



JEFFREY ROSARIO
Speaker

A HUNGRY JESUS

I WISH I could have been there on that momentous day when Jesus finally made his triumphal entry into Jerusalem. It was a Messianic event that announced to the world that Christ was the coming Promised One. Several centuries before, the prophet Zechariah had foretold, “Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, lowly and riding on a donkey” (Zechariah 9:9). Even the hosannas and blessings that were

heralded by the throngs surrounding Him were taken from the Psalmist as echoes of long-awaited expectations (Psalm 118:25-26). Jerusalem would finally meet her Messiah.

But in Mark’s version of this story, recorded in chapter 11, an interesting progression takes place that is easy to miss. The expectation of the people is only part of the story; the Messiah Himself had a heavy set of long-awaited expectations. After the noise settles, Jesus makes His way into the temple to look “around at all things” (Mark 11:11). What did He see? What was He inspecting? We are not told any more details. After inspecting the temple until evening, He retires for the night to nearby Bethany with His disciples.

The next day, on their way back to Jerusalem to visit the temple again, Jesus, who was “hungry,” saw a fig tree and “went to see if

perhaps He would find something on it.” But after inspecting the tree for some fruit, “He found nothing but leaves” (Mark 11:12-13). The expectation of finding fruit was reasonable because the green figs appear first, followed by the opening of the leaves. By the display of its leaves, the fig tree had falsely

JESUS WAS HUNGRY, LOOKING FOR FRUIT. BUT NOT PHYSICAL FRUIT, RATHER THE FRUITS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

advertised its fruit. To the shock of His disciples, Jesus responds by pronouncing a curse on the tree, which eventually withers. Then Jesus makes His way to Jerusalem and creates quite a scene by cleansing the temple.

So what does all this mean? The composition of Mark 11 is profound. The episode of the fruitless fig tree is sandwiched between the two visits to the



BARRY MOSIER
Field Correspondent

LIGHT FOR A DARK AREA

Oh, how sweet it was when the barge finally arrived bearing the precious Bible lessons from Light Bearers Ministry! It had been a long journey! Several months before, the container packed with Bible studies in French, Lingala and Swahili had left Jasper, Oregon. After crossing the ocean to Matadi port, the container had to be trucked 220 miles around unnavigable parts of the Congo River. Then, after unloading the Lingala Bible studies in Kinshasa, 600 more miles by barge were needed to reach Kisangani, the home of Congo Frontline Missions.

Congo Frontline Missions (CFM) is a supporting ministry started by Keith Mosier in 2008. It is located near Kisangani, Democratic Republic of Congo

(DRC), a city of about one million in the heart of the Congo River Basin. This area is both unreached and remote, and today, CFM has the only foreign mission staff families within 300 miles. CFM's focus has been to provide evangelism training

BIBLES ARE ALMOST UNHEARD OF IN THESE REMOTE AREAS . . .

for church planters at its training facility. In addition, CFM has a dental clinic, well-drilling ministry, publishing ministry, radio station, and agricultural training school.

The seventy CFM church planters all started with basic tools for opening new work in remote areas. Each was given a bicycle, a Bible and other books, a picture roll, monthly stipend, and stacks

of precious Bible studies in the local language. After moving their families to the target village (up to 250 miles away, and often very remote), they began to study the lessons with local residents. They are hated and opposed by local witches who want to keep the people under their satanic control. After a church planter has 15 believers in a village, CFM tries to send a team to do evangelism in the village and then baptize.

FROM THE LORD

"The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it."

Psalms 68:11

BEFORE THE END

"The gospel must first be published among all nations."

Mark 13:10

A SPECIAL WORK

"We have no time to lose . . . Many who will not be induced to listen to the truth presented by the living preacher will take up a tract or a paper and peruse it; many things they read meet their ideas exactly, and they become interested to read all it contains. Impressions are thus made upon their minds which they cannot readily forget."

Ellen White
The Publishing Ministry, p. 397



The Light Bearers lessons play a key role in this process. Since Bibles are almost unheard of in these remote areas, each lesson asks spiritual questions and then quotes

THEY CARRY ON FOR THE LOVE OF CHRIST AND HE HAS BLESSED THEIR EFFORTS.

the scripture texts that answer the questions. In this way, the full set of lessons themselves become like the student's own "Bible" until they

receive a real Bible on the day of their baptism.

The lives of our church planters are very hard. Several have been poisoned (none died). They are often shunned by locals who fear the witches. Witches curse them and try to drive them away. Several have buried

children due to disease. It takes some of them four days by bicycle over terrible roads to come to CFM and give their report. But they carry

on for the love of Christ and He has blessed their efforts. Over 5,000 people have been baptized as a result of their work and the Bible lessons. Thank you so much to Light Bearers and their financial supporters for the commitment to getting the Light to such dark and remote areas of the world! Thank you for your prayers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

DECEMBER 5

Cascade Adventist Church
Bend, OR
www.cascadesda.org / 541.749.9005
James Rafferty

DECEMBER 8

Pastoral Leadership Evangelism Council
Huntsville, AL
Oakwood University Church
http://www.pastorsleadership.org/
Ty Gibson

DECEMBER 13-19

Abundant Life Youth Fest
Dundee, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa
http://ww3.abundant.co.za
James Rafferty

DECEMBER 26

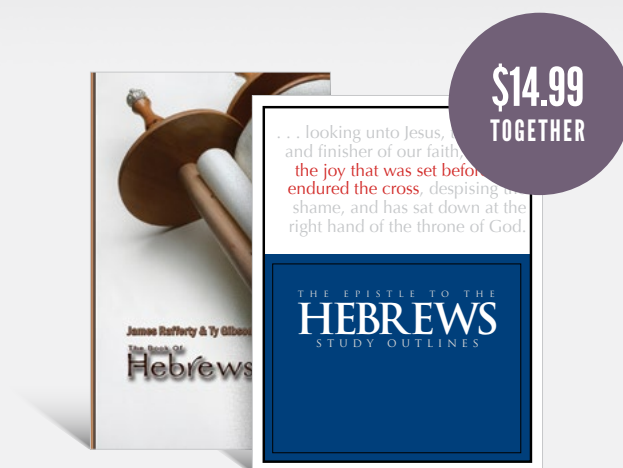
Cascade Adventist Church
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James Rafferty

... A HUNGRY JESUS (continued from page 1)

temple. The connection is provocative and suggests that the fig tree is an acted parable representing the temple, or the church. Jesus was hungry, looking for fruit. But not physical fruit, rather the fruits of righteousness. It was His church that had been elected to bear the fruit of the beauty of God and feed a languishing world. Yet the temple offered “nothing but leaves,”

neglecting not only a hungry world, but a hungry Messiah.

Today, Jesus longs to find the fruit of righteousness and love in every one of His followers. The Promise is certain: “He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).



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