

**Matthew 21:12-17:** 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.

**Intro:** Two weeks ago, we saw Jesus enter Jerusalem as the long awaited King Who would save His people from their sins. Many may have thought Jesus came to end the oppression of the Jews by the Romans, but Jesus came to save from sin, & the target of His holy anger in our text today was not Roman oppression, but the way sinful men had perverted the religion of Israel. Jesus came to clean His house! & God's been cleaning house from the beginning! We studied the various temple cleansing throughout the Bible last week: Eden; Israel & their exile; Jesus coming to earth; He's the perfect Temple; Through His death & resurrection, we are made God's temple; Jesus is coming back to finally cleanse!

Israel's religion was full of hypocrisy, fruitlessness, & selfish idolatry. Israel had failed to be & do what they were supposed to be & do. They were to be a light to the nations & bear lasting fruit for the glory of God. So Jesus comes as faithful Israel! He's the true temple Who ushers in the righteous reign of God! He was & is true & undefiled religion incarnate. For Jesus, judgment starts with the household of God, & He cleanses God's temple of sin, gives grace to all nations, shows mercy to the weak & needy, & accepts the praises of men as the God-Man Who comes to save sinners.

### **1. Jesus Cleanses The Temple**

**Matthew 21:12-13:** 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.

**a. The temple:** This temple was one of the most magnificent structures in the world at that time: It covered about 35 acres. It even excelled Solomon's temple. The temple was the national & religious center of Israel. This was where God's people came to meet with God. It's where God's presence was manifested to the people in the most intense, intimate way. The temple was where sacrifices were offered to take away the sins of God's people!

**b. There was money-changing for animals: D. A. Carson:** Temple service required provision to be made for getting what was needed for the sacrifices – animals, wood, oil, etc. – especially for pilgrims from afar. The money changers converted the standard Greek & Roman currency into the temple currency [Shouldn't be in the temple!]

**c. Jesus entered the temple, showing He is the God-Man Messiah: Malachi 3:1:** Behold, I send my messenger & he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; & the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the LORD of hosts.

Jesus Christ is the Lord & messenger of the covenant Who has come into His temple! He's LORD! It's His house!

**d. Jesus overturned the tables of the money-changers & the seats of those who sold pigeons: Verse 12:** [Jesus] drove out all who sold & bought in the temple, & he overturned the tables of the money-changers & the seats of those who sold pigeons.

1) Jesus came to save & cleanse & judge: Malachi 3:2-5: But who can endure the day of his coming, & who can stand when he appears? For he is like a refiner's fire & like fullers' soap. He will sit as a refiner & purifier of silver, & he will purify the sons of Levi & refine them like gold & silver, & they will bring offerings in righteousness to the LORD. Then the offering of Judah & Jerusalem will be pleasing to the LORD as in the days of old & as in former years. Then I will draw near to you for judgment. I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers, against the

adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired worker in his wages, the widow & the fatherless, against those who thrust aside the sojourner, & do not fear me, says the LORD of hosts.

2) Jesus had righteous anger: Being angry about sin is good, right, necessary, & pleasing to God! It would be wrong not to have righteous anger about sin.

-**Psalm 97:10**: O you who love the LORD, hate evil!

-**Psalm 119:136**: My eyes shed streams of tears, because people do not keep your law.

-**Psalm 69:9**: For zeal for your house has consumed me . . . .

-**Eph 4:26-27**: Be angry & do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, & give no opportunity to the devil

Jesus hates sin, & He will cleanse His temple! He drew circles & lines; We need cleansing; Church needs cleansing

**James 1:19-20**: Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness that God requires.

**e. Jesus proclaims Scripture, reminding the Jews the temple was to be a place of true worship: Verse 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 56:6-7**: And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, & to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath & does not profane it, & holds fast my covenant - <sup>7</sup> these I will bring to my holy mountain, & make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings & their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

- **Jeremiah 7:1-11**: This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: <sup>2</sup> "Stand at the gate of the LORD's house & there proclaim this message: 'Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the LORD. <sup>3</sup> This is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Reform your ways & your actions, & I will let you live in this place. <sup>4</sup> Do not trust in deceptive words & say, "This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD!" <sup>5</sup> If you really change your ways & your actions & deal with each other justly, <sup>6</sup> if you do not oppress the alien, the fatherless or the widow & do not shed innocent blood in this place, & if you do not follow other gods to your own harm, <sup>7</sup> then I will let you live in this place, in the land I gave your forefathers for ever & ever. <sup>8</sup> But look, you are trusting in deceptive words that are worthless. <sup>9</sup> Will you steal and murder, commit adultery & perjury, burn incense to Baal & follow other gods you have not known, <sup>10</sup> & then come & stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, & say, "We are safe" – safe to do all these detestable things? <sup>11</sup> Has this house, which bears my Name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching! declares the LORD.'"

The temple was to be a place of prayer & praise to the one true & living God! But those in the temple had perverted this. They were disobeying God. & their focus was not prayer & praise to God, but on money-changing.

**f. What was the sin of the money-changers & buyers in the temple?** Jesus calls them robbers: They are rebels or insurrectionists with a nationalistic pride that excludes other nations. They had turned a place of prayer, praise, & the worship of God into a place of money making & self-righteous pride. They're robbing the nations of worship! And they are trusting in a building, religious rituals, & an ethnic identity for salvation instead of in God alone! Making money & corruption replaced the pure, holy, worship of God. (Prosperity teaching; Love of money)

See how their sin is in such great contrast to Jesus Christ! These sinners take & take with a focus on self! But Jesus gives & gives & totally dies to self – He literally dies! May we follow Jesus in this! May we die to self & be givers, not takers! Unbeliever, this is only possible if you see yourself for who you really are – a taker. **GOSPEL!**

As Christians, we too must be careful not to trust in religious rituals, ethnic identity, or anything else, except Jesus!

**g. Jesus fulfills Zechariah 14:21**: there shall no longer be a trader in the house of the LORD of hosts on that day.

- h. Be reminded to worship God & pursue Him in a pure, godly, Biblical way:** 1) We should worship God according to His Word: **2 Timothy 3:16-17:** All Scripture is breathed out by God & profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. (Preach the Bible; Read the Bible; Pray the Bible; Sing the Bible; Trust & obey the Bible; Christ & His work!)
- 2) We should worship God from the heart: **Matt. 15:8:** This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me
- 3) We should worship God with reverence & awe: **Hebrews 12:28-29:** Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, & thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence & awe, for our God is a consuming fire.
- 4) We should worship God in all that we do: **1 Corinthians 10:31:** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

## **2. Jesus Shows Love & Compassion & Heals The Blind And The Lame**

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

**a. The law did not allow the blind & the lame to offer sacrifices in the temple: Leviticus 21:18-21:** no one who has a blemish shall draw near, a man blind or lame, or one who has a mutilated face or a limb too long,<sup>19</sup> or a man who has an injured foot or an injured hand,<sup>20</sup> or a hunchback or a dwarf or a man with a defect in his sight or an itching disease or scabs or crushed testicles.<sup>21</sup> No man of the offspring of Aaron the priest who has a blemish shall come near to offer the LORD's food offerings . . . .

**b. Jesus is the true & better Israel & the true & better Temple:** Whereas these money-changing robbers were excluding the nations, Jesus was calling the nations & outcasts & blind, lame, poor, & needy to Himself!

**D. A. Carson:** Most Jewish authorities forbade any person who was lame, blind, deaf, or mute from offering a sacrifice, from "appearing before Yahweh in his temple." . . . But Jesus heals them, thus showing that "one greater than the temple is here" (Matt. 12:6). He Himself cannot be contaminated, & He heals & makes clean those who come into contact with Him.

**Matthew 11:28-30:** Come to me, all who labor & are heavy laden, & I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, & learn from me, for I am gentle & lowly in heart, & you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, & my burden is light.

## **3. The Religious Leaders Are Very Angry About Jesus, His Wonderful Deeds, & The Praise He Receives**

**Matthew 21:15-16:** But when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, & the children crying out in the temple, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" they were indignant,<sup>16</sup> & they said to him, "Do you hear what these are saying?"

**a. The chief priests & the scribes were blind to Who Jesus is:** These are the religious leaders! These are the experts in the Scriptures! (Heidi Wednesday night – we must not only know our Bibles but rightly interpret our Bibles!)

- **John 5:39-40:** You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; & it is they that bear witness about me, yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.

- **John 11:48:** If we let him go on like this, everyone will believe in him, & then the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation.

**b. The children knew Jesus is the Son of David Who alone can save:** "Hosanna" means "Please save us!" Jesus is the Son of David – the promised anointed King/Messiah/Savior Who would sit on David's throne forever!

- **John 14:6:** I am the way, & the truth, & the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

**c. Jesus does wonderful things: V 15:** when the chief priests & the scribes saw the wonderful things that he did

- **John 7:46:** The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!"
- **Mark 2:12:** he rose & immediately picked up his bed & went out before them all, so that they were all amazed & glorified God, saying, "We never saw anything like this!"
- **Luke 7:15-16:** the dead man sat up & began to speak, & Jesus gave him to his mother. <sup>16</sup> Fear seized them all, & they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!" & "God has visited his people!"
- **Mark 4:41:** they were filled with great fear & said to one another, "Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?"

**d. The religious leaders were blind to who Jesus is, but the children see: Matthew 18:1-4:** At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" <sup>2</sup> & calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them <sup>3</sup> & said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn & become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. <sup>4</sup> Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

We must turn! We must turn from this desire to be the greatest! We must turn from trusting in ourselves & in everything else except God! We must turn from pride! We must turn from wanting to be God & having things our way! We must be born again! We must repent! 1) It means we must realize we are utterly dependent on God, & we must utterly depend on God. 2) It means we must humble ourselves like Jesus & take the lowest place. It means we must die to the desire to be great! We must die to the desire to be important & significant! We must be willing to be rejected & despised – we must be willing to take the lowest position – to be unknown.

**e. The children see who Jesus is because God chose them to see: Matthew 11:25-26:** At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven & earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise & understanding & revealed them to little children; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will."

#### **4. Jesus Receives The Praise That Only God Should Receive**

**Matthew 21:16-17:** And Jesus said to them, "Yes; have you never read, 'Out of the mouth of infants & nursing babies you have prepared praise'?" <sup>17</sup> And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany & lodged there.

**a. Jesus rebukes those who should know better:** "have you never read?"

**b. Jesus shows Psalm 8:2 is about Him: Psalm 8:1-2:** O LORD, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. <sup>2</sup> From the lips of children & infants you have ordained praise

**D. A. Carson:** The children's "Hosannas" are not being directed to God but to the Son of David, the Messiah. Jesus is therefore not only acknowledging his messiahship but justifying the praise of the children by applying to himself a passage of Scripture applicable only to God.

**c. Jesus is worthy of this praise because He is God & because He was slain in our place:** Jesus was made a robber on that cross! **Matthew 26:55:** At that hour Jesus said to the crowds, "Have you come out as against a robber, with swords & clubs to capture me? Day after day I sat in the temple teaching, & you did not seize me."

**Matthew 27:38-43:** Then two robbers were crucified with him, one on the right & one on the left. <sup>39</sup> & those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads <sup>40</sup> & saying, "You who would destroy the temple & rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross." <sup>41</sup> So also the chief priests, with the scribes & elders, mocked him, saying, <sup>42</sup> "He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, & we will believe in him. <sup>43</sup> He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'"

**Matthew 27:50-51:** And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice & yielded up his spirit. <sup>51</sup> And behold, the curtain of the temple was torn in two, from top to bottom. And the earth shook, and the rocks were split.

Jesus is the true and better temple! Jesus is the true and better sacrifice! Jesus is greater than the temple because the temple is where God dwells, but Jesus is God Who does not dwell in temples made by humans hands since the heaven of heavens cannot contain Him let alone a man explain Him!

Jesus is greater than the temple because the temple is where the sacrifices took place, but Jesus Himself is the sacrifice of all sacrifices Who alone can take away the sin of the world!

Jesus is greater than the temple b/c the temple is where people pray, but Jesus is the God to Whom people pray!

Jesus is greater than the temple because the temple divided ethnic groups like Jews and Gentiles, but Jesus died and rose again to make all peoples from every tribe, tongue, language, and nation one in Him!

Jesus is greater than the temple because people could come to the temple and remain in their hypocrisy and sin, but those who come to Jesus by faith alone will turn from their sin and follow Him!

Jesus is greater than the temple because the temple was destroyed to never rise again, but Jesus was destroyed on that cross, and He rose again on the third day, never to die again!

Jesus is greater than the temple because people came to the temple for mercy, but Jesus is greater mercy, greater grace, greater love, greater compassion, greater holiness, greater justice, greater truth, greater perfection, greater beauty, and greater glory!

Jesus is greater than the temple because the temple is fallen down and gone, but Jesus is alive forevermore to make intercession for us and to keep loving, to keep helping, to keep forgiving, to keep strengthening, to keep binding up the broken-hearted, to keep drying all our tears, to keep healing, to keep saving, to keep comforting, to keep giving rest, to keep listening, and to keep abundantly satisfying us with the fullness of His pleasures for all eternity!

For Jesus, judgment starts with the household of God, & He cleanses God's temple of sin, gives grace to all nations, shows mercy to the weak & needy, & accepts the praises of men as the God-Man Who comes to save sinners.

### **Jesus Is The Temple Pure And Clean Who Drove The Robbers From The Scene To Grant Us Grace And Peace Serene!**

For God's house He had great zeal  
It ate Him up – He can't conceal  
Passion for justice that He'd feel  
God's glory He won't let them steal  
He came the temple's end to seal  
For He's the temple Who'd reveal  
His death through murder – pain ordeal  
Through resurrection death repeal  
All so sinners He could heal  
And save them from sin's death appeal  
To make them righteous – strong like steel  
God came as man – the Man ideal  
Our Christ is all – before Him kneel  
Then He will fill you with a zeal  
For Him alone – with longings feel  
Since He's the glory none can steal!

Jesus died for every nation  
Haitian, Croatian, and Galatian  
He redeems from condemnation  
Every tribe and tongue translation  
He makes His family blood relation  
He lives for their complete salvation  
And makes all one – a new creation  
Where Christ is all – our sure foundation!

The Jewish leaders wanted to kill  
They feared their idols Christ would steal  
Though He came with pure goodwill  
All God's Word He did fulfill  
They hated Him with evil chill  
And had Him killed on Calv'ry's hill  
Yet through His blood that they would spill  
He won the battle – what a thrill!  
So trust Him now – in peace be still  
His glory this whole earth will fill!

Oh the temple! What a sight!  
So big and huge, robust with might!  
It's where God dwelt with glory light  
Greatest wonder many write  
But oh there's One Who's greater bright!  
His glory shines a better light!  
He enters in – the cleansing Knight  
Against all sin He'll win the fight  
And though He sometimes comes with fright  
And doesn't always seem polite  
His mercy's here for all contrite  
For those who turn from sin outright  
And trust in Him with all delight  
For Jesus died to make you right  
And rose again to kill death's bite  
He's the temple great in might!  
With fame and beauty out of sight!  
He'll save you from your dreadful plight  
And fill you full with pure delight!

Christ Jesus Is The Temple Praise  
The God-Man Truth His Life Conveys  
Zeal For God's House He Loves, Obeys  
He Toppled Tables In A Blaze  
Of Righteous Anger For Their Craze  
For Self And All Their Sinful Ways  
The Temple Is For Prayer And Praise  
Of Him Who Sent His Son These Days  
To Die And Rise So We Could Raise

Hosannas To Our God Always  
Now Every Nation To Him Prays  
He's Healer, Wonderful's The Phrase  
That Captures What He Is Amaze  
All Hail! All Hail! The King Of Praise  
Who Is Our All, Our All Always  
Who Saved Us From Our Sinful Ways  
So He'll Forever Be Our Craze!