

## **SPEAKING THE WORD OF GOD - IN PRAYER**

**Request:** Recently I heard a bible teacher mention the importance of speaking the word of God. He used the following three examples that caught my attention: Creation (Gen.1); Prayer (Matt.21: 21-22); and Written Word (2 Cor.4: 13).

Last week, we studied "Speaking the Word of God - in Life" from 2 Cor.4: 13.

This week we will study "Speaking the Word of God - in Prayer" from Matt.21: 18-22.

**We will study this lesson by the following five homiletical points on speaking the word of God - in Prayer.**

- Setting (vs 21:18)
- Supply chain (vs 19a)
- Spoken word (vs 19b)
- Stunned disciples (vs 21:20)
- Spiritual lesson (vs 21-22)

### **1. The setting for the lesson on speaking the word of God in Prayer occurs on the road from Bethany to Jerusalem (21:17).**

It is week of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ (Triumphal entry; Matt.21: 1).

Jesus and the disciples were apparently staying at the home of Martha. This home offered a wonderful hospitality and refuge from pressures of ministries (R and R) – “practicing hospitality.” (Rom.12: 13b) “Be hospitable to one another without complaint.” (1 Pet.4: 9)

How is it possible for Jesus to leave her home HUNGRY (peinao/ a.a.ind), without breakfast? (Luke 10:38-42)

A great morning bible lesson will come from missing breakfast with Martha.

### **2. The lesson arises from a failure in the divine supply chain:**

“and seeing (horao / a.a.ptc) a lone fig tree by the road. He came (erchomai / a.a.ind) to it, and found (heurisko / a.a.ind) nothing on it except leaves only.” (21:19a)

The fig tree was part of God’s food supply chain for man – “I give you every seed bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.” (Gen.1:29) the 6<sup>th</sup> day of Creation.

Listed are six different supply chains by which God meets our needs.

- Natural foods of garden (Gen.1: 29).
- Supernatural food - the feeding of the 5,000 (John 6:1-15)
- Work for wages and food (2 Thess.3:10)
- Hospitality - Martha’s home (Luke 10 and Matt.21)
- Kin family support (1 Tim.5:8)

**3. The SPOKEN WORD may seem harsh at first but it was used to teach a bible lesson on prayer. "He said to it, 'no longer shall there ever be any fruit from you' and at once the fig tree withered."**

The spoken word of Jesus Christ caused the natural order of creation to reverse itself. This fig tree went from being a healthy fig tree to a withered tree, from its roots up! (Mark 11:20)

Question: What was Jesus' point in cursing a perfectly good fig tree?

**4. The cursing of the fig tree stunned the disciples: "Seeing (horao / a.a.ptc.) this the disciples marveled saying, how (pos / an adverb - not an interrogative) did the fig tree wither (xeraino / a.p.ind.) at once?" (21:20)**

In other words they asked: "How did you do that? Reverse the order of creation?" Jesus would have responded: "I did it (by means of) prayer, Speaking The Word of God!"

The adverb "Pos" is used in this verse as an exclamation! Meaning that the disciples are interested in the spiritual and doctrinal side, the "How did you do that" rather than the scientific side of the event. Jesus was teaching a doctrinal lesson on prayer and not on the withered fig tree.

**5. Jesus gave the disciples a lesson on Prayer.**

He explained to His disciples that it happened because of the power of prayer:

"An Jesus answered and said to them:

- Truly I say to you, if (3CC) you have (echo / p.a.subj) faith (Mk 11:22) in God
- And do not doubt (me diakrino / a.p.subj)
- You shall not only do (poieo / f.a.ind) what I have done to the fig tree (airo / a.p.impv) [command]
- But (alla) even if (3CC) (kan) you say (lego / a.a.subj) to this mountain, be taken up (airo / a.p.impv) [command] and be cast (ballo / a.p.impv) [command] into the sea,
- It shall happen (ginomai / f.a.ind)."
- (vs 22) And whatever (3CC) (hosos) you ask (aiteo / a.a.subj) in prayer, believing (pisteuo / p.a.ptc),
- You shall receive (lambano / f.a.ind).

Note that there are three forms of 3rd Class Condition "Ifs" (3CC) in vs 21:21-22 meaning it was a volitional / possible issue - describing a Powerful Prayer Life! Let's take a look at all three:

- There are two sides to the first, "have" (echo) [faith and not doubt] (James 1:6-8) [same heart].
- There is an interesting statement to the second 3CC (kan) - you can not only have effect on this fig tree but you can effect this mountain! (vs 21:21b)
- There is also a third 3CC 'conditional particle (hosos - an) [whatever] you ask (aiteo /a.a.subj) in prayer, believing (God's Promise relating to a pertinent situation) (pisteuo / p.a.ptc), you shall receive (lambano / f.a.ind) [have effect]. (vs21:22)

The withered fig tree reflects Jesus' messianic authority (Col 1:16-17). This is important because a productive and powerful prayer life operates according to an established standard of the will of God. (Rom 1:16; 1Jn 5:14-15)

Faith must have a working object and that working object is always The Word of God! The Word of God always works because of the faithfulness of God to His Promise! (Rom 4:21)

Divine Production (Works) vindicates The Word of God residing and functioning in the Believer's soul by means of the faith cycle => answered Prayer.