

Home Group Leader's Notes

Week of January 31, 2021

John 2:13-25

**Notes to leaders following the sermon series in John.**

**John 2:13-25**

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** This week's passage in "John" continues an overview of the first "signs" that point to the person and work of Jesus the Messiah. Last week had the rich story of the abundance of wine provided by the Messiah in His new kingdom. This week will feature another "sign" which points to the fact that Jesus knew well the people to whom He was coming to rescue.

QUESTIONS TO HELP YOU EXPLORE THE PASSAGE (2:13-25)

What happens in this week's story?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** Jesus is in Jerusalem and addresses the deplorable condition of the people. He cleared the temple of those doing business, was questioned by the religious leaders about His authority to do so, prophesied about his future death and resurrection, and did many more signs in the area.

To the Jewish people, the temple was the place where God lived and where they worshiped Him.

Why might Jesus have needed to clear the temple area? What was His primary concern?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** Worship in the temple had been corrupted. His primary focus was the purpose of the temple. Instead of treating this as His Father's house which was to be a place of prayer, it had become a marketplace. It was meant to be a place of worship including sacrifice for forgiveness (cleansing), for drawing near to God.

What did His clearing indicate about the condition of the worship by these people?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** The Spirit of God left the temple in Ezekiel 10 because of Israel's disobedience and worship of foreign gods. God's glorious presence was no longer in the Temple. Two primary concerns: (1) people were going through the motions which were religious only, and (2) religious leaders were using their religious position for their own financial and power gains. Jesus, the Messiah, was introducing a new covenant, a new people who worshiped in spirit and truth.

What was the line of questioning by the "Jews" (meaning Jewish religious leaders)? What else might they have questioned?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** Their inquiry focused on Jesus' authority – who gave Him the authority to clear out the marketplace from the temple area. Note that they do not question Jesus' statement – that God's house was meant to be a place of connecting with God in prayer.

How does Jesus respond to their question? What did this answer mean about Him? How is Jesus a replacement for the purposes of the temple?

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** Instead of speaking to His authority, He spoke to the purpose of the temple – about providing a way for people to be cleansed of sin and connect with God.

How was Jesus' clearing of the temple a "sign?" What might be the meaning behind the "sign?"

**NOTES TO LEADERS:** The signs were to point to something deeper about Jesus and His purposes. This sign pointed to three things: (1) That Jesus is the Son of God (cf. My Father), (2) that Jesus has authority over all things in the temple and worship of God, and (3) that Jesus is introducing a new covenant / way to God. (cf. the motif of 'out with the old and in with the new.')

How might last week's and this week's stories be related to Jesus coming as the Messiah? What are the common elements? What might this week's story mean?

**NOTES TO LEADERS: Jesus came to bring in the new covenant in His blood (wine) and to make it possible for all believers to be a temple (a dwelling place) for the living God. Thus, He would do what the Law could not do by providing the perfect sacrifice for sin and inviting people to "dwell" with God.**

Many think there is a connection between the two stories in chapter two with the introductory statements of chapter one. How might these two stories connect with those statements? (See 1:10-11, 14, 16-18)

**NOTES TO LEADERS: Jesus came full of grace and truth. The grace of providing wine and the truth of judgment – that mankind is sinful and needs forgiveness through Jesus.**

What was Jesus' response to the people who "saw the signs" and "believed in His name?" What was the reason for this? How does this connect with Jesus clearing of the temple and His response to the questioning by the leaders of the Jews?

**NOTES TO LEADERS: Jesus knew that their faith was fickle – that it was a faith based on "signs" / miracles. Neither they, nor the religious leaders, were exhibiting genuine faith. Jesus was not willing to trust them.**

#### DISCUSS TOGETHER

Each week we will learn more about Jesus. What do we learn about Jesus from this story? How does this fit with what we read in chapter one? What is your response to this story?

**NOTES TO LEADERS: This question will be repeated as we walk through the book of "John."**

How was the temple significant to the Jews at the time of this story? What made this the perfect time for Jesus to call them out? What might be something like the temple to us today? How is Jesus to be the temple in our lives?

**NOTES TO LEADERS: This question will necessitate research. The temple functioned as many things: religious center, political center, the focus of the culture and their way of life, etc.. The Spirit of God was no longer residing in the temple, the Roman oppression made them needy and looking for the Messiah, and there was no real spiritual leadership**

**For us today, people are discontent, dissatisfied, and alone. They live with a constant hope of finding someone or something else that will fill the place that only God can fill.**

**Now, in Christ, we are the living temple, the place where God dwells. One day soon, that will be complete for us (Revelation 21:3).**

The subject of genuine faith/belief will continue throughout "John." (see 2:23-25) What do we learn about genuine belief in this week's story? How is this relevant to people today?

**NOTES TO LEADERS: We cannot manufacture God with religious or anything else. They were going through the motions of empty religion. (God's presence was no longer in the house.) Genuine belief must be in Christ alone and His work. Genuine faith is not based in religious activities or supernatural entertainment. (We will see more on this topic next week as we examine the story of Jesus with Nicodemus.)**

**May our Father encourage you through His Word.**

Steve