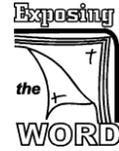




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6- Sign for the Jews 2:18-25

The picture that lies before us in the context of our text tonight is Jesus has suddenly come on the scene in the temple at Jerusalem. He has created quite a stir by running the animals out of the temple with a whip and turning over the money changers tables. The temple has become a place of noise and the opposite of what was intended. Worshippers that came to the temple were being cheated and exhortation was the rule of the day.

Jesus entered the temple and was move to anger and took action against the wrongs.

We saw in our last session that the reaction of the disciples was in *John 2:17* **“And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.”**

Now we are going to see the reaction of the Jews as they are called here. By the very fact that this took place in the temple the Jewish leader, the Sanhedrin would not have been very far removed. Also the High Priest and his temple guards would certainly have instantly been aware of it. So we can make the leap that when it says Jews that it was not just the ordinary citizens nor even that that were changing the money and selling the animals. This certainly was a request from the Jewish leadership.

I- The Request:

John 2:18 **“Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?”** The question that had asked John was by what authority that he baptized. Now they asked Jesus by what authority He did

what He did. If it was by His own power he would have been punished accordingly. If He was declaring Himself to be a prophet they wanted to see proof. The common assumption was if He were a prophet he could and would show them a sign to prove it. The Jews had seen the miracles in the life of Moses, Elijah and other prophets and wanted one asked for one now.

They seemingly did not disagree that the temple needed cleansing but were asking why He was the one to do it.

Could Jesus have preformed a miracle for them? Certainly He could have. He chose not to do so because He was about more than a dog and pony show. He chose to tell them the sign for the Jews.

I also strongly suspect that they already knew the testimony of who He was. They had already sent messengers to John to inquire. They had their informants everywhere. These Jewish rulers ruled partly by fear and intimidation. Evidence of this is found when they interviewed the parents of man born blind that Jesus healed in John 9. *Joh 9:21-22* **But by what means he now seeth, we know not; or who hath opened his eyes, we know not: he is of age; ask him: he shall speak for himself. 22 These words spake his parents, because they feared the Jews: for the Jews had agreed already, that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue.**

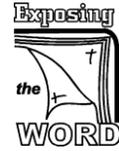
II- The Sign:



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John 2:19 *Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.*

Remember that they are probably standing in the temple. This temple had been the project started by King Herod to rebuilt the temple. The work on this structure had began about 46 years before. Josephus the Jewish Historian says that 18,000 men were employed to do this work. It was still being worked on in that day. This temple was not completely renovated until in the 60's and then destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

Jesus, many assume, would have pointed to Himself indicating that the temple He was talking about was Himself. We know what He intended but do not know it He pointed to Himself. Some think that He was issuing both a challenge to them that would be fulfilled of taking His life and a prophecy.

III- The Question:

John 2:20 *Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days?*

The note of sarcasm is evident here. Today someone might have said, yea right. This temple work had began in 19 or 20 BC some 16 or so years before the birth of Christ. After all these years of work now this man, who had just ran the animals out and turned the temple upside down was saying He could rebuild it in three days.

IV- The Explanation:

John 2:21 *But he spake of the temple of his body.*

We have the insight of John telling us that He was talking about His body. The disciples did not understand this because they did not comprehend that Jesus was destined to die on the cross. This is shown by Peter rebuke of Jesus for saying it. He

told the Jews in **Matthew 12:38-40** *Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. 39 But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: 40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*

It is certainly ironic that in this same chapter of Matthew we have the healing of the man with a withered hand on the Sabbath, the healing of a demoniac, and now they are asking for a sign. Signs were all around them. They didn't need a sign they needed to believe.

Then another time they asked again for a sign and got the same answer basically. **Matthew 16:1-4** *The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven. 2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. 3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times? 4 A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.*

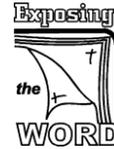
Did you notice that greatest sign that Jesus told them that would verify that He was Messiah was the resurrection. Notice what Paul said in **Romans 1:3-4** *Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; 4 And declared to be the Son of God*



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with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.

This sign that He said would be a sign for the Jews would be fulfilled in a few months after His death.

V- Delayed Verification:

John 2:22 When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said.

This is also another reason I stated that the disciples did not recognize what He meant by this statement.

I find it ironic that the disciples did not believe it at this time, or should we say did not catch it, the Jews certainly caught it. At His trial they used these words against Him to justify His crucifixion. *Mat 26:61 And said, This fellow said, I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days.*

The resurrection brought many of the hard things that Christ had spoken to light. Also another thing we need not miss is that even though the seeds we plant into the lives of others may not seem to be doing much we know from this event that many times seemingly dormant seeds spring forth. Remember God said in *Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and*

it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

So do not be discouraged keep on sowing seeds, some will spring forth into life. Some soon, some later.

They had asked for a sign. Jesus told them the sign that would verify for them His authority. Now notice what else took place. We have unrecorded miracles performed by Jesus in the next days that lead to faith of many. *John 2:23 Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did.*

The obvious was under their nose and they kept asking for a sign. What about you, are you seeking some great spiritual experience that will rock the foundation of the world or will you simply come in faith. Many still today seek signs when they are all around.

The next verses seem to indicate that this faith that they had was only in Him as a healer or miracle worker and not as a Savior. *John 2:24-25 But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, 25 And needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.*

Jesus knew, knows and will always know which faith is real and which is false. He knows those that seek Him for the wrong reasons and those who are truly heart sold.