

## The Judgment of Jesus (John 2:13-25)

Those who say, "Jesus never judges" have not read the story we study today. Let's discover why Jesus had the audacity & authority to cause a scene at the temple.

### Jesus Travels to Jerusalem

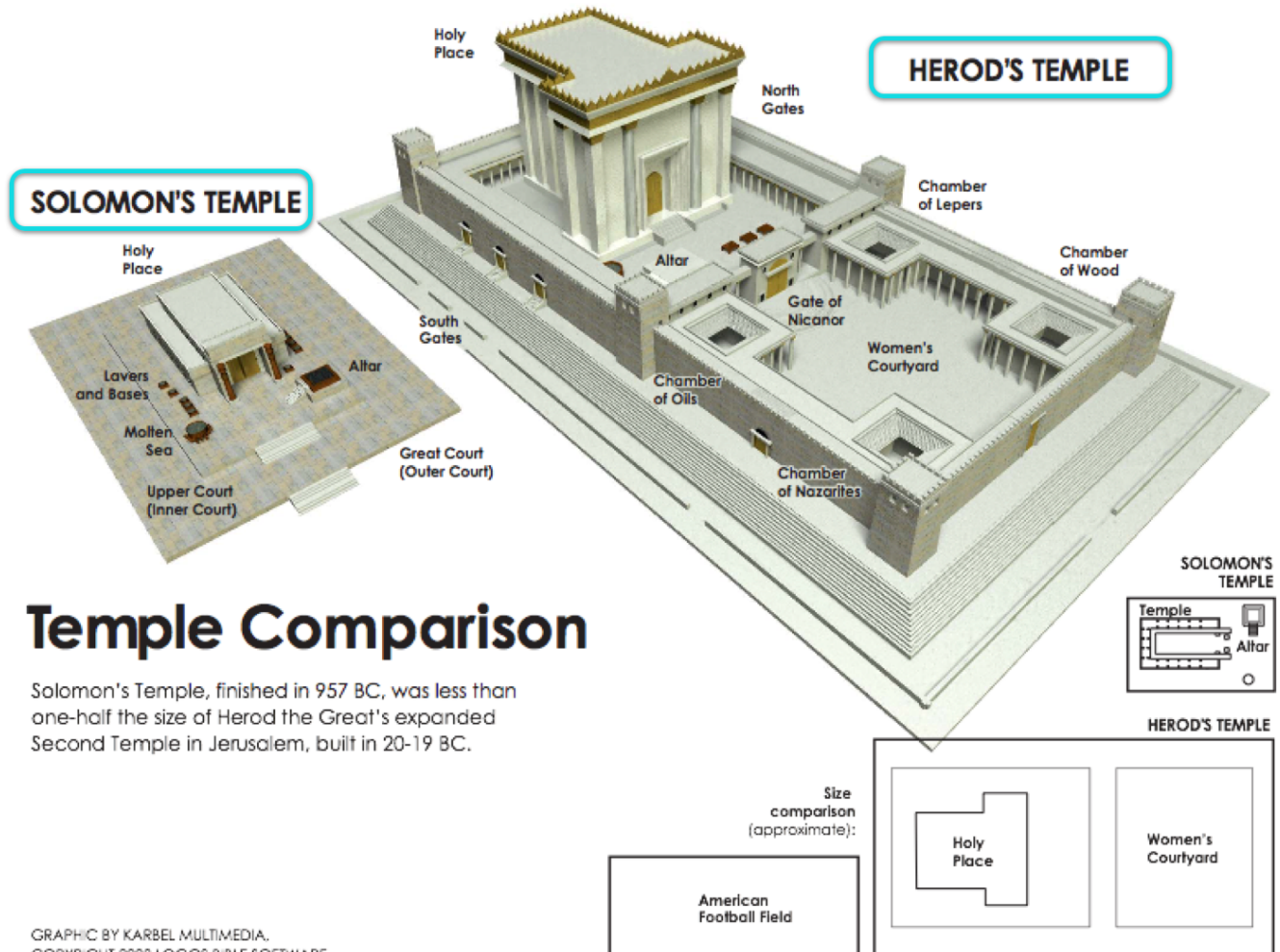
**John 2:13** (CSB) <sup>13</sup> The **Jewish Passover** was near, and so **Jesus went up to Jerusalem**.

The **Jewish Passover** celebrated how Yahweh God freed the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt, and was immediately followed by the 7-day *Festival of Unleavened Bread*.<sup>1</sup> The preparation for this celebration took one month.<sup>2</sup> Over 2 million Israelites would travel and stay near Jerusalem during this time. So too, Jesus made his way **up to Jerusalem** (refers to the mountainous ascent), where the people of Israel gathered at Yahweh's temple.

The **TEMPLE** was a HUGE structure which *had been under renovation for 46 years* (Jn.2:20). Previously, it wasn't nearly as large nor elaborate.

- The 1st temple (built by Solomon) was destroyed by the Babylonians in **586 BC**.
- The 2nd temple was built on the same site in **515 BC** (though not nearly as beautiful as the 1st temple).
- In **20 B.C.**, King Herod began a total renovation of the temple (a total of 83 years), finally completed in **A.D. 63**, over 30 years *after* the crucifixion of Jesus. Herod's temple was MUCH GREATER in size and beauty than the 1st temple built by Solomon.

The **Jewish historian Josephus** mentions the size of the foundation's stones being about 40 feet long, 12 feet high, & 18 feet wide - that's as long as a city bus, a little higher, and much wider!<sup>3</sup>



## Temple Comparison

Solomon's Temple, finished in 957 BC, was less than one-half the size of Herod the Great's expanded Second Temple in Jerusalem, built in 20-19 BC.

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<sup>1</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John, The Pillar New Testament Commentary* (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 176.

<sup>2</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *John: That You May Believe, Preaching the Word* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 66.

<sup>3</sup> Josephus, *Ant.*, XV, 11. 3

## Jesus Cleans House

**John 2:14-17** (CSB) <sup>14</sup> In the temple he found people selling oxen, sheep, and doves, and he also found the money changers sitting there. <sup>15</sup> After making a whip out of cords, he drove everyone out of the temple with their sheep and oxen. He also poured out the money changers' coins and overturned the tables. <sup>16</sup> He told those who were selling doves, "Get these things out of here! Stop turning **my Father's house** into a marketplace!" <sup>17</sup> And his disciples remembered that it is written: **Zeal for your house will consume me.**

Jesus 'meek & mild', marches into what most scholars think this is *the Court of the Gentiles*, and begins to flip tables and drive people out! **Why did Jesus get so upset?**

- In order to provide sacrificial animals of those who traveled from long distances, the animal merchants used to set up their stalls across the Kidron Valley on the slopes of the Mount of Olives.<sup>4</sup> **But now they had filled the court of the Gentiles.** Mark writes that Jesus also quoted Is. 56:7 where God calls the temple '**a house of prayer for all peoples/nations**' [not just for Jews] (Mark 11:17). The smells, sounds, & traffic were **DISTRACTIONS** that wouldn't let people seek God in a serious way.
- Further, the high priest and his family were ripping people off, charging extra to exchange Greek & Roman currencies for the temple tax.<sup>5</sup> The place that was intended to be a place of **PRAYER** for all nations (Mark 11:17), had become a place of **PROFIT** for the unrighteous religious leaders.

And...all this was taking place in the temple, the place Jesus called **my Father's house**. It's there that Jesus' disciples remember what David wrote 1000 years beforehand:

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**Psalms 69:9** (CSB) because **zeal for your house has consumed me**, and the insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.

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Like David, what insulted the Father insulted Jesus, and Jesus dropped judgment on these folks.

## Show Us Your Credentials!

**John 2:18-20** (CSB) <sup>18</sup> So the Jews replied to him, "What sign will you show us for doing these things?" <sup>19</sup> Jesus answered, "**Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days.**" <sup>20</sup> Therefore the Jews said, "This temple took forty-six years to build, and will you raise it up in three days?"

This was all about WHO WAS IN CHARGE. "*Prove your authority...over us.*" And here's Jesus' opportunity, on the BIG STAGE at the temple in Jerusalem. What **sign** WOULD Jesus give them?

**No action. Just words.** "**Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days.**" They thought Jesus was talking about the temple under renovation. It had taken hundreds of workers thousands of hours to build this thing...NO WAY JESUS could 1) tear it down 2) rebuild it in 3 days.

And that claim of Jesus, *the claim to destroy the temple and rebuild in 3 days*, stuck in their craw for a long time. In fact, Jesus' enemies threw his words back at Him during his trial (Matt 26:61; Mark 14:57-58) & at His crucifixion (Matt 27:39-40; Mark 15:29-30).

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**Mark 15:29-30** (CSB) <sup>29</sup> Those who passed by were yelling insults at him, shaking their heads, and saying, "Ha! **The one who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days,** <sup>30</sup> save yourself by coming down from the cross!"

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**John 2:21-22** (CSB) <sup>21</sup> But **he was speaking about the temple of his body.** <sup>22</sup> So when he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the statement Jesus had made.

This gospel was written years AFTER Jesus HAD **raised from the dead**. For Christians, this event, *the resurrection of Jesus*, is forever on the forefront of our minds. In fact,

## **The Resurrection of Jesus IS our Foundation for Faith.**

If Jesus did NOT come back to life....would these guys have lived & died for a dead man? Would they have taken his message to others or would it have died with them? **But if Jesus DID come back to life**, then He had the power to raise the apostles from the dead, and they be willing to die in order to tell others how to really live.

<sup>4</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans, 1991), 178.

<sup>5</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Luke*, The IVP New Testament Commentary Series (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1994), Lk 19:45.

**John 2:23** (CSB) <sup>23</sup> While he was in Jerusalem during the Passover Festival, **many believed in his name when they saw the signs he was doing.**

It's interesting to note that Jesus DID perform **signs** while in Jerusalem - yet he refused to do so for those leaders who demanded a "sign" at the temple. These same leaders heard of the miracles Jesus did later - healing the lepers, making blind see, deaf hear, lame walk, & dead live...but that wasn't enough to convince them either.

At first, we might be impressed and encouraged that **many believed in his name when they saw the signs he was doing.** But we shouldn't be too quick to declare victory, because Jesus wasn't.

**John 2:24-25** (CSB) <sup>24</sup> Jesus, however, would not entrust himself to them, since he knew them all <sup>25</sup> and because he did not need anyone to testify about man; for he himself knew what was in man.

**TIME has a way of SIFTING who the real followers are...and aren't.** And Jesus knew, when times got tough, many of these who 'believed' would be the first to LEAVE. **While they TRUSTED Jesus, Jesus didn't TRUST them.** We will later see where many who were counted as **disciples** of Jesus actually walked away and stopped following Him.

### Many Jewish Leaders

**Mark 4:15-20** (NLT) <sup>15</sup> The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message, only to have Satan come at once and take it away.

### Many Who "Believed" Jesus in Jerusalem

<sup>16</sup> The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. <sup>17</sup> But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word. <sup>18</sup> The seed that fell among the thorns represents others who hear God's word, <sup>19</sup> but all too quickly the message is crowded out by the worries of this life, the lure of wealth, and the desire for other things, so no fruit is produced.

### Apostles and True Disciples

<sup>20</sup> And the seed that fell on good soil represents those who hear and accept God's word and produce a harvest of thirty, sixty, or even a hundred times as much as had been planted!"

*Which one are you? Can you say...*

### The Resurrection of Jesus IS our Foundation for Faith.

- **STOLEN SEED: Have you refused to examine the evidence?** Have you discounted the miracles & claims of Jesus? Have you denied the physical resurrection of Jesus?
- **ROCKY & THORNY GROUND: Have you listened to the message of the Messiah, respond to Jesus quickly but leave Him just as quickly,** once it starting costing you something (e.g. relationship, job, past-time, reputation?)
- **GOOD GROUND: Or did you dive in the deep end? Sink or swim, you're in.** You're realizing that following Jesus is not a sprint, but a marathon. You get tired, but you keep running. You have a desire to impact others and please Jesus in all you do.

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\* **Want to talk further?** Please contact **Jackie** (850-673-1582), **Justin** (704-618-6144), or another follower of Jesus soon! Or call our **deacons & wives:** Fain & Linda Poppell, Tom & Martha Waddail, Steve & Debbie Bass, Freddy & Joyce Howard, Jere & Darlene Burnette, Alan & Christy Androski, Willy & Melissa Gamalero.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What challenged or encouraged you from today's teaching? (Look back over your notes and share!)
2. How did the video clip help you appreciate the BIGNESS of what happened that day at the temple? What might you say to the person who says, "Jesus never judged other people."?
3. **Read John 2:18-22.** Today's **BIG TRUTH: The Resurrection of Jesus IS our Foundation for Faith.** Why is this the case? Discuss what would be different about Christianity if Jesus DID NOT rise from the dead.
4. **Read John 2:23-25 and Mark 4:15-20.** Do you know people who *used to* walk with Jesus but don't anymore? Without using names, share the change you have seen occur in this person. How might you use these passages to counsel/warn the friend who has walked away from Jesus? (also see John 6:60-66)
5. Which represents your life right now and why? 1) Seed Stolen 2) Rocky & Thorny Ground 3) Good Ground
6. Share how you can pray for one another this week and make a phone call to check on each other this week.