

Temple in Vision and in Jesus Dedication of the Lateran Basilica Friday, November 9, 2018 Ez 47:1-2, 8-9, 12; 1 Cor 3:9c-11, 16-17; **Jn 2:13-22** (He is the atonement. He is the temple. And of course he is the high priest.)

“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.”

Coming to believe the **Scripture** is not an easy thing. **People tend to take things literally, but they’re not literally true.** For example in the first reading the vision of Ezekiel is a vision: he sees a temple that produces water, which of course is a sign of Baptism, and he sees this flowing down to the Arabah into the Dead Sea, and he says it gives the sea life. Well of course that’s not actually an historical fact. The Dead Sea is still dead. But **the idea that there is this heavenly temple that produces water that can actually make the Dead Sea alive is of course a perfect example of resurrection.** It in a way is prophesying the resurrection, you might say **the resurrection of all of us.** And along the way this water makes trees grow for both food and medicine, because **it’s God’s will to nurture and heal his people, nurture and nourish and heal his people.** So this is a vision of God’s will; **this a vision of the future in the mind of God.** It is not something already physically present on earth.

Now when **Jesus came to the temple**, a very similar thing. Here is a temple forty-six years old, forty-six years and actually still being built, but it’s a temple **that many believed was corrupt.** Many believed that the priesthood at that time had fallen into corruption and actually apostasy, even at the time of Malachi. Malachi had said that **the Sakina, the overshadowing of the Lord, actually departed from the temple and ascended the Mount of Olives next door.** And I think Jesus believed that because when he went to pray, he didn’t go to the temple; he went to the garden of Gethsemane, which is the bottom of the Mount of Olives. So **Jesus was doubtless part of that school of thought that believed that the temple had become corrupt.**

And you see in today's story how **he throws out the sheep, the oxen, the doves**, drove them away. Well of course you can't have sacrifices without animals. So this is a way of saying **God isn't desirous of the kind of sacrifices you are giving**. And we know that Jesus became the sacrifice because at the Last Supper he said, "Take and drink, this is my blood poured out for you." Well that's what the high priest did on the Day of Atonement; he poured out blood. So Jesus is now becoming the atonement. And he also became the temple, which is what he is saying here: "Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up." So **he is the atonement. He is the temple. And of course he is the high priest**, as is explicitly stated in Hebrews, the high priest who takes the atonement into the holy of holies of heaven, not earth. **The holy of holies of heaven is the temple Ezekiel saw in vision**, the temple **Isaiah saw in vision**, the temple **Moses saw in vision**, from which he got the whole plan for the earthly tabernacle and later temple.

So this all really ties together that **God has a heavenly plan; people are not cooperating. Jesus comes to be the plan in all its parts**. We could say in a certain sense single-handedly Jesus is now the whole plan. He is the high priest. He is the temple. He is the atonement itself, and **it brings about a whole new experience for believers to live in the power of God's glory, to live in the power of the resurrection**. That is the tremendous gift that God has afforded to believers. And of course he does not do this for merely the believers' benefit. He does this **so the believers can spread the word of his infinite goodness and his infinite love to this world that is so deprived of truth**, that is so deprived of meaning, that is so full of its own false self and its own depraved desires, that it is marred and twisted and very sad.