

# The Heart of Jesus; The Hand Of David

*‘When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ‘In the temple courts He found men selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. So He made a whip out of chords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle, he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. To those who sold doves He said, ‘Get these out of here! How dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!’ His disciples remembered that it was written: ‘Zeal for your house will consume me.’ (John 2:13-17)*

A shepherd has a zeal and valiant spirit. He always protects his flock. He is full of courage to fight against the enemies, the thieves, the wolves, the bear, and the wild beast. King David had been a good shepherd to his father’s flock before he became king. *‘But David said to Saul, ‘Your servant has been keeping his father’s sheep. When a lion or a bear came and carried off a sheep from the flock, I went after it, struck it and rescued the sheep from its mouth. When it turned on me, I seized it by its hair, struck it and killed it.’ (1Samuel 17:34-35)*

Who can be that shepherd? A father, a husband, a leader, a governor, a pastor, a manager, and any responsible person whether he is a master or slave, an employee, rich or poor, everyone is invited to be a good and brave shepherd.

In the Gospel of John, Jesus’ ministry is first presented by the miracle of changing water into wine at the marriage celebration in Cana. (*read* John 2:1-11) Because of what Jesus had done, the celebration went on. And the people first came to know and see Jesus as good, kind, cooperative, forgiving, loving, understanding, humble, quiet and practical. But in the same gospel the first miracle of goodness was followed by cleansing of the temple. The temple of God was built to keep the Ark of the Covenant. It was the place of worship, where the people could present to God their sacrifices.

According to the Law of Moses, the priest and the Levites were responsible to minister to the people before God. The priests were to offer the animal sacrifice before God. Every person among the community would bring His due offering to God with the required sacrifices like cattle, sheep or doves. Certainly, people who were coming from far places, it was difficult for them to bring the animal sacrifices with them in the long journey. So there were lots of special offers that seemed for the best and convenience for the people. Men selling cattle, sheep, doves, and money changers occupied the temple courts so people could purchase what the priest would require them for their sacrifice.

Consequently, the secular word ‘corruption’ and the theological word ‘wickedness’ are already present before and even till now. What is corruption? It is like a tank filled with garbage and covered by thin layer of honey. It is like a handsome suit worn over a dirty and non-bathed body. From far it looks fine, but when you approach and come near you will discover the rotten smell.

**1. The temple was built perfectly and is meant for God, but it became a market place for commodities.** Jesus said: *‘To those who sold doves He said, ‘Get these out of here! how dare you turn my Father’s house into a market!’ (John 2:16)* (But we are still in the superficial layer of the garbage, so let us go deeper.)

**2. The priests were responsible and eligible to examine each sacrifice that would be presented to God.** If they found the animal defective, they would ask replacement from the person who brought the offering. Where could they buy? The answer is easy—from the temple courts, the Lord provides! Near and easy, but of course with a higher price because it is a special service. Those who sell would get benefit. The priest as well would get share for they would receive percentage on such case. Maybe, every priest had his own men who were selling or whom he was dealing with. So they just simply could say, ‘go to that shop he has good sacrifices!’ Don’t tell this is not true; the priests had the authority to clear the courts of the temple from such things. But they tolerated and allowed them as business partners because they were getting benefits. So it had become an extra income for the priests. The more they were rejecting the sacrifices, the more they were receiving. As a result, the priests and levities who were not given any inheritance were able to gain treasures, houses and possessions because of their illegal business in the temple courts. There was corruption and practice of wickedness.

**3. The salesman and money changers offered their services.** The secondary phenomenon would be the result of the above primary one. As the business and the dealings increased, money exchange increased, to sell and buy money exchange was needed. The network was expanding and corruption territory was increasing.

When Jesus entered the temple, He saw what was on the ground and He recognized the circuit of dishonesty. They were not the simple people selling and buying but big heads were involved. Those who were supposed to protect the people who come to offer sacrifices, they were the robbers and thieves. But they could not mock Jesus, He is God. He searches the heart of everyone and He knows everything. Imagine the pain and the sadness He felt when He saw that the house of the Lord became a den of robbers. *‘Has this house which bears my name, become a den of robbers to you? But I have been watching declares the Lord.’ (Jeremiah 7:11)*

Jesus saw how the house of God was corrupted. So He made a whip out of cords and drove all from the temple area, all the birds, sheep, and cattle; He scattered the coins of money changers and overturned their tables. Was He so angry? No, still He loved them, but they indeed needed to be treated in such a way. His love is above all sins, but to cleanse them from corruption He has to use His hand and His authority. His act was the boldness to face wickedness in order to bring them to a better state. The situation inside the temple has to be changed. *‘The zeal for your house will consume me.’* Let the word of God speak to us:

- *If we are selling and buying or running a business which is part of the corruption circuit, remember the day the whip from the Lord will reach us. Remove it before He enters. This is a warning to everyone of us.*
- *If we are seeing corruption or wickedness in our workplace, family, or society and God wants us to face it, He will grant us boldness and authority while He puts a whip on our hand.*

**My dear and beloved:** Today we are reminded to do something; *to face with courage and boldness the obstacles set before us.* Let us pray that God may strengthen us to do this task.

**My Prayer:** *Father God I come before you in the name of Jesus who died on the cross for my sins to give me eternal life. Lord I commit myself into your hand, you enable me and equip me to do your will. Lord gives me boldness to stand firm and to say, ‘No,’ to sin and to corruption, this all I ask and pray in Jesus name, Amen.*