

RIVERSIDE ANGLICAN CHURCHES
QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION OR REFLECTION

Rejected stone – Mark 11-12

1. Read Mark 11:1-11. How is Jesus approach to Jerusalem different from the rest of his public ministry? Why does Jesus ride on a colt (young horse) and not on a mature war horse? (think back to the values of 8:23-10:52)
2. Sometimes Mark weaves two stories together so that they will shed light on each other. Think of the blind man who required two touches before he could see. The next story was Peter's confession in 8:30. Yet Peter will also need two touches before he begins to understand. Can you think of any other episodes in Mark where two stories are woven together?
3. What is the story of the fig tree wrapped around? Look at 11:12-14 and then v20-21. What is the focus on in the middle? What do you think the fig tree is supposed to symbolise?
4. How is a leafy, healthy looking but fruitless fig tree a vivid symbol? Read Micah 7:1-6.
5. Read 11:27-28. This is Jesus third day in Jerusalem. What has he done to provoke their question? Why doesn't he give them a direct answer? What does his counter question expose about the chief priests, scribes and elders?
6. Conflict 1. Read 12:1-11. This is Jesus final parable. How is it understood? How do they respond over the coming verses?
7. Conflict 2. Read v13-17. Who comes asking questions? What was their goal in the question? What is the irony of v14? Taxes are tricky territory. Jesus runs the risk of running afoul of the Roman governors or offending the national pride of his fellows. What is their response to him?
8. Conflict 3. Read v18-27. Who comes asking the question? What is Jesus verdict on them in v24 and v27.)
9. Conflict 4. Read v28-34, What does the Scribe ask Jesus? How have Israel's leaders failed in this regard?
10. Make a list of the challengers that Jesus has seen off by the time we come to v34? How successfully have Israel's leaders answered the challenge of Jesus triumphal approach and temple cleansing? What avenues are open to them now?
11. How is the poor woman in v42 an example of piety? Compare her to the rich man in chapter 10? How is she an example of Israel's failed leaders (cf v38-40)?