

# Fig Tree Fervency



© Shelley S. Cramm from [Plants of Jesus' Path](#), published at [www.gardeninDelight.com](http://www.gardeninDelight.com) on Mar 5, 2026

In the [Plants of Jesus' Path](#) series, we have been welcomed to the Table in palm branches, wheat and grapes; now we meet an astonishing fig tree fervency as Jesus moved from Bethany to Jerusalem and passed by a lush, leaves-only tree. This infamous encounter revealed a fierceness in our Savior; suddenly He seemed sharp, perhaps [His gardener's attention showing](#) (Luke 13:7)? Why the startling harassment of the fruitless fig tree? What is Jesus conveying to us in His fervor?

This is one of the most abrupt exchanges the Lord has involving plants, revealing much to us about the crucial work of prayer in the kingdom of God.

On the next day, as they were leaving Bethany, he felt hungry. Noticing in the distance a fig tree in leaf, he went to see if he could find any fruit on it. When he reached it, he found nothing except leaves, since it was not the season for figs. Then he said to it, "May no one ever again eat fruit from your branches." And his disciples heard him say this. Mark 11:12-14 NCB



*The [Plants of Jesus' Path](#) is a 7-week study of plants as a way of cultivating a deeper appreciation for our Savior in the days leading to His crucifixion*

I can't help but wonder if Jesus was looking beyond the local tree supernaturally, if not poetically, and addressing the iconic fig tree in the Garden of Eden, which lent its leaves to cover Adam and Eve's leaving the will of God (Genesis 3:7, 17). No surprise to see [His Righteous Branch-passion](#) stirred, ready to restore the sweet garden communion stolen by the snake.

This is the likely backstory to the full encounter, from back-and-forth fruitless fig tree to matters of prayer: not a mention of a mounded tree, but a planting of Jesus' devotion and intensity. The lack of fruit set the stage for the fury to follow—Jesus' overturning of tables in the Temple, where a focus on worship and prayer had been stolen.

He entered the temple and began to drive out those who were engaged there in buying and selling. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who were selling doves. Nor would he allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. Then he taught them, saying: "Is it not written: 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'? But you have made it a den of thieves." Mark 11:15-17 NCB

*"Jesus broke up the fruitless transactions taking place there; the sanctuary, intended to be a house of prayer, a place of joy for all ([Isaiah 56:7](#)), was now crowded with people*

*disconnected from the Lord's presence, focused on merchandise instead of a personal exchange with God himself."*

—quoted from "Fruiting, Not Leaving," [God's Word for Gardeners Bible](#), page 16



*fig tree in a front yard in Buffalo, NY*

The distraction and disconnection were metaphorical mountains to be moved; [God is jealous](#) and [desiring of His people's hearts](#), ready to clear the way to nourishing and satisfying worship and prayer.

Find information for [growing fig trees](#) in your yard in the Plant Guide

## Fig Tree Fervency

Upon leaving the scene, the disciples were shocked that the fig tree had shriveled—

Early the next morning, as they passed by, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots. Then Peter, recalling what had happened, said to Jesus: “Rabbi, look! The fig tree that you cursed has withered away.” Mark 11:20-21 NCB

—to which Jesus said, “Have faith in God (Mark 11:22).” Again, Words that could have been equally directed to the disciples or to Adam and Eve! The Savior continued with a rustic, practical directive (from the parallel passage in [Matthew 21](#)):

But Jesus was matter-of-fact: “Yes—and if you embrace this kingdom life and don’t doubt God, you’ll not only do minor feats like I did to the fig tree, but also triumph over huge obstacles. This mountain, for instance, you’ll tell, ‘Go jump in the lake,’ and it will jump. Absolutely everything, ranging from small to large, as you make it a part of your believing prayer, gets included as you lay hold of God.”  
Matthew 21:22-24 The Message

No wonder he demanded fruit despite the season; Jesus matched the Father’s desire for prayer to prevail in His house with His command to be fruitful (Genesis 1:28, 9:1), revealing the mightiness and goodness at hand to be established. Did the disciples grasp His revelation? Did they understand the command for prayer being imparted to them?

*Then why didn't they pray for the tree?! Be revived and restored to fruitfulness in the Name of Jesus!*

# Closing Prayer

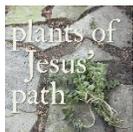
*O Father, You love me, and Your jealous desire is for our vibrant, loving, engaging relationship together—let me live and speak to this continually. You have given us a Kingdom command when we commit our lives to You and receive the sacrifice of Your Son for the forgiveness of our sins. Let this reality grip my soul with a summons to pray! The mountains in my way are to be removed, and the way of Your kingdom—justice, mercy, faithfulness, and love of God—is to reign. I am Your gardener to plant it! I am Your caretaker to cultivate it! (Luke 13:6-9) You have touched me to tidy-up this world and be an agent of Your beauty. You have made everything beautiful in its time (Ecclesiastes 3:11) and the desires of my heart (Psalm 37:4) that You bring to fruition are carrying forward Your fruitful mandate. Hallelujah!*



*Lord, as fig trees leaf out this spring,  
let me be reminded to be on watch and pray ([Mark 13:28, 37](#); [Luke 21:36](#))*

Learn this lesson from the fig tree. As soon as its twigs become tender and its leaves begin to sprout, you know that summer is near.

Mark 13:28 NCB



The [Plants of Jesus' Path](#) is a 7-week study of plants as a way of cultivating a deeper appreciation for our Savior in the days leading to His crucifixion. These botanical touchpoints are met through tangible, scent-filled, tasty or intriguing branches, fruits, roots, trees or shrubs that give us something to grasp in a story hugely ungraspable. They are planted in key places to reveal the immensity of our Savior's grace, showing us converging prophecy and backstory to understand who He is and what He has done for us. Imagine the Stations of the Cross coming to Passover Dinner! Encounter palm branches, wheat & grapes in bread & wine, fig tree, spikenard, olive trees, thorns, and hyssop with the garden as your guide to a refreshed heart, ready to celebrate the Resurrection.



Learn SO MANY more lessons from the fig tree in the Devotions Blog: God's mercy and terror-free peace in [Under Your Own Vine and Fig Tree](#); being restored in [Good Figs in Jeremiah 24](#); more on powerful prayer in [Moving Mulberry Trees and Mountains](#); praying the fruit of the Spirit in ['Little Miss Figgy's' First Fig](#); taste the Lord's hospitality in [Figgy Pudding](#); more on God's mercy in [Healing Leaves](#)



Learn to grow fig trees – any climate will do! I've seen them from [Buffalo](#) to [Denver](#) to [San Antonio](#). Find [fig in the Plant Guide](#)



Let the lessons come to life in ["F is for Fig,"](#) from the [A-to-Z Primer of Plants from God's Word](#)



Do you enjoy connecting your garden work to God's Word? [My Father is the Gardener](#) is a devotional book for you, treat yourself for Lent (ooops!). Makes a great gift for the gardener, too!



Read more on fig trees in the devotions series **Leaving the Garden of Eden** beginning on page a-12, and the weekend essay in **Jesus' Horticultural Parables** series beginning on page a-45 in [God's Word for Gardeners Bible](#)

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