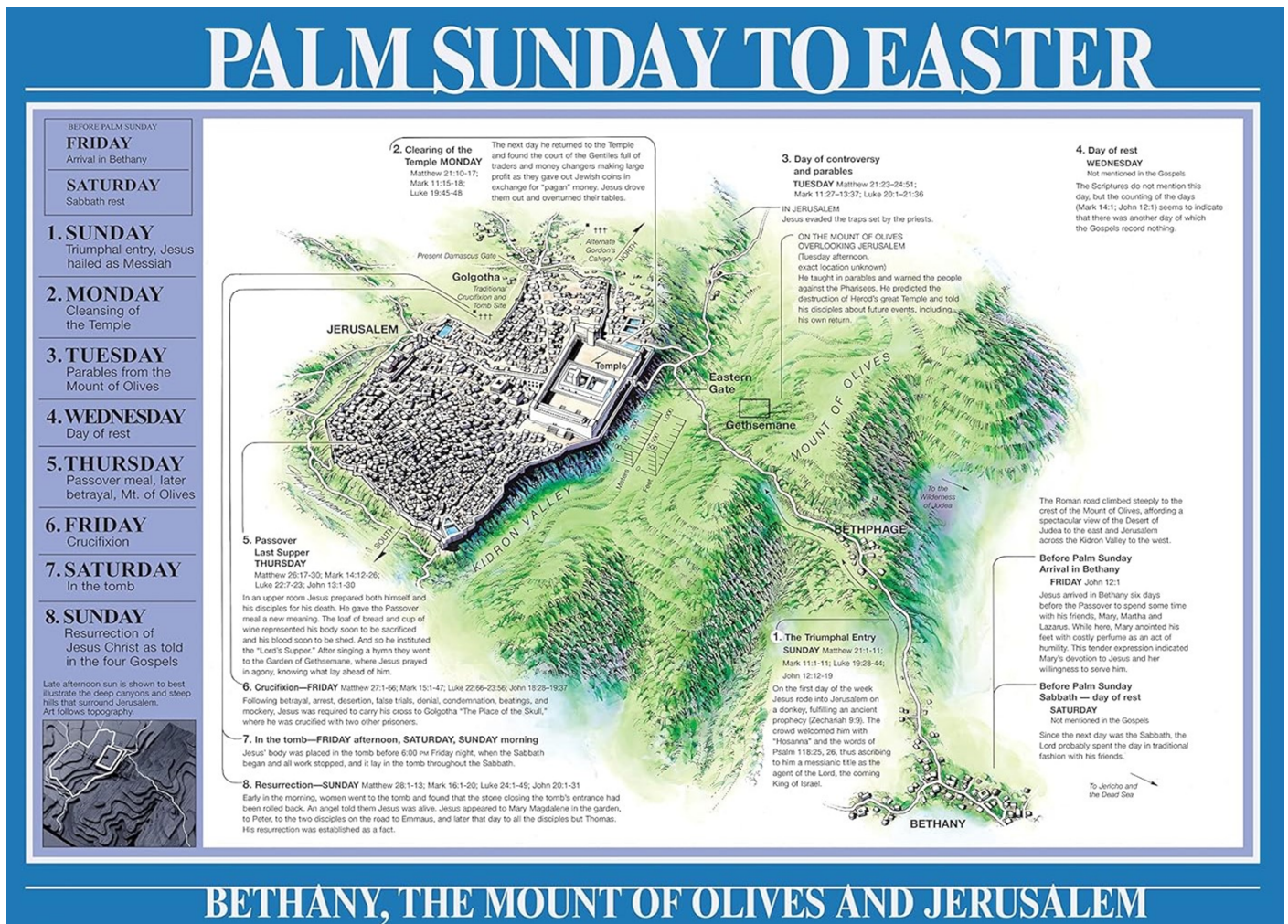
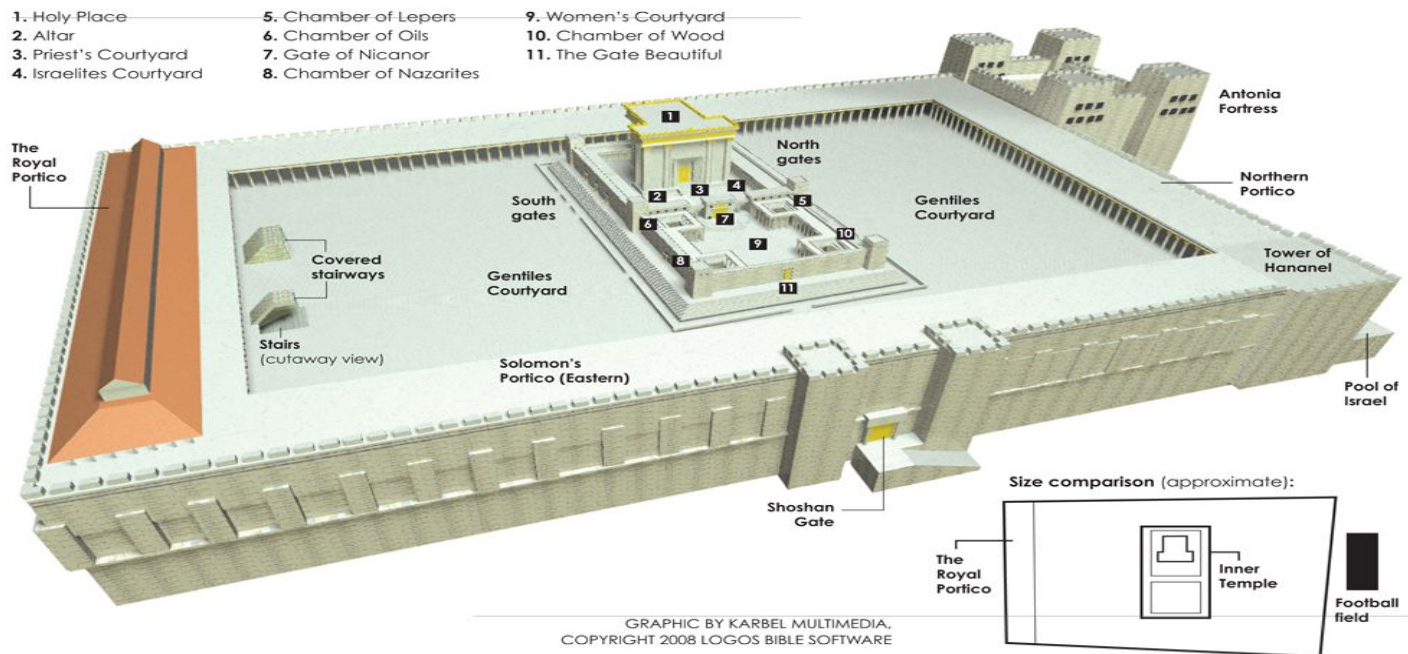


1. **Introduction:** Monday after the Triumphal Entry of Sunday, Jesus and the 12 left Bethany early to go to Jerusalem.
 - On the way, they saw a fig tree with abundant leaves but the buds that should have been present were not. In an “acted-out” parable, Jesus cursed the barren fig tree. They continued to Jerusalem.
2. **Mark 11:15-17:** *And they came to Jerusalem. And he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money-changers and the seats of those who sold pigeons. ¹⁶ And he would not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. ¹⁷ And he was teaching them and saying to them, “Is it not written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations’? But you have made it a den of robbers.”*



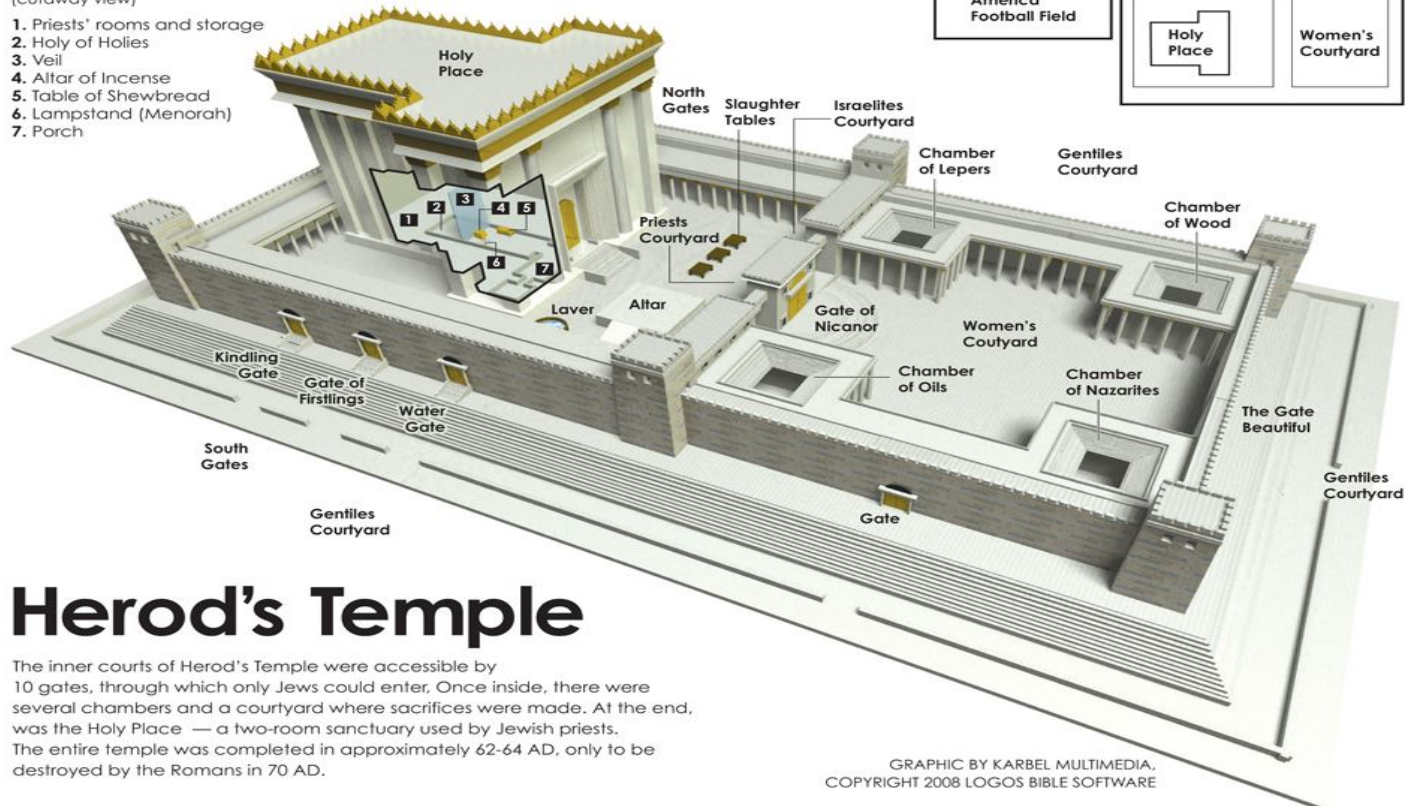
Herod's Temple

King Herod the Great began renovations on the Second Temple approximately 20-19 BC. The entire temple wasn't completed until approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.



INSIDE THE HOLY PLACE (cutaway view)

1. Priests' rooms and storage
2. Holy of Holies
3. Veil
4. Altar of Incense
5. Table of Shewbread
6. Lampstand (Menorah)
7. Porch



Herod's Temple

The inner courts of Herod's Temple were accessible by 10 gates, through which only Jews could enter. Once inside, there were several chambers and a courtyard where sacrifices were made. At the end, was the Holy Place — a two-room sanctuary used by Jewish priests. The entire temple was completed in approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

- Arriving in Jerusalem, they went to the Temple where Jesus began the enormous task of cleansing the Temple of the large-scale money-changing operation and the buying and selling of animals for sacrifice.
 - These business activities took place in the Court of the Gentiles.
 - The noise, filth, and stench from the animals, the hustle from the ones selling them was overpowering.
 - Notice that Jesus began to drive out both buyers and sellers. Driving out the sellers is easy to understand, but why drive out the buyers?
 - The reason seems to be that people did not protest the ongoing debasing of the Temple but participated because it was an easy way to acquire a sacrificial animal that was pre-approved as “perfect.”
 - Money changers were active because in the Temple no foreign money was accepted. Both selling animals and money changing were big profitable business because of the huge influx of pilgrims at Passover.
 - Jesus drove out the animal sellers and overturned the money changer’s tables, clearly demonstrating He is Lord of the Temple.
 - The multiple gates into the Temple made it easy to go through the Temple courtyards as a shortcut. In verse 16, Jesus forbids carrying merchandise through the Temple.
 - The point of all this is that Jesus was indignant that the sacred Temple was being used for purely secular purposes (profitable to the religious leaders).
 - As He took command of the Temple, Jesus quoted from both Isaiah and Jeremiah.
3. **Isaiah 56:7-8**: *“for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. ⁸ The Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, declares, “I will gather yet others to him besides those already gathered.”*
 4. **Jeremiah 7:11**: *“Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord.”*
 5. **Mark 11:18**: *“And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him, for they feared him, because all the crowd was astonished at his teaching.”*
 - The chief priests heard, understood the implication, and sought a way to destroy Him.
 - The chief priests were enraged, fearing Jesus’ influence with the adoring crowds, the penetrating truth of His teachings, and fearing that Jesus would expose them for what they were. The way out was to kill Jesus.
 6. **Mark 11:19**: *“And when evening came they went out of the city.”*
 - According to Matthew and Luke, Jesus did not leave the Temple after His cleansing activity. He healed and taught throughout the day. At the end of the day (Monday), they returned to Bethany. On Tuesday (on the way He gave the fig tree lesson)

7. **Mark 11:27-28:** *“And they came again to Jerusalem. And as he was walking in the temple, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders came to him,²⁸ and they said to him, ‘By what authority are you doing these things, or who gave you this authority to do them?’”*

- ☐ Monday’s cleansing of the Temple greatly disturbed the chief priests and other religious rulers. On Tuesday, they challenged His authority to evict people from the Temple as well as His authority to teach there.
- ☐ Jesus was not one of them, properly trained and commissioned. He was not authorized by a recognized cleric or appointed by a Roman official.
- ☐ What authority did He claim? They had heard His claim to be Messiah but refused to affirm that claim.
- ☐ They were also trying to trick Jesus. If He answered their question, it would verify that He owed them an answer. If He explained Himself in any way, He would be acknowledging their authority over Him.
- ☐ How would Jesus respond? As He often did, He responded with a penetrating question of His own.

8. **Mark 11:29-32:** *Jesus said to them, “I will ask you one question; answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.³⁰ Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man? Answer me.”³¹ And they discussed it with one another, saying, “If we say, ‘From heaven,’ he will say, ‘Why then did you not believe him?’³² But shall we say, ‘From man’?”—they were afraid of the people, for they all held that John really was a prophet.*

- ☐ Jesus changed the tenor of the interaction. He asked a question they would have great difficulty answering and demanded they answer His question first.
- ☐ Jesus’ question reveals the significant difference between His view of authority and the chief priest’s view that authority flows from power.
- ☐ The authority of the chief priests came down to them from the Roman Emperor who appointed the high priest who then appointed them.
- ☐ For Jesus, authority accompanies truth and God is truth. A person has authority only by being aligned with God who is omnipotent. God is the ultimate power and authority in the world.
- ☐ *“Was the baptism of John from heaven or from man?”* In other words, did John baptize by God’s order or did he simply implement it from his own ideas? This question is pointedly about truth.
- ☐ If John’s ministry is admitted to be God-ordained, it would raise several issues. (1.) Why did the religious rulers oppose John? (2.) Why did they assent to John’s

execution by Herod Antipas? (3.) Why did they not agree with John that Jesus is the Messiah?

- ☐ If they denounced John's baptism as being of human origin, they would be opposing popular opinion that affirmed John as a true prophet of God.
- ☐ **Since** the rulers thought in terms of power and had little regard for truth, they searched for an answer that would give them political advantage.
- ☐ It soon became clear to them that they face a no-win situation.
- ☐ They could either affirm Jesus as the Messiah or alienate most Jews who were convinced that John was God's prophet. John had declared Jesus to be the long-awaited Messiah, God's lamb who would take away sins.
- ☐ What should they do? They did the sensible thing and "punted."

9. **Mark 11:33**: ***"So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." And Jesus said to them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things."***

- ☐ The religious rulers' response was a temporary end to their efforts to dispose of Jesus, but they did not give up. Since Jesus had the advantage of truth in His words, the rulers would press their power advantage.
- ☐ Jesus won this confrontation by making a reasonable request that the rulers could not grant without confirming Jesus as the Messiah. They would not do so.
- ☐ Since they would not answer Jesus' question about John's authority, He would not answer the ruler's question about His own authority.
- ☐ The ruler's "We do not know" reveals their guilt. Not admitting the truth doesn't mean that you don't know it.
- ☐ This incident focused the ruler's intent to find some acceptable way to rid themselves of Jesus.

10. Next lesson we begin with Mark 12:1.