

(13) The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. In the temple He found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money changers sitting there. And, making a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. And He told those who sold the pigeons, "Take these things away; do not make My Father's house a house of trade.

(17) His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."

(18) So, the Jews said to Him, "What sign do you show us for doing these things?" Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." The Jews then 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 about the temple of His body. When therefore He was raised from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

(23) Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs that He was doing. But Jesus on His part did not entrust Himself to them, because He knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for He Himself knew what was in man.

Think on these things:

- 1) Passover, typically each April, was one of three primary Jewish celebrations observed annually to which Jewish men are expected to attend in person in Jerusalem if they live within a certain distance and are in good health. It is immediately followed by the 7-day Feast of Unleavened Bread (starting on the 15th day). Look at these passages for information about the observation:

Jewish Calendar? – Exodus 12:2 **God instructed the Jews to make Passover month the first month of their calendar. The Jewish calendar is lunar, i.e., 13, 4-week months. Our April is their January**

Sacrificial Animal? – Exodus 12:3-4 **A lamb selected on the 10th day and slaughtered on the 14th.**

14th Day Actions? – Exodus 12:6-12 **Slaughter the lamb at twilight of day 14. Smear its blood on the doorposts and lintel. Roast and eat the lamb meat that night, and burn everything not consumed by the next morning. Dress for the meal as if leaving on a journey. Families and neighbors could combine to share the meat of a single lamb, rather than waste it.**

Passover Purpose? – Exodus 12:14, 21-24 **It was a Memorial, a remembrance, of God delivering the Jews from slavery to the Egyptians. God destroyed the "firstborn" animals and male children of the Egyptians, but "passed over" all the homes treated with lamb's blood.**

- 2) Now consider Matthew 26:17, 26-28. What Christian event is linked to the Jewish Passover and Feast of Unleavened Bread? **The Last Supper**
- 3) Essentially, Jesus discovered a large "market" at the Temple. What we call cashiers today, the Bible refers to as money changers. Can you guess what the purpose of the market was for? If it served a valid purpose, why was it so offensive to Jesus?
The "market" provided sacrificial animals for pilgrims traveling into Jerusalem for the various feasts and offerings. People didn't need to bring an animal; they could pick one up right there in the temple. --- Jesus opposed this practice for two reasons: 1) misusing the Temple as a

marketplace instead of a worship center; and 2) corrupt business people who were like loan sharks and swindlers. People could not use their own money; they had to use the Temple shekel, and the money changers grossly overcharged for exchanging money types.

- 4) Jesus told those selling pigeons that they had turned His Father's house into a "house of trade." This event can be found in all the Gospels. Check out Luke 19:46. Quoting Isaiah 56:7, what was God's House supposed to be known for? How did Jesus refer to all the money changers?

The Temple was to be known as a "House of Prayer" for all nations. Jesus said they had made it into "den of robbers (thieves)".

- 5) Instead of confronting Jesus physically or verbally (e.g., throwing Him out in order to restore order at the Temple), what did these business people demand from Him (v.18)?

They demanded a miraculous sign be performed/provided to establish His authority.

- 6) In Jesus' day, the Temple at Jerusalem was in its 3rd phase. The original was built by King Solomon (1 Kings 5-8) and was destroyed by the Babylonians (2 Chronicles 36:15-21). The second one was partially rebuilt on the original ruins by Ezra the scribe when he led a group of Jewish exiles in Babylon back to Jerusalem after 70 years in captivity (Ezra 1-6; Haggai 1-2). The 3rd phase was a 46-year expansion project under King Herod the Great completed around the time of Jesus' birth. At this time of Jesus' visit, it was a splendid Temple, though not as great as the original Temple with all its gold and silver overlays. When Jesus responded to the sign demand for throwing the business people out of the Temple with, "*Destroy this temple and I will raise it up in 3 days*," His disciples probably had the same confusion as the money changers (v.20). When did the disciples properly understand from this confrontation that Jesus was referring to His own body (vs.21-22)? To what does raising "this temple" in 3 days refer?

When did the disciples understand? **Much later, after Jesus rose from the dead, they put 2+2 together and realized that the temple Jesus referred to this day was His own body!**

Raising this temple in 3 days refers to...? **The resurrection of Jesus' body after death on the cross**

- 7) V.23 briefly summarizes what Jesus did in Jerusalem during the Passover. He taught some, yes, but what caused Him to gain a large following?

His teachings were accompanied by many miracles (signs & wonders), attracting followers.

- 8) At this time of growing popularity with the people, why didn't Jesus entrust Himself to the crowds (vs.24-25)? Do you trust people in general? Why or why not?

Jesus understood the motives that drive humanity, and He refused to let them control or direct His life. He was here to do the Father's will in the Father's timing. --- Many people believe that others are basically good, that wickedness is not innate. Those who have suffered at the hands of others, or observed this, are more likely to distrust people first. The second question is more personal in nature....

People and situations I want to pray for this week: