

Jesus birth, and then walk through his life and ministry to his death, John takes a different approach. He skips over the nativity and jumps straight into the moments that define Jesus' identity and mission. It's almost as if John is hand picking what he deems are the most significant moments of Jesus life and then highlighting them so we can see with abundant clarity the sovereignty of Jesus Christ.

And in our story today, just like last week, we see again that this example serves to show the same authority and sovereignty of Jesus Christ - but in a different way. And the general message is that the people of the day were turning the temple into a marketplace which grieved Jesus deeply. A place that was meant to bring worship was now bringing idolatry - and Jesus did not stand by and idly embrace this. He did something about it, and made quite the statement by making a whip and flipping over tables and telling people to get out.

Now, a lot of people focus on this moment as a picture of righteous anger - and yes, it is - but that's not the heart of the story. There's something far deeper happening here. We'll dig into that in a moment, but first, it's important to set the scene so we know exactly what we're walking into.

Firstly, it's important to understand that Jesus and His disciples didn't just happen to find themselves at the temple one day. They were there, like thousands of others, because it was Passover. And as they went up to Jerusalem to join the celebrations, naturally they made their way to the temple - the very center of Jewish worship, especially during Passover.

Passover, after all, was a celebration of life and deliverance. It commemorated the night when God brought Israel out of 400 years of slavery and into covenant relationship with Him. That final plague Moses pronounced over Egypt was the moment the angel of death was sent to strike down every firstborn male. But God provided a way of escape: each Israelite family was to sacrifice a spotless lamb and apply its blood to their doorposts. When the angel saw the blood, he spared that home.

Which is exactly where the name Passover comes from. In Hebrew, the word is Pesach, which literally means 'to pass over' or 'to spare.' That's exactly what happened that night - the angel of death literally passed over every home marked by the blood of the lamb. The Egyptians, of course, did not - and every Egyptian household, including Pharaoh's, lost its firstborn - and that was the final straw. Pharaoh relented, and God's people were finally set free.

Fast-forward now to John 2, and we find the Jewish people from all over the region gathered at the temple in Jerusalem to celebrate how God rescued His people - and part of that worship included offering sacrifices at the temple before sharing in the feast.