



STORY 78

Jesus Cleans House

MARK 11

BEFORE THE LESSON

- *Read Mark 11.*
- *Pray for God's help. Ask for the Spirit's help in understanding the passage and for the Lord to open the children's eyes to see who he is what he has done, and how they should respond to him.*
- *Study the lesson plan below. Use these sections as suggestions. Think of ways to teach it in your own voice.*

THE BIG PICTURE

Help children see how this story connects with the other lessons. Build anticipation by introducing the setting and the significance of what is about to happen in this week's story. {5 minutes}

Last lesson we looked at Palm Sunday, the first day of Holy Week. King Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt, a young donkey. The next few lessons focus on that same week, the last days of Jesus's life. One of the details that we left out from last lesson was something the Gospel writer, Matthew, wrote about. He said that Jesus's riding on a colt fulfilled what the Old Testament prophet Zechariah said, "Behold, your king is coming to you, humble, and mounted . . . on a colt" (Matt. 21:5; Zech. 9:9). This verse tells us that Jesus's plan was God's plan. It also tells us we serve a humble King. Jesus was humble—meek and mild and kind and gentle. But, when he needed to, he also showed his awesome power and righteous anger. "Righteous anger" is getting mad about things that upset God, like stealing food from the poor. The day after Palm Sunday, Jesus

1
Read

2
Teach

showed such anger. Let's listen to what happens, and let's also remember that Jesus is both the Lamb of God, who came to sacrifice his life, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah, who came to show his teeth—and roar!

TELL THE STORY

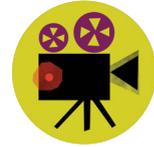
Share the story in one of these three ways. {5–10 minutes}



Read the
Bible passage
together



Read from
The Biggest Story
Bible Storybook



Play *The*
Biggest Story
video

TEACH THE STORY

Retell the story with an emphasis on what it says about God and about us. {10 minutes}

Big Truth
Jesus wants
faithful
and fruitful
followers.

Have you ever been in a cathedral—an old church with stone walls, stained glass, and a really tall ceiling? A place where if you said hello your voice would bounce off the walls for about ten seconds? The temple in Jerusalem was kind of like that. The temple had painted cedar roofs, marble pillars, and the doors to the Holy of Holies were over 60 feet high. Most people were in awe when they saw the temple. It was so big and beautiful! When Jesus entered it on Holy Week, however, he was not impressed. The temple was to be a place of prayer and praise, but the Court of the Gentiles (the temple area for non-Jewish believers) looked more like a noisy and corrupt market. People were buying animals for their Passover sacrifice, but they were being cheated by many of the sellers. This so upset Jesus that he drove 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” (Mark 11:15). And as he was putting a stop to all the buying and selling, he taught, “Doesn’t the Bible say, ‘The temple shall be a place of prayer for Jews *and Gentiles*’? But you have turned it into a hideout for cheats and thieves” (see 11:17).

Just before Jesus had cleared out the money-changers from the temple, Jesus had done something else unusual. He’d cursed a fig tree! Yes, he saw a fig tree that had big, beautiful green leaves, and he expected, because it looked alive, it

to have little buds he could eat. But when he got closer, he noticed that the fruit tree had no fruit. So, he cursed it: “May no one ever eat fruit from you again.” And sure enough, the “fig tree withered away to its roots” (11:14, 20). Wow. Why did he do that? He did it as a symbol to show that the temple was like that fruitless tree and that it was soon to be judged for being fruitless. Now, God’s people are called to be the temple where God dwells, a light to the nations. Are we like the temple and the tree, looking good on the outside but not truly happy to follow God’s ways? Or are we full of good fruits, like forgiveness and prayer? Jesus came to save all of us—let’s turn to him and ask him to make us truly alive and fruitful.

GOSPEL CONNECTION

Show how the story points to Jesus and his rescue mission as the Snake Crusher.
{5 minutes}

The Passover was the most important Jewish holiday. People would travel to the temple, buy an animal to sacrifice for their sins, bring it to the high priest, and have him sacrifice it (see Num. 28:16–25). In this way their sins would be forgiven. The animal died in their place. Now they were in a right relationship with God. But Jesus came into the temple at Passover and cleared it out. He was asked why he did it. Do you know what he said?

Jesus talked about the “temple of his body” and how it would be “destroyed” (he’d be killed on the cross) but raised up “in three days” (John 2:20–21). He also taught, another time, that he was “greater than the temple” (Matt. 12:6). What was he talking about? Jesus was teaching that he was the new and better “temple.” Think about it. Do we travel to Jerusalem to have our sins forgiven? No. We go to Jesus. Do we need to buy an animal and have it brought to the high priest? No. Jesus is our high priest. Do we need an animal to be sacrificed? No. Jesus is our sacrifice for sin. Jesus is greater than the temple, because he is the only person that we need to go to for God’s mercy. What incredibly good news!

DISCUSS THE STORY

Discuss the story in smaller groups. {10 minutes}

- 1. QUESTION:** Was there anything that made you angry this morning? Was Jesus ever angry? What’s different about his anger than our anger?

3

Engage

TAKEAWAY: When Jesus was angry, he was angry about the right things and in the right way.

Memory Verse
My house shall
be called a house
of prayer for all
the nations.

MARK 11:17

2. **QUESTION:** What was happening in the temple courts when Jesus entered? What was supposed to happen there? Why did it make Jesus angry? What did he do?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus was angry that the temple court was full of cheaters and that there was no place for people from other nations to pray.

3. **QUESTION:** What happened just before Jesus came into the temple? Why was he angry at the fig tree? Is Jesus happy when churches and people look great on the outside but inside are not good at all? How might a church seem good but not actually be good? How about you?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus wants his people to be faithful and fruitful, not just to look good on the outside.

4. **QUESTION:** What did Jesus say would be destroyed? What did he say would happen three days later? What was he talking about? How is Jesus like the temple? How is he better than the temple?

TAKEAWAY: Jesus is the new and better temple.

ACTIVITIES

Download coloring pages and activity pages from TheBiggestStory.com, or choose from the following activity suggestions. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Clean Up Relay

Supply List: chairs, tennis balls, brooms

Before Class: Gather supplies. Place a chair on the opposite side of the room from each team's starting line.

Divide children into teams, and have teams stand single file at the starting line. Give the first child on each team a broom and a tennis ball. On “Go” the

first person must use his broom to hit the ball to the opposite side of the room, around his chair, and back to his team. When he reaches his team, he must give the broom and ball to the next player. The first team to race all team members wins. Explain that Jesus didn't clean the temple with a broom. Instead, he cleared the temple of cheaters and thieves.

Option 2: Balloon Train

Supply List: tape, balloons

Before Class: Gather supplies. Place tape on the floor along the perimeter of the room. Inflate balloons (two for every three children).

Divide children into teams of three, and give each team two balloons. Have teams line up along the tape with space between teams. Have each team make a train by standing single file and placing one balloon between each team member. Teams must stand close enough together to keep the balloon in place without touching it with their hands. On "Go" teams walk clockwise along the tape perimeter. The first team to return to its starting point wins. If at any time a balloon falls, the team must stop, step inside the tape line, do five jumping jacks, then reset and walk forward as a train again. Following close to Jesus protects us from getting off track like the cheaters and thieves.

3rd–5th

Option 1: Protect the Temple

Supply List: masking tape, four cones, four small balls, eight soft dodgeballs

Before Class: Gather supplies. Use masking tape to divide the room in half. Place two cones inside each half, and place a small ball on top of each cone (making "temples"). Place eight soft dodgeballs along the tape line.

Divide children into two teams. Have each team stay on its side while using the balls to knock down the other team's "temples." When a temple is knocked down, the children must reset it before their second temple is knocked down. If a team successfully knocks down the second temple before the first is reset, they win. Remind children that Jesus predicted that the temple would be destroyed and that he would rebuild it in three days.

Option 2: Get Out Tag!

Supply List: none

Choose one child to be “It,” and have remaining children be “money-changers.” Play a game of tag. On “Go” the child who is “It” must chase the money-changers. If a child is tagged, she must go to jail (a predetermined corner of the room). When “It” has tagged four people, one of the four becomes the new “It” and the game continues. Remind children that Jesus drove money-changers out of the temple because they were cheating people and preventing worship.

CRAFTS

Choose from the following craft suggestions depending on time, age ranges, and group size. {10–15 minutes}

K–2nd

Option 1: Braided Whip Bookmark

Supply List: thick string, tape, beads

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut thick string into 15-inch pieces (three per child). Make a sample craft.

Set string and remaining supplies on tables. Have children knot three pieces of string together at the top, then tape the knot to the table to hold it in place. Instruct children to braid the string until there are 4 inches left. Have them string two or three beads onto each string and then knot the three pieces together to close. Tell children that the braided whip bookmark represents when Jesus drove the money-changers out of the temple with a whip.

Option 2: Faithful and Fruitful

Supply List: paper, construction paper (green, brown, and red), glue sticks, markers

Before Class: Gather supplies. Make copies of a large, full tree (one per child). Make a sample craft.

Set copies and remaining supplies on tables. Have children rip green paper into pieces and then glue them to a tree paper to make leaves. Have them rip brown paper into pieces and then glue them to the tree paper to form the trunk.

Then they can rip red paper to make fruit to add to the tree. Have children use markers to write, “God can make me faithful and fruitful.”

3rd–5th

Option 1: Braided Whip Bookmark

Supply List: thick string, tape, beads

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut thick string into 15-inch pieces (three per child). Make a sample craft.

Set string and remaining supplies on tables. Have children knot three pieces of string together at the top, then tape the knot to the table to hold it in place. Instruct children to braid the string until there are 4 inches left. Have them string two or three beads onto each string and then knot the three pieces together to close. Tell children that the braided whip bookmark represents when Jesus drove the money-changers out of the temple with a whip.

Option 2: Prayer Jar

Supply List: tissue paper, decoupage glue, paper bowls, empty baby food jars, foam paintbrushes, craft sticks, permanent markers

Before Class: Gather supplies. Cut tissue paper into small pieces. Pour decoupage glue into paper bowls. Make a sample craft.

Set tissue paper, decoupage glue, and remaining supplies on tables. Have children use a foam paintbrush to spread the glue on the outside of a baby food jar. Children then cover the jar with tissue pieces. Finally, children can “paint” the glue over the tissue to seal. While the jar is drying, have children take five to ten craft sticks and use permanent markers to write someone or something they want to be praying for (family, friends, the church, not getting angry, etc.). Have them place the sticks in their jar. Encourage them to use the jar to help them remember to pray for these things because God hears and answers prayer.



Visit TheBiggestStory.com for downloadable coloring pages, activity pages, and craft templates for this lesson.