

3rd Sunday in Lent March 4, 2018

Year B – the Gospel of Mark

LUTHERAN

LIVING THE ^ LECTIONARY

*A weekly study of the Scriptures for the coming Sunday since May 4, 2014.
An opportunity to make Sunday worship more meaningful and to make the
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March 1, 2018 (Thursdays at 10:00 AM)

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Road, Parma, OH 44134

Presented as a part of the bible study/worship at a weekday service (currently on Fridays at 7:00pm) in a house church setting, bi-weekly at an assisted living site, St. Philip Lutheran Church, Cleveland (First Sunday of the month at 11:00am) and used by Lutherans in Africa. Contact puritaspastor@hotmail.com for details.



<https://www.pinterest.com/pin/517491813423832689/>

Hymn of the Day

Lutheran Service Book (LSB) 823/824 The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) 500

“May God bestow on us his grace”

F. Samuel Janzow (translator of this hymn in [Lutheran Worship](#)) was Professor of English at Concordia University Chicago from 1954 to 1980. Concordia University Chicago was originally called Concordia Teacher's College, River Forest. The current hymns were both translated by [Richard Massie, 1800-87](#), but are sung to different melodies. The melody for LSB 823 matches TLH 500.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4cC9-bbAQk> A piano introduction to the melody for 823.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RQZso1_X7E4 As it appears in TLH as hymn 500.

Commentaries have been chosen because the author has written in a way that compliments the reading. Not all of the commentaries are from Lutheran sources. They have been edited for length and in some cases for additional content that is not in keeping with a Lutheran understanding of Scripture. Links are provided for those who wish to read the entire commentary.

The Holy Bible, [English Standard Version \(ESV\)](#) Copyright © 2001 by
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Exodus 20:1-17; Revised Common Lectionary (RCL), the same reading (*Next week: Numbers 21:4-9; RCL, the same reading*)

"Many of our customers were surprised to learn that there ARE two different Christian traditions for numbering the commandments! Usually, our Lutheran customers never knew they were different from their other Reformed brothers and sisters...until they use our Ten Commandments CD with their kids (Many never notice, too.)

The "Protestant-Orthodox-Reformed" numbering tradition separates "you shall have no other gods..." and "you shall not make any graven images" into TWO separate commandments (1 and 2). And it combines the "do not covet neighbor's wife" with "do not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor" into one commandment (the 10th).

The Roman Catholic Church and most Lutheran churches, following Saint Augustine, do the exact opposite. They combine "no other gods" with "no graven images" into the first commandment, and split "covet wife" and "covet neighbors..." into two commandments...

The problem of commandment numbering goes far back in history..."
<http://www.sundaysoftware.com/ten/number.htm> *Visit the website to see a more complete history and several charts that show parallel versions.*

The Ten Commandments

20 And God spoke all these words, saying,

²“I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

³“**You shall** have no other gods before^[a] me.

⁴“**You shall** not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. ⁵You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and

the fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶but showing steadfast love to thousands^[b] of those who love me and keep my commandments.

⁷“**You shall** not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain.

⁸“**Remember** the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. ⁹Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, ¹⁰but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates.

¹¹For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

¹²“**Honor** your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.

¹³“**You shall not** murder.^[c]

¹⁴“**You shall not** commit adultery.

¹⁵“**You shall not** steal.

¹⁶“**You shall not** bear false witness against your neighbor.

¹⁷“**You shall not** covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's.”

- a. [Exodus 20:3](#) Or *besides*
- b. [Exodus 20:6](#) Or *to the thousandth generation*
- c. [Exodus 20:13](#) The Hebrew word also covers causing human death through carelessness or negligence

“The text for this morning is a very small subject-the Ten Commandments. Why, with the ten minute limit set for chapel sermons, I can spend a whole minute on each of the commandments...

What usually happens is that we lump all the commandments into the one word "Law," and then we say about that one word: "I don't like it; I want only the Gospel." The result is that we never get around to looking at what the Ten Commandments actually say. In so doing we demonstrate that we are hopelessly confused about *both* Law and Gospel.

The Ten Commandments were given within the context of grace. Prior to giving them, God had already chosen Israel as his people. He had already tucked them away as his precious possession. He had chosen them by grace from the time of Abraham... When Moses could not believe how God could forgive the people for making the golden calf, God showed himself to Moses as "a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..."

Violations of the Ten Commandments are a terrible thing. It was a problem so acute that God marshaled all the forces of heaven and earth to cure the problem. It took the Son of God himself to live the beautiful life we could not live, as he did the will of his Father. It took the Son of God himself to pour out his lifeblood on the cross-a terrible price for a beautiful righteousness..."

<http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/bollhagenchapelsermon.pdf> Dr. James Bollhagen is Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology, (Old Testament) at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana.

Psalm 19; RCL, the same reading (*Psalm 107:1-9; RCL, Psalm 107:1-3, 17-22*)

“It was a beautiful September day in Iowa and a group of students had gathered on one of the hills near the college.

The event was the regular Sunday evening meeting of the Lutheran Student Association (LSA). The LSA met outside during the fall, taking advantage of the beauty of Decorah until the weather turned cold. I attended the sessions regularly, partly because the dining hall was closed on Sunday evening and food was available for 50 cents a plate, and also because I knew that a particular freshman woman was a faithful LSA participant.

The speaker for the evening was the college president. I remember him talking about the two books which told about God and creation. One book was the Bible which he held in his hand. He read from Psalm 19, “the heavens are telling the glory of God.” The other book, he said, was the book of nature. He paused and pointed at the red, green, and yellow trees surrounding us and at the Oneota River moving through the valley below. Those were the two books: the book of Scripture which used words to tell about God and creation and the book of nature which through its own beauty praised God. Such is my first memory of the psalm assigned for this Sunday.

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2297 **James Limburg**
Professor Emeritus of Old Testament, Luther Seminary, Saint Paul, Minn

The Law of the LORD Is Perfect

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David.

19 The heavens declare the glory of God,
and the sky above^[a] proclaims his handiwork.

² Day to day pours out speech,
and night to night reveals knowledge.

³ There is no speech, nor are there words,
whose voice is not heard.

⁴ Their voice^[b] goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.

In them he has set a tent for the sun,

⁵ which comes out like a bridegroom leaving his chamber,
and, like a strong man, runs its course with joy.

⁶ Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them,
and there is nothing hidden from its heat.

⁷ The law of the LORD is perfect,^[c]
reviving the soul;

the testimony of the LORD is sure,
making wise the simple;

⁸ the precepts of the LORD are right,
rejoicing the heart;

the commandment of the LORD is pure,
enlightening the eyes;

- ⁹ the fear of the LORD is clean,
enduring forever;
the rules^[d] of the LORD are true,
and righteous altogether.
- ¹⁰ More to be desired are they than gold,
even much fine gold;
sweeter also than honey
and drippings of the honeycomb.
- ¹¹ Moreover, by them is your servant warned;
in keeping them there is great reward.
- ¹² Who can discern his errors?
Declare me innocent from hidden faults.
- ¹³ Keep back your servant also from presumptuous sins;
let them not have dominion over me!
Then I shall be blameless,
and innocent of great transgression.
- ¹⁴ Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable in your sight,
O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

- a. [Psalm 19:1](#) Hebrew *the expanse*; compare [Genesis 1:6–8](#)
- b. [Psalm 19:4](#) Or *Their measuring line*
- c. [Psalm 19:7](#) Or *blameless*
- d. [Psalm 19:9](#) Or *just decrees*

Psalm 19 offers plenty of useful avenues of engagement. Indeed, it presents the interpreter with an embarrassment of options.

The Psalm touches on a number of major biblical themes -- creation, law, sin, forgiveness, and ethical conduct among them -- and also offers a rich set of imagery and well-known language on which to draw. The preacher will be well-advised to focus on a selection or combination of these themes according to the needs and situation of the congregation.

Whatever themes or images are emphasized, however, the overall structure and movement of the Psalm offer a solid pattern for exposition.

There are three clear sections of the Psalm:

Verses One through Six

Here the Psalmist offers a vivid description of the glories of creation, focused particularly on the heavens. According to the text, the orderly succession of day and night offer mute but eloquent testimony to the power of the God who has created and continues to maintain them. The daily progress of the sun also illustrates this power. While some of the neighboring cultures viewed the sun as either divine in itself or at least a visible manifestation of a god's presence, the Psalmist sees its movement across the sky as evidence of the remarkable might of the One who could and did arrange and regulate such a spectacle.

Verses Seven through Ten

The focus of the Psalm switches abruptly from God's creation to God's *torah* (law, instruction). This *torah* is praised repeatedly, whether it is referred to as "commandment," "precepts," "decrees," or any of the other various terms deployed here...

Verses Eleven through Fourteen

Recognizing all of the virtues of *torah*, the Psalmist now turns specifically to its value as a guide to right conduct. At first glance, the ethical consequence of receiving *torah* seems straightforward: if one keeps the law, great reward will result. If one does not, the consequences alluded to in the line "by them is your servant warned" would instead come into play. The difficulty, as the Psalmist goes on to point out, is that one does not always even realize when one has transgressed the law. Thus, the Psalm concludes with a series of pleas to God for forgiveness of unconscious sin, for protection against evil influences, and for the acceptability to God, deserved or otherwise, of the Psalmist's words and thoughts...

This text is a celebration of three great gifts of God: creation, *torah*, and forgiveness. Its reading and interpretation can and should summon the people of God to join in, giving thanks for the particular ways these gifts have been manifest in their lives and the life of their community. Such a celebration is appropriate for any congregation, and will surely be found acceptable in God's sight.

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1144 **Matthew Stith**
Pastor Round Hill Presbyterian Church Elizabeth, Pa

I Corinthians 1:18-31; RCL, I Corinthians 1: 18-25 (*Ephesians 2:1-10; RCL, the same reading*)

"For the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are dying" (v. 18a). This verse introduces the rest of this chapter, where Paul contrasts the wisdom of the world (human wisdom) with the wisdom of God, which finds its highest expression in the apparent foolishness of the cross of Christ. For those who pride themselves on their own wisdom, the cross appears to be foolishness—nonsense. Why would God send his Son to die on a cross? By the standards of human wisdom, it makes no sense! But human wisdom, attractive as it might seem on the surface, has no saving power..."

<https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/1-corinthians-118-31/>

Christ the Wisdom and Power of God

¹⁸For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. ¹⁹For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Isaiah 29:14b

²⁰Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? ²¹For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, **it pleased God** through the folly of what we preach^[a] to save those who believe. ²²For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, ²³but we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, ²⁴but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. ²⁵For the

foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

²⁶For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards,^[b] not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. ²⁷But **God chose** what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; **God chose** what is weak in the world to shame the strong; ²⁸**God chose** what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, ²⁹so that no human being^[c] might boast in the presence of God. ³⁰And **because of him**^[d] you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, ³¹so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

- a. [1 Corinthians 1:21](#) Or the folly of preaching
- b. [1 Corinthians 1:26](#) Greek according to the flesh
- c. [1 Corinthians 1:29](#) Greek no flesh
- d. [1 Corinthians 1:30](#) Greek And from him

“C. F. W. Walther writes this about the word of the cross, “Following Christ’s death, the cross is now the only boat upon which even the greatest sinner can escape from the raging floods of his sins into the harbor of eternal salvation. It is a ladder ascending to heaven, upon which faith climbs confidently, as well as the key of heaven, with which the gates of paradise are opened. Once a sign of shame, the cross is now a sign of eternal honor and glory. Christians should never be ashamed of the cross. Instead, they should carry it secretly in their heart as their most precious treasure and they should carry it on their banner triumphantly throughout the world as a wonderful sign of the redemption of the world and as the dearest symbol of their holy religion, their faith, and their hope.”¹

<https://concordiatheology.org/2015/02/lent-3-%E2%80%A2-1-corinthians-118-31-%E2%80%A2-march-8-2015/>

“..The world is rejecting, and the church seems to be embarrassed by, the genuine Christian message. Because the world is impressed by things like power and wisdom. And the genuine Christian message—the message of the cross—comes across as “Weak Power and Foolish Wisdom.”

But then this is nothing new. St. Paul faced the same situation back in the first century that we face in the twenty-first: people rejecting the gospel because it seems weak and foolish, not very powerful, not very wise...

Signs of power, appeals to human wisdom—those are the things that will impress people, back then and still today. Power and wisdom. Let’s take power first. “Show us a sign, Jesus...” Of course, what was really behind this demand for a sign was that they didn’t like what Jesus was saying and doing. Jesus was exposing their greed and hypocrisy, overturning money-tables, and calling people to repentance. And his opponents didn’t like that. Thus the demand for a sign of power, in order to put Jesus on the spot, to test him and trap him, and to discount and dismiss what he was saying.

People still do that sort of thing today. They raise all kinds of smokescreens and put up all kinds of barriers, in order to keep Jesus at arm's length and under their control. They don't want that message of repentance to get too close. It makes them uncomfortable. So they make all kinds of excuses for not coming to church... But they all boil down to, in reality, people don't want Jesus to get too close...

And then there are people who are looking for wisdom. Human wisdom, that is. Something that appeals to their own ideas and opinions. Something that makes sense. Something that appeals to me, to my know-how or goals, or how to lead a better life. Something I can do, from the resources that are within me, to better my life. Something to make me happy. That's what people are looking for. Give me seven habits I can work on. Give me ten steps to success and prosperity in these tough economic times. Give me a DVD and a three-ring binder. That's what I want. Me in control. My needs, my desires, my goals. Steps I can master to make things better for me.

But the message of the cross doesn't offer that kind of wisdom, mere human wisdom. It sounds rather foolish, in fact...

Power and wisdom. Give us that or else we're not interested, that's what our society is saying. So what has the church said in response? "Fine. We'll junk that old sin-and-grace business, that forgiveness-of-sins stuff, or maybe we'll put it on the back burner and pay lip-service to it just a little bit." Take the cross down, whether literally or figuratively. Eliminate the blood talk, the poor miserable sinner talk—all that old, boring, irrelevant stuff. That's so last millennium.

Razzle-dazzle, church in the fast lane—that's what we'll give 'em! Felt needs, pep bands, and lots of programs. Lots and lots of programs. Keep the customers satisfied. Keep them entertained. Hey, at least it will keep the doors open and we won't go out of business. The cross? The cross . . . well, yeah, it's back there . . . somewhere. I forget...

But now I want to tell you why this church will continue to preach Christ and him crucified, every sermon, every service: Because this message of the cross is the one thing you need more than anything else, and you will not get it anywhere else...

There it is. That's the truth of the matter. The word of the cross, preaching Christ crucified—this is God's way of saving people. This is real wisdom, this is real power... "

<https://steadfastlutherans.org/2009/03/weak-power-and-foolish-wisdom-1-cor-118-31-by-pr-charles-henrickson/> Rev. Charles Henrickson is a 1990 graduate (M.Div.) of Concordia Seminary-St. Louis, where he also received an S.T.M. in Exegetical Theology (Old Testament concentration)

THE MARK CHALLENGE – And so, you begin Chapter 5.

“The Holy Gospel according to St. John, the 2nd Chapter”

John 2:13-22 (23-25); RCL, the same reading (*John 3:14-21; RCL, the same reading*)

“Any careful reader of John's Gospel will notice that his account varies from his synoptic cousins at a variety of points, few more significant than in today's reading. Rather than place Jesus' cleansing of the Temple at the end of Jesus' public ministry, as Matthew, Mark, and Luke do, John places it here at the beginning of the story.

Why? Because of distinct theological agendas. Keep in mind that the Gospels are confessions of faith from the first century rather than historical accounts of the twenty-first century. So each difference provides us with a clue to the distinct confession of faith the particular evangelist offers. In this case, the synoptic writers cast the disruption in the Temple as the final provocative act of Jesus that precipitates his arrest, trial, and crucifixion. John, however, uses this same scene to announce the inauguration of a new era, one in which the grace of God is no longer mediated or accessed through cultic sacrifice but instead is available to all who receive Jesus as God's Messiah..."

<http://www.davidlose.net/2015/03/lent-3-b-igniting-centrifugal-force/> David Lose

"...All four Gospels tell the story of the cleansing of the temple (see Matthew 21:12-17; Mark 11:15-19; Luke 19:45-48), but the Synoptics place it near the end of Jesus' life, and it provokes the chief priests and scribes to plot to kill him (Mark 14:10). John's Gospel places the cleansing at the beginning of Jesus' ministry, and the raising of Lazarus is the precipitating event for his trial and crucifixion (John 11-12). In John's view, Jesus' life was not taken from him, but he laid it down of his own accord (10:17-18).

There are three theories about the difference between John and the Synoptics with regard to the timing of this story:

- *Most scholars believe that the cleansing of the temple took place toward the end of Jesus' life, as reported in the Synoptics. It makes sense there as the precipitating incident for the crucifixion. This would also account for the abruptness of the transition from the Cana wedding story to the temple-cleansing story. It seems unlikely that Jesus could come from nowhere to cleanse the temple without stirring more significant opposition than John records. Also, the style of the Synoptics is quite different from the Gospel of John—the Synoptics emphasizing more the history of Jesus' life and John emphasizing more the theology behind his life. It would be more in character for John than for the Synoptics to move the story out of sequence, and it seems likely that he did so to establish important themes at the outset of his Gospel.*

- *Borchert says that John wanted to introduce a Passover theme and an emphasis on Jesus' death and resurrection early in his Gospel (Borchert, 161-162).*

- *Some scholars believe that John's sequence is correct and that the Synoptics moved the story to the end of Jesus' life to show why Jesus was crucified.*

- *Still others have suggested that there were two cleansings of the temple, but this theory has not met with widespread acceptance.*

Verse 12 provides a brief transition between the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee and the cleansing of the temple in Jerusalem of Judea. This transition shows Jesus, his mother, his brothers, and his disciples going to Capernaum (home base for Jesus' ministry) and spending a few days there.

<https://www.sermonwriter.com/biblical-commentary/john-213-22/>

"Any attempt to harmonize John's version of Jesus' demonstration in the temple in 2:13-22 with the Synoptic accounts (Matthew 21:12-13; Mark 11:15-18; Luke 19:45-46) risks missing John's theological "take" on this important moment in the life of Jesus.

In John, the temple scene makes a claim for Jesus' authority at the beginning of his ministry (in the Synoptics, it occurs near the end), an authority ultimately based in his identity as God's Son...)

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=1918 **Gilberto Ruiz**

Assistant Professor of Theology, Saint Anselm College, Manchester, NH

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

¹³ The Passover of the Jews was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple he found those who were selling oxen and sheep and pigeons, and the money-changers sitting there. ¹⁵ And making a whip of cords, he drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and oxen. And he poured out the coins of the money-changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ And he told those who sold the pigeons, **“Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a house of trade.”** ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it was written, “Zeal for your house will consume me.” ¹⁸ So the Jews said to him, “What sign do you show us for doing these things?” ¹⁹ Jesus answered them, **“Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”** ²⁰ The Jews then said, “It has taken forty-six years to build this temple,^[a] and will you raise it up in three days?” ²¹ But he was speaking about the temple of his body. ²² When therefore he was raised from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this, and they believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken.

Jesus Knows What Is in Man

²³ *Now when he was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many believed in his name when they saw the signs that he was doing. ²⁴ But Jesus on his part did not entrust himself to them, because he knew all people ²⁵ and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.*

a. [John 2:20](#) Or *This temple was built forty-six years ago*

“This is the Gospel of the Lord” **“Praise to You, O Christ”**

“Midway through Lent, pretty much every year, we clergy types have to look once again at an extremely odd story of Jesus taking a whip to the “Money Changers” in the Temple in Jerusalem...

But what exactly did he find that enraged him so? According to John, Jesus found two things: those who were “selling” and those who were “changing.” The sellers sold things like cattle, sheep, and doves for the offerings, and the changers changed money from international currency to local currency. Both were corrupt, and both were central to the economic idolatry that sustained the nation as a whole...

The sellers (tous pōlountas) were those who sold animals for the offerings made at the temple ... People were required to make sacrifices for a variety of festivals and rites. If you were wealthy you gave a large animal, like a cow or ox. If you were poor you gave doves or pigeons. However, to ensure “unblemished” animals, you were required to purchase your animals at the gate of the temple where the prices were higher than the country-side...To purchase one pair of doves at the temple was the equivalent of two days’ wages. But the doves had to be inspected for quality control just inside the temple, and if your recently purchased unblemished animals

were found to be in fact blemished, then you had to buy two more doves for the equivalent of 40 days' wages!

The money changers sat outside of the temple proper, in the "court of the gentiles." They bought and sold money as a part of the functioning of the general economy. Jerusalem, in fact, required a money changing industry because it was an international city that dealt in a number of currencies and people had to have a system by which they could buy and sell them. They used the money changers both for basic commerce and also for currency speculation...

However, the Money Changers were also corrupt. They would not only exaggerate the fees they had to charge for the transactions, they would also inflate the exchange rate. The result was that for a poor person, the Money Changer's share of the temple tax was about one day's wages and his share of the transaction from international to local currency was about a half-day's wages. And that was before they purchased their unblemished animals for sacrifice and then had to buy them again (at an enhanced price) because the inspector found a blemish or otherwise inadequate for the offering...

All told, a one day stay in Jerusalem during one of the three major festivals could cost between \$3,000 and \$4,000 dollars in contemporary value, and Jews were required to attend at least one of them each year. Josephus estimated that up to 2.25 million people visited Jerusalem during Passover, which would generate the equivalent of hundreds of millions of dollars. The money-changers opened their stalls in the country towns a month before the feast and then moved them to the temple by the time of the first arrivals. While all of this may appear immoral, none of it was illegal. They were business men operating within the law..."

<http://jubileejusticeeconomics.blogspot.com/2015/03/jesus-and-international-exchange.html>

"Stan Duncan is the chair of the Jubilee Justice Network, a faith and justice ministry of the United Church of Christ"

"...In spite of their dawning comprehension of perils that surround Jesus, Son of God, King of Israel (1:49), the disciples are no more able than the "Jews" to grasp fully Jesus' statement in verse 19. (And remember, the disciples themselves, like Jesus, are also Jews). Jesus offers a sign so outrageous and so incomprehensible; it is not until after his resurrection that his disciples understand what he has just said. Jesus seems to speak of the temple, but does not. Or does he?

By the time of John's gospel, the temple in Jerusalem has been cast down, but Jesus has been raised from the dead. Is he the temple instead, the one God has sent to take the place of the temple? Indeed it would seem so, given Jesus' statement in John 4:20-23. The temple itself is not raised again. But when the narrator informs us that Jesus is raised in three days, we see that the old temple will no longer matter to Christians...

First, we are informed that Jesus had a particular meaning in mind not understood by his contemporary audience, a meaning that makes Jesus' prophecy abundantly true. Second, we are reassured that the disciples come to understand this when their experience catches up to that of the readers. That is, when the disciples find out what the narrator and his audience already knows, that Jesus will both die and be raised in three days, they too will look back at this prediction in verse 19 and fully understand it...

This passage lays before us a promise that if we pay attention and remember, then Scripture and its Lord will be revealed as true and reliable. However mysterious and incomprehensible Jesus' word or deeds may be in the present, to engage with belief and keep

Scripture in mind eventually will bring disciples to the place where things come together and belief is created.

https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=261 **Sarah Henrich**

Professor Emeritus of New Testament, Luther Seminary, St. Paul, MN

Want to dig deep into the nuances of vocabulary this week? Visit:

<http://leftbehindandlovingit.blogspot.com/2015/03/liberating-temple.html>



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