

## Daily Devotional, April 6, 2020

### 'Cleansing the Temple' (Matthew 21:12)

*“Then Jesus went into the temple of God and drove out all those who bought and sold in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He said to them, ‘It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer,’ but you have made it a ‘den of thieves.’”*” (Matthew 21:12-13, NKJV).

This event took place on Monday of Holy Week, on the day after Jesus' Triumphal Entry (Palm Sunday). It was the second time that Jesus cleansed the temple. The other time was early in Jesus' ministry (John 2:13-17). Jesus was righteously angry at the fact that these booths were distracting the worship of those who had come to worship God at the Passover. Many of these booths were set up in the Court of the Gentiles, and it was the Gentile pilgrims who were especially affected. God is not the God of Israel only, but He is also the God of the Gentiles.

The first application is for the church. Is there anything that goes on in the church services or programs that detracts from the worship of God? Fog machines, concert lights, and tables at services selling books or cookies are all things that distract from the worship of the Living God. Get rid of them from the sanctuary.

The second application is for all of us individually. Scripture calls the believer **“the temple of God.”** **“Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are”** (1 Corinthians 3:16-17). If Jesus were to come to your house, your temple, what would He find? Would He find a few tables to overturn? Perhaps the tables of broken vows, impure thoughts, unconfessed sin, self-righteous pride, anger, dishonesty, bitterness, hate, jealousy, or covetousness? If our temple is defiled by anything, let's clean our own house up and worship God **“in spirit and truth”** (John 4:24). If we don't, we can be sure that Jesus will come by and do it in time, and that will be a less pleasant experience than if we voluntarily cleansed our temple ourselves. Now fear of divine discipline ought not be our motivation. Our motivation should be a desire for personal holiness in order to maintain a right relationship with God. If that's not your desire, a careful examination is in order. If it is, then you are almost there. After you finish reading this sentence, cleanse your temple by confessing your sins directly to God with a contrite heart.