

HIS HOUR

John 2:13-25 / Yeshua §§31-32

Next Week: Yeshua §33 / Pastor Paul

"Is it your turn this year?"

I didn't understand the full meaning of this question asked by my fellow staff member as we walked into the business meeting of our church. By the end, I understood.

My salary became a topic of public debate complete with a value comparison between me, a first-year assistant pastor and the music pastor of 20 years. By the end of the meeting I was humiliated and angry. After a long, long walk I resolved two things. First, if ever I became a Senior Pastor, I would never allow staff salaries to be debated publicly. And second, if ever I became a Senior Pastor I would never allow anything to be said or done in a church business that violates the law of love.

So when I became Senior Pastor of Grace Church in 1991 I implemented two policies with the approval of the Elders. First, staff salaries are confidential. Staff salaries are set by the Elders and presented as part of the general budget voted on by church membership. We will never shame or humiliate our staff by publicly debating their salaries. It is a cultural faux pas and it violates the law of love.

Second, at my first business meeting here at Grace in 1991 I declared my resolve that we will never do or say anything that violates the law of love or dishonors a member of this church family. There is no business we face in the church that justifies violating the law of love. For 27 years we have endeavored to conduct our church business meetings with transparency and good humor, but always with love and respect for one another. As I stated 27 years ago, if a business meeting becomes unloving, I will shut it down. Nothing justifies violating the law of love.

There are evils in this world that should make us angry and spur us to action. If they don't make us angry, something is wrong with us. As we continue the story of *Yeshua, Messiah King*, Jesus encounters a situation that has angered Him for twenty years but up until this moment He has not been at liberty to do anything about it.

But this time it's different.

Please turn with me to John 2:13-25.

After attending the wedding at Cana, Jesus, His family and His disciples settled, not in Nazareth, but on the north shore of the Sea of Galilee in the town of Capernaum (Jn. 2:12). Fairly soon after, Jesus and His disciples traveled south to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feast of Passover.

HEROD'S TEMPLE AND ANNAS' BAZAAR



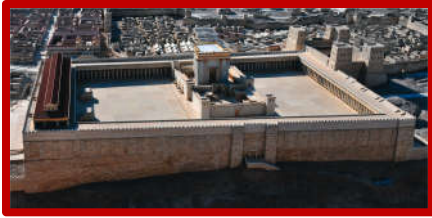
At the heart of first century Judaism was the Temple in Jerusalem. The first Temple, *Solomon's Temple*, was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C. The *Second Temple* was built when the Jews returned from the Babylonian captivity. It was significantly less majestic than Solomon's.

In 19 B.C. Herod the Great undertook the rebuilding of the *Second Temple* in order to win the favor of his Jewish subjects and to impress his fellow rulers in the Roman Empire.

It was the largest building project at the time in all the Roman empire.

It took 83 years to complete.

Part 1.	The Coming of the King
Part 2.	The Authentication of the King
	→ His Hour
Part 3.	The Controversy over the King
Part 4.	The Training of the Twelve by the King
Part 5.	The Opposition to the King:
Part 6.	The Preparation of the Disciples by the King
Part 7.	The Official Presentation of the King
Part 8.	The Preparation for the Death of the King
Part 9.	The Trial of the King:
Part 10.	The Death of the King
Part 11.	The Resurrection and the Ascension of the King
Part 12.	The Sequels



Herod greatly increased the size of the Temple Mount. Enormous stone blocks, some up to 40 feet in length and weighing over a 100 tons were used in building a retaining wall. The end result was a 35-acre flat plateau.

Herod's Temple was considered one of the most beautiful buildings in all the ancient world. When illuminated by the sun, the white, blue and yellow marble shimmered like the waves of the ocean. At 35 acres, the Temple Complex and surrounding porticoes were massive.

Here is an animation that gives us a sense of the size and magnificence of Herod's Temple.

[Play Video: "Herod's Temple"](#)

The Law of Moses instituted seven feasts to be observed annually (Lev. 23; Deut. 16:16-17). All men of Israel were required to come up to Jerusalem three times a year to celebrate the seven feasts. After the wedding at Cana and after settling in Capernaum, Jesus and the disciples traveled to Jerusalem to celebrate the Feasts of Passover, Unleavened Bread and Firstfruits. This would have been about four to six months after His baptism.

At this time, the Temple Mount was under the control of the Sadducees and the main Sadducee was the former high priest, Annas. The Sadducees focused on political power. They were the religious liberals and aristocrats of Israel. They believed in a literal interpretation of only the first five books of the Torah, not the Oral Law. Their interests were in the political and secular realm in order to continue their lucrative control of the Temple and the priesthood. Their influence was among the wealthy of the nation.

Despite their great power and influence, most Jews, especially the Pharisees, did not respect the Sadducees. They were aloof from and condescending toward the common people. They were especially disliked for their theology. They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead or the existence of angels (Acts 23:8). They did not believe in the coming of a Messiah King.

The Sadducees were pro-Roman because it was only by Roman permission that they exercised their religious and political control over Israel. Because they were valuable to the Romans in keeping the people under control, the Romans delegated limited authority to them, even to the extent of having their own police force in the form of the Temple guard. Because of their complete dependence on Rome for their power, they were understandably extremely supportive of their pagan rulers. And for that they were also hated by the people.

Annas was appointed High Priest from 6 A.D. to 15 A.D. Jesus was 12 or 13 when Annas came into office. Within the first years of his High Priesthood, Annas instituted drastic changes in the way things were done at the Feasts.

Those arriving in Jerusalem for the Feasts needed to purchase animals for sacrifice and to exchange their foreign currency for coins acceptable in the Temple. Historically, the western slope of the Mount of Olives across the Kidron Valley, served as the marketplace where worshippers could buy animals and items necessary for celebrating the feasts. It was here, also, they could exchange their currency into acceptable coinage.

Annas saw an opportunity to make a financial killing because that was the kind of man he was.

Annas brought the livestock and money changers into the Royal Stoa and the Courtyard of the Gentiles under the control of his sons, sons-in-law and his servants. This became known as "the bazaar of Annas and his sons." The Pharisees and devout Jews hated what Annas did and eventually ended it in 67 A.D.

This open-air market made Annas and Caiaphas (High Priest at the time and the son-in-law of Annas) a lot of money. They abused people in two ways. First, to celebrate Passover, every family group needed a lamb to sacrifice. According to the Law it had to be a lamb *without spot and without blemish* (Ex. 12:5; Lev. 22:18-20). It was their right to bring a lamb from their flock, but every lamb had to pass inspection by a priest. Invariably the priest would find a blemish and disqualify the sacrifice. The owner had two options: he could go home and bring another animal (if he lived close by) or he could purchase an animal from the

stock on hand that had already passed inspection. Of course, these animals were sold at inflated prices, and the profits went to Annas and Caiaphas.

Second, during Passover everyone had to pay the annual half-shekel Temple tax. However, because Roman coinage was imprinted with Caesar's image, it could not be used to pay the Temple tax. The money had to be exchanged. Conveniently, Annas provided *money changers* who, for a service charge, would exchange people's money. Again, those profits went to Annas and Caiaphas.

It is difficult to imagine the scene that met Jesus as He entered the Temple. The Royal Stoa and Courtyard of the Gentiles was packed with people and animals. Rather than reverence, the air reverberated with the bellowing and bleating of cows and sheep. Rather than peace there was anger at the exorbitant prices and fees charged for the animals and currency exchange. The air was pungent with the stink of dung and urine. One could hardly concentrate on God while trying not to step in a pile of wet manure or a puddle of pee.

The Courtyard of the Gentiles was the only place gentiles could come to worship and pray to God. But Annas and Caiaphas turned the Courtyard of the Gentiles into a stinking barnyard.

What Jesus saw made His blood boil.

It had made His blood boil every time He came to the feasts for the last twenty years.

Year after year Jesus stood in the midst of this sacrilege with clenched fists begging His heavenly Father to let Him clean it up, but feast after feast, His Heavenly Father said no; "Your hour has not yet come."

But this Passover was different.

His hour had come.

JESUS CLEANS HOUSE (JOHN 2:13-17)

JOHN 2:13-17 (ESV)

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. ¹⁵ 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. ¹⁶ 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."



We must not sanitize or spiritualize Jesus' actions. He was livid. He was violent. He was relentless, driving out all the livestock.

He was righteously angry that the Temple was being defiled and God's people abused by their spiritual leaders and prevented from worshipping God. In obedience to God, these people came three times a year to the feasts even though they had been abused by the High Priests this way for twenty years. They were honor bound to honor God knowing full well they would be robbed at the hands of their High Priest and his servants. It was religious extortion and it infuriated Jesus.

As we think about it, if Jesus is the Messiah, He should have been furious over the desecration of the Temple. We would expect Messiah to be angered by anything or anyone who dishonored God and prevented people from connecting with God in worship and prayer.

But standing for what's right makes enemies.

Verse 17 says that “His disciples remembered that it was written, ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’” According to verse 22, they probably remembered this after Jesus’ resurrection.

What does this quote mean?

It is a quote from Psalm 69:9. It reveals two things about Messiah: first, He will be zealous for the sanctity of God’s House, the Temple. Second, His zeal for God’s House will destroy Him; in other words, His zeal for God’s House will get Him killed.

Both aspects of Psalm 69:9 were fulfilled in Jesus. Once His hour came; once the heavenly Father released Jesus to publicly present Himself to Israel as her Messiah, Jesus did so by manifesting His zeal for the sanctity of God’s House. And here, in one of His first acts presenting Himself as Messiah, Jesus makes enemies out of Annas, Caiaphas and the Jews associated with them – the very ones who will have a hand in killing Him three years hence.

When Jesus finished cleaning out the courtyard, “the Jews”, (representatives of Caiaphas) challenged Him.

A SIGN - CRYPTIC AND DELAYED (JOHN 2:18-22)

JOHN 2:18–22 (ESV)

18 So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” 20 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. 22 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.

As mentioned earlier, devout Jews and Pharisees hated Annas’ desecration of the Temple Courtyard. Perhaps they pitched in and helped Jesus clear the courtyard! Anyone with a heart for God knew Jesus was doing the right thing. Yet “the Jews”, representatives of the High Priest, who should have been zealous for God’s House instead accused and challenged Jesus’ authority to cleanse the Temple.

Essentially, they were defending the desecration of the Temple!

This was a potentially violent confrontation between “the Jews” (representatives of Caiaphas the High Priest) and Jesus. Jesus has shamed them and the High Priest. He has defied the High Priest’s authority. He has cost them a lot of money. He has stirred up the masses against them. He has made Himself a hero to the people. Verses 23-25 confirms Jesus was very popular with the masses. If He had “entrusted Himself” to them, they would have made Him king by force.

They came at Jesus hard; they want to hurt Him. They want to shut Him down – some want to kill Him.

Jesus doesn’t flinch. He doesn’t back down. He came back at them and essentially said, “Come on, do your worst; kill me! But if you do, don’t think you’ve gotten rid of me, I’ll rise again in three days. You can’t destroy me. You can’t win.

That’s what Jesus said; that’s not what they heard.

But Jesus was also saying something else and this they understood: “Touch me and you’ll blow this place up (Destroy this Temple). There’ll be a riot, the Romans will toss you out and I’ll still be here.”

Why didn’t His enemies hurt Jesus or arrest Him? Jesus walks away from this confrontation unmolested; why?

Jesus’ statement shut them down. They weren’t going to risk a riot and getting on the wrong side of the Romans. What could they do? So they protested that Jesus couldn’t raise up the Temple in three days and stalked away.

Jesus didn’t give them a sign; they wouldn’t have believed anyway. But in this experience Jesus fulfilled Psalm 69:9 and predicted His death and resurrection.

As John states in verse 22, after Jesus’ resurrection, the disciples remembered this event. They came to see how Jesus perfectly fulfilled Psalm 69:9; He was zealous for God’s house and that zeal lead to His

death at the hands of “the Jews”. After Jesus’ resurrection they came to understand that the Temple He spoke of was His body which was killed and which He raised from the dead three days later.

Jesus’ hour has come to publicly present Himself as the Messiah to the nation of Israel. In doing so, He makes enemies of the religious leaders of Israel. But as verses 23-25 reveal, He also had many who believed.

JESUS’ HOUR HAD COME TO PRESENT HIMSELF, NOT TO BE MADE KING (JOHN 2:23-25)

JOHN 2:23-25 (ESV)

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. 24 But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.

Jesus refused to give a sign to His enemies, but to all others He was more than willing to work miraculous signs such as healings and exorcisms to show people He was really the promised Messiah. This He did during His time in Jerusalem while celebrating the Passover.

Jesus’ power and compassion won many people over. They were hoping for a Messiah who would liberate them from Rome and reestablish King David’s throne. They were looking for a Messiah who would fulfill the many promises in Scripture of prosperity and security. People were enthused by Jesus’ supernatural power to heal and provide. Who wouldn’t want such a man to be king? But Jesus wasn’t going to become king by force. So He avoided doing anything to encourage such a movement.

Next week we will meet an extremely influential man who observed all that Jesus did during this time in Jerusalem. What he saw and heard filled him with questions and he wanted to know more. His conversation with Jesus resulted in some of the most memorable words Jesus ever spoke.