

# Jesus Cleanses the Temple

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[ 0 : 00 ] I encourage you today to open your Bibles to the Gospel of Matthew and the 21st chapter, Matthew chapter 21. Matthew 21, we'll begin reading together in verse 12 through verse 17.

So Matthew 12 through verse 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. He said to them, it is written, my house shall be called a house of prayer.

But you make it a den of robbers. And the blind and the lame came to him in the temple and he healed them. 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.

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 babes?

[ 1 : 27 ] You have prepared praise. And leaving them, he went out of the city to Bethany and lodged there. Let's pray together. Oh, Lord, we again ask for your spirit's help in the preaching of your word, that you would speak through your messenger, that you would help us understand your word, that you'd be glorified in the preaching of it.

We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Now, you may remember last week we saw the triumphal entry. We were looking at that aspect of Jesus's ministry.

So he had just entered into Jerusalem. You may remember what all we saw there with the children crying out, Hosanna, as he's welcomed into the city, the laying down of blankets. And we talked about Jesus even there embracing or acknowledging his kingship.

But even in this, it was a kingship of humility. He came riding on a donkey. It wasn't what we'd expect for a typical king. And one of the things we talked about was the contrast between Jesus's coming as king then versus what we are told of Jesus's return when he fully announces to the world his kingship.

So he's reigning now as king, but we know that not everyone sees that. And there will come a day when we'll all behold him coming as king and how that will look different than in that time. We also looked at how Jesus was fulfilling the prophecies of the Old Testament in showing himself to be the king.

[ 2 : 49 ] So in line with this today, we see that upon entering Jerusalem, Jesus goes to the temple and not a palace to sit on the throne. Again, if we might imagine what might the king do as he enters into his royal city, well, the king goes to the palace to sit on the throne.

But that's not so with Jesus. Instead, he goes to the temple. And again, we're pointing to the fact that Jesus is setting up, establishing a spiritual kingdom and not yet a physical kingdom.

And again, there will come a day when that physical kingdom will be set up and clearly acknowledged. But here Jesus is setting up that spiritual kingdom. And so today we see him as a righteous king, a king who's zealous for God, his father, and for God's worship.

And yet still we see humility, a humble Messiah, serving others and healing those in need. So we have this balance where Jesus comes really as this righteous king to establish his kingdom, and yet humility, he's serving others still.

And so one of the ongoing themes that we have seen is Jesus fulfilling messianic prophecy and proclaiming himself to be the king and the Messiah.

[ 4 : 00 ] So here we see those same realities going on now, the prophecy that he's fulfilling to establish and declare his identity. So as we look at the three encounters in this passage specifically, we'll see how each one fulfill prophecy and how they fulfill his claim as the king and the Messiah.

So we have here the three things we're going to look at, the cleansing of the temple, the healing of the blind and the lame, and then again the proclamations of Hosanna and the response of the scribes and Pharisees with that.

So the cleansing of the temple, the healing of the blind and the lame, and the proclamations of Hosanna. So let's look first at the cleansing of the temple. In verse 12, we see Jesus' actions.

And Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who sold and bought in the temple, and he overturned the table of the money changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. Now, this may be difficult for some of us to grasp.

Is this an outburst of anger? Is this a sinful response? Maybe there's others of us who look at this as justification. It's okay for me to get angry and overturn the table at the house or whatever. Jesus did this at a time.

[ 5 : 10 ] So what's going on with Jesus? What's happening here? Well, just to begin with, we're all aware that this isn't a sinful response. Jesus isn't angry in a sinful way. So what's going on?

Well, if we think about the outlay of the temple, only the priest could really enter what we might think of properly as the temple. But it was surrounded by three outer courts, or three courts.

The inner court was for the Israelite or Jewish men could enter into the inner court. And then there's a middle court, a second court, where Jewish men and women could come to worship and pray.

And then there's an outer court, which all the Gentiles could come to. So anyone who was outside of Israel, who wanted to come and worship God, could come into this third court. And the third court is really the closest that any Gentile could get into the temple itself and the worship of God.

This outer court was as close as they could get. And so for the Passover, Jews from all over the world came, and there would be others who would be coming to worship God all over the known world.

[ 6 : 13 ] And you might imagine, as they come to worship God, one requirement of the Passover is they're to bring sacrifices. But if you're traveling a long way, and we see even in Paul's ministry that there are people dispersed as far away as places like Spain and Italy.

If you're traveling long distances in that day and age, you don't just hop on a plane. Not that carrying a sacrifice on a plane is going to be very easy either. But imagine trying to get your lamb or whatever animal you choose to bring to the sacrifice a large distance while you're walking with your family or traveling with your family.

So would it be easy? Maybe some of you even know this today. I only have three kids, but I remember specifically a time where we flew all of us together when some of the kids were still in car seats and strollers and trying to go to the airport with luggage for five of us when three of them can't carry their own bag and we have cars.

It's not easy. But imagine all the more before planes trying to travel long distances and bringing your sacrifice. It can be difficult. And so an easy solution to this is when you get to Israel, you buy your sacrifice there.

You're still sacrificing your money. You're getting the sacrifice. You're giving it to the Lord, committing it to the Lord. And so as we think about this process, Jews come from all over the known world for the Passover.

[ 7 : 35 ] A way of serving them was to supply the sacrifice for them so they could buy it conveniently when they got there. And maybe that's part of how this process started and what we see here in this passage. For a price, and from all accounts that I've read, the prices were quite inflated.

You guys can maybe imagine you ever go to a theme park and once they get you inside the doors, you thought, oops, I should have brought a drink with me because drinks that you could get for a dollar anywhere else or \$8 or \$10 inside the thing.

It's kind of like that. So you get there, you don't have a sacrifice. Where are you going to get one? Well, supply and demand. And so the prices were quite high that they were charging. And then also most Jews would choose to pay the temple tax, which was typically done annually.

They would choose to do it while they were there for the Passover. It made sense. They made the trip there for the Passover. They'd go ahead and give the temple tax there. And so for the temple tax, you couldn't give pagan money, foreign money even.

But much of the foreign money would have pagan mottos on it. And so you'd have to change it over into Jewish currency to then give it to the temple. And so the idea of having money changers there made sense.

[ 8 : 47 ] Again, if you've ever traveled to a foreign country, now we have the convenience of using credit cards. But if you have to buy something from a little market or whatever and they don't take American dollars, you've got to go find a money changer somewhere.

You've got to get it switched over to the local currency. But if you imagine that in a microcosm happening inside the temple, you needed to have the temple currency if you're going to give or pay the temple tax.

And so Roman money with the pagan mottos could not be accepted. And so if you think about these, these practices aren't inherently wrong. Buying even your sacrifice wasn't wrong.

Selling a sacrifice wasn't wrong. Neither also is changing money. It provided the opportunity for people to pay the tax. But the reality is that some of the fees that were charged for the animals, as I said already, but also for changing the money, was exorbitant for the pilgrims.

Oftentimes poor people, and God's word allows or gives an allowance for poor people to give an offering of pigeons or doves, cheap animals.

[ 9 : 49 ] But even when they got there, the prices were so high that it wasn't easy for poor people even to give the poor sacrifice. It set aside in Leviticus 5. So, one problem is, and Jesus says, a den of robbers, is that people were being taken advantage of.

And so it wasn't so much as a service as it was a way for people, opportunities for people to take advantage of people who were coming to worship God. But then also, all these shops were set out in the outer court where the Gentiles were.

Now this is convenient because you hit the most people. You put it in the inner court, the Gentiles can't get to your market. How are you going to make any money if you can't sell to everybody? So they put it out here in the Gentiles outer court, but it became so busy with business going on there.

It was like a marketplace. And imagine going to worship. Just imagine if we came here to have church and we're trying to preach or even pray or sing over a marketplace going on.

People coming, selling stuff, discussion. Maybe we, I think in our modern days, not looking like Walmart, it's looking like what you think of in a street market. Where there might be groceries and things like that or vegetables, things that people bring in, spices, those kind of markets.

[ 11 : 05 ] And people discussing it, the fish market. And they're having all these discussions that are priced, they're haggling over this and that. So all this is going on in the outer court where the Gentiles are supposed to come and be able to worship God.

So again, as we look at this, Jesus comes and what he does is the fulfillment of scripture. Last week, we looked at the triumphal entry. We talked about Jesus riding on a donkey and how that fulfilled Zechariah 9, verses 9 through 10.

Here, Jesus quotes Jeremiah 7, 11 to explain what was happening. Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord.

And so he calls them out and again, fulfilling what was foretold in Jeremiah 7, that this is what would happen, that God's people would make his house a den of robbers. And the Lord's seen it.

And then he also quotes Isaiah 56, verse 7, to explain his actions there in 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.

[ 12 : 12 ] And so, Isaiah 56, the context of that passage, that Old Testament passage, is the coming kingdom of God. Now you may remember we saw the same thing with Zechariah, that it had to do with the coming of the king, this one quotation.

But Jesus quotes out of this larger passage I want to read to you. This is Isaiah 56, verses 5 through 8. I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than the sons, better than sons and daughters.

I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord and to be His servants, everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not profane it and holds fast my covenant.

These I will bring to my holy mountain and make them joyful in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

The Lord God who gathers the outcasts of Israel declares, I will gather yet others to Him beside those already gathered. So here in the context, and again, Jesus is pulling from these two passages, but Isaiah 56, my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

[ 13 : 30 ] And the connection to this is that Jesus speaks of His worship and that He will make them to be His own and that He will write their names and they will never be cut off.

And then He says, who does that include? And you think about Isaiah, our expectation would be that it's going to include the Jewish people. But He says, and the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord to minister to Him, to love the name of the Lord and to be His servants.

Everyone who keeps the Sabbath and does not prevent it and holds fast my covenant. And then if you notice even what it says is that their altar, their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.

And so here, Jesus is saying, this is speaking of the inclusion of the Gentiles and we think about the Messianic age, this is part of what the Messianic age would usher in. The Messiah would bring in not just the Jewish people but the Gentiles.

And so here He comes and He's saying, my temple, the design of my temple is not to be exclusively for the Jewish people but that all peoples might call my house a house of prayer.

[ 14 : 42 ] And then He includes it with the other passage from Jeremiah, but you made it a den of robbers. And so we understand the context of what Jesus is speaking of. I think again, He's declaring Himself to be the Messiah that's bringing in the Gentiles and at the same time acknowledging that what they've done is excluded foreigners from the worship of God.

He's opening the temple to become a house of prayer for all people. And then we also understand that the zeal that He has for God's house was also foretold.

So Psalm 69, 9, we read, For zeal for your house has consumed me and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me. In fact, we read in John, chapter 2, the Gospel of John, chapter 2, Jesus cleansing the temple and this is probably a time before this.

So three years earlier, Jesus did something similar to this. But His disciples witnessed it and it says in John 2, 17, His disciples remembered that it was written, zeal for your house will consume me.

So their response to seeing Jesus' actions is to say, Jesus is fulfilling what was spoken in this passage. Zeal for God's house consumes Him. So even as we think about, is Jesus responding in anger?

[ 16 : 02 ] I think we have to understand righteous anger. And my guess is most of the time we don't really understand what righteous anger is. Righteous anger is a righteous, a good response to seeing evil in the world against God.

So it's being upset for God and His glory. And so oftentimes I think we kind of excuse our anger for these kind of reasons.

Will so-and-so sinned against me? That's not righteous anger. That's retributive anger, right? That's not what we're talking about here. We're talking about God's glory is at stake here. God's worship is at stake and we ought to be upset, even angry, when we see people intentionally trying to interfere with God's worship, demean His glory in some way.

I think that's a hard balance for us to make. Most of the time, maybe 99% of the time, maybe we've never experienced a righteous anger, but most of the time I think our anger is a sinful anger and we need to be on guard against that type of anger.

But what we see is Jesus responding in zeal for God's house, for God's glory. That's what was consuming Him in this moment. And again, this was foretold of the Messiah in Malachi 3, 1-3.

[ 17 : 21 ] Behold, I send my messenger and He will prepare the way before me. It's John the Baptist. We've seen this quoted already in the Gospel. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple. And 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 fuller's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver and He will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver and they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord.

So, in the passage that we've already seen quoted in Matthew's Gospel that speaks of the coming of John the Baptist as who will precede Him, what does it say about the Messiah? And the Lord, Yahweh, whom you seek will suddenly come to His temple.

God's going to come to His temple. the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight. And so the picture of God coming into His temple, what might we expect? Well, it tells us here, 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?

And what is He going to be like? Like refiner's fire, He's going to purify like fuller soap. Maybe we might even say like laundry detergent. It's going to cleanse, it's going to wash away some things.

[ 18 : 43 ] And so this is exactly what happens as Jesus appears to the temple. He comes, but He comes in judgment upon those who have defiled the temple. And He purifies Him.

And it says that He will purify the sons of Levi. Who are the sons of Levi? Who are the Levites? What was their job? This would be the priest and all those who would serve in the temple.

And so when the Lord appears, He'll go to His temple, He will judge those who are there, He will purify the temple, and in particular, the priest and those who serve in the temple. And they will bring offerings in righteousness to the Lord.

And so in this, I should have counted as I prepared, but we've seen, I think, five scripture passages fulfilled in Jesus' coming to the temple and purifying the temple. But then in verse 14, we see, after He purifies the temple, we see it says, and the blind and the lame came to Him in the temple and He healed them.

First, these were probably people who would have been excluded before who couldn't even make it into that part of the temple courts because of what was happening there with the marketplace. But secondly, these were people who could not be healed.

[ 20 : 01 ] Right? These are problems that you just don't get better from. They're lame and blind. Maybe we could even say in our language, probably more than lame, we might say paralyzed.

So just picture people who are paralyzed and blind being given the ability to move their limbs again, being able to see again. Well, to some extent, not often, even in our day with medical technology, can many people be healed from these kind of things.

But even back then, there's no one who gets healed from this kind of thing. And so they come and they're seeking healing and Jesus is healing them, performing miracles there.

And this also points to Jesus' kingship that he is the Messiah. Back in Matthew 11, verses 2 through 6, you may remember when we were there, but it says, Now when John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, Are you the one who is to come or shall we look for another?

Do you remember how Jesus answered this? John the Baptist wants to know, Are you the Messiah? How can I know and my followers know that you're the Messiah? You remember how Jesus answered? Jesus answered them, Go and tell John what you hear and see.

[ 21 : 17 ] The blind receive their sight and the lame walk. Lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear and the dead are raised up. And the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.

And so Jesus' answer is, Here's how you can know I'm the Messiah. And the first two things he begins with is, The blind see and the lame walk. In Isaiah 35, 4 through 6, we read, Say to those who have an anxious heart, Be strong, fear not.

Behold, your God will come with vengeance. With the recompense of God, He will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap like a deer and the tongue of the mute sing for joy.

So again, another Messianic prophecy. What will it be like when God comes to His people? Well, it says, Behold, God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. Now we see that already in the cleansing of the temple.

God comes in vengeance on those who have distorted His worship, who have interfered with the worship. But then it also tells us that He will come and He will save you.

[ 22 : 26 ] And the eyes of the blind shall be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap like a deer and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. So again, what Jesus is doing even in the second instance in healing is He's fulfilling prophecy about what the Messiah would do.

He's fulfilling His role as the King. He's doing what God has said beforehand would take place when Jesus comes. So people are coming to the temple and praying.

They're asking to be healed by God and God is healing them through His Son, Jesus Christ. And remember what Jesus said that my house is to be called a house of prayer.

I think now it actually is called a house of prayer. Right? They're actually coming and praying to God and God's answering prayer. Not what preceded that. Not when it was a marketplace. All that went before.

God says He desires mercy and not sacrifice. Here there's sacrifices going on but not in a way that honors God at all. But we see this change happening when Jesus comes.

[ 23 : 33 ] He purifies His temple and what's happening afterwards? Prayer for healing and people actually being healed. And then we read that again the children are crying out in the temple Hosanna to the Son of David.

We see this in verse 15. We also see the response of the scribes excuse me the chief priests and scribes. So Jesus is again proclaimed to be the Messianic Savior.

I won't belabor the point if you were here last week you heard it if not you could go back and look but that is Hosanna. It's just a prayer in Hebrew that meant Lord save that I argued over time became more and more to the understanding of God saves and that as the children are crying this out and people are calling out Hosanna as Jesus enters into Jerusalem what's actually being proclaimed is God saves or God is saving or as I interpret it as God has sent His Savior.

God's saving here's the evidence of it the Savior's entering Jerusalem. And so now here Jesus comes and He cleanses the temple He purifies the worship of God He begins doing what the Messiah was supposed to do He's giving sight to the blind He's causing the lame man to leap for joy and the people who are looking on they come to the right conclusion Hosanna to the Son of David Son of David is the king the Messianic promise that there would be a Son of David who would reign on God's throne forever.

And so here they're saying here's the eternal Son of David come to reign on His throne doing what the Messiah should do here is our Savior God saves. But that's not the response of everyone is it?

[ 25 : 22 ] Verse 15 But when the chief priest and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did when they saw the wonderful things He did how do you respond when you see wonderful things?

And they saw the children crying out in the temple Hosanna to the Son of David Worship's going on and how do you respond? And they were indignant They're angry They're upset at what's happening here And the chief priest asked Jesus a question but I would argue that the chief priests and the scribes are rebuking Jesus Look at verse 16 And they said to Him Do you hear what they are saying?

Now what's the implication here? Well there's a few possibilities Obviously Jesus either you don't hear what they're saying because if you did you would correct them you'd tell them to stop Or you hear it and you're blasphemous you don't care They're proclaiming you to be the Savior And don't forget that this is actually in response to not just what they're proclaiming but also that they've seen Jesus perform miracles And their response is literally tell them to shut up Don't you understand that they're calling you God?

I mean the chief priests and the scribes they understood They're crying out Hosanna to the Son of David They're calling you the Messiah They're calling you God And I like Jesus' response And Jesus said to them Yes I mean I could stop there He goes on obviously But I like just his simple affirmation Jesus says Yes I hear him That's right Jesus said to them Yes Have you never read out of the mouth of infants and nursing babes you have prepared praise So here Jesus says Yes And then he quotes to them a passage of scripture Now again I think we're seeing a clear theme aren't we?

Jesus fulfilling scripture He's acknowledging what's happening in their presence is the fulfillment of scripture scripture And so he quotes to them psalm 8 2 But really all of psalm 8 is about God So listen as I read this is beginning in verse 1 I'm only reading through verse 4 but you could go on from there as well This is psalm 8 that Jesus quotes And again consider the context because we're seeing this pattern where Jesus quotes one portion of a passage of scripture and you go and read the bigger portion you understand more of what Jesus is speaking of Or maybe I could say another way Jesus is quoting one small part of scripture probably with the expectation that people would know the passage and be able to tie together what's happening So here's psalm 8 O Lord our Lord how majestic is your name in all the earth You have set your glory above the heavens Out of the mouth of babies and infants you have established strength because of your foes to steal the enemy and the avenger

[ 28 : 32 ] When I look at your heavens the work of your fingers the moon and the stars which you have set in place what is man that you are mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him And my guess is that's familiar to many of you guys you've heard it before But what is psalm 8 all about O Lord our Lord how majestic is your name in all the earth Who's spoken of here Can there be any question about the fact that it's God How majestic is God's name in all the earth You have set your glory above the heavens And then the passage that Jesus quotes out of the mouth of babies and infants You have established strength because of your foes to steal the enemy and the avenger When I look at your heavens the work of your fingers If there's any doubt who made the heavens and who worked out the creation It's God The moon and the stars which you have set in place what is man that you're mindful of him and the son of man that you care for him And so Jesus quotes this passage

He says So again let's establish context again The chief priests and the scribes come to Jesus and say Do you hear what they're saying?

And I'm arguing the undertone is this They're calling you the Messiah And Jesus says Yes I hear it Don't you remember what Psalm 8 says? That infants and children will proclaim glory glory to God And so this probably is I think through what we've seen in Matthew this is probably the boldest proclamation Jesus has made so far that he's the Messiah that he is God himself that he's God in human flesh He's saying what Psalm 8 speaks of these children and infants worshipping God that was about me this is what's happening right now You can imagine how the chief priests and scribes might respond to that I partly wonder one part that Jesus leaves out of Psalm 8 Is there an implication here?

Listen again Psalm 8 verse 2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants you have established strength because of your foes to steal the enemy and the avenger Now if we just take Jesus is quoting that right now and saying this is being fulfilled in your presence I think who are the foes and the enemies that God's stealing Again Jesus doesn't quote this and I don't want to go too far but I can't help but think that Jesus is probably implying that the chief priests and the scribes have placed themselves as enemies to God as the foe and that he comes now as an avenger So we again see that it's a simple faith of the children that get it right and the religious leaders of that day get it completely wrong the chief priests and the scribes they don't worship Christ they don't see him for who he is but it's those with simple faith those who consider

Jesus' words we might almost say that this is kind of obvious here you got here you come here comes a guy who fulfills now we're up to six passages of scripture about the Messiah who cleanses the temple who purifies the worship and performs miracles that were distinctly messianic miracles and we might say this is obvious but we also understand things are spiritually discerned and God has chosen to reveal himself to those with simple faith and so as Jesus said let the little children come to me and do not hinder them for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven again we're seeing that that's true it's the humble who trust Christ and are saved it's not those who think they have it all together we don't know why the chief priests and scribes are indignant one obvious answer ought to be that they're indignant for the glory of God if someone comes to steal God's glory we would be angry but considering that I think Jesus has just implied they're enemies of God and the foe of God

[ 32 : 42 ] I think the reason they're indignant is out of jealousy he's messing up the worship things were going really smooth we had a nice market going on out here we were even getting some extra donations some kickbacks maybe from this you're messing up our whole worship if people think you're the Messiah maybe they're not going to come to the temple anymore the way they did whatever it may be but they're angry but it's those who are children those who we might think the least about who are actually those who are worshiping Christ and it's the lesson that Jesus has been teaching his disciples privately for some time to such belong the kingdom of heaven it's people who come to Christ in humility and in faith who receive the kingdom not those who we would think of maybe as the religious leaders so how does this all apply to us today these three scenes that we see and the fulfillment of prophecy in this well let me start with what I think is an implied point

I want to say almost a minor point a side point but an implied point as well that there's a need for pure worship today that I think we have to be on guard that we don't allow things into the church that resemble what we see taking place here in the temple we must be careful about what we allow into worship is it something that's been commanded by God and that in no way profanes the worship of God or his day and so we want to be mindful of what we allow in worship in some ways I think that's a negative application that I don't want to be the major point but I think at the very least we ought to be mindful we ought to be careful that we don't just do anything that we think would be great to do in worship but that we consider what would God have us to do in his worship secondly although there's not a one-to-one correlation between the church and the temple but would we describe grace fellowship church as a house of prayer Jesus comes he says my temple was to be a house of prayer now again

I think the correlation with the temple today is the individual members of a church the people the Christians but we think of us as a gathered group would that be true of us today would our building be called a house of prayer maybe if I want to apply it on a personal level would we be called a people of prayer I think this is pretty convincing I think how much time are we giving to prayer especially as we gather together we ought to be praying together corporately and we do gather together on Wednesday nights and is that something you prioritize in your life what about as you come into church each Lord's Day we were talking about this some in Sunday school but are we coming to receive only are we coming to give to others I even think to what extent are we coming in are we praying for the worship service are we praying for the preaching of the word does it happen outside of the elders in the office before the church and when you hear me do the pastoral prayer and the prayer at the beginning of the sermon are there other people who are praying for the preaching of the word praying for the hymns praying for the worship leader praying for the lost who might be gathered here today is this building or is this church a house of prayer thirdly I question what is the state of your own heart if we imagine maybe more individually that we're the temple of the

Lord are the things that we have allowed into our hearts that interfere with God's worship that make it harder to worship God if you think of that outer court and the Gentile coming he just wants to pray to God but all the market stuff's going on and he can't concentrate you know how hard it can be just to pray sometimes and to concentrate you hear something else going on you think about something else going on in your day but just imagine the marketplace going on all around you and you're trying to pray and so if we personalize this and say well our body our hearts are the temple of the Lord our Holy Spirit dwells there what are we allowed in our heart in our thoughts in our mind that interferes with the worship of God if we can imagine and this is somewhat of a stretch but if we can imagine Jesus coming into our hearts our temple today to drive out false worship to drive out whatever might be competing with his worship what might he want to drive out I said it's somewhat of stretch what we understand today is that Jesus is present in us by spirit this is exactly what the work of sanctification is doing isn't it so where do we need sanctification where do we need to get rid of things that might be distracting us from God's worship fourthly and this is a little bit of a larger point but the triumphal entry pointed to the future coming of

Jesus and the glory of the return of the king and what I want to do is just take a moment and look at each three or each of the three things that we looked at in these points in our message and say is that true of them also the cleansing of the temple how does that point us to Jesus's second coming well I think the cleansing of the temple obviously points us to God coming as a refiner Jesus returning to judge or returning in judgment J.C. Ryle says this let us see in our Lord's conduct on this occasion a striking type of what he will do when he comes again a second time he will purify the temple he will cleanse it of everything that defiles and works iniquity and cast every worldly professor that perfect those who profess the world out on its tail he will allow no worshiper of money or lover of gain to have a place in that glorious temple which he will finally exhibit before the world and this is what Revelation 21:8 says the cowardly the faithless the detestable as for murderers the sexually immoral sorcerers idolaters and all liars their portion will be in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur which is the second death and so maybe this isn't where our minds immediately go but

[ 38 : 52 ] Jesus is cleansing of the temple is meant to point us to the reality of his second coming as well that there will come a cleansing that he will cast people out of his temple and that that casting out will be a permanent one to hell there will be judgment to come but also in Revelation 21 we see a picture of the healing that will come when Jesus returns behold the dwelling place of God is with man and he will dwell with them and they will be his people and God himself will be with them as their God he will wipe away every tear from their eyes and death shall be no more neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore for the former things have passed away it is done I am the alpha and the mega the beginning and the end to the thirsty I will give from the spring of the water of life without payment the one who conquers will have this heritage and I will be his God and he will be my son so there's a picture of us of this healing that happens in the temple it too points to a greater reality at Jesus's return no more tears no more death us reigning in the presence with Jesus him in our presence he with us and even says and I will be his God and he will be my son and then thirdly we have the

Hosannas point to a future worship that will come revelation seven nine through twelve after this I looked and behold a great multitude that no one could number from every nation from all tribes and peoples and languages I will make my house a house of prayer for all peoples standing before the throne and before the lamb clothed in white robes with palm branches in their hands and crying out with a loud voice salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne into the lamb salvation belongs to our God is basically Hosanna Hosanna all the peoples gathered together around the throne crying out Hosanna and we read and all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures and they fell on their face before the throne and worship God saying amen blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever amen and so if all these things point to that great day my question would be are we prepared for that day are we ready for that day I think of Jesus entering the temple how many people would have been unprepared for that

Jesus is coming and he's going to judge some and condemn them there will be others who will be healed and who will spend their days worshiping the Lord so where are we in relation to that here Jesus enters into the temple and points to a greater return are we prepared for Christ's return are we eagerly awaiting the day and when he returns are we prepared for that will we be counted as those who are judged or those who are healed and who worship him let's pray together dear heavenly father we thank you for the coming of the king and our savior and lord we pray and long for the return of the king and the return of our savior and lord yet we know from your word that it will look in many ways like it did this time yet with more power more glory more fully known to the world and lord we pray that those who are in this room would not be those who are recipients of the lord's wrath his judgment but lord we would fall on our face and worship lord we long for that healing that will come where there will be no more tears or death we're always mindful of how the fall has affected us in this world but lord we thank you that christ has come that he has established his kingdom and he's coming one day for the consummation of that kingdom and lord may we long for that day in worship of him we pray this in his name amen please rise let's sing him 310 rejoice the lord is king king rejoice the lord is king your lord and king adore rejoice in thanks and sing and triumph never evermore lift up your heart lift up your voice rejoice the lord is king and i still rejoice jesus the savior reigns the lord of truth and love when he had purged our saints

His kingdom is sweet above. Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice, rejoice again, I say, rejoice.

His kingdom cannot fail, he rules for earth and heaven. Let these come, let them come unto our Jesus' name.

[ 44 : 42 ] Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice, rejoice again, I say, rejoice.

He sins and thoughts again, till all his works appear. And bow to his covenant, all he is sweet.

Lift up your hearts, lift up your voice, rejoice again, I say, rejoice.

Rejoice in glorious hope, our Lord the Lord shall come. And take his servants, come to them eternal.

Lift up your heart, lift up your voice, rejoice again, I say, rejoice.

[ 45 : 54 ] Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.  
Amen. Amen.