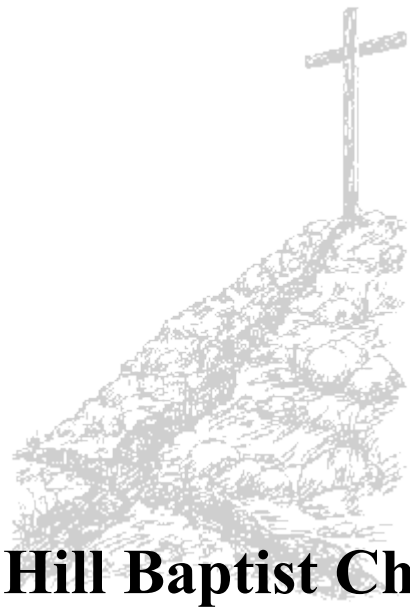


# Jesus Went Up To Jerusalem

John 2:13-22



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### **FOCAL Read Responsively** (John 2:13-22 KJV)

"And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, {14} **And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: {15} And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables {16} And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. {17} And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. {18} Then answered the Jews and said unto him, What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things? {19} Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. {20} Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? {21} But he spake of the temple of his body. {22} When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said."**

**Opening Prayer:** Who is like You, O Lord? To Whom can we compare You? When I look up to Heaven I see stars - more than I can count. The Bible says that You made each one of them, and You know each one and call them by name<sup>a</sup>. You, dear Lord, are our Creator, the Maker of all. Just as You hold the stars in the palm of Your hand, You hold all who believe in You in a grasp as sure as You are forever. You, dear Lord, have said<sup>b</sup> that "My sheep recognize my voice; I know them, and they follow me." Because You know us - because we have believed in You - You have

a Isaiah 40:25-26, 28

b John 10:27-30

promised that you have given us eternal life. We will never perish. No one will ever take us from You, dear Jesus! Both You and the Father agree on this, and we cherish this promise more than air itself. You, dear Lord, remain forever. Please open the eyes of all in this place today to Your presence. If we wish to have lives that matter for all eternity, we must come to You, Eternal God, in faith. Help us to see this clearly. We pray now, dear Jesus, for those who do not know You as Savior, who do not rejoice when they think of You. Oh Precious Holy Spirit, please open their eyes while there is yet time. Life is short, and we do not know when You will call us home. Save with a mighty Hand, we pray, while there is yet time. Oh God our Father, if there are any that after having made the profession of religion have gone astray by any form of sin, Lord, please restore them. If they have fallen by strong drink, if they have fallen by unchastity, if they have fallen by dishonesty; if, in any way, they have stained their garments, Oh! that Thy mighty grace might bring them back and put them yet among the children. The wages of sin leads to death, dear Lord. Please touch hearts and draw Thy children away from the viper's hole! We ask of Thee, dear Father, please perfect Thy work within our hearts. We are saved, but we would be saved from sin of every form and degree; from sins that lie within, and we are scarcely aware that they are there. If we have any pride of which we are not conscious, any unbelief of which we are not aware, if there is a clinging to the creature, a form of idolatry which we have not yet perceived, we pray Thee, Lord, to search us as with candles till Thou dost spy out the evil and then put it away. "Create in us a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within us". In Jesus precious name we pray, and all who believe agree together on this. **And the people said, Amen!**<sup>c</sup>

We read:

**FOCAL** (John 2:13-22 KJV) "And **the Jews' passover was at hand,**

<sup>c</sup> with assistance from C.H. Spurgeon's prayers - praise Jesus!

Our Lord had just spent a few days in Capernaum with His earthly mother and brothers. **Matthew Henry** said:

"[Capernaum] ... was a large and populous city, about a day's journey from Cana; it is called his own city (Matthew 9:1), because he made it his head-quarters in Galilee, and what little rest he had was there."

Following a very brief rest in Capernaum Jesus went north to Jerusalem to celebrate the first of four *Passover celebrations* the Father would allow Him during His first coming. On the *fourth Passover* Jesus would be hanging on the Cross paying for our sins.

When Jesus got to Jerusalem and entered the Temple the Bible says that He

**FOCAL** (John 2:14-15 KJV) "... found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables.."

By the way, this was *not* the first time that Jesus would see such a thing. When He entered Jerusalem on the day we call *Palm Sunday*, just prior to the *fourth Passover* where He would suffer for we who believe, we see that Jesus did the nearly the *same thing*:

**Matthew 21:12-13 (HCSB)**<sup>1</sup> "Jesus went into the temple complex and drove out all those buying and

<sup>1</sup> Holman Christian Standard Bible Copyright © 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003 by Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville Tennessee. All rights reserved.

**selling in the temple. He overturned the money changers' tables and the chairs of those selling doves. And He said to them, "It is written, My house will be called a house of prayer. But you are making it a den of thieves! "**

The difference between our Lord's *first* and *last purging of the Temple* is merely a matter of degree. In the purging during His *first Passover* He made a whip to chase people out of the Temple, whereas in the *fourth Passover* no whip is mentioned. But no matter. In both of these incidents we see that our Lord *was angry* and our Lord *took action* against these moneychangers. Let's examine the Scripture.

### **1. The People Had Forgotten Salvation Is By Faith Alone**

There was a time in her history when Israel, God's Chosen people, were held in slavery by an unbelieving and cruel nation called Egypt. Though father Joseph entered Egypt many years before, and though God used Egypt to bless His people, the Egyptians became cruel and enslaved Israel. So God raised up a man named Moses, a man that should have died at childbirth but for the *Grace of God*, and God gave that man *mighty power* out of His abundance of Grace. God in Grace stood behind Moses, punishing Egypt with *plague after plague* while demanding that Pharaoh "let My people go". Pharaoh refused time after time until God finally had had enough.

God told Moses to tell Israel that the *Death Angel* was coming, and that on a certain night that Angel would

come and *kill the firstborn* of every family *not under the Blood*. God told the Israelite in

**Exodus 12:3-7<sup>2</sup> (NIV) Tell the whole community of Israel that on the tenth day of this month each man is to take a lamb for his family, one for each household. If any household is too small for a whole lamb, they must share one with their nearest neighbor, having taken into account the number of people there are. You are to determine the amount of lamb needed in accordance with what each person will eat. The animals you choose must be year-old males without defect, and you may take them from the sheep or the goats. Take care of them until the fourteenth day of the month, when all the people of the community of Israel must slaughter them at twilight. Then they are to take some of the blood and put it on the sides and tops of the door frames of the houses where they eat the lambs."**

These were *very clear* instructions. During the **Shabbat HaGadol** - the Sabbath preceding Passover - the head of the family was to take a lamb **without defect** and, after keeping the animal for *four days with the family* the animal was to be killed and its blood placed on the **door frames of the houses**. At the Internet site **hebrew4christians.com** we read:

"[The lamb was kept for four days] ... **to fulfill the instructions**

2 New International Version, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society, NIV at IBS International Bible Society NIV at Zondervan

given in Exodus 12 that the lamb for Passover be without spot or blemish (*tamim*). Interestingly, this period of time allowed time for each family to become personally attached to their lamb, so that it would no longer simply be “a lamb” (Ex. 12:3) but rather their lamb” (Ex. 12:5). ... On the afternoon of the Nisan 14 the lambs were to be publicly sacrificed by the “whole assembly” (Ex. 12:6). And even though the entire nation was responsible for the death of the lambs, each family was to apply the blood of their personal lamb upon the door post as a sign of their faith in the Lord (Ex. 12:7).”

The *Passover* was instituted by God as a *memorial to His Grace*. Those of Israel who did as God asked, who took a lamb without spot or blemish and, after keeping it close for four days, *sacrificed that animal* - this family was spared the terrible fate of the Egyptian. When the *Death Angel* came it saw the *Blood of the Lamb* and, seeing that Blood, *passed over* that household. Death was averted by the Blood.

This was *entirely a matter of Grace*. The lamb without spot or blemish symbolized Jesus Christ the One that John the Baptist called:

**John 1:29<sup>2</sup> (NIV) "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!"**

The Passover that led to Israel's freedom from Egypt - an act of Grace - was a wonderful Old Testament illustration of what Christ our Redeemer would do for us on Calvary. We sing that song:

**Christ our Redeemer died on the cross,**

**Died for the sinner, paid all his due.  
All who receive Him need never fear,  
Yes, He will pass, will pass over you.**

**Refrain**

**When I see the blood, when I see the blood,  
When I see the blood, I will pass, I will pass over you<sup>3</sup>.**

What Israel did not *add to nor earn their salvation*. They believed God, believed Christ, and believing in Him *put that Blood on the door posts of their houses*. Those who believed and applied the Blood lived - those who failed to believe in the Blood died. Good people or bad people, morally pure or immoral, it made no difference. If you believed and killed the Lamb, placing its blood on your house, you were spared.

When Jesus entered the Temple that day, He entered *as an obedient Jew would enter* to sacrifice a lamb in obedience to God's Law. Though the Passover was instituted by God *prior to the giving of the Law on Mount Sinai*, the Passover was written into the Law by God through Moses. The Passover was an institution that *every Jew* had to obey. It was an institution that *emphasized the Grace of God*, and it was an institution that reminded all who participated in it that *salvation is by Grace alone through the Blood*.

So when Jesus went into the Temple to honor the Grace of God as any Jew would do, and when He found *people selling animals in he Temple* in direct disobedience to God's Grace - then He acted. We see

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3 *When I See The Blood*, John G. Foote & E. A. H

**FOCAL** (John 2:14-15 KJV) "[Jesus] found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: {15} And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables "

I want you to see this in your mind's eye, because this is a beautiful illustration of how God looks at our *feeble works of righteousness*. Jesus walked in the Temple and, walking through the **Court of The Gentiles** He sees all these animals and merchants *defiling God's Temple*. Now hear me well, Believer! It was not a defilement to have the animals in the Temple! Animals were brought in the Temple to be sacrificed, so I don't want you to think that just having an animal in the Temple defiled it. No Beloved, animals would be brought to the Temple, and their Blood shed for each family of believers. What Jesus saw when He saw these merchants was people who had tried to *circumvent what the Passover taught*. You see, the *Lamb without blemish* was supposed to be found *four days* before it was to be sacrificed. That Lamb was to be brought into the family, *personally* attended to and watched over. As we read before, this was **no longer just a lamb - it was The Lamb**. This Lamb was known *personally* by the family, sacrificed *personally* by the sinner, and believed on *personally* by the saint.

Just as you cannot walk into Church and buy your salvation by putting money on the offering plate, or by being baptized, or by doing so called good works, neither can you walk into the Temple and purchase an *off the*

*rack lamb* and be saved. Such a thing smacks of *working your way to God's Heaven*, and such a thing is abominable to Christ.

Jesus looked around the Temple Courtyard and saw the *litter* of human *good works* all over the ground.

**Matthew Henry** says:

"... He made a scourge of small cords, which probably they had led their sheep and oxen with, and thrown them away upon the ground, whence Christ gathered them. .."

The human works of righteousness - the bridles, the ropes, the cords that were used to lead these animals into the House of God were what the Lord used to *condemn the very users*. Men believe that they can *work their way to God* by a variety of means.

- Some believe that they can *purchase* their way in to Heaven by giving to charity. Yet didn't Jesus tell the *rich young ruler* in **Luke 18:22**<sup>1</sup> not only **sell all that you have and distribute it to the poor**, but also **come, follow Me**. Heaven looks favorably on those who truly give to charity out of a heart of love. But unless you do that latter part and **follow Jesus** your works are abominations that will lead to your condemnation. Remember that you *must personally know the Passover Lamb* before His sacrifice can be applied to your life!

- Some believe that they can purchase their way in to Heaven by *good works*. But was it not the *dregs of these seemingly good works that lay on the Temple floor* that became the very whip by which unrepentant people were chased from God's House? Jesus said

**FOCAL** (John 2:16 KJV) "... make not my Father's house an house of merchandise."

What you do before God in His presence - whether in the Temple or in this Church - will one day come back to either bless you or to curse you. If you believe that your *mere works of righteousness* will cause you to enter Heaven one day, then heed the Apostle's warning:

Romans 9:30-33<sup>1</sup> (HCSB) "... **Gentiles, who did not pursue righteousness, have obtained righteousness—namely the righteousness that comes from faith.** But Israel, pursuing the law for righteousness, has not achieved the law. Why is that? Because they did not pursue it by faith, but as if it were by works. They stumbled over the stumbling stone. As it is written: Look! I am putting a stone in Zion to stumble over, and a rock to trip over, yet **the one who believes on [Jesus] will not be put to shame.**"

and again,

Galatians 2:16<sup>2</sup> (NIV) "**know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ.** So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because **by observing the law no one will be**

**justified.**"

What saved the Jew? Faith in Christ our Savior! What saves the Gentile? Faith in Christ, the Lamb of God Who taketh away the sins of the world! You cannot **make the Father's House a house of merchandise** and get into the *Heavenly House of God*".

**2. Since Salvation Is By Faith Alone In Christ, Then Any Work Apart From Christ Is An Abomination Before God**

**FOCAL** (John 2:16-17 KJV) "... [He] said ... Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise. {17} And his disciples remembered that it was written, The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. "

When Jesus chased the money changers - the *false workers of righteousness* - out of God's House (the Temple), the disciples remembered a passage from Psalm 69:9:

"For **the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up;** and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."

The Messiah, Jesus Christ, is the One Who controls *entrance into God's Heaven*. Jesus called the Temple of God **My Father's house** in **verse 16** of our text - but do you know that the phrase **Father's House** applies *not only to the Temple of God*, but also to the Church that Jesus died for. The Apostle Paul called the Church a **spiritual house** in ...

1 Timothy 3:15<sup>1</sup>(HCSB) "... [I have written] so that you will know how people ought to act **in God's household, which is the church of the living God,** the pillar and foundation of the truth.

You see Beloved, God's **household** is God's **Church** - that is, those who are saved by faith in Christ will one day *be with God in Heaven*. It is the work of faith that saves. There are a number of people who believe that - when we stand at Heaven's gate - that it will be Saint Peter that allows us entrance or who sends us to Hell. This is a lie! It is Christ our Redeemer Who **zealously guards the House of God**. It is Christ our Redeemer Who allows us entrance into Heaven or Hell. If you have not accepted Christ as Savior, if you do not have a relationship by faith with the Lamb of God, if you have not *kept that Lamb personally in your house from the 10th of Nisan to the Day of the Passover* then your offering will be as rejected in God's Heavenly Household as it was rejected by Christ that fateful day in the Temple. You must be a spiritual stone in Christ's Church if you expect to get into Christ's Heaven.

When the ancient Jew went to Jerusalem to offer a lamb without blemish at the Temple, the lamb represented Christ and the Temple represented the House of God, Heaven itself. The priest was supposed to sacrifice the Lamb without blemish for the family that brought it. This act of faith saved the Israelite. It was not works, but *faith in Christ* that saves. This truth, Beloved, has not changed! We read in

(Hebrews 10:19-22 KJV) "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to **enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;** And having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

It is faith in Christ that saves the believer from eternal punishment, and it is faith in Him that must be fixed to *any work* that we do for God. Again heeding the Apostle's words we read:

(1 Peter 2:5 KJV) "Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to **offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.**"

Any work apart from Christ is *an abomination*, because any work apart from Christ is *apart from faith*. What is sin? Sin is *unbelief*, a failure to believe in Christ! We read:

(Romans 14:23 KJV) "And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for **whatsoever is not of faith is sin.**"

and again,

**(John 16:9 KJV)** "[the Holy Spirit will convict] of sin, because they [the unbeliever] believe not on me;"

A failure to believe in Christ is what causes lost salvation, lost blessing, and eternal punishment. The Bible says...

**(1 Samuel 16:7 KJV)** "... the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."

God looks at the heart. He knows what you're thinking today, and knows whether you are here to worship Him or merely to fulfill some *ritual*. If you are here merely to fulfill some ritual, remember how our Lord Jesus responded and repent! God is in this place and knows your heart, even though I do not.

The Jews were, needless to say, *very angry* with Jesus for chasing them out of the Temple. They asked ..

**FOCAL** (John 2:18 KJV) "...What sign showest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things?"

*by what authority do you do these things?* You see, these money changers had paid the Sadducees and the Pharisees for the "right" to be in the Temple selling sacrifices. What right did Jesus have to come into the Temple - a place administered by God's Tribe of Levi - and overturn a system that had been in place for years? What did our Lord answer?

**FOCAL** (John 2:19-20 KJV) "... destroy this temple,

and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? {21} But he spake of the temple of his body."

Jesus Christ, the **Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world**, would not be like those lambs slain during the Jew's Passover. Those lambs, purchased and kept for four days without spot or blemish, once sacrificed were *gone forever*. But Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, would be sacrificed *during the fourth Passover following His baptism*. He would suffer a cruel and terrible death, taking the sin of all who believe on Him on Himself. As the Scripture says:

**(Isaiah 53:5-6 KJV)** "But **he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. {6} All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."**

He did the work of salvation on the Cross of Calvary. But He did not, like the Temple sheep, stay dead. He rose again on the third day. All who believe on Him shall be saved, but those who believe not *shall be cursed* - and in fact, are *cursed already*.

Since salvation is by faith in Christ alone, any work done *apart from faith* is a cursed work. The life hid in Christ works for Christ, for the Risen Savior lives in those

whom He has saved. A few final illustrations and then I shall close.

Some of you say that you believe, yet your actions speak only of unbelief. When Israel believed God, all who believed went out, found a Lamb without spot or blemish, then sacrificed that Lamb. They then took the Blood and put it on the door posts of their houses. Their work did not save them, but their faith in God saved them.

Whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

The person who *professes* Christ and yet does not *follow God* in their lives is saved *in name only*. That dear preacher C.H. Spurgeon said:

"A converted Jew, coming to London to visit a friend, set out on Sunday morning to find a place of Christian worship and he chanced to enter the chapel of this eminent divine. When he came back he said that he feared he had made a mistake—he had turned into a building which he hoped was a Christian place of assembly, but as he had not heard the name of Jesus all the morning, he thought, perhaps, he had fallen in with some other religionists. I fear that many modern sermons might just as fairly have been delivered in a Muslim mosque as in a Christian Church! We have too many preachers of whom we might complain, "they have taken away my Lord and I know not where they have laid Him." **Christianity without Christ is a strange thing, indeed. ... Only advertise it all over London, Mr. Baker, that you are making bread without flour—put it in every paper, "Bread without flour"—and you may soon shut up your shop, for your customers will hurry off to other bakers! Somehow there is a strange prejudice in people's minds in favor of bread made with flour and there is also an unaccountable prejudice in the**

**human mind which makes men think that if there is a Gospel, it must have Christ in it. ... If justification by faith is not set in the very forefront in the full blaze of light, nothing can be accomplished! Without Christ in the doctrine you shall do nothing!**<sup>4</sup>

True salvation comes when the heart of faith clings to the Blood. If you expect to *rise again* one day then you must *believe on Him Who rose again*. If you believe on Him then you will love Him, and if you love Him you will follow Him. If you follow *mere works* without Him, then you will find yourself standing in that place of terror on judgment day. Your part will be that *Lake of Fire*, and the very thing that will put you in that Lake will be **your works of unbelief**. We read:

**(Revelation 20:13 KJV) "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."**

What caused this awful final judgment? It was unbelief. Just as Egypt failed to believe in the Blood, and failed to place the Blood on their door posts, those who will not come to Christ stand in that same frightful place. The Egyptian lost their firstborn children because of unbelief. Listen Beloved, **Satan's firstborn is unbelief**, and unbelief will one day be cast - along with the unbeliever - into the Lake of Fire. Unbelief is the **hand that sharpens the murderers knife**. The ones who think, "Surely my sins are not so bad, and my works apart from

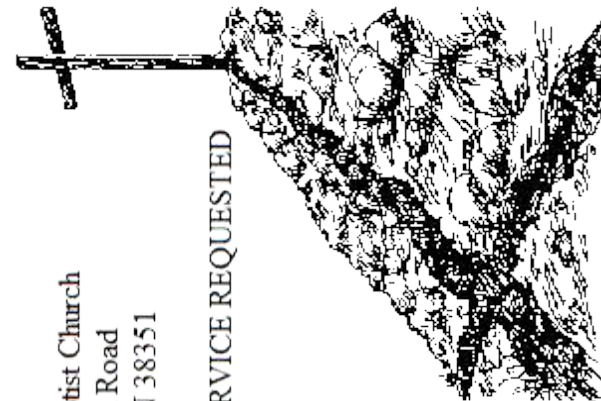
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4 C.H. Spurgeon *Without Christ - Nothing!*

Christ are pure", will find themselves in that Lake that burns forever. Why? Because they would not come to Christ. Because they would not surrender all to God. When you try to *serve God in my own way*, you will one day discover this way to be no more than littered cords. Those broken cords of faithless work will be gathered together to become the whip that Christ will use to judge you.

I am told that there is a tribe of Indians that use strips of cloth for money. This may be so, and these strips of cloth may be valuable in that land - but they have no value here. If you wish to purchase goods here you must use the currency of this land. If you want to purchase a place in God's Heaven, you must use the currency that He alone will accept. You must have faith in Christ, in the shed Blood of Calvary, in the resurrected Savior and Lord. Faith in Christ is the long locks of Samson that give strength for life and eternal life. Faith in Christ gathers the Grace gift of manna, and faith in Christ answers the call of **Follow Me**.

May God bless the preaching of His Word.



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