

Theme: Jesus cleansed the Temple as a sign that He is the Lord of God's House, and the True Temple of God.

I. Intro - Ruining the Moment in Italy

- A. Visited Italy 5 years ago - amazing sights; some of the most beautiful architecture
- B. Meant to make the human spirit soar, contemplate
- C. Guys selling cheap laser toys and flying toys; talk about desecrating the moment!
- D. Today we see Jesus cleanse the Temple as the second sign - quite different than the first!
- E. Why does He cleanse the Temple? What does it tell us about Jesus?

II. The Sign: Cleansing the Temple

- A. Jesus goes to Jerusalem
When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. John 2:13
 - 1. Passover - Jesus goes with crowds to Jerusalem
 - 2. A shift from rural Cana to Jerusalem
 - 3. John notes at least 3 Passovers in the Gospel
 - 4. One of three mandatory festivals for God's People
Three times a year all your men must appear before the Lord your God at the place he will choose: at **the Festival of Unleavened Bread**, the Festival of Weeks and the Festival of Tabernacles. **No one should appear before the Lord empty-handed:** Deuteronomy 16:16
 - a. All Jewish men were expected to come

- b. Most local Jews came; many from around the world
 - c. They came for Passover/Unleavened bread
 - d. A time to sacrifice, eat the meal, and remember and celebrate God's Passover Lamb of Salvation!
 - e. They brought sacrificial animals and Temple tax (which had to be paid in Tyrian shekels)
 - B. Jesus goes to the Temple - and takes action!
In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵ So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, "Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father's house into a market!" John 2:14-16
 - 1. The people had to get animals for sacrifice, coins for the Temple tax - providing a service
 - 2. Jesus makes a whip, drives animals out, scatters the money. Note the contrast between the signs:
 - a. The first sign was done in a house in Cana, this sign is done in God's House in Jerusalem
 - b. In Cana, the sign was done thru the action of others; here it is done by Jesus directly
 - c. In Cana, the sign was done privately; here in the most public spot in Jerusalem
 - d. In Cana it was a sign of blessing; here it was a sign of judgment.
 - 3. Many focus on corruption and graft as the reason Jesus reacts - but that is not what John tells us
 - 4. "Stop turning My Father's House into a market!"

- a. Problem is not the service of selling animals for sacrifice, nor the money exchange (though that may underlie the Temple cleansings in Synoptic Gospels)
 - b. The problem is doing this IN THE TEMPLE
 - c. Had always been done near the Temple; only recently brought into the Temple
 - d. They are doing this in the Court of the Gentiles
 - e. The stunningly beautiful Temple is like an animal stall for the Gentiles
 - f. The only place Gentiles were allowed in the Temple had been degraded from a place of prayer and worship (Isaiah 56:7) into a noisy market
5. They are treating the Temple as theirs, but Jesus reminds them that it is the House of God. It does not belong to them, and they are responsible to not profane the place or the worship that goes on in it.
6. This is a warning that God does not place a premium on convenience but rather true worship. In fact, God sometimes requires that which is inconvenient as an antidote to us being formed and fashioned by the world around us.

C. Responses to Jesus' action

His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me." ¹⁸ The Jews then responded to him, "What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." ²⁰ They replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and you are going to raise it in three days?" ²¹ But the temple he had spoken of was his body. John 2:17–21

1. The disciples remember Psalm 69:9

- a. Zeal for Your house will consume me - "house"
 - b. A psalm of a righteous man surrounded by evil, full of a passion for God, His glory, His worship
 - c. Also prophetic - as this begins a battle that will ultimately end in Jesus' death - literally consumed
2. Jewish leaders demand a sign to prove authority
- a. They recognize this is a claim to be Messiah, both by calling the Temple "My Father's house" and cleansing the Temple - an expected act of Messiah
 - b. The irony: they demand a sign when He just gave the sign!
3. Jesus enigmatic, multi-faceted answer
- a. Destroy this Temple (ναός not ἱερόν), I will raise it in 3 days
 - b. A challenge that they won't take up of course
 - c. But he is referring to the new Temple His body (and even the disciples didn't understand until later (v22))
 - d. So they actually will destroy it, and He will raise it!
 - e. Also, by rejecting and killing Jesus they brought about the destruction of the Old Covenant Temple
4. The leaders' sarcastic response
- a. 46 years to build - and YOU will raise it in 3 days?
 - b. They here begin their rejection of the signs and Jesus, which will continue until they kill Him.
 - c. But remember the irony - they will actually destroy both of the Temples, and Jesus will raise the True Temple of His Body in 3 days!

III. The Reality: Lord of the House and the True Temple

- A. Messiah would cleanse the Temple & people's worship
"I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the Lord Almighty.
²But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a **refiner's fire or a launderer's soap**. ³ He will sit as a **refiner and purifier** of silver; he will **purify** the Levites and **refine** them like gold and silver. Then the Lord will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, Malachi 3:1–3
1. Messenger John the Baptist had prepared the way
 2. Now the Lord had come to His Temple - they said they wanted this and now they have it!
 3. But He comes to purify - refiners fire, launderers soap; refiner, purifier
 4. The result will be purity in true worship
 5. The cleansing of the Temple was the sign that the Lord and Messiah Whom they sought had come to His Temple and was cleansing it.
 6. Jesus is here making a clear claim to be the Messiah and the Lord over the Temple. Thus He had every right to cleanse the Temple of all impurities and distractions so true worship could be offered.
 7. Also, this cleansing was to allow the Gentiles to be brought in and to worship - Messiah was coming to redeem all nations and bring them into God's family!

- B. Messiah would establish the new True Temple

1. The Temple in Jerusalem was a marvel to see
2. But the expectation was that Messiah would build a new and better Temple where everyone would come to worship
3. This expectation arose from OT texts
He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 2 Samuel 7:13

Tell him this is what the Lord Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the Lord. ¹³ It is he who will build the temple of the Lord, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.' Zechariah 6:12–13

- a. Both texts had initial fulfillment in their days
 - b. But both came to be taken as looking forward to Messiah who would build the Temple and restore God's people
 - c. This is also seen in Ezekiel 40-48 and the vision of God's new Temple
 - d. We also see it in many extra-biblical texts from the period, so that the people expected Messiah to not only cleanse the Temple but to build a new Temple.
4. Jesus is here proclaiming that as Messiah He will raise a new Temple in three days - but not the Temple they expected!
 5. Jesus was announcing that He Himself was the new Temple - the fulfillment of all the OT had typified
 6. This is why John says Jesus tabernacled among us

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling (literally “tabernacled”) among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

- a. Jesus is the new Tabernacle/Temple among us
 - b. He is the place where God’s glory now dwells
7. Now that Jesus has come, there will never be another House of God made of stone; Jesus is the True Temple of God.
8. Remember, the building is NEVER the place of God’s Presence anymore. Jesus and His People the Church are the ONLY Temple of God in the earth from now on. Worship is not about the location but the Presence of Jesus!

IV. Applying the Word

A. Three responses to the Lord of the House

After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they **believed** the scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken.²³ Now while he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Festival, many people saw the signs he was performing and **believed** in his name.²⁴ But Jesus would not **entrust** himself to them, for he knew all people.²⁵ He did not need any testimony about mankind, for he knew what was in each person. John 2:22–25

1. The leaders rejected Jesus outright (v20)
 - a. This began a pattern of rejecting Jesus & His claims
 - b. This culminates in them consuming Him by having Him put to death
 - c. There are still some today who are hostile to Jesus, His claims, and His ways

- d. If this is you, I urge to turn from your ways and embrace Him, for He is the Lord over all
2. The disciples believed with true, full, lasting faith
 - a. The resurrection opened their eyes & they believed
 - b. They believed Scripture & Jesus’ word - God’s Word
 - c. This was true, full, lasting faith - knowledge, assent, and active trust
 3. Many had a shallow, partial, temporal faith
 - a. Attracted to the signs & seemed to believe
 - b. But Jesus did not entrust (same Greek word) Himself to them - something was wrong
 - c. Nicodemus, the crowd in John 6,8 seem to be this
 - d. This faith is not full, real faith: they like Jesus - until He says things they don’t like
 - e. Jesus does not entrust Himself to such ‘faith’ - He is calling for fully committed faith
 - f. The real Jesus is the One in Scripture - not the One we want to imagine and put our “faith” in
 - g. Jesus will say and do things that go against our desires, our culture - He will attack them with a whip!
 - h. Many ‘believe’ in Jesus until His Word crosses their desires & will. He never entrusts Himself to such ‘faith’

B. The Lord’s Table

1. The Lord of the House spreads His Table for us
2. The Temple of His Body was consumed for us
3. Come to the Table in true, full, lasting faith!

The Lord of the House

John 2:13-25
March 17, 2019
Communion

1 Thessalonians 5:23-24

Teaching keywords: Christology; Deity of Christ; miraculous gifts and signs; God's glory; tabernacle and temple; faith; salvation and deliverance; worship

May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it. 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24

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