

The Mind Of Jesus Attending The Passover.

Text: John 2:12-25

1) As To The Temple

Suggested Hymns:

2) As To Himself

503, 822, 245, 332, 504

3) As to ourselves

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is John 2:13–25, *¹³ Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. ¹⁵ 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.*

¹⁶ And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!" ¹⁷ Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."

¹⁸ So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?" ¹⁹ Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

²⁰ Then the Jews 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 of the temple of His body.

²² 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.

²³ 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. ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men, ²⁵ and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man. (NKJV)

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Jesus went up to Jerusalem to the Jews' Passover. It was the Jews' Easter, commemorating the deliverance from the angel of death and out of Egypt's bondage. The pious Israelite, if possible, journeyed to Jerusalem and to the Temple for that high festival. Jesus' parents, accordingly, went up to Jerusalem every year. It was also the custom of Jesus.

Our Easter commemorates the fulfilment of all that of which the Old Testament Passover was a type. We, too, have an Easter Lamb, Jesus Christ, offered for us.

Lent commemorates the sacrifice of the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. It commemorates the sacrifice of Jesus, by the sprinkling of whose blood we, too, are delivered from death and out of the bondage of sin. And it leads on to Easter, which proclaims the accomplished fact, the victory unto life, given to us by our Lord Jesus Christ.

Devout Christians, in mind and in spirit, during Lent also go up to Jerusalem. Christ, their Passover, is continually before their eyes during this season as they prepare for the Easter Feast. It is their constant longing to see more and more of Jesus.

It is therefore also of supreme interest to the Christian to know the mind or thoughts of Jesus as He attended the Jews' Passover, as it is revealed, for instance, in our text today. On its basis let us consider *The Mind of Jesus Attending the Passover*. May the Lord bless our meditation.

1. The Mind Of Jesus Attending The Passover As To The Temple.

Our text begins, ¹³ *Now the Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.* ¹⁴ *And He found in the temple those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business.* ¹⁵ *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.*

¹⁶ *And He said to those who sold doves, "Take these things away! Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise!"* ¹⁷ *Then His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up."*

The Temple, accordingly, in the mind of Jesus is His Father's house. The house dedicated to God, the Father of us all and, in the specific Biblical sense, of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the house dedicated to the heavenly Father's uses, the place where He enters into communion with man, where His law and His testimonies are delivered, preserved, and revealed.

It is the house, according to the Saviour's own words to His astonished parents when they found Him in the Temple both hearing and asking questions in the midst of the teachers there, where He was about His heavenly Father's business. There the great business of God with man and for man is officially carried on.

Is it any wonder that His zeal for that house was outraged to see that house used as described in our text? Is it any wonder that Jesus proceeded at once to purge the Temple of such sacrilege?

Did not the business of these men, seeking financial gain, relegate into the background the real business of the House of God? Did it not protrude into the foreground that which was properly only incidental in the matter of divine worship?

Yes, indeed; this bartering for gain in dealing in the things that belonged only to the outward form of worship had changed the very mind of the people, until they found their main interest in the purchasing of animals for the sacrifices, in the outward acts, until the Temple had become in reality a house of merchandise.

It was no longer really a house of prayer, a place where man worshiped in spirit and in truth, where the lost child returns to its heavenly Father and finds pardon for sins, and rest for its yearning soul. Jesus was aroused by this abuse of God's house and cleansed it of its shame. Jesus restored the Temple for its proper uses.

With our minds turned toward the coming Passover, toward Good Friday and Easter, we, too, in the likeness of Jesus look to the Church as God's house, the place where His honour dwells.

In it we look for and after the heavenly Father's business, that great and all-important business which He has attended to in the incarnation and the sufferings and death of His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, the business that Jesus finished

by His death and resurrection. Such is our Lenten mind, the mind of Jesus as to the Temple.

2. The Mind Of Jesus Attending The Passover As To Himself.

Our text continues, ¹⁸ *So the Jews answered and said to Him, "What sign do You show to us, since You do these things?"* ¹⁹ *Jesus answered and said to them, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."*

²⁰ *Then the Jews 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 of the temple of His body.*

²² *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.*

Our lesson makes reference to the first Passover after Jesus' began His public ministry. It was on the third Passover after this that Jesus was crucified. And yet here, three years before His crucifixion, Jesus, going up to Jerusalem to the Passover, speaks prophetically of that Passover to which the Passovers of the Old Testament all referred. Jesus speaks here of the destroying and the resurrection of His body. His mind is on it.

It is all true of Jesus what is said in the Second Psalm. Jesus is God's Holy One whom God has set upon His holy hill of Zion. No one can succeed against Him or harm His cause. Forever it will be the holy singers' boast: *"Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing?"*¹

Yet it is also true that *"He was led as a lamb to the slaughter." He is despised and rejected by men. "He was wounded for our transgressions." "By His stripes we are healed."*²

This, the heavenly Father's real business on earth, Jesus had come to carry out, and it is on His mind as He attends the Passover at Jerusalem, three years before that event.

Note the text. When Jesus had assumed the authority to cleanse the Temple, the Jews asked Him for His credentials for such action. They asked Him to show

that He had a right so as to interfere in the place that He had called His Father's house.

Jesus refers them to His death and resurrection. That was to be to them the sign that they asked. By it they should learn to know that Jesus had authority in that Temple. Accordingly He tells them: ***“Destroy this temple,”*** speaking of the temple of His body, ***“and in three days I will raise it up.”***

The image of the temple for Jesus' body was significant. Just as the presence of God was manifest in the temple for God's people, so in the Word become flesh God was manifest among the people. He fulfilled in person what the temple only foreshadowed. To destroy Jesus was virtually to destroy the temple.

Unbelief does not recognise a true sign when it's pointed out; instead, it becomes a sign of judgement. So these Jews later tried to use Jesus' words against Him at his trial.³ Even when Jesus rose from the dead to fulfil this sign, these Jews hardened their unbelieving hearts to the truth. The disciples, on the other hand, ***“remembered that He had said this to them; and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.”***

Notice how a disciple's faith grows. There is no hint here that the disciples understood what Jesus was saying any more than the unbelieving Jews did. They remembered Jesus' words, however, and looked to Scripture for understanding and confirmation. They found Scripture that fit. Perhaps it was Psalm 16:10: ***“You will not leave my soul in Sheol, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.”*** Then when they saw the risen Jesus, they believed.

Similarly, we today do not always readily understand God's Word to us. But following the disciples' example, we remember His words and search the rest of Scripture for understanding and confirmation. In that way, the Lord reveals His signs to us, and we believe and live.

The resurrection of Jesus is surely an amazing sign. One that is worthy of credence, the sure proof that Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Anointed One, of whom Moses and the prophets spoke, the Glory of God's Temple and of God's people Israel.

Such is the mind of Jesus attending the Passover, and such should properly be also our mind as we prepare for Easter. Jesus “destroyed,” Jesus delivered

unto Pontius Pilate, crucified and buried, and on the third day risen again, that is the essence of our thoughts.

Contemplating these things, wondering at this great sign, we attend the feast, we commemorate the Passover, our Passover, and experience the strengthening of our faith.

3. The Mind of Jesus Attending the Passover

As to ourselves.

Our text concludes, ²³ *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.* ²⁴ *But Jesus did not commit Himself to them, because He knew all men,* ²⁵ *and had no need that anyone should testify of man, for He knew what was in man.*

What an disgraceful picture of man is described here! And it is true to the facts. And Jesus knew it all better than we are ever able to understand ourselves. We read in Jeremiah 17:9, ⁹ *“The heart is deceitful above all things, And desperately wicked; Who can know it?”*

Just think: Jesus, on earth because of the love that sacrifices itself for man, did not commit Himself to man, because He knew all men. He knew what was in man.

Jesus did other miraculous signs while He was in Jerusalem for the Passover, and many people believed in His name. What they knew about Jesus, that is, His name, led them to trust Him. The signs had an effect. People began to trust in Jesus as a great prophet or even the Messiah.

Jesus, however, saw more here than any of the others, and all was not as favourable as it seemed. He did not simply give Himself over to those professing faith in Him. For now at least, He remained aloof because He knew the hearts of the people.

He saw weak faith, fickle faith, and misapplied faith. He saw people impressed primarily with His miracles. He saw people who wanted Him to give them a better life on earth, but did not see Him as the Son of God who came to prepare heaven for them. Jesus knew their hearts.

Altogether untrustworthy, that is man. O how true! Man cannot be trusted in the important matters that Jesus has to deal with for man's salvation.

Jesus was mindful of this fact when He was attending the Passover particularly. Oh, that this mind may also be in us! Let us not trust in ourselves in dealing with the solemn and sublime subjects and thoughts that centre around our Passover, our Lent and our Easter.

Let us not trust in ourselves for either the observance of the feast or the profitable use of it. Rather, let us fix our attention on Jesus, always mindful of our own unworthiness. Let us put all our trust in Him alone.

So, in summary, the mind of Jesus Christ attending the Passover teaches us that we are to look at the Church as God's house where His honour dwells, look to the Scriptures for understanding and confirmation of Christ's death and resurrection and finally don't trust in yourselves for salvation but trust in Christ alone.

Let us close with the words of the hymnist,

Thy works, not mine, O Christ,
Speak gladness to this heart;
Thy wounds, not mine, O Christ,
Can heal my bruised soul;
Thy cross, not mine, O Christ,
Has borne the awful load
Thy death, not mine, O Christ,
Has paid the ransom due;
Thy righteousness, O Christ,
Alone can cover me. Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds, in Christ Jesus. Amen.

¹ Psalm 2:1

² Isa. 53

³ Matthew 26:61