

CHRIST CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

THE LIFE OF CHRIST WITH SAINT LUKE



JESUS IN JERUSALEM

Luke 19:45-48

The Temple in Jerusalem was central to the lives of the Jews. The Jews made pilgrimages to Jerusalem several times a year and went to the Temple for many reasons, some of them being: to pay their annual Temple tax, to offer animal sacrifices, and especially for the big feast days - such as Passover (*Feast of Unleavened Bread*), Pentecost (*50 days after Passover*), and the Feast of Tabernacles.

1

GOAL

Why did Jesus drive out the moneychangers & merchants from the Temple?

2

AT CHURCH

Gospel Readings:
Judas became consumed by greed too and betrayed Jesus

3

AT HOME

We fast on Wednesdays in remembrance of Judas' betrayal of Jesus.



Passover / Feast of Unleavened Bread:
commemorates the Jews' liberation from slavery in Egypt & the "passing over" of the first born Israelites



Pentecost / Feast of Weeks:
Israelites arrival at Sinai 50 days after Passover



Feast of Tabernacles:
All of Israel would camp outside for a week & offer sacrifices to God

The Temple was an huge complex. It had several entrances, large stair cases, enormous doors, many different sections, and everything elaborately decorated. There was so much always going on at the Temple - coins dropping into the treasury boxes, Levites chanting, people talking (Jesus often taught under the porticoes in the Court of the Gentiles) and people praying, and the constant noise of animals being used as sacrifices.

On any given day, there would be thousands of people working in their different roles and during the big feast days, the Temple would be absolutely bursting with people! So much so, that the Roman Empire had built the Antonia Fortress, a garrison equipped with many soldiers, at the northwest corner of the Temple Mount in order to watch over the crowds going in and out of the Temple.

Among those working at the Temple were the money changers and merchants. Have you or your parents ever gone to a foreign country? If you are using cash in another country, you have to go to a place that will exchange your U.S. dollars for the local currency. The same was true when you went to the Temple in Jerusalem - you needed the coins used there and you had to go see the money changers to get them in order to purchase sacrificial animals or pay your Temple tax.



During this time, coins were not standardized like they are today. The weight, size, and purity of the metal used for coins varied widely. Therefore, the Temple exclusively used the silver shekel of Tyre because of its consistent 94% purity of silver.



The thirty pieces of silver paid to Judas would have been the silver shekel of Tyre.

EXTENDED LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

The Gospel of Luke: Good News for the Poor by Fr. Lawrence Farley, pg 344-345

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel According to Luke by Blessed Theophylact, pg 257-259

The Crucifixion of the King of Glory by Dr. Eugenia Constantinou, chapters 5-7

Podcast: [Jesus Cleanses the Temple](#) by Dr. Eugenia Constantinou

[Christ's Love for the Temple](#) by Fr. Vladimir Berzonsky



All four of the evangelists tell us about Christ driving out the money changers and merchants from the Temple. Dr. Constantinou explains that Christ was not objecting to some sort of man-made rule they had violated, but rather, “Jesus was protesting the commercialization of the Temple and its corruption by the chief priests.” Basically, all of them were just trying to make as much money as possible from the people who came to the Temple. They had changed the Temple from a place of prayer to God, to a place of robbery for those who traveled there. Jesus was telling the money changers, merchants, and chief priests that this was not appropriate and they needed to stop. The Temple was sacred and their actions were wrong. *(The chief priests had to authorize everything that happened at the Temple and would get a percentage of the merchants’ sales that occurred on the Temple grounds.)*

The people witnessing the cleansing of the Temple didn’t understand that Christ would soon sacrifice Himself, as the spotless Lamb of God, who would take away the sins of the world. In AD 70, the Temple would be destroyed by the Romans and animal sacrifice would altogether stop, never to be done again.

“Christ and the Church he established brought a new Law, a new focus, a new way of worship: spiritual worship. Christians never scarified animals; they understood the death of Christ as the perfect sacrifice that fulfilled and infinitely surpassed any and all other sacrifices, because of which the blood of animals became obsolete and unnecessary.” (Constantinou, pg 69)

The chief priests were really done with Jesus at this point. They saw Him as challenging their authority and infringing on their quality of life. Soon, they would be plotting with Judas to arrest Jesus.

ACTIVITY: MIDDLE SCHOOL

Complete the next worksheet (attached) for their folder.

Use the model of the Temple in the classroom and explain the different parts to the kids

ACTIVITY: HIGH SCHOOL

Learn about the Jewish Temple

Option 1 - Download “**Immersive Herod’s Temple**” for your iPhone or iPad and share with the class via the projector.

(Please use the app before showing the kids)

Option 2 - YouTube video: [3D Walkthrough of the Temple in Jerusalem](#)

(Please watch before showing the kids)

Option 3 - YouTube video: [3D Model of Herod’s Temple](#)

Option 4 - Use the model of the Temple in the classroom and explain the different parts to the kids

SING:

Middle School - Save O Lord Thy People

High School - More Honorable Than the Cherubim

CHRIST CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

AT HOME

FOR PARENTS

And He looked up and saw the rich putting their gifts into the treasury, and He saw also a certain poor widow putting in two mites. So He said, "Truly I say to you that this poor widow has put in more than all; for all these out of their abundance have put in offerings for God, but she out of her poverty put in all the livelihood that she had."

Luke 21:1-4

"When the Lord renders to each his due reward, He does not consider the amount given but the amount left."

St. Theophylact

The Explanation of the Holy Gospel of Luke
page 269



HOME ACTIVITY #18

The Rich Family in Church - Read and discuss this story with your family in relation to "Jesus Cleanses the Temple" and "The Widow's Two Mites." *What can our family do this Lent to give sacrificially?*



JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

Luke 19:45-48



Jesus protested against the commercialization of the Temple.

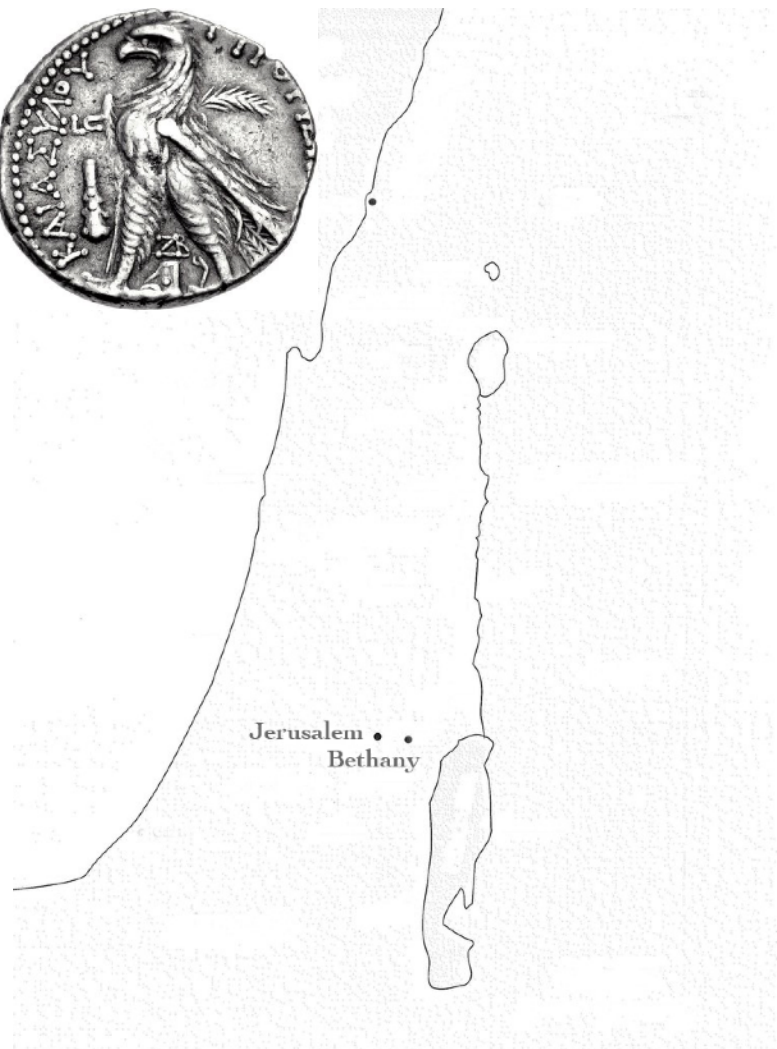
The moneychangers, merchants, and chief priests had made the Temple a place of robbery instead of a place of prayer to God.

Find Tyre on your classroom map and then label it on your map.

At the time of Jesus, there were a lot of variations between the same coins - size, weight, and the purity of the metal. The silver shekel of Tyre was different though. They were consistently 94% pure silver and the required coin to use at the Temple. You would have to go to the money changers to get your silver shekel and then be able to pay your Temple tax or to purchase animals from the merchants at the Temple. Unfortunately, the moneychangers and merchants were not being honest with the people who came to the Temple and cheated



The 30 pieces of silver paid to _____ would have been the silver shekel of Tyre.





INTERIOR ARRANGEMENT OF THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM

