

JOHN

Chapter 2

The Wedding at Cana

On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. 3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” 4 And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.**” 5 His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, “**Fill the jars with water.**” And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it. 9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.” 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him. 12 After this he went down to Capernaum, with his mother and his brothers and his disciples, and they stayed there for a few days.**

2:1-11 In the introduction to his Gospel, John proclaims of Christ that “we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father” (1:14). Later, John the Baptist testifies that “I came baptizing with water, that he might be revealed to Israel” (1:31). In his calling of Nathanael, Jesus tells him, “You will see greater things than these” (1:50). In today’s Gospel, Jesus performs his first miracle at the wedding at Cana and begins to reveal his glory as the Son of God to his disciples and to all Israel with even greater things to come. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

2:1 *on the third day* – Jesus had been in the Jordan Valley near John the Baptist. After calling Philip and Nathanael, he traveled to Cana in Galilee. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

The wedding at Cana took place “on the third day,” connecting the beginning of Jesus’ earthly ministry with its climax on the day of his resurrection. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

a wedding. Little is known of how a wedding was performed in first-century Palestine, but clearly the feast was very important and might go on for a week. To fail in proper hospitality was a serious offense. (CSB)

According to Jewish custom, the wedding feast typically lasted seven days. Many guests would remain the whole week, abstaining from work and sharing the family’s joy. The intertestamental document Tobit describes a Jewish wedding contract and extended feast. (TLSB)

In the ancient Near East, a typical wedding began when the bride was brought by her relatives and friends to the groom's house in a procession. The festivities could last seven days or even two weeks. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

Cana. Mentioned only in John's Gospel (2:11; 4:46, 50; 21:2). It was west of the Sea of Galilee, but the exact location is unknown. (CSB)

Nine miles north of Nazareth, on the north side of the Beit Netofa Valley, on a main route. (TLSB)

Jesus' mother was there – Mary may have been related to the host family, or simply a close friend. (TLSB)

2:2 *Jesus was also invited...with his disciples* – Since Jesus and his mother had been invited, it is possible that the wedding involved one of their relatives. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

Jesus is called (*eklēthē*) by invitation as a guest to this feast along with his disciples. The disciples are now identified by their association with Jesus. They will one day be martyred, not because they are fishermen, a tax collector, or even a zealot, but precisely because they are Jesus' disciples. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

Ecclesiastes 4:12, "Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken."

Known and thus invited by the host family or welcomed with their Teacher. (TLSB)

2:3-4 With the setting established, the story truly begins. The wine had begun to run short, and Jesus' mother approached him with her concern. Jesus' answer, *ti emoi kai soi, gunai*, "Woman, what does this have to do with me?" or literally, "What is it to me and to you, woman?" is not a disrespectful answer. Rather, Jesus is indicating that Mary need not concern herself. This will be Jesus' responsibility. Jesus is Lord and Savior. He acts in his Father's time in accordance with his Father's will. It is as though Jesus were telling Mary that the moment for action was up to God. Thus, "My hour has not yet come." His "hour" is his death on the cross, thus linking this event to his crucifixion, but here also it signifies his imminent revelation of his glory as the Christ, the Son of God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

2:3 *When the wine ran out*. More than a minor social embarrassment, since the family had an obligation to provide a feast of the socially required standard. There was no great variety in beverages, and people normally drank water or wine. (CSB)

Mary's concern perhaps is evidence she may have been related to one of the wedding families. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

Wine was the symbol in the OT of physical and spiritual joy (Gen 27:28; Ecc 9:7), future hope (Is 25:6; Joel 2:19; Zec 10:6-7), and abundance (Joel 2:24; 3:18; Am 9:13). Running out of wine or having wine of poor quality at a wedding was a social blunder. (TLSB)

they have no wine – She told Jesus of the shortage, fully expecting Him to do something about it. But what? We aren't told, so any answer involves some guesswork. We cannot rule out that she hoped for a miracle. Remember, this was the virgin mother who had learned from an

angel that she would bear the Savior. This was Mary, who pondered the things about Jesus in her heart. She believed in Him as the One sent from God. (PBC)

2:4 woman – A common and respectful greeting, though somewhat unusual for one’s mother. Jesus may be speaking to her as a disciple. (TLSB)

what does this have to do with me – His mission henceforth is to do the will of his Father, not that of his mother. This was not disrespectful. Probably Jesus was distancing himself from his earthly family as he began his mission. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

My hour has not yet come. Several similar expressions scattered through this Gospel (7:6, 8, 30; 8:20) picture Jesus moving inevitably toward the destiny for which he had come: the time of his sacrificial death on the cross. At the crucifixion and resurrection Jesus’ time had truly come (12:23, 27; 13:1; 16:32; 17:1). (CSB)

Allusion to the hour of Jesus’ death, when God will “lift up,” or glorify, His Son (3:14; 8:28; 12:32). (TLSB)

2:5 do whatever he tells you – This is consistent with how he replies in Luke 1:38 “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May it be to me as you have said.” (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

Mary reveals her great faith. All that she had pondered in her heart up to this moment she was about to experience in the actions of her Son. Her response is no more surprising than her response to Gabriel when he announced to her that she would carry the child of the Most High God (see v 38 of Lk 1:26–38). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

Mary is a model of faith. Cf Luke 1:38 (TLSB)

We pause at these words, thinking how important they are for everyone to this day. (PBC)

2:6-7 The six stone water jars are for the Jewish rite of purification and the old covenant. They are empty, for the Law cannot save us. Jesus has these jars filled with water as the Law demands, just as he will fulfill all the Law and the Prophets to the brim. The hour for Jesus to reveal himself to his disciples had come. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

2:6 six stone jars – In rabbinic thought, stone did not attract impurity, so the jars could be properly cleansed and reused. Archaeologists identify Jewish communities of the NT era by the presence of such stone jars and cups. (TLSB)

rites of purification. Jews became ceremonially defiled during the normal circumstances of daily life, and were cleansed by pouring water over the hands. For a lengthy feast with many guests a large amount of water was required for this purpose. (CSB)

Custom of washing utensils and esp hands before eating (see note, Mk 7:3–4). The transformation of the water in such vessels shows Jesus’ power to purify and to provide. (TLSB)

Ceremonial washing was a part of everyday Jewish life. Stone jars could be cleaned if defiled, whereas clay jars were to be broken. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

holding. Refers to capacity, not actual content. (CSB)

Jesus made over 120 gallons of wine. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

2:7 *fill the jars with water* – Table wine was typically prepared by mixing water with thick, syrupy wine. Jesus made the servants witnesses of the miracle because they saw that only water was used. (TLSB)

2:8 *draw* – The jars were not used for pouring but as reservoirs (cf 4:7, 15). (TLSB)

master of the banquet – Chief steward in charge of the physical needs of the wedding guests. (TLSB)

2:9-11 While the master of the feast did not know where the wine came from, the servants and Mary knew, and, implicit in v 11, the disciples knew as well. Therefore, they believe in Jesus. While the world offers wine of less quality, the wine of Jesus is the very finest vintage. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

2:9 *water now become wine* – Jesus’ first recorded miracle (v 11). (TLSB)

The sign is complete. The water is now wine. The old covenant has been replaced by the new. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 17, Part 1)

bridegroom – The servants, who had the lowest status, witnessed the miracle. Now the groom, who had the greatest status, was about to receive the wine. (TLSB)

2:10 *have drunk freely* – methusthosiv which means to be drunk. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

good wine until now – The feast’s master recognized the wine’s high quality, giving witness to the miracle’s greatness. (TLSB)

2:11 *signs*. John always refers to Jesus’ miracles as “signs,” a word emphasizing the significance of the action rather than the marvel (see, e.g., 4:54; 6:14; 9:16; 11:47). They revealed Jesus’ glory (see 1:14; cf. Isa 35:1–2; Joel 3:18; Am 9:13). (CSB)

Greek “*semeia*,” meaning more than miracles; used 17 times in John. Signs reveal God’s mind and work (cf. 10:38). (TLSB)

He disclosed something of his divine nature and his mission of grace. His signs point beyond themselves to the person of Jesus and to the kingdom of God he ushers in. This first sign, like subsequent one, elicited in his disciples faith. The newly-called disciples were led to believe in him, who would later reveal the full splendor of his saving glory. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 5, Part 1)

disciples believed in him – The disciples’ faith in Jesus as the Messiah was strengthened through the miracle. Cf 4:46-54. (TLSB)

Miracles (1) proved Jesus’ was God, (2) brought people to faith, and (3) helped people.

2:12 *went down*. Situated on the shore of the lake, Capernaum was at a lower level than Cana. (CSB)

Cana, in the hill country, was at an elevation higher than Capernaum. Note from Matthew 4:13: Modern Tel Hum. Fishing village and important garrison on the northwest shore of the Sea of Galilee. Home of Peter (8:14) and also the town where Matthew collected taxes (9:9). Capernaum served as Jesus' base of operations. (TLSB)

brothers. These were the other sons of Mary and Joseph. James later was a leader in the 1st century church and the author of the Book of James. (CSB)

The immediate family of Mary and Jesus (cf Mk 6:3) were also guests at the wedding. The disciples were like extended family (cf Jn 20:17). (TLSB)

2:1–12 Jesus, through whom all things were made (1:3), performs His first miracle (“sign”) at a wedding at Cana in Galilee, manifesting His glory by turning water into wine. Today, take your concerns to Jesus in prayer. By His life, and at the hour of His death, Christ revealed His great mercy toward us, assuring us that no need escapes His care. • O Lord Jesus, give me confidence as I seek You in my hour of need. Amen. (TLSB)

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, 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.

2:13 There was likely a lapse of some time between verse 12 and 13. From Luke 2 we know that Jesus went to the annual Passover Festival for the first time at the age of twelve. Very likely He attended every Passover from the age of 12 until His death. The one mentioned here in verse 13 is His first in His public ministry. The Gospel of John mentions the Passovers which took place in Jesus' public ministry. (Buls)

Passover. Passover was one of the annual feasts that all Jewish men were required to celebrate in Jerusalem (Dt 16:16). (CSB)

The first Passover in Jesus' ministry likely took place in AD 30; first of three in Jn (6:4; 11:55; cf 12:1; 13:1; 18:28, 39; 19:14). (TLSB)

The law required every Jewish male to go up (in elevation) to Jerusalem for the yearly Passover feast. This pilgrimage marks Jesus' first appearance there as Prophet. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

All Jewish males 12 years old or older customarily made this pilgrimage at the Passover. The celebration lasted seven days and included the killing of a year old male lamb, without blemish, for the feast. The participants recalled how the blood of the lamb at the first Passover had spared

the firstborn Israelite from the angel of death. Now the very Lamb of God was attending that feast. (PBC)

The Passover was a red-letter occasion for Jews, requiring an appropriate offering to the temple. Before us is marked the glory of Christ as the Lamb, the Temple, and the Passover (Jn 1:36; 2:19; 1 Cor 5:7). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

At a later Passover, his final one, Jesus will find a similar scene and react in a similar way (Mt 21:12–13). With the profit to be gained from exchanges, there is no doubt Jesus performed this cleansing repeatedly. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:14–17 Matthew, Mark and Luke record a cleansing of the temple toward the end of Jesus' ministry (see note on Mt 21:12–17). (CSB)

Some exchanges during Passover were legitimate, as foreign currency was involved and some travelers found it impractical to transport animal sacrifices. God had provided for this (Deut 14:24–26). In some cases, though, the money changers would discard worthy animals brought by worshipers and require purchase of a temple animal. The cost was often exorbitant. Hence the temple had become a warehouse. *poiēsas*, an aorist active participle, indicates Jesus' readiness to act before even saying a word. Rope was in ample supply as larger animals were restrained. Jesus exited both men and beasts from the temple proper. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

Some scholarship suggests that the selling took place in the Gentiles' courtyard, robbing even earnest Gentiles of the opportunity to approach the true God. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:14 The references the margin of the Nestle/Aland Greek text are to the second temple cleansing which took place at the time of Jesus' last Passover on earth (three or at the least, two years later, depending on the determination of John 5:1). (Buls)

These *Notes* reject the idea that this temple cleansing is the same as that mentioned by the Synoptics. All good, sound commentators reject identity of the two. (Buls)

temple – The hieron, “temple (and courts),” included the Court of the Gentiles, the only place where proselytes could pray. A market there enabled Jews to purchase sacrificial animals when they arrived, rather than bring them from afar. The *kermatistai* changed foreign money into the sacred half-shekel required for the temple tax (Ex 30:13). These vendors provided services that made worship more convenient or “user-friendly” in fulfillment of the law. It is estimated that the tax and lambs brought in annual profits in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the temple treasury had over \$10 million when the Roman Crassus raided it (Leon Morris, John, NICNT [Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971] 193, note 59). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

"Temple courts," a locative phrase, denotes the Temple proper, perhaps the Court of the Gentiles, translated "in the Temple area" by LB. From what Jesus says in verse 16 it is clear that it was within the limits of what they called the Temple. Formerly the cattle, sheep and doves were sold to worshippers in markets outside the Temple. Gradually all this was moved right into the Temple. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: At the paschal feast He began His activity in Jerusalem and at a paschal festival He brought it to a close. . . The uncleanness in the temple portrayed the corruption of the people and was an image of the impurity in their hearts. . . For the Passover all leaven should be removed from the houses. Here is the house God, and there is an abundance of the leaven of impurity. . . Our thoughts revert to Malachi 3:1-3, where the prophet proclaims the coming of the Lord to His temple. This was the first fulfilment of the prophecy. (Buls)

Fahling: As many as two and a half million worshippers were gathered at Jerusalem from all parts of the Jewish world. . . The time had come for Him to present Himself to the nation as the promised Messiah. . . The work and the profit (of selling animals) must have been enormous. . . The prices charged were often exorbitant. (Buls)

Kretzmann: Instead, however, of keeping the market in the lower part of the city, it had been brought up to the gates of the Temple, and finally into the very courts of the sanctuary. (Buls)

Lenski: The cattle and the doves were a necessity for the prescribed sacrifices, but to make of the great court a stockyard was the height of abuse. (Buls)

Jesus cleansed the temple twice, once at the start (Jn 2:14–17) and again at the end (Mt 21:12–13; Mk 11:15–17; Lk 19:45–46) of his earthly ministry. From first to last, he demanded purity of worship. Judgment begins with the house of God (1 Pet 4:17). John relates the first cleansing only, and as an eyewitness, recording the year (v 20). Apparently the first cleansing had no long-term impact on the lucrative business, necessitating the later cleansing. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

oxen and sheep and pigeons. Required for sacrifices. Jews who came great distances had to be able to buy sacrificial animals near the temple. The merchants, however, were selling them in the outer court of the temple itself, the one place where Gentiles could come to pray. (CSB)

This was for the sacrifices prescribed by the Levitical code, performed Passover. In the outer court of the Gentiles, merchants sold animals to the travelers because it was impractical for travelers to transport animals. Luther dubbed this “crass commercialism” (AE 22:220). (TLSB)

sitting – katae *sit down*; figuratively to *remain, reside*:—dwell, sit (by, down). (QV)

The sellers were "seated" as merchants in their place of business. (Buls)

mone-changers. Many coins had to be changed into currency acceptable to the temple authorities, which made money changers necessary (see note on Mk 11:15). They should not, however, have been working in the temple itself. (CSB)

Travelers had to have their money exchanged into the local currency for the temple tax, which required Jewish coins (shekels) without human images. The on-site bankers charged an exorbitant exchange fee. (TLSB)

kermatiste a *handler of coins*, that is, *money broker*:— changer of money. (QV)

The noise and confusion were distractions enough. However, the whole business was liable to gross abuses as well. The sellers had a corner on the market much like vendors in a theater or stadium today. From every indication, they exploited the people. Greed gathered wealth. Reverence played the pauper. The practice subverted the worship purpose of the temple. Many surely came with sacrifices not pleasing to God because their hearts were not with God. (PBC)

These vendors provided services that made worship more convenient or user-friendly in fulfillment of the law. It is estimated that the tax and lambs brought in annual profits in the hundreds of thousands of dollars, and the temple treasury had over \$10 million when the Roman Crassus raided it. Jesus cleansed the temple twice, once at the start and again at the end of his earthly ministry. Apparently the first cleansing had no long-term impact on the lucrative business, necessitating the later cleansing. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

2:15 *whip* – paragallion a *whip*, that is, Roman *lash* as a public punishment:—scourge. (QV)

With the rope whip Jesus drove out “all”—masculine plural in Greek, implying the merchants as well as the animals. “It was surely the blazing anger of the selfless Christ rather than the weapon which He carried which really cleared the Temple Courts of its noisy, motley throng”; “Christ had a powerful confederate in the consciences of the offenders” (Turner and Hengstenberg, respectively, quoted in Morris, p. 194). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

Made of ropes used for animals in the temple. Symbol of Jesus’ moral authority. (TLSB)

Bengel: There was no material which inflicted less lasting hurt on the body than this. Nor is it said, that He inflicted a single blow upon the men. (Buls)

Kretzmann and Fahling feel that Jesus did not actually use this whip but merely had it as a symbol of His authority and power. Lenski insists that He did use it on all, the people and the animals. (Buls)

Ylvisaker: We notice that Jesus does not destroy their property, but He removes the desecration. (Buls)

In any case He clearly maintains the privilege and authority of the Son in the house of His Father. Jesus made no excuses for what He did. Does the word "all" refer to the merchants and moneychangers or to the sheep and goats? KJV, NKJV, LB, RSV, JB, NEB, NASB, and AAT take the former view. NASB is typical: "drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen." TEV and NIV refer it only to sheep and cattle: "drove the animals out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle" Surely the translations from KJV to AAT are correct. (Buls)

Furthermore, the last clause of verse 15 shows how definitely Jesus used His authority and implies that the money changers had already been driven out. We are saying that "all" means not only the merchants but also the moneychangers. They must have been dumbfounded and the sudden rush of cattle, sheep and doves must have caused bedlam, necessary bedlam. (Buls)

drove – Literally, “cast out, expel.” (TLSB)

all – Masculine plural in Greek, implying the merchants as well as the animal. It was surely the blazing anger of the selfless Christ rather than the weapon which he carried which really cleared the Temple Courts of its noisy, motley throng. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

Christ revealed holy wrath, not a violent spirit. (TLSB)

money-changers – Two specific terms are used for the money changers. "A changer of large into smaller coins" and "A man who changes heathen into Jewish money for payment into the Temple treasury." The fact that the Evangelist John distinguishes the two, shows how highly systematized this racket had become. (Buls)

poured out the coins ... overturned their tables. Christ revealed holy wrath, not a violent spirit. (TLSB)

2:16 *make* – poieo to *make* or *do* (QV)

He addresses only those who were selling doves, but it is meant for all. They would likely take least space and were selling mostly to the poor people. Jesus addresses the least offensive, making the command clear for all. He said: "Get these things out of here!" He really cleaned house. It is the same verb used in John 1:29 to denote totality and finality. (Buls)

Jesus' present imperative *mē poieite* means, "Stop making . . ." He purges as a prophet. He reminds us of Moses, whose anger at Israel's idolatry caused him to shatter the first two stone tablets of the covenant (Ex 32:19), or Hezekiah, who purged the temple of abominations during Passover (2 Chr 30:1, 14–15). But Jesus is *the Prophet*. With the phrase "of my Father," he openly claims to be God's Son. In early Jewish prayers God is often called "*our heavenly Father*." Jesus strikingly calls him "*my Father*" with intimate language appropriate only for family members. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

my Father's house – *pate* a primary word; a "father" (literally or figuratively, near or more remote):—father, parent (QV)

Then He adds: "Quit making My Father's House a merchandise house." The House of God is where God meets man. They had turned it into a place to make money, a place where people meet animals. The contrast is stark. It is symptomatic of the deep degradation of the Covenant people in Jesus' day. This verse has often been quoted in opposition to bazaars in the church. Is it relevant? Isn't the anger of those who want the bazaars often like the attitude of Jesus' enemies? (Buls)

Jesus gives ownership of this temple to his Father. "Do not make My Father's house a house of merchandise" (NKJV), *emporiou* (literally, "of trading, gain-setting, unjust dealing"). In this Greek word, one sees the English "emporium," a marketplace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

Jesus openly claims to be God's Son. In early Jewish prayers God is often called "*our heavenly Father*." Jesus strikingly calls him "*my Father*" with intimate language appropriate only for family members. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

house of trade – emporion a *mart* (“emporium”):—merchandise. (QV)

The temple is where the lowly from all nations may come to beg the Almighty and obtain his mercy. It cannot be an *oikon emporiou* (epexegetical genitive), “a house that is a market or trading place.” Sinners have nothing to trade God for his favor. Neither does God owe them anything. Those who do not humble themselves to receive God’s free gift will go away bankrupt, even if they are rich in worldly wealth. Here the Lord comes suddenly to his temple to purge and purify it (Mal 3:1–3). At his Second Coming he will return to settle all accounts. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

2:17 disciples remembered – The disciples thought of Ps 69:9 (cf. Ps 119:139). Only later, in light of the resurrection of his bodily temple, did they understand this Scripture (v 22) to refer to his rigor for the Gospel. Luther comments, “When he witnesses the heinous corruption of souls and this abomination and desecration of his Father’s house—then he is deeply grieved. The Lord came to His temple. He came as a “refiner and purifier” in the spirit of Malachi 3:1-4. He declared Himself the Son of the heavenly Father. His disciples watched, no doubt frightened and awestruck. Being well-verse in Scripture, they recalled one of David’s psalms that spoke of the Messiah, and applied it to Jesus: “Zeal for your house consumes me” (Psalm 69:9). Significantly, that same psalm predicted some of the rejection and suffering that lay ahead for Christ. For now, it gave the disciples another sign that Jesus was the Christ, and maybe it left some fear of what was to come. (PBC)

"Remembered" here and in verse 22, means "recalled." They applied something which they already knew. "It stands written," never to be revoked. This is a quotation from Psalm 69:10, which the disciples knew. The Greek of the LXX has "consume" as past tense, and is found in the Koine text here at John 2:17 and is therefore found in the KJV and NKJV. All others translate future tense. The translations are interesting: RSV, NIV, NASB, and AAT read: "will consume me." JB has "will devour me." NEB "will destroy me." TEV has "My devotion to your house, God, burns in me like afire." And LB "Concern for God's House will be my undoing." (Buls)

Psalm 69 is Messianic. Did the disciples know that? At any rate, they realize that the situation was critical, and ominous. In part it led to Jesus' death. (Buls)

Hendriksen: The disciples are filled with fear that Jesus may suffer what David had to endure in his day; namely, that this zeal in some way would result in his being consumed. . . In expressing this thought use is made of Psalm 69, which is one of six Psalms most often referred to in the New Testament (the others 2, 22, 89, 110, 118). Other echoes of various passages of this Psalm (68 in the LXX) are heard in Matthew 27:34.48; Mark 15:36; Luke 23:36; John 15:25; 19:28; Romans 11:9.10; 15:3; Hebrews 11:26; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 16:1; 17:8; 20:12.15; and 21 :27). While some of these are quotations, others are allusions, references more or less indirect. Jesus himself (15:25) cites Psalm 69:4 'They hated me without a cause' and refers it to his own experience. In fulfilment of Psalm 69:21 he uttered the word from the cross (19:28). . . From this it appears that Psalm 69 is Messianic. It is possible that the disciples so regarded it even at this time, but that cannot be proved. (Buls)

It would not be wrong to say that the Holy Spirit caused them rightly to recall Psalm 69:10 on this occasion. They were believers in contrast to Jesus' enemies in the next verse. (Buls)

zeal – He grows indignant and jealous. A saddened zeal comes over him when he sees his church, his cathedral, desecrated and misused this way. For he loves God; and he is concerned about the preservation of the divine Word, solicitous about the poor people who are thus robbed of their salvation” (Luther’s Works, 22:235). Christ was consumed—literally, “eaten up”—with such zeal that brought him from heaven and took him to the cross. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

Luther: “Zeal is an angry love or a jealous love...His anger does not arise from hatred; it springs from...love toward God” (AE 22:233-34). Christ’s zeal revealed His relationship with God and the people of His house, Israel. (TLSB)

Here we see the Lord’s high regard for worship and prayer. *kataphagetai*, “will eat up,” indicates that Jesus fulfills the prophecy of Ps 69:9. Just as Jesus *esplagchnisthē* (“yearned from the inward parts”) for the multitude (see Mt 9:36), so, too, his depth of passion for the purity of worship is without comparison. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:18 *so the Jews* – “Then” means that they responded to the whole situation by addressing a question to Jesus. Here “the Jews,” as often, means the Jewish authorities who were Jesus’ enemies. It is not limited to the merchants and money-changers. (Buls)

sign – semeion an *indication*, especially ceremonially or supernaturally:—miracle, sign, token, wonder. (QV)

Visible proof or evidence to back up Jesus’s authority. (TLSB)

The Jewish leaders reacted in a guarded way to Jesus’ actions. They did not try to arrest Him, perhaps because they knew of the excesses and unpopularity of the market. But they missed the point. Instead of addressing the faults Jesus had exposed, they asked Jesus for a sign to prove His authority to clear the temple. They implied that if He did a miracle, they might recognize Him as the Messiah, but likely only as someone to lead them against the Roman oppression. (PBC)

Bengel: This very act of cleansing the Temple was a sign, which Jesus had miraculously wrought. . . They require signs, to be proved by signs. They showed the same perversity at 6:30. (Buls)

Look at the passages in the margin at 1 Corinthians 1:22. It is the language of unbelief, in sharp contrast to that of the disciples. TEV paraphrases: “What miracle can you perform to show us that you have the right to do this?” And NIV: “What miraculous sign can you show us to prove your authority to do all this?” And AAT: “By what miracle can You prove to us You may do this?” They are practically saying: “You have no right to do this. You must prove that you have the right.” (Buls)

Two things surface here: (Buls)

1. They were impenitent. They should have confessed guilt immediately.
2. They are rejecting Jesus’ divinity, barely six months into His public ministry.

Stoekhardt: What was going on in the Temple portrayed the earthly, worldly attitude of the Jewish people. . . . It was Jesus' first and necessary work that, as Messiah, He must oppose the unholy and ungodly living in Israel. The people were in need of a Reformation. (Buls)

Kretzmann: The Jews resented the implication of authority. (Buls)

Lenski: Here the hostile attitude is quite marked. . . . An unknown layman and mere visitor cannot be allowed to take matters into his own hands. (Buls)

The word "sign" is a key word in John's Gospel, used seventeen times, occurring first at 2:11. We quote pertinent passages from Kittel, VII, pages 243-247: (Buls)

John uses 'sign' in the sense of 'sign' 'pointer' 'mark.' In John's Gospel almost exclusively of the person of Jesus. . . . Signs reveal His true nature, 2:11. . . . In John 'signs' takes over the role played by 'miracles' elsewhere in New Testament. . . . The miracle at the wedding of Cana in 4:54, the feeding of the multitude in 6:14 and the raising of Lazarus in 12:18 all explicitly called 'signs' . . . Also includes the appearance to the disciples (20:24ff; cf. 20:30ff). (Buls)

Lenski: John's Gospel naturally uses this term in the sense of the strongest and the most tangible testimony for Jesus' divinity, always counting those guilty who meet the signs with unbelief. (Buls)

Hendriksen: It indicates a miracle viewed as a proof of divine authority and majesty. Hence, it leads the attention of the spectator away from the deed itself to the divine doer. (Buls)

The Jews met the temple-cleansing with unbelieving ignorance. (Buls)

show us – The Jews were skeptical of Jesus' messianic claim. They did not repent, nor pray, nor keep the temple clean for very long. Seeking an excuse not to believe, they challenged Jesus for a sign, as usual (1 Cor. 1:22). (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

2:19-20 *ton naon touton*, “this temple,” “this sanctuary.” The unbelieving Jews were so consumed with the temple building that they missed the Lord, the true Temple. The temple was to proclaim the sacrifice standing before them. Jesus' body would be destroyed, but it would be built again on the third day. Notice, Jesus does not say that *he* will destroy the temple, as later charged (Mk 14:58; see also Mt 27:40), but rather challenges the *Jews* to “destroy [*lusate*] this temple,” which they will do when they crucify him. Ironically, by doing so, they would also be tearing down their own sanctuary. All men have done the same in relation to God's glory, by disobeying his holy will. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:19 The Jews thought Jesus was referring to the literal temple, but John tells us that he was not (v. 21). Years later Jesus was accused of saying that he would destroy the temple and raise it again (Mt 26:60–61; Mk 14:57–59), and mockers repeated the charge as he hung on the cross (Mt 27:40; Mk 15:29). The same misunderstanding may have been behind the charge against Stephen (Ac 6:14). (CSB)

Christ speaks prophetically of His impending death and resurrection. (TLSB)

Here "destroy this temple" denotes Jesus' answer to a specific question. On "destroy" three explanations have been offered: (Buls)

1. Robertson-Davis and others call it a conditional imperative: "If you destroy, etc."
2. Bengel and others say it is equivalent to a future indicative, a prophecy.
3. But all our translations and several good commentators take it as an imperative.

Note Jesus uses the word for "shrine" not temple. Jesus typified especially the holy place and holy of holies. (Buls)

Bengel: The body of Jesus, about to be raised again, is the temple and dwelling-place of the Godhead. Therefore, Jesus is the Lord of the temple at Jerusalem, which was the type of the body of Jesus. . . . shrine recurs at verse 22. This is a grand declaration of His 'I can do what I please with the temple of My body. cf. 10:17.18. And so, I can also do what I please with this temple made of stone and wood.' (Buls)

Ylvisaker: If they were not satisfied with what they had seen, they must wait. 'Destroy it, if you will' . . . The words imply that they will do this very thing in their blindness and obduracy. . . . When the leaders in Israel rejected the person of Jesus and led Him to His death, they also destroyed the temple as God's dwelling. . . . What the Romans accomplished later was but the external ruination, the razing of an empty shell. . . . The temple was the main shadow or the reflection of the body which the coming of Christ prefigured among the people of the Covenant, Colossians 2:17. (Buls)

Stoekhardt: In Him dwelt all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. . . . Already at the beginning of His public ministry the Lord was fully aware of His entire life, suffering, death, resurrection.

Jesus' enemies never forgot what He said here. Cf. Matthew 26:61 and 27:40. At His trial they tried to use it against Him and on Calvary they used it in derision. Mark 15:29. (Buls)

Jesus does not respond with a hypothetical subjunctive, "If you destroy . . . then I will . . ." but with an aorist imperative, "[I tell you to] destroy . . ." Jesus uses a different word for "temple" in his resurrection promise. Unlike hieron (vv 14, 15), the word here, naos, refers to the temple proper—the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Jesus himself is the tabernacle of God's glory (Jn 1:14), the place of atonement, the Tent of Meeting where God and man are reconciled in peace. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

The Jerusalem temple was always and only a type, a shadow of the body of the Christ to come. Ylvisaker writes, "When the leaders in Israel rejected the person of Jesus and led Him to His death, they also destroyed the temple as God's dwelling. . . . What the Romans accomplished later [A. D. 70] was but the external ruination, the razing of an empty shell" (The Gospels [Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1977] 140). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

At the very start of his ministry, Jesus establishes his crucifixion and resurrection as the sign of his messiahship. That he himself will raise his body not only shows his power as the Son of God (Jn 10:18), it also promises us the continuation of the true temple. Jesus' crucified and risen body is the true dwelling place of God. As the faithful eat and drink in the Sacrament, God is in his temple mercifully saving his people. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

2:20 *Jews then said* – The Jews dodged Jesus' words. They refused to consider that they might bring the temple to ruin by profaning it and rejecting Jesus. Instead they, they zeroed in on Jesus'

promise and mocked it. Natural man disregards the Law and mocks the Gospel. (Concordia Pulpit Resources – Volume 4, Part 2)

No one understood Jesus' sermon at the time. Only after the resurrection did they truly believe, i.e., find comfort in Jesus' Gospel promise and perceive its relation to Ps 69:9 and the earthly temple he fulfilled. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

forty-six years. The temple was not finally completed until A.D. 64. The meaning is that work had been going on for 46 years. Since it had begun in 20 B.C., the year of the event recorded here is A.D. 26. (CSB)

Jesus had said "destroy this temple" meaning Himself. They use the same expression but use "shrine" in the sense of "temple," this temple. Verse 19 has been called a *mashal*, a deliberately enigmatic statement, a kind of riddle. In response to such a *mashal*, faith responds positively, though it does not understand all immediately. But unbelief reacts in rejection. Such is the case here. Herod had begun the rebuilding of the Temple forty-six years before, to gain the approval of the people. It was not actually finished for another thirty-six years, in 64 A.D., just six years before its destruction. Thus, Josephus. (Buls)

"And you are going to" is emphatic, something like: "And YOU mean to tell us etc." To these people, Jesus sounded like a fool. Read 1 Corinthians 1:25-30. The things which God says appear as mere foolishness and weakness to unbelievers. Expect that in our day too. Don't give up when it happens. Jesus didn't. Paul didn't. You shouldn't. (Buls)

The 46 years of construction fix the cleansing in A. D. 26 (Alford, The Greek Testament [Chicago: Moody, 1958] 1:710–711). The verb *oikodomēthē* is a "global aorist," summarizing as a simple fact the building which continued for years (M. Zerwick, Biblical Greek [Rome: Biblical Institute, 1982] 83, para. 253). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

2:21-22 God's Son became one with us by virtue of his fleshly body (*tou sōmatos autou*). Our destruction is then destroyed with his death. Conversely, our resurrection is then secured by his. Christ's sinless and obedient form declares our sinful form free. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 16, Part 2)

2:21 *his body* – Christ's human body, where God dwelt and was made manifest, was given as the ultimate sacrifice for the sins of the world. (TLSB)

The body and person of Jesus were the anti-type to the greatest type of the Old Covenant, namely, the Tabernacle and the Temple (Solomon, Zerubbabel, Herod). The Temple was the place where God met the Covenant people. And no one comes to the Father but through Jesus. (Buls)

The Temple was destroyed in 70 A.D. The Israelis would like nothing better than to rebuild it. The Arabs won't permit it because The Dome of the Rock is built on the Temple site. The millennialists have an unScriptural view of Jerusalem and the Temple. It is gone for good. The Jews themselves were the cause of its destruction. (Buls)

2:22 *remembered.* See 14:26. (CSB)

John gives away the conclusion of the Gospel, implying that the readers already know the full story. (TLSB)

Kretzmann: The Jews did not understand Him. Even the disciples did not understand the saying at that time; in a way they were just as ignorant as the Jews. But they remembered it after the Lord's resurrection, and at that time drew their conclusions correctly. (Buls)

Lenski: The disciples found the key as verse 22 shows, but the Jews, because their unbelief grew only more intense, never found it (Matthew 26:61; Mark 14:57; 15:29). (Buls)

On this verse look at 12:16 and then 14:26. It is plain as can be that the disciples were no synergists. They had no innate powers of their own to believe. They recalled and then believed only because the Holy Spirit caused them to recall and then to believe. Neither enemy nor friend forgot what Jesus had said. Friend was enlightened by the Holy Spirit only through the Word of God. (Buls)

The obdurate rejection of Jesus on the part of His enemies led them to say what is recorded in Acts 6:14. They accused Jesus and Stephen of high treason. Read Stephen's final words at Acts 7:44-53 where he gives the Lord's enemies a severe verbal lashing. Jesus was the fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Temple. The days of the Temple were numbered. Its destruction by the Romans in 70 A.D. is a stark reminder of what happens to those who reject Jesus, the Son of God, Who died and rose again for all. (Buls)

Unbelief does not recognize a true sign when it's pointed out; instead, it becomes a sign of judgment. So these Jews later tried to use Jesus' words against Him at His trial (Matthew 26:61). Even when Jesus rose from the dead to fulfill this sign, these Jews hardened their unbelieving hearts to the truth. The disciples, on the other hand, "recalled what He had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken. (PBC)

Notice how a disciple's faith grows. There is no hint here that the disciples understood what Jesus was saying any more than the unbelieving Jews did. They remembered Jesus words, however, and looked to Scripture for understanding and confirmation. They found Scripture that fit. Perhaps it was Psalm 16:10: "You will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay." Then they saw the risen Jesus, they believed. (PBC)

2:13–22 With holy zeal, Jesus cleanses the temple, which has been turned into a marketplace, and He predicts His resurrection to those questioning His authority. When we disrespect God's Word and sacred things, He calls us to repentance. Christ's suffering, death, and resurrection reveal God's heart, which is zealous for those He loves. • O risen Lord, give me a heart that fervently clings to You and Your Word. Amen. (TLSB)

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.

2:23 name. In ancient times an individual's "name" summed up his whole person. (CSB)

What they knew about Jesus, that is, His name, led them to trust Him. The signs had as effect. People began to trust in Jesus as a great prophet or even the Messiah. (PBC)

This was still a shallow and fickle faith based on the spectacular miracles and bold actions they saw. (TLSB)

2:24-25 *he knew all men* – Christ put no confidence in these people because their faith was not genuinely directed toward Him as the Messiah. As the omniscient Son of God, Jesus knew the spiritual state of those coming to Him, that is whether their faith was genuine. (TLSB)

2:24 That the Lord now looked into the hearts of the many who believed on His name. He saw weak faith, fickle faith, misapplied faith. He saw people impressed primarily with His miracles. He saw people who wanted Him to give them a better life on earth but did not see Him as the Son who came to prepare heaven for them. To this day, some who profess trust in Jesus have reservation or misdirected expectations. There are hypocrites in our churches. Now, as then, other people cannot adequately judge who they are. But Jesus knows their hearts. (PBC)

2:23–25 In Jerusalem, many come to believe in Jesus, but theirs is a superficial faith based mainly on the miracles they see. The all-knowing Christ calls us to abandon all outward pretense, to repent truly, and to trust Him fully. The Lord Jesus offers Himself in mercy and forgiveness to those who trust in Him. • O all-knowing Savior, forgive my secret sins and cover them with Your boundless love. Amen. (TLSB)