

Sermon Outline

April 26 Matt 21:12-22
"The Temple and the Tree"

- ✚ The river from the new temple (Ezekiel 47:1-12)

- ✚ The contrast of the two trees
 - Miraculous abundance

 - The appearance of life with no fruit

- ✚ The fig tree cursed

- ✚ The two applications
 - Prayer

 - Two kinds of pruning

✚ Points to Ponder to Prepare

May 3 Matt 21:23 – 22:14
"A Question and Three Answers"

Jesus was exercising a boldness that shocked the Jewish leaders. He has been a minor concern in backwater Galilee, but now he had entered Jerusalem hailed by the crowds as King. He proceeded with an assault on their power and money by cleansing the temple.

They wanted to put him in his place and show that they were in charge in Jerusalem, but the wildcard was the crowd of pilgrims. In a contest of strength, which side would they take?

So they want him to say something that they can use to discredit him with the crowds. The next few chapters are their various attempts to force him to say something to turn the crowds against him.

Their first question is about his authority. Only the Messiah can claim the title "Son of David." The temple is God's house. Anyone who cleanses the temple as Jesus has must have the authority of God himself. But claiming that authority might sound blasphemous to those on the fence about who Jesus really was.

So they ask the question. "Who do you think you are?"

In turn he responds with a series of questions and parables. See Isaiah 5, especially verses 1-7 for the background of the third parable.

Scripture readings for the week

Sunday April 26	Numbers 21-22
Monday April 27	Numbers 23
Tuesday April 28	Numbers 24
Wed April 29	Numbers 25
Thursday April 30	Numbers 26
Friday May 1	Numbers 27
Saturday May 2	Numbers 28-29
Sunday May 3	Numbers 30-31

Prayer Focus

We pray today for marriages.

- ✚ May God grant patience, forgiveness, laughter and playful delight to all of the marriages in our church and community. May we speak with humility, honesty and vulnerability. May we listen with our whole hearts.

- ✚ May God grant prayerful patience to all those looking ahead to their eventual future marriages. May all our dating relationships honor God as we learn to treat each other with service, kindness and respect.

- ✚ May God peace, strength and comfort to all who walk through the hard patches of "until death do us part". May God smile his blessing on caregivers and those who grieve.