

# WEEKLY SERMON

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## What would Jesus do?

The question on the wristband may be a help in some situations. But a passage like today's gospel reading may make us wonder if it's always the right question to ask!

The scene is Passover, when God's people gathered in Jerusalem to remember God's rescuing of his people from Egypt.

Jesus is there with his disciples. When he found what was happening in the temple, that his 'Father's house' has become a trading house (v16), he reacted in a shocking way.

What is happening here?

The disciples were no doubt as shocked as everyone else to see tables overturned, and sheep and cattle driven out with a homemade whip.

But as they thought about what they were witnessing, they remembered the Scriptures.

His disciples remembered that it is written: "Zeal for your house will consume me." v17

The quotation is from Psalm 69. It's a psalm that speaks of God's king being hated because of his concern for what's happening in God's temple.

And the king takes that very personally: "the insults of those who insult you fall on me" (Psalm 69:9)

The focus of Jesus' anger is the temple, the place where God has chosen to make his presence known in the midst of his people, the place of meeting God through sacrifice and hearing God's word taught.

And the anger of Jesus raises questions: Who does he think he is? What authority does he have? Jesus replies: 'Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days' v19.

What the Jews didn't understand was that he was speaking of his death and resurrection.

Jesus anticipates a coming Passover feast where he would lay down his own life to provide the 'full, perfect and sufficient sacrifice' of his own body.

And gloriously he would be 'raised' to life as confirmation of his authority.

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The place where God lives, the place from where God rules, the place where God offers forgiveness is no longer the bricks and mortar of the temple.

Jesus is saying: 'I am the temple of God', the place of meeting between God and his people. His body destroyed and then raised (v19) spells the end of the sacrificial system.

How do we meet with God today? Not through a building nor by offering sacrifices but by coming to Jesus, trusting in his once-for-all sacrifice, and being united to him in his death and resurrection.

**Rev Canon Andrew Raynes**