

John 2:19

John 2:19 Yeshua answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

Some have interpreted this verse to mean that Yeshua the Messiah *raised himself* from the dead, which is based in Gnosticism—particularly Docetism, the belief that Yeshua was a human, but the Messiah was a separate, spiritual being. **This false belief manifests itself in the notion of Yeshua being "fully man and fully God."** This interpretation overlooks the plain meaning of "temple" in the Greek. The word "temple" also appears in verse 14, but it derives from a different Greek word, *hieron*, meaning a "shrine" or "holy building." In verses 19-21, John uses the word *naos*, signifying the "dwelling place" of deity.

In the New Testament, *naos* is used metaphorically of the bodies of believers (I Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19). Whereas the Jews of John 2:19 were thinking in terms of a building, the Temple, Yeshua was referring to His body, the church.

During Yeshua' trial, the Jews brought up what He said in John 2:19 as an accusation against him. However, Mark 14:58 adds two significant phrases that clarify what Yeshua said beyond a shadow of doubt: "We heard Him say, 'I will destroy this temple *made with hands*, and within three days I will build another *made without hands*.'"

To understand what He meant, we must consider what occurred as a result of His death and resurrection. The instant God the Father raised Yeshua from the dead, the church—the "body" in which God dwells—became an accomplished fact. Yeshua the Messiah is its first member and Head. This is also one of the senses of Matthew 16:18: "On this rock [Yeshua Himself] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades [the grave] shall not prevail against it."

The true meaning, then, of John 2:19 is that Yeshua makes a parable-like statement about His nature then and in the future. His physical body at that time represented the extent of His church; He was the only believer, its only member. But once the Father resurrected Him and He became Mediator and High Priest, He indeed raised up a body of believers, the Temple of God, of which we are part.

<http://www.bibletools.org/index.cfm/fuseaction/bible.show/sVerseID/26115/eVerseID/26117>

1. Many verses plainly state that it was *the Father* who raised Jesus, and the Bible cannot contradict itself.

2. Jesus was speaking to the Jews after he had just turned over their tables and driven their animals out of the Temple. This was the first of the two times when he did this, and this occurrence was at the beginning of his ministry. He did it once again at the end of his ministry, and that event is recorded in other Gospels. The Jews were angry and unbelieving, and Jesus was speaking in veiled terms, so much so that the Gospel of John has to add, "but he was speaking of

the temple of his body,” (John 2:21 – *NASB*) so the reader would not be confused. Since Jesus was standing in the actual Temple when he said, “Destroy this temple,” the natural assumption would be the one his audience made, that he was speaking of the Temple where he was standing at the time.

3. The fact that Jesus was speaking in veiled terms to an unbelieving audience should make us hesitant to build a doctrine on this verse, especially when many other clear verses say that *the Father* raised Jesus. For example, 1 Corinthians 6:14 states: “By his power, God raised the Lord from the dead.” Jesus was not in a teaching situation when he was speaking. Tempers were flaring and the Jews were against Jesus anyway. It was common for Jesus to speak in ways that unbelievers did not understand. Even a cursory reading of the Gospels will show a number of times when Jesus spoke and the unbelievers who heard him (and sometimes even the disciples) were confused by what he said.

4. We know that Jesus was speaking in veiled terms, but what did he mean? He was almost certainly referring to the fact that he was indeed ultimately responsible for his resurrection. How so? Jesus was responsible to keep himself “without spot or blemish” and to fully obey the will of the Father. In that sense he was like any other sacrifice. A sacrifice that was blemished was unacceptable to the Lord (Lev. 22:17-20; Mal. 1:6-8). Since this event in John was at the start of his ministry, he knew he had a long hard road ahead and that obedience would not be easy. If he turned away from God because he did not like what God said to do, or if he were tempted to the point of sin, his sin would have been a “blemish” that would have disqualified him as the perfect sacrifice. Then he could not have paid for the sins of mankind, and there would have been no resurrection. The reader must remember that Jesus did not go into the Temple and turn over the money tables because he “just felt like it.” John 2:17 indicates that he was fulfilling an Old Testament prophecy and the will of God, which he always did. Had he not fulfilled the prophecy spoken in Psalm 69:9, he would not have fulfilled all the law and would have been disqualified from being able to die for the sins of mankind. Thus, his destiny was in his own hands, and he could say, “I will raise it up.”

5. It is common in speech that if a person has a vital part in something, he is spoken of as having done the thing. We know that Roman soldiers crucified Jesus. The Gospels say it, and we know that the Jews would not have done it, because coming in contact with Jesus would have made them unclean. Yet Peter said to the rulers of the Jews, “you” crucified the Lord (Acts 5:30). Everyone understands that the Jews played a vital part in Jesus’ crucifixion, so there really is a sense in which they crucified him, even though they themselves did not do the dirty work. A similar example from the Old Testament is in both 2 Samuel 5 and 1 Chronicles 11. David and his men were attacking the Jebusite city, Jerusalem. The record is very clear that David had sent his men ahead into the city to fight, and even offered a general’s position to the first one into the city. Yet the record says, “David captured the stronghold of Zion.” We know why, of course. David played a vital role in the capture of Jerusalem, and so Scripture says he captured it. This same type of wording that is so common in the Bible and indeed, in all languages, is the wording Jesus used. He would raise his body, *i.e.*, he would play a vital part in it being raised.

6. Christ knew that by his thoughts and actions he could guarantee his own resurrection by being without transgression, obedient unto death. That made it legally possible for God to keep His

promise of resurrecting Christ, who was without sin and therefore did not deserve death, the “wages of sin.”

<http://www.biblicalunitarian.com/verses/john-2-19>

Ezekiel 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die.

The death of the soul, is more than just the body going to the grave, it is complete separation and destruction of YHWH, from which there is no return. That is what the penalty is for transgressing, the second death. In order for Yeshua to have paid this penalty of the second for us he HAD to go through that complete separation and destruction of the second death of YHWH. Being innocent he would not be left there and YHWH brought him back, resurrected him from that destruction which will not happen to any transgressor.

In conclusion:

Yeshua was responsible for his own resurrection only because he did not transgress and therefore could not remain dead because of His God and Father's righteousness.

To say ‘in three days I will raise it up’ shows his complete trust that his God and Father's righteousness would not allow him to remain in the grave. YHWH was physically responsible for Yeshua’s resurrection because, being completely dead in body and soul, Yeshua could not restore himself to life.