

Having inspected the temple on the previous day (11:11), Jesus now returns to set it right. He assails the bustling currency exchange and pigeon market he finds there. Why is the Lord so angry? Is it the greed on display? He normally has compassion for human weaknesses (but always seeking repentance). Has the loud commerce profaned His father's house? This is more likely except for one detail. The coin tables and pigeon cages were in the outer court of the Gentiles, not in the sacred precincts of the inner temple.

But look at the quote in verse 17: *"Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations'?"* The full quote from Isaiah 56:6-8 is:

*"And the foreigners who join themselves to the Lord ... these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; **for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples.**"*

**Questions:**

1. Why does Jesus do the things He does in verse 15?
2. What Old Testament scriptures is the Lord quoting in verse 17?
3. Why do the scribes and chief priests want to destroy the Lord in verse 18?
4. What do we learn from verses 20 and 21?
5. What are the things the Lord is teaching about faith and prayer in verses 22-26?

*The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, "I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered."*

The temple was to be a testimony to all the nations, not just the nation of Israel. In Isaiah 49:6 the Lord declares *"I will make you as a light for the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth."* The jealous children of Israel have forgotten this promise. In the place set out for the Gentiles to gather, on the threshold of the Most Holy Place, what do they see? Not God's glory but a buzzing arena of self enrichment.

The Lord has not forgotten the promise to the Gentiles. In His future kingdom they will come, but not to a temple. *And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb. **By its light will the nations walk, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it*** (Revelation 21:22-24).

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6. Do the questions the chief priests and scribes ask the Lord in verse 28 show the attitude they had in verse 18? If so, how?
7. How could the Lord's question to the chief priests and scribes show them what was in their own hearts?
8. Should these men have discussed among themselves in verse 31? Why or why not?
9. Why do the chief priests and scribes avoid answering the Lord's question?
10. In the following parable, identify who or what the various parts of it represent:
  - The man (verse 1):
  - The vineyard (verse 1):
  - The hedge (verse 1):
  - The tenants or husbandmen (verse 1):
  - The servants (verses 2-5):
  - The son (verses 6-8):
11. What Old Testament scripture is the Lord quoting in verses 10-11?