

The Gospel of John

Chapter 7:1-13

April 27, 1997

- **The Gospel of John Outline:**

- Chapter 1 Our Lord is the Word, the Light and the Life
- Chapter 2 The Lord of the Wedding Feast; Zeal for the purity of the temple
- Chapter 3 Spiritual Birth, Belief and Salvation vs. Unbelief and Condemnation
- Chapter 4 The Ministry in Samaria, The Harvest, The Faith of the Nobleman
- Chapter 5 Paralytic man healed on the Sabbath, Unity of The Father and Son
- Chapter 6 The Bread of Life
- Chapter 7 The public debates about Jesus during the Feast of Tabernacles

- **Review and Introduction**

Having concluded His instruction to the multitude in Capernaum, Jesus is left with only a few faithful followers who included the original twelve. The events in Galilee are chronologically bounded by a Passover at the beginning of chapter 6 and the Feast of Tabernacles at the beginning of chapter 7. This would mean that his stay in the region was about six months and the current time of year would have been in autumn.

- **Exposition of John 7:1-13**

After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He did not want to walk in Judea, because the Jews sought to kill Him.

- After feeding the multitude, Jesus chose to remain in the region of Galilee for some period of time. After His last appearance in Judea at Jerusalem, where He healed the paralytic man on the Sabbath, the hatred for Him had not subsided but only grown. Knowing this, Jesus stayed in Galilee and performed many other signs and works that are recorded in the other gospels but John chooses not to record them. From this point on, the hatred of Jesus becomes more prominent in this gospel and will continue to mount until it culminates in His death.

2 Now the Jews' Feast of Tabernacles was at hand.

- The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated in the autumn "on the fifteenth day of the seventh month" (Lev. 23:34) which correlates to about the second week in October. The feast lasted a total of eight days with the first day beginning five days after Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. This feast was one of three annual feasts which required the attendance of all males. (Deut. 16:16)
- The purpose of the feast was to commemorate the period of wandering in the wilderness when the Lord granted them release from the Egyptians and sustained them in the desert. Each family would build a little shelter (tabernacle) made out of sticks and branches and live inside the shelter during the 8 days. The first day of the feast was a Sabbath as well as the eighth day. This feast was a joyous one marked with much celebration, thankfulness and festivities. Each man was responsible for bringing a sacrifice to be offered in fire.

3 His brothers therefore said to Him, "Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing."⁴ "For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world."⁵ For even His brothers did not believe in Him.

- This portion of the narrative provides a very interesting insight into the struggle that Jesus' brothers had understanding who Jesus was. Because the feast was near, the brothers suggest that Jesus go to Judea and take advantage of the large crowds. It is obvious that their counsel to Him was not sincere nor genuine. It appears that they were mocking Him or at least being somewhat sarcastic because they clearly did not believe in Him.
- The mindset of the brothers was that if Jesus was looking to become well known, the crowds at the feast would provide an excellent opportunity to amass a large contingent of followers. Although the brothers might have made good political campaign chairmen, Christ's campaign was clearly not a political one. His purpose was to accomplish the work to which He had been called by the Father.
- Frequently, the relationships that prove to be the greatest struggle for Christians are the ones with family members. The high degree of familiarity within a family can make spiritual issues more difficult to discuss, especially conversions. However, these relationships with our families are not primary over our relationship with Christ, rather it is only when our relationship with Christ is in order that the family relationships can be fully enjoyed.

6 Then Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always ready."⁷ "The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me

because I testify of it that its works are evil.

- The most obvious understanding of Jesus' response is that the time for Him to die had not yet arrived. He knew that going to Judea would be an opportunity for those who wanted to kill him to do so. Jesus is carrying out the plan of the Father which was detailed down to His each and every move. Jesus does not deviate from His father's plan even by a hairsbreadth.
- Another understanding of "My time" is that Jesus is referring to His time of departure for Judea. Although this is a simpler way to understand His response, I don't think that it reveals the depth of the response especially in light of the many other scripture references where Christ refers to "His time" not yet having come.
- The brothers can come and go through the world as they please because they are of the world. There was no hostility between the brothers and the world because they were the same. On the other hand, those who are believers in Christ have become new creations and have been given a heavenly citizenship and are not of this world. The word world in this verse is used to describe the evil systems and sinfulness of the world as John also uses the word in 1 John 2:15.

8 "You go up to this feast. I am not yet going up to this feast, for My time has not yet fully come."9 When He had said these things to them, He remained in Galilee.

- Jesus sends His brothers on ahead without Him because He wishes to enter Judea secretly rather than with great fanfare and following. Just as when the Israelites were to conquer the land of Canaan, the Lord held them back because the "iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete" here Jesus allows the hatred of Him to grow further until the time is deemed appropriate by the Father.

10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, "Where is He?"12 And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, "He is good"; others said, "No, on the contrary, He deceives the people."13 However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews. NKJV

- As with all of the other requirements of the Law, Jesus intended to fulfill the requirements of the feast by attending just like His brothers. However, Jesus wanted to leave at the precise time and arrive in the precise manner which the Father showed Him. Naturally, Jesus was the talk of the town yet they were fearful of the Jewish leaders so they kept their discussions quite.