

# The Harmony of the Holy “Week” Accounts

## The Cleansing of the Temple:

**Mt 21:12-22 vs. Mk 11:12-26 vs. Lk 19:45-48 vs. Jn 2:13-25**

Study by Jason Labonte

### I. Chronology: Two Views (of a Very Many):

#### A. A More-Traditional View

1. Friday, 8th of Nisan<sup>1</sup> — Jesus arrives in Bethany from Jericho<sup>2</sup>
2. Saturday, 9th of Nisan — A normal sabbath<sup>3</sup>
3. Palm Sunday, 10th of Nisan — Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey<sup>4</sup>
4. Monday, 11th of Nisan — **Jesus curses a fig tree and clears the temple**
5. Tuesday, 12th of Nisan — **The fig tree is found withered**; Jesus teaches in the temple; a woman anoints Jesus
6. Wednesday, 13th of Nisan — Nothing is known.
7. Maunday Thursday, 14th of Nisan, Passover — Jesus eats the Passover meal, his last supper with his disciples.
8. Good Friday, 15th of Nisan — Jesus the Christ is crucified for the sins of the world
9. Black Saturday, 16th of Nisan — A normal sabbath
10. Easter Sunday, 17th of Nisan — Jesus the Christ is raised from dead! Hallelujah!

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<sup>1</sup> also called Abib

<sup>2</sup> Some believe this trip was on Saturday, but they forget that Jesus would not have travelled on a sabbath day.

<sup>3</sup> This view assumes that when John writes, “the next day” that he really means, “the next non-sabbath day”.

<sup>4</sup> Some believe the triumphal entry was on Monday, falling on a 10th that year, such that he died on Passover instead of the day after.

## **B. An Alternate View**

1. Friday, 8th of Nisan — Jesus arrives in Bethany from Jericho; a woman anoints Jesus
2. Saturday, 9th of Nisan — A normal sabbath, Jesus rides into Jerusalem on a donkey (It may have been a sabbath day's journey<sup>5</sup>. It was also late<sup>6</sup>, so the sabbath may have been over.)
3. Sunday, 10th of Nisan — **Jesus curses a fig tree and clears the temple**
4. Monday, 11th of Nisan — **The fig tree is found withered**; Jesus teaches in the temple
5. Tuesday, 12th of Nisan — Nothing is known
6. Wednesday, 13th of Nisan — Jesus eats the Passover meal, his last supper with his disciples.
7. Thursday, 14th of Nisan, Passover — Jesus the Christ is crucified for the sins of the world
8. Friday, 15th of Nisan, 1st Day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread — A high sabbath
9. Saturday, 16th of Nisan — A normal sabbath
10. Sunday, 17th of Nisan, The Feast of First Fruits — Jesus the Christ is raised from dead! Hallelujah!

## **II. The Cursing of the Fig Tree**

**Compare and discuss the tables.**

- A. Fig trees usually get their leaves in March or April; they did not grow figs until June.**
- B. When Jesus said “*this* mountain” and “to the sea”, He was likely using the Mount of Olives and the Dead Sea as His immediate examples.**
- C. Mark 11:26 was likely copied from Matthew 6:15.**

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<sup>5</sup> Acts 1:12

<sup>6</sup> according to Mark

### **III. The Cleansing of the Temple**

**Compare and discuss the tables. Also read Is 56:6-8, Jer 7:11, and Ps 8:1-2 for the prophetic significance of these events.**

- A. Where? — This likely happened in the Outer Court of the Gentiles, which was several acres.**
- B. When?**
  - 1. Some scholars believe the cleansing to have occurred twice.
  - 2. Other scholars believe that John placed his account early for thematic reasons.
  - 3. From John 2:20, it is possible to calculate that this event took place in AD 26 or 27.

### **IV. Discussion**

**Discuss the questions below.**

- A. Why did Jesus curse a tree that shouldn't have had any fruit (Mk 11:13)? (See also Lk 21:29-33.) What did this mean?**
- B. Is the mountain parable meant to be literal?**
- C. What is the significance of the cleansing taking place in the Court of the Gentiles?**
- D. How was Jesus justified in using (premeditated, even) a whip? Is such anger and even violence ever justified for us as well?**
- E. Are there ways in which we turn our own churches into "robbers dens"?**