

2. To the religious Rulers in general however, Jesus' effort to purify the Temple by ending their corruption had a permanent and negative effect on their evaluation of Him. To them the Nazarene was nothing more than a self-made Rabbi, a Galilean outsider, a prophetic upstart, a mere wandering preacher carpenter. Unlike the women and the commonplace Jews, who were so elated about what Jesus did to restore the Temple to its priority position as a House of Prayer, the Temple administrators never exonerated Jesus. His courageous action against their greedy scam had thoroughly mortified them. This, they would never forget or forgive. Jesus had disrupted their financial gold mine; and they moved to restore it.

Thus, outside of Nicodemus, the preponderance of Priests, Pharisees, Scribes and Rabbis in and out of the Sanhedrin soon fell in line with those now in opposition to Jesus. How dare He

question their Torah observance! Yet to Jesus there was no doubt as to His duty as the final Prophet of Yahweh. The Messiah preached, no, demanded everyone to refocus their way of life and recommit to Divine Principles on a personal level.

To this stance the reaction of the Temple Elders was typical. As had happened to many prophets before Him, the perpetrators of sacrilege labeled Jesus a religious fanatic! This adverse attitude of the powers that be toward any reformer is chronic. Nothing must change; all under their watch was either perfect or good enough. From now on, whatever Jesus said or did to prove His Messianity, not even His most astounding miracles, could ever make them review their negative position. The money-changing and animal-selling merchandising practice was restored at the Temple by the next Passover with no regard to Jesus. Thus, three years hence, He would once again repeat this same cleansing engagement. This purification of His Father's House was both Jesus' initial and final Messianic witness. (Mt. 21:22; Mk. 11:15; Lk. 19:45)

Another set of obstacles against the Leaders' acceptance of Jesus were some specific rabbinical teachings then in vogue by their general consensus:

- ♥ First, that the era of prophetic activity had terminated almost three hundred years previous;