

Lesson IV.

JESUS CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

January 26, 1908

John 2 : 13-22—Memory Verses, 15, 16.

Golden Text—Holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.—Psalm 93 : 5.

13 And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Je'sus went up to Jeru'salem,

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 shewest thou unto us, seeing that thou doest these things ?

19 Je'sus 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.

THE LESSON RETOLD

Now it happened that the time of the Passover, one of the great Jewish Feasts was near, and Jesus went up to the holy city of Jerusalem where the feast was held. There, in the temple—God's holy house—Jesus saw something that made Him sad and angry. All the outer court or enclosure was filled with noise and confusion; and crowds of scrambling, shouting people were buying and selling oxen and sheep, to be used in sacrifices. Boys were crying doves for sale, and changers sat at small tables, giving to the people from foreign countries the Jewish coins used in paying the temple tax, in exchange for the coins they had brought from their own lands.

Jesus was greatly troubled at seeing such things going on in His Father's house, so He hastily tied together some small cords into a whip, and went up to the sellers of the oxen and sheep, and commanded them to leave the temple at once. And He drove them all, and all their sheep and oxen, out of the gates. The sellers of the doves were allowed to take their cages away, but they,

too, had to leave the temple; while the money changers fared worse : their tables were upset and they were turned out.

When His disciples saw what Jesus had done, they remembered that long ago it had been written, that God's Son would be filled with a great love for God's house and a burning desire that it should be kept holy. The rulers of the Jews could not find fault with Jesus for what He had done; but they came asking Him to tell them who He was, and to give them some sign to show them what right He had to drive the buyers and sellers out of the temple.

Jesus did not answer them directly, but said, "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up again". The Jews mocked at Jesus' words. "This temple took forty-six years to build", they cried, "and yet you say you could raise it up again in three days !"

But Jesus was speaking of the temple of His body. The Jews had shown disrespect to the temple of God, making it a place for worldly business. So, too, they would