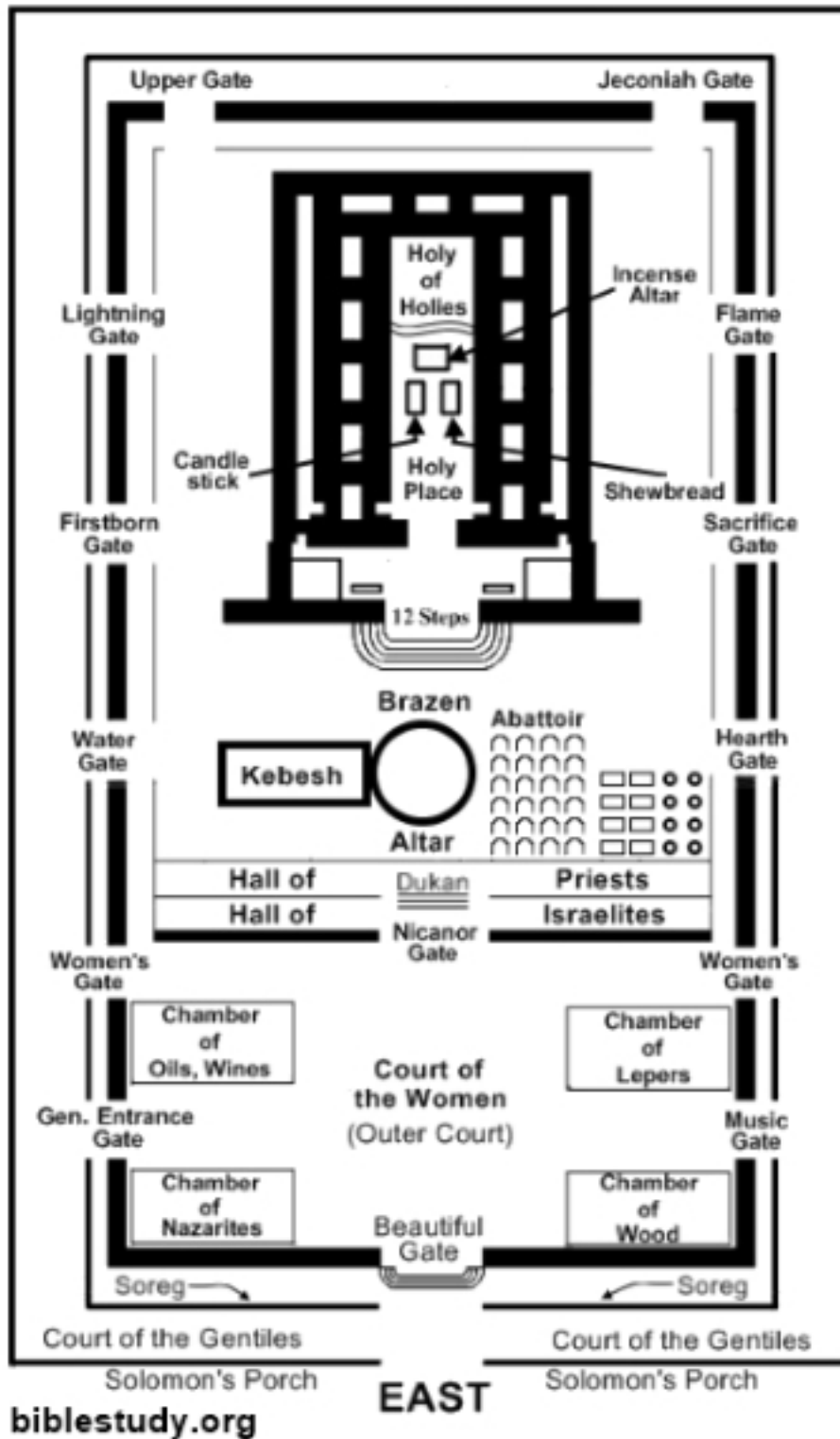
Verses 12-26: The Fig Tree and Jesus in the Temple



Photo by [Jametlene Reskp](#) on [Unsplash](#)

“And let us understand the things concerning the fig tree. For there is much here that might seem odd. First, was He in fact hungry that morning? Second, if it was not the season for figs, why was He looking to find figs? Third, what was the reason for giving a punishment to an insensible plant? It is said that He did everything here according to divine economy. Although He had often worked miracles to do good to men, the disciples had not yet seen His power to punish. Therefore here He displays His power to punish in regards to a plant, wanting to show His disciples that if He wished, He could destroy in an instant those who were about to crucify Him. And it was a great miracle which He performed, for the fig tree has more sap than almost any other plant, and yet such a succulent tree dried up at once... This fig tree is a symbol of that assembly of the Jews which had only leaves, that is, which had the law which gave only shade to them, but which bore no fruit. Jesus hungered for their salvation... Therefore, since this assembly did not bear the fruit of repentance, God’s blessing was withheld and it withered, for thereafter the unrepentant Jews had neither prophet nor teacher.” (Blessed Theophylact, page 97-98)

Interior of Jerusalem's Temple



“Christ, finding the Temple a place not of spiritual faithfulness and fruitfulness but of worldliness and greed, began to cast out those buying and those selling. The problem,

of course, was not the idea of sacred commerce itself. The many kinds of coinage in circulation throughout the world necessitated the use of moneychangers and their tables, as only the coinage of the Temple was allowed. Also, people would come from afar and buy their sacrifices (such as doves, the cheapest of offerings) on site, so as to ensure that the animals were properly unblemished and fit for sacrifice. There were markets on the Mount of Olives nearby for that very purpose. The problem with these tables and markets was that they were located within the Temple itself, in the Court of the Gentiles. (This was a fairly recent development, having been established there as recently as about AD 30.) The Gentiles were not permitted to enter the inner courts of the Temple. It was punishable by death for them to enter into the Court of the Women or the Court of the Israelites beyond that. The only place that these Gentiles had to pray in, as they came from all the nations of the world, was the outer Court of the Gentiles, and it was just here that these markets had been lately set up. The Gentiles were therefore hindered in their communion with the God of Israel, and unable to pray in peace because of the commotion and noise that inevitably accompanied any Easter bazaar. Jesus was indignant on behalf of His Father's House. He **overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those selling the doves** and drove all of those engaged in the sacrilegious business out of the Temple. His only concern was to restore the proper sanctity of the place. Those who tried to **carry vessels through the Temple**, using it as a shortcut, were refused access. As He sat in the Temple and taught them there, He reminded them of the sanctity of God's House. Had it not been written in Isaiah 56:7, 'My House will be called a House of prayer for all the nations'?...They themselves had transformed the holy House into a **thieve's cave**, a place where the unrighteous huddled and hid in safety, avoiding detection and righteous punishment for their deeds, even as the prophets had said (Her. 7:11). The **chief-priests and the scribes heard** Him give this public teaching in the courts and colonnades (see John 10:23). They were the ones ultimately responsible for the markets which He had so peremptorily ejected. This act was a defiant challenge to their authority, and they burned with impotent anger, which they dared not yet express. They could only meet secretly and seek how to destroy Him." (Fr. Lawrence Farley, pages 184-185)

Verses 20-26:

Jesus explains to His disciples that, "God's power in His Church will not be limited by anything but their doubt." (Farley, page 186)

Verses 27-33:

The Pharisees are once again trying to trap Jesus into saying something that will condemn Himself. It, of course, does not work. Jesus turns around their questioning of Him onto

them. He asks them about St. John the Baptist. It was a common belief among the people that St. John the Baptist was a prophet sent by God. The Pharisees were stuck. If they said St. John was a prophet, then Jesus would ask them why they did not listen to him. If they said he was a false prophet, the people might turn against them since they loved St. John.

The Pharisees just want Jesus to disappear. He challenges everything they built for themselves and they continue to plot against Him.

REVIEW:

- Summarize what happened on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday).
- What was Jesus explaining to His disciples through the parable of the fig tree?
- Why was Jesus upset when He entered the Temple?

WEEK 17: MARK 11 - MESSIAH MADE MANIFEST: AS KING, AS HIGH PRIEST, AS PROPHET

MIDDLE SCHOOL

GOAL

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Learn more about Palm Sunday: <https://www.goarch.org/palmsunday-learn>

GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 11

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As Jesus rode into the city, the people were laying down their outer garments or clothing onto the ground to create a royal entry for Him into the city. (Think about a red carpet entry or special entrance for a king) Those who didn't have an outer garment to lay along Jesus' path quickly ran to cut down palm branches off the nearby trees and laid those down instead. These were what were readily available to them in the moment and why we receive a palm cross today on Palm Sunday. For areas of the world that do not have any palm trees, they use pussy willows on Palm Sunday because it is the first plant in their area to grow in the spring and readily available to them.

This whole moment is a really huge deal. Not only is Jesus publicly making His entrance into Jerusalem as the Messiah, there is also still the misunderstanding that the Messiah will establish a new kingdom here on earth. This understanding makes Jesus a direct

threat to the current king's throne! Therefore, Jerusalem is not a safe place for Jesus and His disciples. Despite knowing the danger, Jesus voluntarily enters Jerusalem because He is not just there to save the people of that time, but will be crucified and Resurrect for the salvation of every single person, ever.



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Let's learn more about Palm Sunday:

As Orthodox Christians, Palm Sunday is one of our major feast days.

In the icon of Palm Sunday, we see Jesus riding into the city of Jerusalem on a donkey. He is blessing the people and accompanied by His disciples. The people are laying down their outer garments onto the ground to create a royal path for Jesus into the city. Others are cutting down palm branches and laying them on the ground. They used palm branches because that is what grew around them.

The people are shouting, "Hosanna! Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord! Blessed is the kingdom of our father David that comes in the name of the Lord! Hosanna in the highest!"

Jesus voluntarily entered into Jerusalem knowing full well that He was in great danger. There were many people who felt threatened by Him - the Pharisees and the king among them. Soon, Jesus would be betrayed by Judas, which will ultimately lead to Jesus' death and then resurrection.

We receive blessed palm crosses on Palm Sunday in remembrance of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. When we take our palm crosses home, it's important to place them either on our family altar or tucked behind the icon of our patron saint in our room. These crosses are blessed and do not belong in the trash! We can have our parents burn last year's palm crosses in our fire place when we receive our new palm cross.

Optional activity: Learn how to fold palms into crosses

Using long strips of cardstock, follow the directions below to learn how to fold a palm cross.

How to Make a Palm Leaf Cross: https://youtu.be/znDyR8_POCU

How to Make a Palm Cross: <https://www.goarch.org/documents/32058/3219264/ScottPalmCross.pdf/7d245163-a814-4744-9823-0215e421a486>

REVIEW:

- Summarize what happened on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday).
- Is Palm Sunday one of our major feast days?
- What do we do with our blessed palm crosses when we get home?

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3RD - 4TH GRADE

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Jesus voluntarily entered into Jerusalem knowing full well that He was in great danger. There were many people who felt threatened by Him - the Pharisees and the king among them. Soon, Jesus would be betrayed by Judas, which will ultimately lead to Jesus' death and then resurrection.

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Optional activity: Learn how to fold palms into crosses

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REVIEW:

- Summarize what happened on Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Palm Sunday).
- Is Palm Sunday one of our major feast days?
- What do we do with our blessed palm crosses when we get home?

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1ST - 2ND GRADE

GOAL

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GOSPEL OF MARK - CHAPTER 11

Read pages 230 - 232 in the Orthodox Children's Bible Reader

What is Palm Sunday? It is the day that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey and the people publicly recognized that He was the Messiah. It means Jesus was the Messiah all of the prophets were pointing to in the Old Testament and the One who would save them.

As Jesus rode into the city, the people were laying down their outer garments or clothing onto the ground to create a royal entry for Him into the city. (Think about a red carpet entry or special entrance for a king) Those who didn't have an outer garment to lay along Jesus' path quickly ran to cut down palm branches off the nearby trees and laid those down instead. These were what were readily available to them in the moment and why we receive a palm cross today on Palm Sunday. For areas of the world that do not have any palm trees, they use pussy willows on Palm Sunday because it is the first plant in their area to grow in the spring and readily available to them.



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PRE-K - K

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