

JESUS RIOTS IN THE TEMPLE AND SLAPS THE TEMPLE WORKERS

Jesus decided to fulfil a prediction about the Messiah and went on a donkey into Jerusalem to great acclaim where he was hailed as king. It was his political statement that he was rightful ruler by entering Jerusalem in Messiah fashion.

Jesus organised a riot in the Temple soon after. Matthew, Mark and Luke give information on that.

John puts this riot far back at the start of Jesus' ministry. Christians say that there is no contradiction so Jesus must have rioted at least twice.

He acted like a Zealot - a Jewish terrorist. These people had a group with them that spread among the crowd and pulled knives on them. Jesus had to have been organised otherwise we would not even hear of the incident. He would have been grabbed and thrown out immediately without further ado. There would only be some hustle and bustle but no incident!

John the Baptist was executed for political reasons even though it does not look like he was involved in politics. Josephus blames political fears and fears of upheaval for John's death. This over-caution shows us that Jesus would not have been allowed to minister as it would give rise to a new and worse problem. So he did not get into the Temple unless authorities were afraid of him which makes sense if the Zealots were behind him.

Anyway Jesus overthrew baskets and wouldn't let people carry things through the Temple. He must have had people helping him for the Temple Guards would have taken care of him as soon as he turned the first table and he could not do all those things on his own. The attack took place near a festival time and uprisings of some sort were always happening at such times so the number of guards would have been increased considerably. The Temple area was well over the size of thirty football fields. For Jesus to drive the workers out of the Temple would have demanded a huge amount of assistance. He must have had over a thousand supporters to help him. Mark 11:11 says that Jesus went into the Temple to examine everything and used a professional word to describe what Jesus did periblepsamenos inferring that Jesus was on what he considered an official legal mission which would have necessitated a very thorough examination and had the manpower to help him assess the goings on in the Temple. Jesus was obviously a self-appointed king for only that could have let to him imagining that he had the right to stick his nose into the affairs of the Temple and it indicates that he and his followers who helped him did not respect the law of the land at all though Christianity says they did. Jesus was defying the law of the land and going his own way and even decreeing his own laws. This was the one that supposedly said, "Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth". He risked death for himself and his followers and was obviously prepared to command the bloody slaughter of any Temple Guards that tried to stop his outrageous intrusion. To pick a festival time was very very provocative. Innocent men and women and children could have been killed.

Many thousands came to the Temple at festival time. Mark tells us that Jesus kept the visitors out and managed to keep people from coming in with their containers and other things (11:15-16). Mark tells us that the priests could not kill him though they wanted to there and then that day for they were afraid of the crowd. This would not have been the case had Jesus only had a few men with him – then a Temple Guard could have slain him and blamed a sniper afterwards to hide the priests' role in the matter. The fact that Jesus and his army got into the Temple suggests one undeniable fact: Jesus had some of the Roman leaders in his pocket. Christians take note of that when you argue that the Romans could not have stolen the body of Jesus or helped him survive the cross or fake his death.

The Christians say Jesus just threw over a few tables in the Temple. That amount of violence would not have made any difference or any impact but it would have got Jesus into trouble. Jesus had to have done more than thrash up a few stalls. John 2 says he did a lot of damage and even got the animals out of their pens. These pens were strong. He didn't do that with a whip. He must have had an axe with him as well. The John gospel is not telling us everything – but we will not be taken for fools by it.

It would have been more respectful and sensible if Jesus had protested outside the Temple. He defiled the Temple if he did what the Christian gospels say. It seems Jesus would have earned no friends by doing that and so it was very unlikely for him to wilfully defile the Temple. This view would have it that Jesus and his army caused what they believed to be a justifiable riot in the Temple to purge it of the abuses that were taking place in it. The gospels say as much when they said this point was that the Temple was not to be a den of thieves but the house of God. But the fact that Jesus chose such a strange time for it was so busy and the Temple had extra protection and when he knew the Jews could have rallied together the male visitors to the holy city to oust him from the Temple if they needed to shows that Jesus couldn't care less about defiling the Temple. Spilling human blood in the Temple and tarring all the workers with the same brush and attacking them and their property and throwing their money to the ground for thieves to grab it shows absolutely no respect for the Temple and no belief in its status as the House of God. The gospels are lying.

The gospels are not saying too much in case they give away the fact that Jesus led the Zealots to war in the city. Perhaps his followers saw that he wanted to slaughter the Jewish leaders as well as the Romans and that was why they turned against him and bayed for his crucifixion later. John 2:15 says that Jesus used a whip of cords leading some to say it was an absurd whip that would do no good. They say he just made it not to use it but for symbolism. But he could have made a huge whip from cords and depending on what the cords were made of they could have left a mark on anyone struck by them. The Christians say he did not use the whip as a weapon but as a symbol. They have an excuse for everything unpleasant he did. Jesus was not going to get sheep and oxen out of the Temple area and knock over several tables with coins on them like John reported with a symbolic whip. Or did Jesus attach something to the end of the cords – a weight or something? When Jesus was not grabbed to stop him doing these things it shows how powerful the army he had with him was. The Temple workers were afraid to lay a finger on him showing it was a real ugly brutal riot.

Christians say that Jesus was not a Zealot when he attacked the Temple for that was a religious not a political act. But the Zealots were religious people and hated religious corruption which was why they held such racist attitudes towards Gentiles ruling over their country. They embraced the bloodthirstiness and racism commanded by the God of the Torah.

The riot in the Temple makes no sense. The story is so bizarre and full of inconsistencies and yet it is like something nobody would have made up about Jesus even if nearly everything else was. For example, it is impossible to believe that Jesus could have taken an army into the Temple and not been stopped. It is impossible to believe that Jesus would even have been let into the Temple. The Jews agreed that he was a heretic and in league with the Devil. Jesus said he was the Messiah which means Rome would direct that the likes of him be kept away from the Temple for it was feared that would-be Messiahs would use religion to get political power and even cause an insurrection. I take it as evidence that there is no evidence for the existence of Jesus. When even the things about him that you might think nobody would have made up about him are untrue, Jesus probably never existed either. Paul stressed a Jesus of peace indicating that Jesus led no riot in the Temple. The origin of the story seems inexplicable. The story probably began among Jewish Christians who had zealot sympathies who were getting revelations from Heaven that Jesus was on the side of the nationalists and it grew into a story about Jesus rioting in the Temple. Perhaps Jews who pretended to be Christians were saying it happened in the hope of making the Christian believe it and look silly. Josephus never mentioned this momentous riot so it never happened. It could be that Jesus Barabbas who allegedly was chosen by the people to be released instead of Jesus was confused with Jesus. Perhaps somebody thought Jesus appeared in the Temple and caused the riot while in fact it was Barabbas. The Luke Gospel says that Jesus Barabbas was an insurrectionist and who caused a riot in the city.

Jesus made no difference to the Temple shenanigans. It would have been business as usual the next day. The Son of God failed. No wonder a resurrection story would have been popularised to make him look better. But it does no good except to convince those who are already predisposed to believe. Has the exposures of Sai Babas' miracles as tricks and his alleged illicit sexual activities done his religion much harm? Very little!

Far from abrogating the Jewish Law of God, Jesus was obeying its rule that false places of worship must be attacked.

At the time of Jesus, the Temple carried a sign that read, "No foreigner may enter within the balustrade around the sanctuary and the enclosure. Whoever is caught, on himself shall he put blame for the death which will ensue." Non-Jews were not allowed. Jesus was in trouble after the sacrilege in the Temple which to some who think he was a fake Jew is the real reason he was put to death.

AN ATTEMPTED ANSWER

Christians deny Jesus did anything wrong, "Herod was responsible for the Court of the Gentiles at the Temple. There Jews and non-Jews could mix and it was a place for discussing religious issues with Jewish teachers. A lot of selling of sacrificial animals took place there. It was a place for exchanging money. Jesus seems to have attacked this area twice both at the start and near the end of his ministry. Jesus was only in the court of the Temple and not the Temple itself. He did not attack a place of worship."

But it was still a public order offence. Nobody reasons that if an attack takes place in the grounds of a Church that matters. It still counts as disrespect for the Church and the community.

Jesus clearly claimed to be in the Temple, "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." Jesus violated his religious and social culture a lot and in huge ways. He ignored public order. He cannot be taken as an example of non-violent activism. Religion nevertheless makes a debate about all this. Debating facts is a form of propaganda. It makes the critic think there is something to be debated when the simple fact is that Jesus was not a good role model for the activist or progressive or liberal.

WOMEN

The gospels do not say if Jesus aimed for any specific court. They would have for there was a stigma against attacking a

place of worship and that stigma had to be avoided if Jesus really had just attacked a court that was not really part of the Temple except in theory. And women were active in the court of the Gentiles. If Jesus was able to throw tables over and do what he would not have got the time to do if there had been men around to apprehend him, then he attacked the easy targets - women.

SLAVES

Some of the Temple workers who were hit or made to feel unsafe would have been slaves. And if the owners were embarrassed at sending the slaves to con the people and the poor the blame would be put on the slave. People forget that slaves were more than unpaid workers but also scapegoats and pawns.