

#### 4. Jesus Cleansed the Temple

**Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48**

##### **Matthew 21:12-17**

<sup>12</sup> And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. <sup>13</sup> He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you make it a den of robbers.”

<sup>14</sup> And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them. <sup>15</sup> But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying out in the temple, “Hosanna to the Son of David!” they were indignant, <sup>16</sup> and they said to him, “Do you hear what these are saying?” And Jesus said to them, “Yes; have you never read,

“‘Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies  
you have prepared praise’?”

<sup>17</sup> And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there.

##### **Mark 11:15-19**

<sup>15</sup> And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. <sup>16</sup> And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. <sup>17</sup> And he was teaching them and saying to them, “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 robbers.” <sup>18</sup> And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching. <sup>19</sup> And when evening came they went out of the city.

##### **Luke 19:45-48**

<sup>45</sup> And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, <sup>46</sup> saying to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a den of robbers.”

<sup>47</sup> And he was teaching daily in the temple. The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, <sup>48</sup> but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.

**Jesus is God:  
Prophecy Fulfilled:**

**Matthew 13:13** - He said to them, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer,' but you make it a den of robbers."

**Isaiah 56:7&8** - These I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; **for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.**" The Lord GOD, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, "I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered."

**Jeremiah 7:11** - <sup>11</sup> Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen it, saith the LORD.

**Matthew 13:16** - And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, "'Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies you have prepared praise'?"

**Psalms 8:1-3** – O LORD, our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who hast set thy glory above the heavens.

<sup>2</sup> Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

<sup>3</sup> When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained;

**Matthew 21:14** - <sup>14</sup> And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

**Isaiah 35:5-6** - Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; <sup>6</sup> then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert;

**Luke 7:20-23** - <sup>20</sup> And when the men had come to him, they said, "John the Baptist has sent us to you, saying, 'Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?'"

<sup>21</sup> In that hour he healed many people of diseases and plagues and evil spirits, and on many who were blind he bestowed sight. <sup>22</sup> And he answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, lepers<sup>[a]</sup> are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good news preached to them. <sup>23</sup> And blessed is the one who is not offended by me."

**1.) Read the passages in all three Gospels and compare the account from the three different perspectives.**

**Matthew:** tells us that the blind and lame came to Jesus after he drove out the businesses, the customers, and money changers.

Tells of the children calling out “Hosanna, Son of David.” And the Pharisees rebuke. Jesus references Psalm 8 in his defense of the children

**Mark:** Jesus would not allow anybody to carry anything through the temple.

**Luke:** The people were hanging on His words.

**2.) The market and the money changers were in the outer court of the temple – the “court of the Gentiles” selling the stuff needed to give an offering to God. They were making a profit from the pursuit of God. How is this different than God’s plan for the financial support of the priests in the Old Testament?**

Numbers 18 & Deuteronomy 18 discuss the provisions for the priests. They were to have share of the offerings as their provisions. When the Israelites moved into the land of Canaan the Levites were not given land, and they did not have an inheritance in the land. They were to live among the people, and be supported by the temple worship. In this way, when the Israelites followed after God, and offered sacrifices in the temple the Levites saw their provisions increase, and when the Israelites forsook God and did not offer their sacrifices at the temple, the Levites saw their provisions decrease.

**3.) Five days later, in the temple itself, the curtain separating the Holy of Holies from the priests would be ripped from the top to the bottom. The Temple institution would be no more. Jesus was not cleansing the temple for future service, but showing us something bigger about access to God. How does his driving out the marketplace and His reference to Isaiah 56:7 show that there is something more than just Jewish worship on the horizon?**

The court of the Gentiles was a place for foreigners to come and worship at the temple. They could offer sacrifices and worship as well, but this area was over-crowded with the marketing of livestock and birds, and changing money. There was no atmosphere of worship, and certainly the place was not a place of prayer.

**Isaiah 56:7** - <sup>7</sup> these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.”

All of Isaiah 56 is about salvation for foreigners. This passage is just one verse that tell of the message of salvation for all nations. Jesus was opening the way for Gentiles to come to God, and taking the financial burden away from devout Jews to access God. The way to God was

clear and through Jesus whosoever will may come. Jesus was condemning the marketing of the temple and opening the way for Gentiles to access God. The court of the Gentiles was being cleared. Jesus was going to give his life in 5 days to open the veil of the temple and allow all people access to God. His cleansing of the temple was a fulfillment of Scripture and the beginning of the fulfillment of his statements in John 12:31-36

**John 12:31-36** - <sup>31</sup> Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. <sup>32</sup> And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself.” <sup>33</sup> He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. <sup>34</sup> So the crowd answered him, “We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?” <sup>35</sup> So Jesus said to them, “The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. <sup>36</sup> While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light.”

- 4.) The chief priests of the Temple were selling access to God at their marketplace. The mindset of the Jewish people, particularly the Pharisees, was that they could earn their salvation. Jesus came to offer Salvation free to all who believe. How is this passage an example of Jesus message that salvation is a free gift rather than a product of works.**

There is no heavy burden of laws and tributes that must be given for salvation. Jesus death paid the price for all of our sin, and the requirements for us are simply to place our faith in Him and follow Him. Jesus condemned the Pharisees for their continually laying burdens on people to grant them access to God, but Jesus cleared that all away and opened the veil of the temple so that all may come in. In Matthew 21 the story of the cleansing of the temple ends with Jesus healing the blind & the lame (vs. 14). As soon as the temple was cleared and the path to God was open, the healing could begin. The blind and the lame did not need to pay sacrifice, or offer taxes to the temple to receive Jesus healing, they simply needed to come in. They came in to the court after the market was thrown out, and Jesus received them and offered them healing.

Matthew 23 is Jesus condemnation on the scribes and Pharisees for they, as keepers of the faith, block access to God with their many laws and rules.

**Matthew 23:13-15** - <sup>13</sup> “But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.” <sup>15</sup> Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you travel across sea and land to make a single proselyte, and when he becomes a proselyte, you make him twice as much a child of hell <sup>[e]</sup> as yourselves.

**Matthew 23:23-28** - <sup>23</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier matters of the law:

justice and mercy and faithfulness. These you ought to have done, without neglecting the others. <sup>24</sup> You blind guides, straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

<sup>25</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you clean the outside of the cup and the plate, but inside they are full of greed and self-indulgence. <sup>26</sup> You blind Pharisee! First clean the inside of the cup and the plate, that the outside also may be clean.

<sup>27</sup> “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs, which outwardly appear beautiful, but within are full of dead people's bones and all uncleanness. <sup>28</sup> So you also outwardly appear righteous to others, but within you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.

After all of this, you can feel the pain in Jesus heart as he closes this dialogue mourning over Jerusalem – who in the name of religion has rejected its Messiah.

**Matthew 23:37-39** - <sup>37</sup> “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! <sup>38</sup> See, your house is left to you desolate. <sup>39</sup> For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, ‘Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.’”

**5.) Jesus was removing the obstacles in the temple that blocked access to God. What kinds of things might Jesus overthrow in the church today if he were to arrive in the same manner?**

**6.) What kinds of things might Jesus overthrow in our lives that are standing in the way of our worship?**

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** - <sup>19</sup> Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, <sup>20</sup> for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.