

28.17 First Cleansing of the Temple (John 2:13–25) (Later Temple cleansings are found in Matthew 21:12–17; Mark 11:15–18; and Luke 19:45–48.)

✓ “*Check*” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- A thin rope from which to make a whip at the appropriate place in the story
- A change box full of coins (play money) which can be poured out at the appropriate place in the story
- CEF’s “Life of Christ, Vol. 1” flannelgraph of the story; Accent’s primary curriculum, P3A, for Temple model or other visual aids if these are unavailable

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *Passover*: Israelites celebrated the feast of Passover to remember God’s saving them from Egyptian slavery, and of His saving their firstborn when the firstborn of the Egyptians died (Ex 12:1). The name Passover was given to the feast because the Lord passed over the houses of the Israelites without slaying their firstborn, while the Egyptians were cut off. It was celebrated seven days, from the 15th to the 21st of the month ABIB, or NISAN, (our April) (Ex 12:15-20). During all this period the people ate unleavened bread, and so the festival was sometimes called the feast of unleavened bread (Ex 12:18 Le 23:6). People would bring a ram, an ox, or doves to the Temple for sacrifice. A special meal at home included lamb meat (from Online Bible).
- *money-changers*: Every year Jews were to pay a special tax to take care of the Temple. Money that came from a different place had to be changed to Temple money.
- *Temple*: [Use a model or the picture found below to demonstrate the parts of the Temple.] The main building called the Temple housed the holy place, where only the priests could go, and the holy of holies, where only the *high* priest could go and that only once a year. The various courtyards of Herod’s Temple (called so because he built it) were still called the Temple even though they were open spaces and not covered buildings. These courts could be entered in this order: 1. Court of the Gentiles; 2. Court of the Women; 3. Court of Israel; 4. Court of the Priests. The Gentiles could not enter the Court of the Women; the women could not enter the Court of Israel, Israel could not enter the Court of the Priests or the Temple building itself. [Use the “Attention” visual found below.]
- *going up to Jerusalem*: The city of Jerusalem was a higher elevation than the surrounding area; therefore, *going up* did not mean going north as on a map but going to a higher elevation.
- *miracle*: something only God can do; also called a *sign*

Scripture: (ESV)

John 2:13 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.

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.

Introduction/Review:

So far, the events of Jesus' adult public life have been His baptism, His temptation, His calling five or six disciples, His providing wine for a wedding, and His going to Capernaum.

Story:

Today we will learn about Jesus' going to Jerusalem. The reason He needed to go to Jerusalem was because it was time for the Passover. Every male Jew was required to go to the Temple in Jerusalem to this feast every year. Remember when Jesus did this at age twelve? In order to obey God's Law completely as set forth in the Old Testament books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, Jesus needed to obey the command to go to the Feast of Passover in Jerusalem every year.*

As Jesus entered the Court of the Gentiles, the outer court still called the Temple, He observed something very wrong.

Getting a sacrifice

Now, pretend I'm a male Jew who traveled several miles in order to get to the Temple. I need an animal (an ox, a lamb, or a dove) for my sacrifice. It's too hard to bring one of these animals a long or even short distance. Instead, I need to purchase it when I get to Jerusalem. Wouldn't it be handy and convenient for me to buy an animal at a market in Jerusalem? It would be even better to buy it close to the Temple. Right?

A market *close* to the Temple would be just fine, but that's not what Jesus saw. He saw a market *inside* the courts of the Temple. Although it wasn't in the Temple building itself, being in the courts of the Temple was described as being inside God's House! Can you imagine a market like that on our church lawn or parking lot before worship services?!

Oh, this was not right! ✓And it was noisy. [Teacher, make the animal sounds and shout like a vendor.] "Moos" and "baas" and "Get your lamb here!" and "Change your money here!" and "Yes, you have to pay me extra for helping you change your money!"—arguing, yelling, making money for oneself, and total disregard for God's House was going on right inside the Temple courts.

Was Jesus happy about all this noise, selling of animals, changing of money? No. God's Temple (and His church today) was to be a place to praise and worship Him, not to do these other things. God's place of meeting with His people is not to be a place for selling but a place to concentrate on all God's blessing and on all He is. That's why it's important for people, old and young, to be respectful of God when we meet for church. That's why we ask children to be quiet. That's why we ask children not to run in the buildings. That's why we sing songs and do other things that will honor God and not remind us of everything out there in the world.

Getting sellers out

Jesus was angry about all the business going on in God's House. Did He sin in being angry? No; it is right to be angry at sin. Did He lose His temper? ✓I think not. He calmly and sensibly prepared himself a short whip out of rope, whipped it out, and, one by one, made those sellers and money changers leave the Temple. He poured out the coins of the money changers and turned over their money tables, saying, "Take these things away; do not make my Father's house a market!"

Notice that Jesus said, "*My Father's* house." Who was His Father? [God, the Father.] This statement gives

us another instance of Jesus' showing He is God, for He calls God His *Father*. Whose house was the Temple? [God's.] How should God's House be treated? [With respect.]

Notice, also, that Jesus demonstrated His authority, for all those men left when Jesus forced them to go. That fact reminded Jesus' disciples that the Old Testament (Psalm 69:9) had prophesied this kind of action by the Messiah. Knowing this Scripture and others like "He shall purify the sons of Levi" (Malachi 3:2, 3), some important Jewish leaders standing there also thought about connecting Jesus' act to prophecy. Jesus' throwing out the sellers and money changers had gotten their attention. ✓Was this was the Messiah? Whatever their thoughts, they asked, "Since you are doing this, what sign do you give to prove your authority?" ✓In other words, "You are acting like the Messiah as prophesied. What sign do you give to prove this?"

Getting a sign

Wasn't the thing He had just done a sign? Yes, but the leaders wanted more. In fact, all throughout the rest of Jesus' life they would ask Him again and again for a sign, even after amazing miracles had been shown them. They wouldn't believe any of those signs.

Jesus answered in a way that threw those leaders off. He answered, "If you destroy this temple, in three days I will raise it up."

"What!?" exclaimed the leaders, looking at the Temple building. "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will you raise it up in three days? ✓Preposterous!"

We know that Jesus, the Creator of the universe, could have rebuilt that Temple in three days or in even less than three days. But John 2:22 tells us what Jesus really meant by His speaking of raising up the Temple: "He was speaking about the temple of his body." What does this mean—"raising up the temple of his body"? [Allow time for answers.] He meant that three days after dying, He would rise again from the dead—He would be alive! Could there be a better sign than this? No, but Jesus was prophesying; the event had not yet happened so that the leaders could see the sign. Still, very early in the ministry of Jesus, He was foretelling that He would die and be raised up again in three days. Later, when it happened, the disciples remembered this occasion and the words of Jesus.

That's all we hear about the unbelief of the leaders at this point, but we also read of the faith of others. Jesus did unnamed miracles at this Passover that caused some to begin, at least, to think that He might be a great prophet if not the promised Messiah.

We read an interesting statement in John 2:24. It is this: "Jesus knew all people . . . for he himself knew what was in man." What kind of amazing knowledge does Jesus have? [Knowing all people; knowing what is in people.]

Do you see how we are learning more and more that Jesus was truly God?

*Passover: On the evening of the fourteenth day, all the leaven or yeast in the family was removed with great care, as it is to the present time—a circumstance to which the apostle alludes in #1Co 5:7. On the 10th day of the month the master of a family separated a lamb or a goat of a year old from the flock, (#Ex 12:1-6,) which he slew on the 14th day before the altar, #De 16:2,5,6. The lamb was commonly slain at about 3 o'clock, P.M. The blood of the paschal lamb was, in Egypt, sprinkled on the doorposts of the houses; afterwards it was poured by the priests at the foot of the altar, #Ex 12:7. The lamb thus slain was roasted whole, with two spits thrust through it—one lengthwise, and one transversely—crossing each other near the fore legs; so that the animal was, in a manner, crucified. Not a bone of it might be broken—a circumstance strongly representing the sufferings of our Lord Jesus, the Passover slain for us, #Joh 19:36 1Co 5:7. Thus roasted, the lamb was served up with wild and bitter herbs (Online Bible).

The order of the celebration of this feast was as follows: The ceremony commenced with drinking a cup of wine

mingled with water, after having given thanks to God for it. This was the first cup. Then followed the washing of hands, with another short form of thanksgiving to God. The table was then supplied with the provisions, viz., the bitter salad, the unleavened bread, the lamb, and a thick sauce composed of dates, figs, raisins, vinegar, etc. They then took a small quantity of salad, with another thanksgiving, and ate it. After which, all the dishes were removed from the table, and a second cup of wine set before each guest. . . . The dishes were removed, it is said, to excite the curiosity of children, and to lead them to [ask] the cause of this observance. See #Ex 12:26,27. The leading person at the feast then . . . rehearsed the history of the servitude of the Jews in Egypt, the manner of their deliverance, and the reason of instituting the passover. The dishes were then returned to the table, and he said, "*This is the passover which we eat, because that the Lord passed over the houses of our fathers in Egypt;*" and then holding up the salad and the unleavened bread, he stated the *design*, viz., that the one represented the *bitterness* of the Egyptian bondage, and the other the suddenness of their deliverance. This done, he repeated the 113th and 114th Psalms, offered a short prayer, and all the company drank the wine that had been standing , , , before them. This was the *second cup*. The hands were then again washed, and the meal then eaten. . . . After which they washed the hands again, and then drank another cup of wine, called the cup of blessing, because the leader was . . . to offer thanks to God for his goodness. This is the cup which our Saviour is supposed to have taken when he instituted the Lord's Supper, called by Paul *the cup of blessing*, #1Co 10:16. There was still another cup, which was drunk when they were about to separate, called the Hallel, because in connexion with it they were accustomed to repeat the lesser *Hallel*, or the 115th, 116th, 117th, 118th Psalms. In accordance with this, our Saviour and his disciples sang a hymn, as they were about to go to the Mount of Olives, #Mt 26:30. It is probable that our Saviour complied with these rites according to the custom of the Jews. While doing it, he signified that the *typical* reference of the passover was about to be accomplished, and he instituted in place of it *the Supper*—the communion—and of course the obligation to keep the passover then ceased.

The passover he [Jesus] kept at Jerusalem; it is the *first* after his baptism, and the evangelist takes notice of all the passovers he kept henceforward, which were four in all, the *fourth* that at which he suffered (three years after this), and half a year was now past since his baptism. Christ, being *made under the law*, observed the passover at Jerusalem; #Ex 23:17. Thus he taught us by his example a strict observance of divine institutions, and a diligent attendance on religious assemblies (Matthew Henry in Online Bible).

** The temple which then stood upon Mt. Moriah was the third structure which had occupied that site. The first temple, built by Solomon (B.C. 1012-1005), was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. The second temple, built by Zerubbabel and Jeshua (B.C. 520), had been torn down and rebuilt by Herod the Great, but in such a manner as not to interfere with the temple service. The sanctuary was completed in one year and a half, while the courts required eight years. Josephus says eighteen thousand workmen were employed in its erection. Additional outbuildings and other work had been carried on from that time, and the whole was not completed until A.D. 64. (TFG 124in Online Bible).

This temple Herod the Great commenced repairing, or began to rebuild, in the eighteenth year of his reign—that is, sixteen years before the birth of Christ (Jos. Ant., b. xv. 1). The main body of the temple he completed in nine years and a half (Jos. Ant., xv. 5, 6), yet the temple, with its outbuildings, was not entirely complete in the time of our Saviour. Herod continued to ornament it and to perfect it even till the time of Agrippa (Jos. Ant., b. xx. ch. viii. § 11). As Herod began to rebuild the temple sixteen years before the birth of Jesus, and as what is here mentioned happened in the thirtieth year of the age of Jesus, so the time which had been occupied in it was forty-six years (Barnes in Online Bible).

Lessons from This Lesson:

- Jesus is God: He said the Temple is "My Father's house"; He predicted His resurrection; He said, "I will raise it (His body) in three days"; He fulfilled "The zeal of your house has eaten me up"; He showed more than human power in clearing the Temple; He knows what is in man.
- Know the Bible. One day it will all come together for you.
- Treat God's House right.

- Jesus was angry about sin. Are you?
- Believing for only a short time because of some sign is not true belief in Jesus Christ.
- The body of believers is now called the Temple of God, but Christ is our Temple.

Activities:

- Play dough: whip, sheep, ox, dove, coins, tables
- Remind students that God made each animal carefully and that animal sounds have a purpose. Imagine, for example, a bird mooing or a pig chirping. Students may wish to share other nonsensical notions about the sounds animals might make. Remind them that God did it right.
- Play charades: Students guess what activities are done in church (singing, praying, listening, greeting people, giving).
- Students shake head “no” if an activity should not be done in church or nod head “yes” if an activity should be done in church: sing, throw things, pray, fight, talk while others are worshiping, say “hello,” listen to sermon or story, run and play all over the building after the service, say Bible verse, hit, learn.
- Print and prepare take-home booklets for this story. The online source for ordering or downloading for \$12.99 is <https://www.carsondellosa.com/products/0499--New-Testament-Take-Home-Bible-Stories-Resource-Book-0499#/?book%20media%20type=f389e45b92884d48844baaf09d49e3c5>. The book is less expensive at other sites, but those sites do not offer the ebook.
- Sing previously sung Life of Christ songs found on the Songs page at teachingthebibletochildren.org.
- Review questions: (Game: Place a penny for each correct answer into a container or two containers if teams are playing. The team or student that gets the most correct answers may pour out the coins of both containers.)
 1. What event in the book of Exodus did the Feast of Passover remember? [When the Israelites were delivered from Egypt, the death angel “passed over” the houses with blood on the door posts.]
 2. Why did Jesus go to Jerusalem to observe Passover? [It was required of all male Jews to go.]
 3. When the Bible states the sellers and money changers were *in* the Temple, were they inside the Temple building? Explain. [No. All the courts around the Temple were “*in* the Temple.”]
 4. What did Jesus do to the sellers and money changers? [Made a whip of cords, drove them and their animals out, overthrew the money tables.]
 5. Fill in the blanks. “Do not make My _____ a house of trade.” [Father’s house.]
 6. What did Jesus say was His sign for doing these things? Hint: “In three days . . .” [He said, “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.”]
 7. What did Jesus mean by saying “*this Temple*”? [His body.]
 8. What did the Jews think Jesus meant by saying “*this Temple*”? [The actual Temple building.]
 9. What did Jesus mean by saying, “In three days I will raise it up”? [He would rise from the dead after being dead three days.]
 10. Why did many in Jerusalem believe in Jesus’ name? [Because they saw His signs; however, Jesus knew their hearts.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- John 2:24, 25—[Jesus] knew all people and needed no one to bear witness about man, for he himself knew what was in man.
- John 1:1-14:
 - 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

- 2 He was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.
- 4 In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- 5 And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.
- 6 There was a man sent from God, whose name *was* John.
- 7 This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.
- 8 He was not that Light, but *was sent* to bear witness of that Light.
- 9 That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world.
- 10 He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him.
- 11 He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him.
- 12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:
 - 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
 - 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

Handwork:

- Make a whip of cords
- Cut out a church shape from cardboard. Have students trace the shape on paper. Fill in the windows by gluing wrapping paper or tissue on that space. Draw things to do in church on the back side of the church.

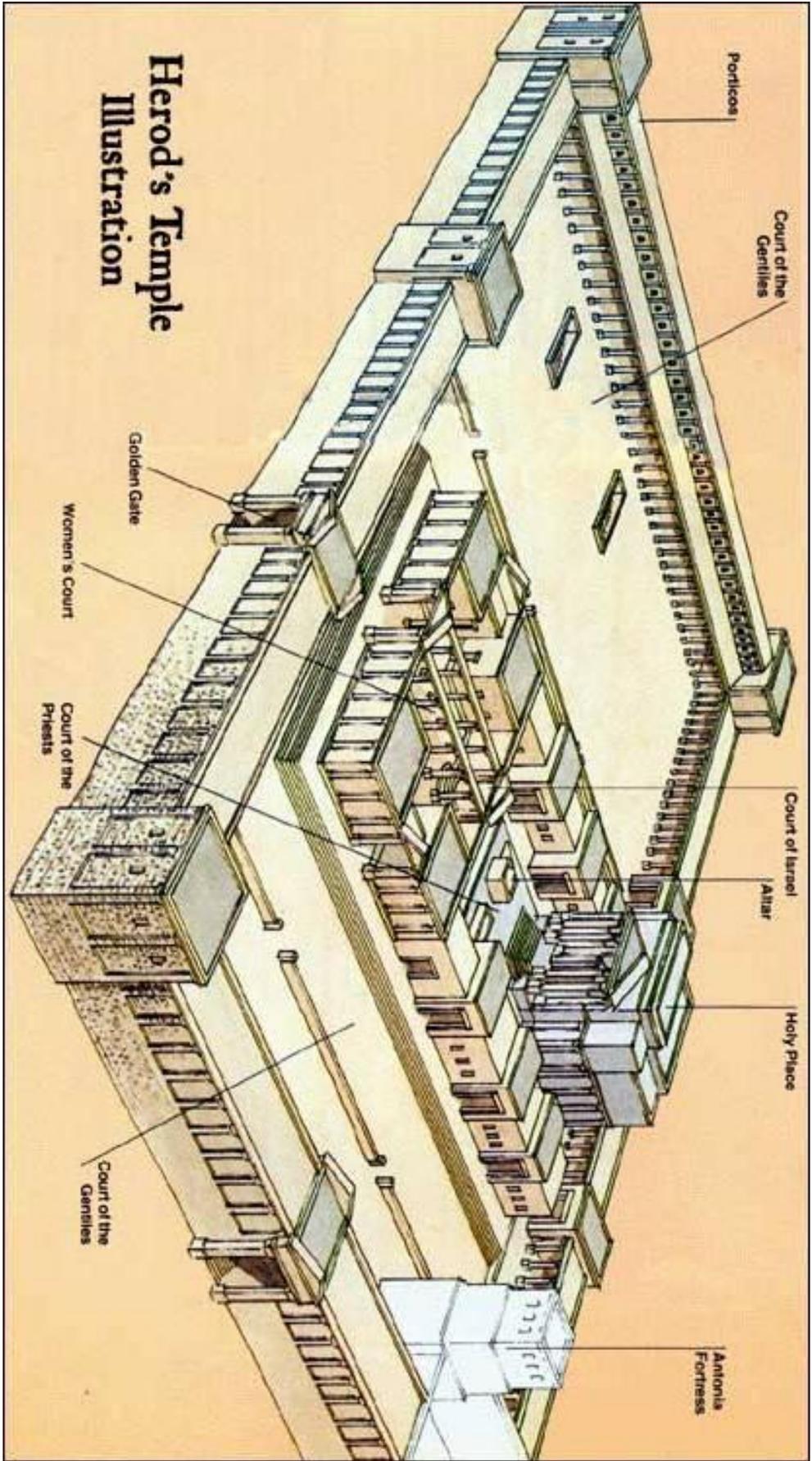
Passover

money-changers

Temple

going up to Jerusalem

miracle



Attention!

You may enter the Temple courts
in this order only:

1. Court of the Gentiles.

Gentiles may go no farther.

2. Court of the women.

Women may go no farther.

3. Court of Israel.

Israelite men may go no farther unless they are
priests.

4. Court of the priests.

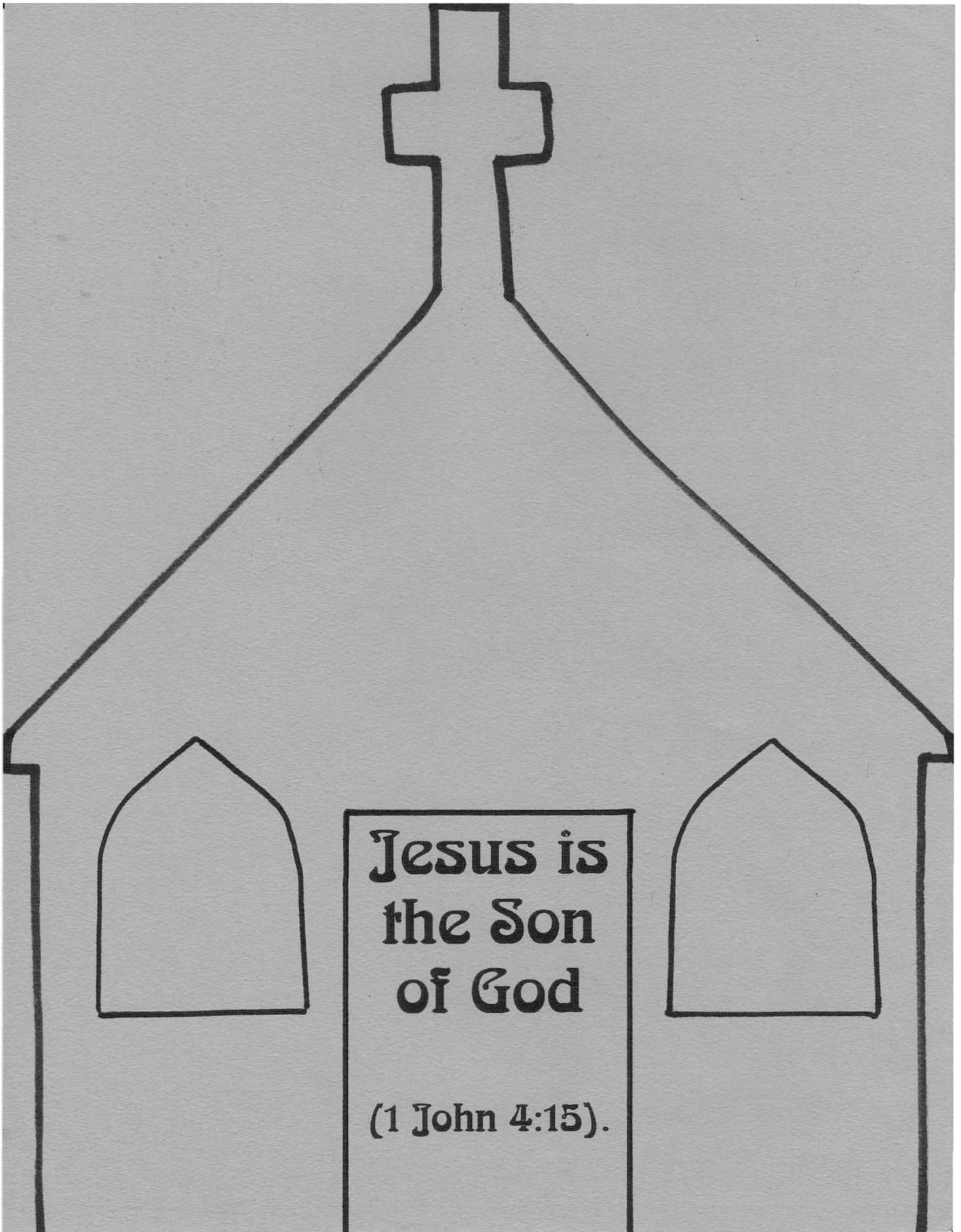
Only priests may go this far. Only certain priests
may enter the Temple building.











**Jesus is
the Son
of God**

(1 John 4:15).