

# Verse by Verse: John 2:13-24

## By Lloyd T. Anderson

[Musical Introduction]

Announcer:

The radio department of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles Inc. presents Verse by Verse. Verse by Verse is heard Monday through Friday at this time and is presented for your spiritual instruction and blessing by one of the West's oldest and most respected evangelical training institutions. This ministry is maintained through the interest and help of its listeners. Dr. Talbot's special guest on today's verse by verse broadcast is Dr. Lloyd T. Anderson, pastor of the Bethany Baptist Church of West Covina and distinguished member of the board of directors of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles Inc. And now with today's Bible study, here is Dr. Lloyd T. Anderson.

Lloyd Anderson:

Thank you and good morning friends. We're happy again to share with you the second chapter of John's particular gospel. And as we come to it this morning, I trust it will be of infinite blessing to your own soul. For certainly Jesus Christ in the temple, beginning with verse 13 of chapter 2, is an increasingly interesting passage; I can assure you, as we study it through. Now let's take our Bibles together before we have a word of prayer, and let's read beginning in verse 13 down to the end of the chapter if you will.

"And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when

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He had made a scourge of small cords, He drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; and make not My Father's house some house of merchandise. And His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.

Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things? And Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days? But He spake of course of the temple of His body. 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 Himself had said.

And 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. And Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men, and He needed not that any should testify of man: for He knew what was in man." Now that's an interesting word, isn't it? And in a moment we're going to come to its study, if you have your Bibles open to John chapter 2.

Our Father, we thank Thee again for the privilege of coming into Thy house; into every house, into every heart, to worship Thee in the Spirit of holiness. And this morning as we share together in the radio broadcast, we would ask that the Holy Spirit shall take the things of our Lord Jesus

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Christ and reveal them to every believing heart. Oh God, wilt Thou take away the veil from our eyes. Help us to see and to discern and to know Thy truth, beyond and above everything else.

We pray for many in radio-land, Lord, who may be ill and sick and disconsolate and downcast. Wilt Thou touch their bodies and heal them we pray; and raise them up, dear Lord, right now, that they may be useful servants of Thine moving about, doing Thy purpose and doing Thy will. We praise Thee that Thou are able to heal; Thou are able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we even ask or think. And our Father, we thank Thee for that today.

We pray, Lord, for Dr. Talbot, where he is; Wilt Thou bless his great ministry. Use him mightily in these days in churches, wherever he might be, that the Holy Spirit shall take of the things of Jesus Christ through him, and make them clear to the hearts of men and women, boys and girls, as he moves about from place to place. Bless the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. May it have a tremendous ministry in the years that lie before us; Should Thy Son tarry His coming. And Oh Lord, we place in Thy hands all that we are and all that we hope to be. For we ask it in Jesus' name and for His wonderful sake, Amen.

Now just this word, as we come to John chapter 2, beginning with verse 13, would you be reminded again concerning the need of your part in the ongoing of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. It is my prayer and your prayer too, I know, that God in the years to come shall use this great school. And many many people shall be one to Christ because of the graduates who go forth from its halls of learning; young men and women who have learned how to study the Word of God, who know the inescapable eternal truths of God Himself, and who are willing to impute

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them and impart them to many others because YOU were willing to sit down and write a letter and enclose a gift, in order that the school might continue to go on. And so remember if you will, and pray much for it. This, of course, will gladden the heart of God and do great service unto Him.

Now Jesus Christ, beginning with verse 13, is at the temple. And after a brief stay, you remember, of not many days, with loved ones and friends in Capernaum, where we had, of course, the episode that preceded verse 13. Then we find Jesus as He goes up to Jerusalem to observe the Passover. This was the first Passover in His own public ministry. Then we need to note immediately His revulsion at the mercenary practices within the temple that are here suggested. And the two things that provoked Jesus were the marketing and the money changing in which articles sold were precisely those which were needed for the sacrifices: the oxen, and the sheep, and the doves.

The money changers performed several functions. They changed the foreign currency of the foreign Jews into local money. They made change for those who wanted to pay the temple tax, and for those who wanted to buy sacrifices. And for each of these services, a very profitable charge of interest was levied in the money changers' business. Now these transactions went on in the temple area, in the court of the Gentiles as distinguished from the inner sanctuary of the temple itself. It was here in the very commodious court of the Gentiles of the temple, with its great arcades, that all of this merchandising took place.

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The Jews took advantage of the situation by actually converting a part of the court of the temple into a bazaar, where the noise of the oxen mingled with the bleating of the sheep; and where the fluttering of the doves accompanied the clink of the change in money; as the bankers took care of the worshippers' needs. You see, the merchants did a big business, even if they had to pay a percentage for their concessions. And our Lord Jesus Christ was shocked to see business going on in the temple courts as though it was a worldly market or some kind of a financial counting house.

And what had perhaps begun innocently enough as an accommodation to supply lambs for visiting Passover guests, and the exchanging money for those from distant lands, had now, my friend, degenerated into a feverish effort to make merchandise of what was needed in order to observe the Sacrificial Sacrifice, which was connected with the Passover feast of the Jewish people. Covetousness and overreaching prevailed to such an extent that God was dishonored, and the temple was scandalized, and they were commercializing the things of the Lord, and this, my friend, as all was repugnant in the sight of God.

I don't believe I have ever been so driven away as I was when I visited a certain land where, in the frenzy of religiosity, religious articles were being sold as as if they were little toys. Now Jesus takes affront at what He sees. What does verse 13 and even verse 14 have to say, "And the Jews' Passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. And He found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money were sitting:" But oh, when you come to verse 15, Jesus is filled with zeal to cleanse the house of His Father. This desecration of the house of worship filled Jesus Christ with a righteous indignation and deepest godly anger.

And having made a whip, a scourge, out of ropes, probably from the rushes that were littered down for the cattle or even used for packing, Jesus Christ drives with that whip everybody out of the temple. He drove out the sheep. He drove out the oxen. He drove out the doves. He drove out the men. And unquestionably, the men probably fled first. And then He poured out the money. He overturned the tables. And finally, He turned to those who sold the doves and He ordered them to take them outside.

You see, the Lord Jesus Christ is perfect master of Himself, and He commands regarding the temple, "My Father's house is not to be made a house of merchandise. And this was no doubt applied to all; and the original language here signifies strongly "stop MAKING My Father's house a house of merchandise." And this was a practice which needed to come to an end. My Father's house is a reminder of the same idea spoken here 18 years before by Jesus Christ as a child, in Luke 2 and verse 49. Jesus is fully conscious of His relationship to His own Father.

Now the fury of the attack of the Lord Jesus Christ here left the men no time to gather the small money that was lying in stacks on the table; and as they all were turned, the coins flew and rolled in every direction, making it impossible to continue business. What you see as you study this particular passage, the background of Christ's rebuke, as in the second scourging of the temple three years later on, is found in the book of Isaiah chapters 56 -57. And evidently, the Lord, here, caused some of the rays of His divine power and majesty to shine forth through the cloak of His humiliation. Otherwise, the merchants would hardly have submitted so meekly to His attack. However, it is further noted that our Lord inflicted no blows upon the men at all.

This incident brings before us a side of the character of Christ which is absolutely and universally ignored in our day. We think of the Lord Jesus Christ as a gentle, and as a compassionate, and as a loving One; and such He was and still He is. He is just as loving and compassionate and gentle as God can be. And my friend, that's a great deal, I can assure you. But this is not all that He is. God is light, as well as love. God is inflexibly righteous, as well as infinitely gracious. God is infinitely holy, as well as infinitely merciful. And you and I could well remind ourselves of this very thing. For the Scripture says it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God, as all who defy Him will yet discover eternally speaking. The Bible speaks of the wrath of the Lamb, and our study today furnishes us with a very solemn illustration of this very thing before us.

The incident also rebukes the present day desecration of God's own house. If the holy anger of the Lord Jesus was stirred when He beheld the profanation of that which was His own house of prayer, if the idolatrous commercialization of it caused Him to cleanse it in such a drastic manner, my friend, how must He now regard many of the buildings which have been so-called consecrated to His name. How tragically does history repeat itself again and again. There is certainly a connection here with the Apostle Paul's writing in 1 Corinthians 3 and verse 16, when He talks to the New Testament believer and declares "know ye not that ye are the temple of God? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy."

You see, the apostle has reference not only to the composite collective church but also to the individual believer. Well might we permit the Savior again, through the ministry of the Holy

Spirit, to drive from our churches and to drive from our individual bodies and lives, which are really the temples of God if we love Him as savior, any indulgence, any practice, any pursuit that would desecrate the dwelling place of Divine Deity, who lives and dwells permanently within our hearts and lives.

Now it's interesting to notice here the effect that was produced by what Jesus did. And you have that in verses 17 and 18, "And His disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of Thine House hath eaten me up. Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, What sign shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?" Well, what was the effect produced upon His own disciples in verse 17? The disciples spoken of here are not the twelve, for these of course had not yet been appointed but those who had attached himself to Jesus even at this early stage of His ministry, including among others, of course, John, who was the writer of this wonderful book. These disciples remembered at that time, not at a later date, the words of Psalm chapter 69 and verse 9, "For the zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up." Now in this wrathful zeal, which they saw had taken hold of Jesus, they thought they saw the messianic fulfillment of that word in the book of Psalms, wherein the speaker in the Old Testament declares his great zeal for God's house which was yet to wear him out.

Our Lord had already identified Himself with the temple as He termed it "My Father's house" and thus He affirmed His divine Sonship before His disciples and all of the people who were standing by. A tremendous thing, neither Moses Solomon nor Ezra ever termed the tabernacle or the temple as "my father's house." Christ alone could do that. One man single handed takes a

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whip and the whole crowd flee and fear before him. Oh my friend, this was no mere man. It was the terror of God that had fallen upon these people.

Not only did it produce an effect upon the disciples but my friend what was the effect upon the Jewish people in verse 18? "Then answered the Jews and said unto Him, What sign shewest Thou unto us, seeing that Thou doest these things?" What effect did it have upon the Jews may seem to be very surprising to you and me. We should expect that severe resistance would be offered to such an act as Jesus committed, instead, there is not even reproof, except indirectly in the request for a sign of His authority.

You see, the failure of the Jews to offer resistance to Jesus when He picked up the whip and began to whip them out of the place is explainable on two grounds. First of all, they would hardly have dared to stir up a riot even if policy had not been dictated, uh had not dictated quietness within the temple area. When the Roman garrison so closeby kept a very close watch for the first appearance of a tumult. And then secondly, we need to remember this, my radio friend, that the whole traffic in the temple was especially obnoxious and unpopular at this particular time. The great masses of the people disapproved of it equally with Jesus Christ. The high priest and the temple officials encouraged it however because of the profits that were derived from it to them.

No wonder such places then, as well as today, are devoid of any spirituality and are absolutely strangers to the power of God. You see, the Lord will not tolerate an unholy mixture of worldly things with that which is spiritual. This demand for a sign evidence their blindness and gave

proof of what John the Baptist had said in John 1 and verse 26, that "there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;" They didn't know Him, you see. And to have given them a sign would only have been to confirm them in their unbelief.

You remember in verse 19, "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." Now He spoke in language which was quite unintelligible to them. Then in verses 20 and 21, "Then said the Jews, as they answered Him back, Forty and six years, you see, was this temple in building, and wilt Thou rear it up in three days? But He spoke of the temple of His own body." Now lacking in spiritual understanding as these Jews were, they associated the sayings of Jesus only with the outward material building called the temple, especially the sanctuary which they looked upon with their own eyes.

He had given them an enigma, which was more likely to be remembered because of its nature, and the subsequent understanding afforded a basis for the faith of the disciples. It is very very significant, my friend, that Jesus here, in the very first months of His public ministry, in His first public appearance in the temple, foretold His own death and His own resurrection. It was this point which remained in the memory of His disciples. For you remember in verse 22, we're told that the disciples remembered what? Read it with me, and I'm reading it out of the in- the original transliteration. "And when He had now risen from the dead, His disciples remembered what- that He had said this very thing; and they believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken unto them."

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Now for the time being, the disciples, as many as were with Him at the festival, were also in the dark regarding the full significance of the statement of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can't you imagine the amazement of even these who were called disciples at that time when Jesus Christ said "you destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." And the Jews revealed that they did not understand that He was talking about the temple of His body, which, going to the cross would die, and in three days, like a temple, He would be raised again from the dead. And they showed their ignorance of their spiritual understanding by saying that it took us forty six years to build this temple, how in the world are You going to raise it up after it's destroyed in only three days?

You see their unbelief. You see their ignorance. You see the fact that they did not understand what Jesus came into the world to do. Yes. Certainly, after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, these disciples drew their conclusions correctly. Then it was that they understood and believed also the corresponding Bible passages of the Old Testament like Psalm 16 and verse 10, and Job 19 verses 25-27. And if Scripture Bible verses seem to be dark and enigmatic, it is a matter of wisdom for the believer to keep on searching and comparing biblical prophecy and fulfillment in order to gain the ever foreknowledge of God's own indivisible, wonderful, marvelous, glorious, eternal truth.

What do we read now in verses 23 and 24 of John and chapter 2. "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. But Jesus did not commit Himself unto them, because He knew all men,-" That's a very graphic statement, isn't it? Oh what a declaration that is. How it evidences human depravity; fallen man is a creature that God will not trust. Only a new creation of veils before the

Lord, man must be born from above. Man must be regenerated. Man must have salvation. Man must be born again; unless he will not have eternal life. Yes, Jesus did not commit Himself unto these men. And the Lord Jesus Christ's example here is an example and a warning for you and me. You and I could well remember that it is not all gold that glitters. It is not wise to trust in appearances of friendliness or even short acquaintances. The discreet man will be kind to all but he will be intimate with few people.

It only remains for us this morning to point out how here there is a series of most unique contrasts between the two incidents recorded in the first and second parts of chapter two. The creating of water into wine at Cana of Galilee, and, on the other hand, the cleansing of this temple in the city of Jerusalem. The one presents a festive gathering, and the other one is a scene of divine judgment. To the former, the Lord Jesus Christ was invited, but to the latter, He took the initiative Himself. In the former case of the wedding, He employed human instruments; in the latter in the temple, He acted all alone. In the former, He supplied the wine; in the temple, He emptied the temple. In the former, His act of making wine was commended; in the cleansing of the temple, He was challenged. In the matter of the wedding, Christ pointed forward to His own death, and in the matter of the temple, He pointed forward to His own resurrection. And in the matter of changing water into wine, the Lord Jesus Christ manifested forth His glory, as you have it there in verse 11. But in the story of the temple, judgment and Jesus driving the money changers out of the temple, you have a revelation of His zeal or judgment for His own Father's house.

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This is a tremendous thing, and something, my friend, that cannot be (inaudible) said but certainly is, in every sense of the word, a tremendous portion of Scripture. Oh that men and women will believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in this our own generation. Can't you visualize the Lord Jesus coming into a church today, and because there is no preaching of the Gospel of salvation in the pulpit, and because there is no lifting up of the Lord Jesus Christ and redemption, and because there is not the desire on the part of those people, including the minister, that men and women should come to Jesus Christ and be saved and to be cleansed of all their sins, and if, believers, then to walk in a consecrated dedicated spiritually surrendered victorious way.

Oh my friend, Jesus comes to your church and to my church as He did to this temple, and I ask you what does He see? Does He see a church which is only interested in social things? Does He see a church which is only interested in the betterment of the environments of man? Or my friend, does He see a church which is busy winning people to Jesus Christ? Does He see a church which is interested in the heart of man, knowing that when man's heart has changed, his environment is going to change as well.

Oh it's a tremendous passage, John chapter 2. And I think we could do well to read it and reread it again; it has only 25 verses. It's only as long incidentally as the whole book of Jude. Not very long is it? But it has a graphic picture of Jesus at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee. And then we see Him in the temple as He makes a scourge, and as He drives the money changers and the animals out of the temple, and He declares that He did not want His own Father's house to be made into a den of thieves. Oh what a tremendous word is this word from John and chapter 2.

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And I trust, my friend, that you and I together will catch a glimpse of the Lord Jesus Christ as He really and earnestly is One who despises the ill treatment of His own Father's house. You and I are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Let us keep that temple as God would have it to be. We're happy now to be with you and I pray God's blessing upon you through this week which lies before us. We pray Thy blessing oh Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus Christ; upon every word spoken everything accomplished, in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

[Musical Closure]

Announcer:

For the past half hour, the Bible Institute of Los Angeles has presented verse by verse, a program of stimulating Bible study and inspiration for your spiritual blessing. You are invited to share in this and the many other ministries of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. Address all mail to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Los Angeles 17, California. That's the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, Los Angeles 17, California. Dr. Talbot's special guest today has been Dr. Lloyd T. Anderson.

[Musical Closure]