

**Jesus Cleanses the Temple
(3rd Sunday of Lent, Year B)**

Exodus 20:1-17—The Ten Commandments

1. Ten Commandments: “God spoke all these words” (20:1)
2. Mount Sinai: God calls Israel to be “holy” or “set apart” (Hebrew *qadosh*)
3. Ten Commandments about “Holiness/Sanctity” or things that are “Set apart”

Tablet 1: Love of God

1. Sanctity of God
2. Sanctity of Divine Name
3. Sanctity of Time

Tablet 2: Love of Neighbor

4. Sanctity of Fatherhood and Motherhood
5. Sanctity of Life
6. Sanctity of Marriage
7. Sanctity of Property
8. Sanctity of Speech/the Truth
9. Sanctity of another’s Spouse
10. Sanctity of another’s Property

Psalm 19—Lord, You Have the Words of Everlasting Life

1. The “Law” (Hebrew *Torah*) = “perfect, reviving the soul” (v. 7)
2. The “Precepts” = “right, rejoicing the heart” (v. 8)
3. The “Commands” = “pure, enlightening the eyes” (v. 8)
4. The “Ordinances” = “true, and righteous altogether” (v. 9)

1 Corinthians 1:22-25—The Stumbling Block of Christ Crucified

1. Christ Crucified: “the power and wisdom of God” (1:25)

John 2:13-25—Jesus Cleanses the Temple

1. The Passover: “was at hand” = in the Springtime, ca. March/April (=Eastertime) (2:1)
2. Money-Changers: providing sacrificial animals for pilgrims at Passover (1 million)
3. Jesus Drives Them Out: “my Father’s house” ≠ “a house of trade”
 - a. Holy Space: set apart (Hebrew *qadosh*) for worship
 - b. Psalm 69:9: “Zeal for your house consumes me”
4. The Response: “what *sign* do you have to show us for doing this?”
5. New Temple: “Destroy this temple and in *three days* I will raise it up” (2:19)
 - a. Sole place of sacrifice
 - b. Dwelling place of God on earth
6. Misunderstanding: they think he’s speaking of *Herod’s Temple*
 - a. “It has taken 46 years to build this temple”!
 - b. “He spoke about *the temple of his body*”

The Catechism on the Cleansing of the Temple

Jesus went up to the Temple as the privileged place of encounter with God. For him, the

Temple was the dwelling of his Father, a house of prayer, and *he was angered that its outer court had become a place of commerce*. He drove merchants out of it because of jealous love for his Father: “You shall not make my Father’s house a house of trade.” (CCC 584)

Questions for Discussion and Reflection (3rd Sunday of Lent, Year B)

1. Have you ever wondered why Jesus drove out the money-changers from the Temple? Where exactly were they in the Temple, what were they doing there, and why was it a problem? (cf. CCC 584)

2. What is the rationale behind the two tablets of the Ten Commandments? Why are these commandments in particular so important to Jesus’ dual command to love God and to love our neighbor?

3 Psalm 19 says that the Law of God “refreshes the soul.” Have you ever had that experience of being refreshed when you read the Scriptures?

For Further Study

1. Joel C. Elowsky, *John* (2 vols.; Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament IVa-b; Downers Grove: IVP, 2006), 98-106.