



7 - 13 March 2021 Under construction

Related Bible reading(s): John 2.13-22

Bible study on John 2.13-22

This study can be used by a small family/ household group, or by an online group, or – sometimes with a little adaptation - by an individual.

See our [Guidelines for a weekly Bible study](#)

Begin with an opening prayer

Holy God, as we meet together,
we ask that you renew our love for you.
Open our eyes to see fresh things,
open our ears to hear with more clarity,
open our minds to recognise new ideas –
that we may be willing to grow and change
and to become more like your Son,
Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Read the passage

Consider different ways to read the text. For example, hearing it in more than one version of the Bible.

In an online group, you could share parts between those present, or use/adapt this week's Share the Word suggestion: Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to go to Share the Word and scroll down to find the Gospel reading.

Explore and respond to the text

Start by reading the Bible notes below. You may want to read them more than once, or pause after each paragraph to reflect on what you have read.

Bible notes

There are three Passovers in John (2.13; 6.4; 11.55), and Jesus regularly observes the Jewish festivals in the Jerusalem Temple – Passover in the spring (2.13; 12.12), Tabernacles in the autumn (7.10), and the ‘festival of the Dedication’ (Hanukkah) in the winter (10.22). John places Jesus’ driving the traders from the Temple at the beginning of his ministry, leading us to read the Gospel in the light of John’s insight that Jesus ‘was speaking of the Temple of his body’. Accordingly, the ceremonial pouring of water and lighting of lamps in the Temple at Tabernacles gives way to Jesus as the source of living water gushing to eternal life (4.14) and as the light of the world (8.12). Hanukkah celebrated the rededication of the Temple after the successful revolt against the Seleucids, and Jesus sanctifies himself so that his followers may be sanctified in truth (7.19ff). Dying on the day of Preparation for Passover (19.14), when the lambs were slaughtered, Jesus is indeed ‘the Lamb of God’ (1.36). It was only after Jesus’ death and resurrection that the disciples ‘believed the Scripture and the word that Jesus had spoken’. They understood that Jesus’ actions fulfilled the prophecy that on ‘the day of the Lord’ there would no longer be traders in the Temple (Zechariah 14.21), and realised the hope of the psalmist, whose ‘zeal for your house’ longed for the rebuilding of the Temple and the renewal of the people (Psalm 69.9,35-36). And the disciples came to understand that Jesus’ words announced the sign of his death and resurrection. After the destruction of the Temple in AD 70, a mere 90 years after Herod started its reconstruction, Jesus’ followers fully understood that God is worshipped in spirit and truth (4.21-24).

See also:



[Hardwired for story](#)

Arnold Browne discusses
Lent storytelling with
Joel Denno.

Reflection

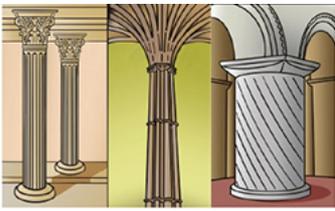
Spend a few moments thinking about what stands out for you from the Bible reading. This idea may help.

The educationalist Ken Robinson describes a little girl drawing. Asked, ‘What are you drawing?’, she replies, ‘A picture of God.’ Told, ‘But nobody knows what God looks like,’ she responds, ‘They will in a minute.’

That demonstrates a child’s confidence in her creativity, something to be nurtured and treasured. But as we smile, we are reminded that all our images of God are at best partial. Even the law, given to Moses, the delight of the psalmist, and always respected by Paul, is incomplete as an account of God’s holiness, and must not be used to divide and exclude. This remains a challenge even to what we think are our most elevated insights into the divine.

Questions for reflection

You may wish to use these questions and the picture to help you think about or discuss issues of sharing.



- In your church community what, or who, holds things together? ...is purely decorative? ...gets in the way?
- What type of pillar are you?
- If you are a 'community under construction', what needs constructing next?

A simple worship activity

Map and pray for church activity, Monday to Saturday.

You will need: a large map of your local area on a board, and coloured pins.

- Invite people to place one or more pins on the map where they spend most of their week.
- Ask them to think of the people they meet in those places. How might they make their lives better this coming week (e.g. by smiling, buying a coffee, carrying their shopping, praying for them)?
- Finish by asking people to think of one of these people to pray for. Then pray for everyone.

Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to go to more activities in Explore and respond

Prayer

Adapt to your local context.

We thank you, Lord, for the times when you have knocked us off our pedestals. Thinking we are wise, we have trusted in our own understanding rather than yours. You have bulldozed our 'castles in the air' to bring us down to earth. Praise be that, time after time, you have driven our falseness and foolishness away with cords of truth and righteousness, freeing us to be your Church without walls, open to all and ever expanding.

Amen.

*Use the Jump to this week's menu on the right to find more prayers, including up-to-date intercessions in **The week in focus**.*

A prayer to end the Bible study

We came together to worship God.

We have read God's Word.

We have prayed and sung songs.

Now we go into God's world:

to be God's people wherever we are called to go.

Let us go in Christ's name.

Amen.

Go with God 24/7

Encourage everyone to put their faith into action.

During the coming week, keep the stone close by to remind you of the essentials of being church. Look for a situation or place where you can be or do something – e.g. be a channel of God's grace or justice – and leave the stone there for someone else to find.

*Encourage everyone to explore their faith this week with the **ROOTS at home** resource.*

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