

Mark 11–13 review

IGG | 24 March 2021 | George Diwakar

Introduction

- Mark 11–13: nobody's favourite section?

- **Jesus's introduction in Mark 1:1–3:**



The anointed king of Psalm 2, who will reign in Zion:

"The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Mark 1:1 ESVUK

"As for me, I have set my King on **Zion**, my holy hill." Psalm 2:6 ESVUK



The Exodus rescuer of Isaiah 40, who will lead his people to Jerusalem:

"...the voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord.'" Mark 1:3 ESVUK

"Say to the cities of **Judah**, 'Behold your God!'" Isaiah 40:9 ESVUK



The divine judge of Malachi 3, who will come to his temple:

"Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way..." Mark 1:2 ESVUK

"And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his **temple**." — Malachi 3:1 ESVUK

- **Jesus's entry to Jerusalem in Mark 11:1–11:**



Jesus reveals his identity as king:

In Mark 1–8, Jesus proclaimed his kingdom (1:14–15), but hid his identity (1:25, 34, 44; 3:12; 5:43; 7:36)

In Mark 11:1–11, Jesus enters **Zion** as Israel's Messiah (11:2–4 cf Zechariah 9:9)



Jesus enters the city as rescuer:

In Mark 1–8, Jesus revealed his rescue (6:30–44; 8:1–10), but he was still on the way (8:27; 10:52)

In Mark 11:1–11, Jesus comes to **Jerusalem** as the New Exodus rescuer (11:9–10 cf Psalm 118:26)



Jesus inspects the temple as judge:

In Mark 1–8, John told all Jerusalem that the LORD would come (1:4–5), but Jesus stayed in Galilee

In Mark 11:1–11, Jesus finally comes to look round his **temple** (11:11)

- In short, Mark 11–13 is when the actions starts! The LORD has finally come to Zion—what will he find there?



The temple was:

- the focus of Israel's relationship with God (cf 1 Kings 8:28–29),
- the means for Israel's forgiveness from God (cf 1 Kings 8:30),
- the source of Israel's opposition to Jesus (3:22; 7:1).



Remember the Jewish religious leaders:

- a social and political elite whose power relied on controlling the Jewish religious system,
- murderously opposed to Jesus for his refusal to bend to their rules (3:6, 7:1–23, 8:11–13, 10:1–12),
- whose successors were an intimidating threat to Mark's readers and to us.

The court case in Mark 11–13:



11:11: Jesus's first visit to the temple → the advance inspection before the verdict



11:12–25: Jesus's second visit to the temple → the judge's pronouncement of the verdict



11:27–12:44: Jesus's third visit to the temple → the legal challenge to the verdict



13:1–37: Jesus teaches about the temple on the Mount of Olives → the future fulfilment of the verdict

Discussion (10 minutes): how might the structure and context of Mark 11–13:

- control our expectations for the section?
- help us to apply it rightly?

1. The judge's verdict on the temple (11:12–25)

- Having entered Zion (11:1–10) and inspected his temple (11:11), the Lord returns to pronounce:

a. The temple's final rejection

“And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple.” Mark 11:15–16 ESVUK

- **The aim:** a temple shutdown, not a temple cleansing
- **The illustration:** a fruitless fig tree withered to its roots (cf Jeremiah 8:13; Micah 7:1–6)
- **The accusation:** a bandits' lair instead of a house of prayer (cf Isaiah 56:7; Jeremiah 7:11)

b. The temple's final replacement

“Truly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be taken up and thrown into the sea’, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.” Mark 11:23 ESVUK

- A prayer for the day of the Lord to come → “this mountain” = the Mount of Olives or Mount Zion (cf Zechariah 14:4)
- A prayer which Jesus is now answering → the king, saviour, and judge has come to Zion (11:1–10)
- A prayer which means the temple's time is up → access and forgiveness through faith for all (11:24–25)

Discussion (10 minutes): In what ways do people try to go back to knowing God through buildings, priests, etc? Why is it so misguided? How does this section give us confidence when we pray to God and ask for forgiveness?

2. The defendants' challenge to the judge (11:27–12:44)

- On Jesus's third temple visit from 11:27, the Jewish leaders try to appeal against his verdict:

“By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?” Mark 11:28 ESVUK

- **The defendants' appeal:**

- An insincere question asked by outsiders → they have already made up their mind (11:18, 29–33)
- An important question asked by insiders → for Mark's readers and for us
- A perfect question to answer with a parable → to blind outsiders while informing insiders (4:10–12)

- **The parable of the tenants:**

- The care of the owner (12:1)
- The price of the rent (12:2)
- The patience of the owner (12:3–8)

- **The meaning of the story:**

- The national story of Israel (cf Isaiah 5:1–7)
- The present story of Israel (1:9–11, 3:6, 9:7, 11:18)
- The hole in the defendants' appeal
 - The religious leaders → trapping (12:13), withholding (12:17), misleading (12:24), devouring (12:40)
 - Jesus → Teacher (12:14, 19, 32, 35, 38), Lord (12:29–31, 36 cf 4:24–25), Judge (12:35–37)

Discussion (10 minutes): How do people question Jesus's right to judge them today? How does this section of Mark 11–13 help us to respond? How does it give us confidence that Jesus can reject and replace the temple?

3. The future fulfilment of the sentence (13:1–37)

- Two questions about the fulfilment of Jesus’s sentence against the temple:

“When will these things be and what will be the sign when all these things are about to be accomplished?”
Mark 13:4 ESVUK

- “These things” = the temple’s destruction (13:1–2) as a “day-of-the-Lord event” (11:1–10 cf Daniel 12:7)

a. The signs of the judgement

i. The birth pains

- False Christs, wars, famines, earthquakes
- Persecution and proclamation

ii. The tribulation

- The siege of Jerusalem and destruction of the temple
- Fulfilled by the Romans in AD 70

iii. The end

- The vindication of the Son
- The judgement of the world

b. The timing of the judgement

- The parable of the fig tree: the disciples could know when the tribulation was near → have confidence!
- The parable of the servants: no-one can know when the Son of Man is near → stay awake!

Discussion (10 minutes): How does this section of Mark 11–13 help us understand our place in salvation history? What would it look like for us to “stay awake” a) during the pandemic, b) when we’re in our home countries?