

# Gospel of John (pt 3)

## JESUS AND THE TEMPLE (2:13-25)

August 19, 2021 | steve ellis

### John's Narrative



John is continually pushing forward in the narrative of his gospel. John moves us to the enthronement of Jesus on the cross and the resurrection. What is so remarkable about this gospel is that he connects us back to the Old Testament while doing so.

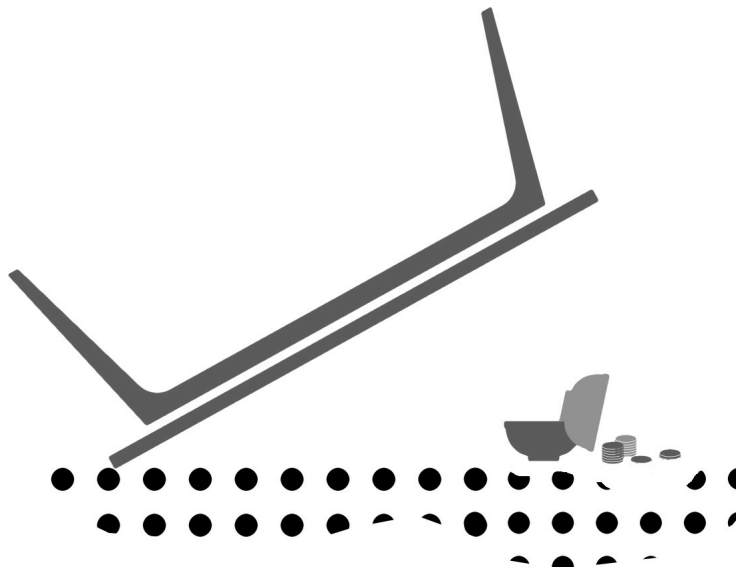
John uses the word “signs” in his gospel. It’s a word where we could just as easily use the word miracle. However, as N. T. Wright says, John uses these signs somewhat like “signposts” as he directs us to Jesus and revealing the identity of Jesus, who Jesus is. In the temple scene, John 2, what can we learn about the identity of who Jesus is?

### What Is Jesus Doing?

In the temple, Jesus turns over the money tables, fashions a whip out of cords, and drives out the animals. **What is Jesus doing?** A question that often comes up in John’s gospel. It’s a question that evokes different responses. Responses we read about as we read through this narrative of Jesus’ life and ministry. Part of the purpose John records these responses is for us is to consider our response to Jesus.

#### JOHN 2:13-18 (NRSV)

*The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. 14 In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. 15 Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle.*





*He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. 16 He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" 17 His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me." 18 The Jews then said to him, "What sign can you show us for doing this?"*

An important observation to make from the text is that this was **"almost time for the Jewish Passover."** The Passover was a remembrance of the 10th plague in Exodus when the Lord delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage. The Lord, in Exodus 12, had instructed Moses what the children of Israel were to do:

#### **EXODUS 12:21-23 (NRSV)**

*"Then Moses called all the elders of Israel and said to them, "Go, select lambs for your families, and slaughter the passover lamb. 22 Take a bunch of hyssop, dip it in the blood that is in the basin, and touch the lintel and the two doorposts with the blood in the basin. None of you shall go outside the door of your house until morning. 23 For the Lord will pass through to strike down the Egyptians; when he sees the blood on the lintel and on the two doorposts, the Lord will pass over that door and will not allow the destroyer to enter your houses to strike you down."*

Passover is one of the main feasts on the Jewish calendar. Many would have traveled to Jerusalem to remember the Passover and to celebrate the Passover. The temple would have been crowded and busy with activity when Jesus enters.

Jesus sees all that is going on, He overturns the tables of the money changers, and drives out the animals. Jesus disrupted the activities of the temple at a significant time. Something like this would not go unnoticed, and it doesn't. The religious leaders ask, **"What sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?"** They are questioning Jesus' authority.

### **THREE DAYS**

Notice how Jesus responds to their questions; **"Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days."** (Jn. 2:19). Did they understand what Jesus meant? Noticing their response, it does not appear that they understood Jesus; **"The Jews then said, "This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?"** (Jn. 2:20). We learn in (Jn. 2:21), Jesus was talking about the **"temple of His body."** John is pushing us forward in the narrative. John is pushing us to the cross.

John records:

**JOHN 2:23-25** (NRSV)

*“When he was in Jerusalem during the Passover festival, many believed in his name because they saw the signs that he was doing. 24 But Jesus on his part would not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people 25 and needed no one to testify about anyone; for he himself knew what was in everyone.”*

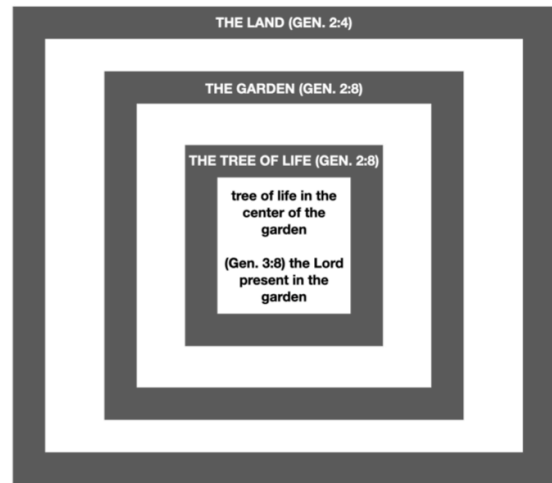
Some believe, but not all. Jesus knows what is in the heart of people.

## THE FULFILLMENT

What is Jesus saying and doing? What is the meaning of this temple scene? One of the things John intends for us to see is that Jesus is the fulfillment of the temple.

The tabernacle and later the temple is a story that begins on the first page of our Bible.

*Each are places where heaven and earth meet.*



Going back to the Garden and noticing the design of the Garden, we discover a familiar pattern. Described for us is the earth (Gen. 2:4), from the land, God creates a Garden (Gen. 2:8), and in the center of the Garden (Gen. 2:8), there is the tree of life. In (Gen. 3:8), we learn the Lord is present in the Garden, heaven and earth meet in the Garden.

This pattern is one we see in both the tabernacle and the temple. The tabernacle consisted of the courtyard (Ex. 26), the Holy Place (Ex. 26:33), and the Holy of Holies, which contained the mercy seat (Ex. 26:34). In the tabernacle (Ex. 33:9), the Lord was present and talked with Moses. Later in the temple:

**2 CHRONICLES 7:1** (NRSV)

*“When Solomon had ended his prayer, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the Lord filled the temple.”*

Heaven and earth come together in the temple.

**JOHN 2:18-22** (NRSV)

*“The Jews then said to him, “What sign can you show us for doing this?” 19 Jesus answered them, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.” 20 The Jews then said, “This temple has been under construction for forty-six years, and will you raise it up in three days?” 21 But he was speaking of the temple of his body. 22 After 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.”*

John reveals the identity of Jesus. Jesus is the fulfillment of the temple, and in Jesus, heaven and earth come together.

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