

A Temple Born Again – *John 2:13-22*

“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.’” John 2:19

Introduction – When Jesus went in to cleanse the temple, He certainly intended to drive out the evil of *that* day. But maybe more importantly, Christ was in the role of a prophet here. He gives a prophetic demonstration, just as many other prophets had before (i.e. Ezek 12). This is followed with the prophetic exhortation (John 2:16), and a prophecy of future events (v19). We see a picture of a temple being cleansed; but this cleansing will ultimately require judgment and destruction. But we hear a claim of another temple destruction that will ultimately result in quite the opposite. This Temple will be cleansed. This Temple will be resurrected. This Temple was born again.

What Was the Temple? – This massive structure, which had been repaired and massively expanded by King Herod, estimated to be able to hold 210,000 people. It remained the central place of worship for the Jews, the only place where priests could offer the ceremonial sacrifices required by God.

The Dwelling Place (1 Kings 6:9-13) – After the days of the Tabernacle, this became the place where God promised to dwell. This was the symbol of God’s covenantal relationship with His people, a promise God had made with David, and before with Moses and Abraham.

Warnings Against Superstition and Presumption (Jer 7:1-11) – Hypocrisy ruled the day, as it had done for years in the house of the Lord. What was supposed to be a house of prayer and worship had actually become a meat-market and an international money-exchange-house.

What Was in the Temple? – Originally, the temple had the ark of the covenant in the Holy of holies. In the Ark were the stone upon which the Ten Commandments had been written, and a golden bowl containing manna.

“To Fulfill the Law” – Jesus had a zeal for God’s house, for He came to fulfill the Law, not to abolish it. Now begin to consider the ‘two temples’ (Heb 8:8-11). One temple had the law kept on tablets of stone, the new Temple would also contain the Law, but now it would be written on hearts. There was going to be a great cleansing.

Heavenly Manna (John 6:49-58) – The old temple housed the manna from the days of the wilderness, but the new Temple was the house of heavenly manna. Here was the Bread of Life

Waters of Life (Zech 14:8) – There had also been strange prophecies that a river would one day rise up out of the temple (Ezek 47:1-12), and that it would provide life to the world. But this was not a prophecy about the old temple. This was the promise of the new (John 7:37-39), an outpouring of the Holy Spirit after the establishment of the new Temple.

The End of the Temple Era – The formal end of the temple came with the rending of the veil (Matt 27:51). The final destruction of that temple, never to be rebuilt, was promised by Christ to take place in that generation (Matt 24:2ff), and took place in 70 AD. This was the end of the administration of the old temple, the old dispensation, the old covenant.

Jesus Is the True Temple; and So Are We (1 Pet 2:5-9) – United to Christ in His death and resurrection, we are His body, we are the temple of God (1 Cor 3:16-17). We are not a symbol. We are the realization of the symbol. “Christ and His Body” is the meaning for which the temple had existed. Christ is the realization of the Temple.

We are priests of this Temple – (1 Pet 2:5)

We offer our bodies as living sacrifices - (Rom 12:1)

We offer our service as sweet smelling offerings – (2 Cor 2:14-16)

“We have an altar from which those who serve the tabernacle have no right to eat” (Heb 13:10).

A Resurrected Temple – *“Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up’”* (John 2:9). The temple had to die. Jesus had to die. The temple was full of sin. Jesus, the clean Temple, took our sin upon Himself and became sin for us. To be born again in Jesus, we have to die in Jesus. There is no Easter Sunday without a Good Friday. There is no resurrection without a crucifixion.

The Grace of God Superior To the Power of Sin – In this temple a once-for-all sacrifice was made by One Great High Priest for His people. For those people, the Temple-cleansing was effective. In this Temple, grace reigns over sin (Rom 5:17). There was a crucifixion, but there is also a resurrection. If, by grace through faith, your sin was in Jesus, then your new life, by grace through faith, is in His resurrection. You have been made clean.

Beware of the Folly of Superstition or Presumption – They lived in the shadow of the temple. They thought they were close enough. They thought that their tradition, their works, their own self-righteousness was enough. They were wrong. Do not live in the shadow of the New Temple. If you are not in Christ, you are not clean. You will be like the money-changers – put out. If you are not in this Temple, then like the old temple, you will be destroyed. Who is your high priest? Where is your temple?