

Eternal Life Through Believing in Jesus

6) House Cleaning

'Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business'
(John 2:13-14)

What happened was at the time of the Passover feast. John tells us this for 4 reasons:

- ✓ **He calls it a feast 'of the Jews', not of the LORD (Jn.2:13; 5:1; 6:4; 7:2)**
- ✓ **Jerusalem would be crowded with visitors**
- ✓ **It was an opportunity for many to do business in the outer court, which would transform it into a marketplace**

**The temple became a money-making machine.
People were exploited in the name of religion:**

- ✓ **Through the animal sacrifices**
- ✓ **Through the money changers**

**Those doing business in the outer court spoiled
the only place where Gentiles could come and
worship**

**It had been built as an invitation to the Gentiles
to worship the true God. This was the only place
in the temple a Gentile could pray, but the whole
atmosphere militated against prayer and
meditation**

'When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"'
(John 2:15-16)

This brings us to the 4th reason John mentioned the Passover

Every Jewish home was to be cleansed by the removal of all leaven from the house

“Behold, I send My messenger, and he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, will suddenly come to His temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” says the LORD of hosts. “But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner’s fire and like launderers’ soap. He will sit as a refiner and a purifier of silver; He will purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer to the LORD an offering in righteousness’

(Mal.3:1-3)

Jesus did not do this in a flash of anger. He took the time to make a whip of cords, and had time to carefully think about what He would do

He drove the cattle and the traders out with the whip, and overthrew their tables

He commanded they not use His Father's house as an opportunity to make money out of people. It was a claim to ownership. It's His Father's house, not theirs

'Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up"'
(Jn.2:17)

'So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up"'

(John 2:18-19)

The Jews asked for a sign to authenticate His actions. Jesus only gave the sign of the resurrection (also, the sign of Jonah)

He knew that these religious leaders would attempt to destroy His body, but He also knew that they would not succeed. The irony is that the religious leaders themselves would be the means by which the prophecy was fulfilled.

'I will raise it up'

Jesus claimed the power to raise *Himself* from the dead, and He repeated the claim in John 10:18

The New Testament also claims that *God the Father* raised Jesus from the dead:

'Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead)'

(Gal.1:1)

...and that *the Holy Spirit* raised Him from the dead, *'But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you...'* (Rom.8:11)

'Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" But He was speaking of the temple of His body. Therefore, when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said'

(John 2:20-22)

He told the Samaritan woman that the hour was coming when people would no longer worship at a temple in Samaria or Jerusalem, but they would worship in Spirit and in truth

When Jesus died the Jewish temple was rendered obsolete – the veil was rent

The body of Jesus is still God's temple

'Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are'

(1 Cor.3:16-17)

'Now when He was in Jerusalem at the Passover, during the feast, many believed in His name when they saw the signs which He did. But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man'

(John 2:23-25)

Many knew what He did was right and professed faith in Him

But Jesus, who knew Simon and Nathanael, knows all and would not entrust Himself to those whose faith was based on miracles

True believers will believe in Jesus even when there is no sign

Application

The Passover was a busy time for every Jewish family: rigorously searching to ensure their home was not defiled by the presence of leaven

God's House had become defiled

It was being used as a house of merchandise and was now 'a den of thieves'

It needed to be purged of the leaven of covetousness

'Your glorying is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? Therefore purge out the old leaven, that you may be a new lump, since you truly are unleavened.

For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, nor with the leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. I wrote to you in my epistle not to keep company with sexually immoral people. Yet I certainly did not mean with the sexually immoral people of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or idolaters, since then you would need to go out of the world'

(1 Cor.5:6-10)

Leaven, here, refers (among other things) to covetousness, extortion and idolatry. When these things exist there is leaven in the house of God

Extortion is to take something by force or threat

In Col.3:5 we read, '*covetousness, which is idolatry.*' A false, covetous preacher teaches others to become covetous and to love the things of this world

There is a problem when the church becomes a money-making machine instead of the pillar and ground of truth

This corruption was at the top. The Pharisees were lovers of money. When spirituality dies amongst leaders, covetousness fills the vacuum

Paul says not to keep company with covetous people. He repeats it here:

'...who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself. Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows'

(1 Tim.6:5-10)

**Contentment is being happy with having our
basic needs met**

***'And God is able to make all grace abound
toward you, that you, always having all
sufficiency in all things, may have an abundance
for every good work'***

(2 Cor.9:8)

True riches are spiritual and eternal