

## **Cleansing the Temple**

### **John 2:13-22**

13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. 15 When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. 16 And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" 17 Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."

18 So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"

19 Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

21 But He was speaking of the temple of His body. 22 Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said. NKJV

Jesus begins His public ministry with some very strong actions. He goes up to the feast of Passover in Jerusalem. That was the only place where it could properly be observed. But He goes there for another purpose. He goes there to right a wrong. A wrong that no doubt many others were aware of but no one else ever had the audacity to correct.

#### **I. 13 Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.**

A. John focuses on the ministry in Judea

1. He also identifies 3 or 4 Passover feasts, thus giving us the limit of His ministry.

B. This passage fulfills at least a couple of O.T. prophecies.

1. Mal (3:1) "Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming," Says the LORD of hosts.

2. Ps (69:9) Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up, And the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me.

#### **II. (2:14) And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business.**

- A. These were there under the pretense of providing a service. But instead it was a business, an easy way to make large profits.
  - 1. For many it was a burden to maintain an animal on a long trip to Jerusalem.
  - 2. So it was easier to take the money and just purchase one when you arrived.
  - 3. But of course you would need to pay for that privilege
- B. Worse yet it was operated by the priests. Those who were supposed to be concerned about the souls of people were more concerned with their money.
  - 1. Edersheim says that the money changers alone brought several million dollars into the coffers of the priests each year.
- III. (2:15) When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. (2:16) And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away!"
- IV. Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"
- V. (2:17) Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten° Me up."
- VI. (2:18) So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"
  - A. The Jews were always looking for a sign.
    - 1. A sign was considered proof of a prophet's message.
    - 2. From the beginning of the time of the prophets, they had performed signs or miracles that authenticated their message.
    - 3. The first of these was Elijah, and Elisha.
    - 4. They had the tradition to follow of the earlier prophets.
      - a. Moses, Samuel etc.
    - 5. For many of the Minor Prophets, there is no reference to signs they performed. Their prophesies were the signs of their ministry.
  - B. Later on Jesus would answer those who asked for a sign with some rather harsh language.
    - 1. Matt 12:39-40 39 But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah. 40 For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. NKJV
  - C. Jesus had already performed many signs.
    - 1. John 2:23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the

feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did.  
NKJV

2. John 3:2 "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him." NKJV

VII. (2:19) Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

A. Jesus only claims to give them one sign, that of His resurrection.

B. We have to admit that is a pretty good sign.

VIII. (2:20) Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?"

A. Here we have one of the characteristics of John's gospel.

1. John often introduces truths that are misunderstood because the subject is trying to understand what Jesus is saying in a physical sense but Jesus is speaking of a spiritual truth.

2. In John 2 Jesus speaks of the new birth and Nicodemus thinks He is referring to a physical birth but Jesus is referring to a spiritual one.

3. Others are water in 4, bread in John 6

IX. (2:21) But He was speaking of the temple of His body. (2:22) Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.