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The Sermons of Jesus Christ: The Feast of Tabernacles

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THE SERMONS OF JESUS

THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (John 7:1-53)

- **The disbelief of the brethren of Christ (John 7:1-9)**

- A. Their ridicule—*“His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him”* (Jn. 7:3-5).

The names of Jesus’ younger half-brothers are recorded for us by Matthew, as is the fact that He had some younger half-sisters:

“Is not this the carpenter’s son? is not his mother called Mary? And his brethren, James and Joses, and Simon, and Judas? And his sisters, are they not all with us? Whence then hath this man all these things?” (Mt. 13:55-56).

- B. His response—*“Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready. The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil”* (Jn. 7:6-7).

Note the statement by Jesus, *“My time is not yet come.”*

The “time” in mind here, of course, is His crucifixion. He was always acutely aware of this time and hour. Note:

“Jesus saith unto her” [His mother at the marriage feast in Cana], *“Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come”* (Jn. 2:4).

“Then they” [a murderous crowd in Jerusalem] *“sought to take him; but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come”* (Jn. 7:30).

“And Jesus answered them” [some Greeks who wanted to see Him] *“saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified”* (Jn. 12:23). (See also 12:27.)

“Now before the feast of the passover ... Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father” (Jn. 13:1).

Especially important to note are the statements found in John 7:30 and 8:20. These verses teach that the servant of God is indestructible until the will of God has been accomplished in his life. (See also Rev. 11:7.)

- **The division of the temple crowds (Jn. 7:10-30, 40-43)**

- A. Some thought He was a good man (Jn. 7:12).
B. Some thought He was a deceiver (Jn. 7:12).
C. Some thought He was a demoniac (Jn. 7:20).
D. Some thought He was an ordinary man (John 7:27).
E. Some thought He was a prophet (John 7:40).
F. Some thought He was the Messiah (John 7:31, 41).

- **The disdain of the Pharisees**

A. They attempted to detain Him, but were frustrated by their own officers—

“The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him ... And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?” (John 7:32, 44-47).

B. They attempted to denounce him, but were frustrated by one of their own members—

“Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet” (John 7:50-52).

- **The decision of the thirsty**

A. The invitation—

“In the last day; that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified)” (John 7:37-39).

1. The feast referred to here was the Feast of Tabernacles. It was one of the three great Jewish feasts. Josephus called it their holiest and greatest feast (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, TN, 2003). This feast, also called the Feast of Ingathering, was a time of thanksgiving for harvest. It was a happy time; devout Jews lived outdoors in booths made of tree branches for seven days as a reminder of God’s provision in the desert during their forefathers’ wanderings. The feast also signified that God dwells with His people.
2. Dr. Homer Kent of Grace Seminary in Winona Lake, Indiana, suggested the following:

The custom had developed of having the priests bring a vessel of water daily during the festival from the Pool of Siloam and come with it in procession to the Temple. Here the water would be poured on the altar of burnt offering as a reminder of how God supplied Israel’s need in the wilderness. On the eighth day the ceremony was omitted, signifying Israel’s presence in the land. If this event occurred on the eighth day, Christ’s invitation to men to come to Him for living water

was especially dramatic as he claimed to be the fulfillment of the typology carried out at the feast. He was the supplier of the spiritual living. (See also John 4:10 and 1 Cor. 10:4.)

B. The determination—

“And many of the people believed on him” (John 7:31).