November 9, 2019

Scripture

**John 2:13-22**
Since the Passover of the Jews was near,
Jesus went up to Jerusalem.
He found in the temple area those who sold oxen, sheep, and doves,
as well as the money-changers seated there.
He made a whip out of cords
and drove them all out of the temple area, with the sheep and oxen,
and spilled the coins of the money-changers
and overturned their tables,
and to those who sold doves he said,
"Take these out of here,
and stop making my Father's house a marketplace."
His disciples recalled the words of Scripture,
Zeal for your house will consume me.
At this the Jews answered and said to him,
"What sign can you show us for doing this?"
Jesus answered and said to them,
"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."
The Jews said,
"This temple has been under construction for forty-six years,
and you will raise it up in three days?"
But he was speaking about the temple of his Body.
Therefore, when he was raised from the dead,
his disciples remembered that he had said this,
and they came to believe the Scripture
and the word Jesus had spoken.

Our Scripture Reflection
Pious Jews were expected to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem during the annual celebration of the great feast of Passover. This most important feast commemorated the liberation of their ancestors from slavery in Egypt by God’s mighty hand. As a part of the commemoration the worshipper was expected to bring an animal for offering at the Temple: a large animal such as an oxen if one was of means or a smaller animal such as a pigeon if one was not. Can you imagine how difficult it would have been for a pilgrim to bring his oxen to the Temple if he lived several days journey on foot or camel away? Remember, there were no flat bed trucks or interstate highways in those days!

Not to worry. Over time some enterprising Jewish businessmen came up with a system that was very likely the origin of the “convenient store” concept. Rather than drag your animal for sacrifice across the desert or through the hills for several days, you could purchase your animal outside the Temple precincts, unblemished and ready to be sacrificed...at an inflated price, of course. To purchase your animal you could not use the coinage you brought from home because it likely had the image of Caesar on the front of it. You were welcome, however, to exchange your pagan coins for acceptable Jewish coinage at the Temple precincts AT AN INFLATED EXCHANGE RATE. The merchants got you coming and going! This, my friends, is what made Jesus furious. He said to them with great wrath: “stop making my Father's house a marketplace.” Needless to say, the merchants were furious. How dare He attempt to get them to change their lives!

Food for your Journey

When people say, "It's not the money; it's the principle of the thing," it's the money.
--Will Rogers.

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, You want nothing more than my salvation. You want me to spend all eternity with You in Heaven. Help me to wake up and realize that Your ways are like medicine, meant to heal me from my sins so that I can be found worthy of living forever with You. Amen