

# JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES

**BIBLE TEXT** : John 7:1-53

LESSON 128 Junior Course

**MEMORY VERSE:** "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink" (John 7:37).

## BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

### **John 7:1-53**

<sup>1</sup> After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him.

<sup>2</sup> Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand.

<sup>3</sup> His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> For neither did his brethren believe in him.

<sup>6</sup> Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is alway ready.

<sup>7</sup> The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil.

<sup>8</sup> Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come.

<sup>9</sup> When he had said these words unto them, he abode *still* in Galilee.

<sup>10</sup> But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

<sup>11</sup> Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he?

<sup>12</sup> And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people.

<sup>13</sup> Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.

<sup>14</sup> Now about the midst of the

## BIBLE REFERENCES:

### NOTES:

#### **The Feast of Tabernacles**

There was great excitement in Jerusalem during the seasons of the appointed feasts. Jews came from all the countries round about, and thousands of people camped on the streets of the city. Flickering lights could be seen far into the night, and the pilgrims could be heard moving about, visiting with one another, telling what had happened since they last met at another feast.

God had instituted these feasts, including the Feast of Tabernacles which came in the seventh month. The purpose was to remind the Jews from year to year of the wanderings of their forefathers in the wilderness, so they would be grateful for a permanent home in Canaan and would rejoice and praise the Lord. During the Feast of Tabernacles they were to live in booths made of branches to resemble the Israelites' tents during their forty years of sojourn in the wilderness.

But the Jews at the time of Christ had lost the spirit of the celebration; and aside from a few ceremonies and some animal sacrifices, there was little sacredness in their observance.

#### **Christ's Obedience to the Law**

Jesus was always very careful to observe the Law. When the Law said that all the men should go to Jerusalem to keep the Feast of Tabernacles, of course Jesus would go too. But when His brothers were preparing to leave, Jesus told them to go without Him. He knew there were people in Jerusalem who hated Him, and He would attract too much attention if He went with His brothers. His brothers were not hated, because they were like everyone else; but Jesus was different.

#### **A Stand for the Right**

Jesus knew why the people hated Him. He had reproved them for their sins. When a person does the same things everyone else does, he is considered a "good fellow." But when a Christian takes his stand for the right, it stirs the evil instincts in the sinners, and persecution follows. Not very many people who do not have Jesus in their hearts can stand to be laughed at for being good. They would rather do sinful things they do not really want to do than to be different from the crowd.

Jesus followed His brothers to Jerusalem a few days later, and went right to the Temple to worship and to teach the people. He observed the feast as God meant it to be kept — in the spirit of worship. He did not spend His time visiting and talking about worldly things.

#### **Weak in the Faith**

Some people in Jerusalem believed in Jesus and would have liked to have shown Him they loved Him, but they were afraid. They did not want to be hated by His enemies. Sometimes a person is saved and really loves the Lord, but he does not have the courage to take a bold stand for Jesus before

feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

<sup>15</sup> And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?

<sup>16</sup> Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me.

<sup>17</sup> If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or *whether* I speak of myself.

<sup>18</sup> He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him.

<sup>19</sup> Did not Moses give you the law, and *yet* none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

<sup>20</sup> The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel.

<sup>22</sup> Moses therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man.

<sup>23</sup> If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day?

<sup>24</sup> Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

<sup>25</sup> Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?

<sup>26</sup> But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?

<sup>27</sup> Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence

his friends. That is why we need to pray for more of the grace of God. That is why we need the deeper experiences of sanctification and the baptism of the Holy Ghost. With each new experience we gain more courage; and with the baptism we receive power to be witnesses for Christ.

### Wisdom from Above

Of course, when Jesus began teaching in the Temple the people recognized Him. They were surprised at His wisdom, for they thought He had little education. Jesus knew what they were thinking, even when He could not hear what they said. He knew they were wondering about the eternal truths He was telling them, and He explained that He was teaching them what God had given Him to teach. It was the doctrine of the Father — nothing He had learned in school. It was the message God had sent Him to earth to preach.

God's servants today do not need a high education to be able to teach the things that are in the Bible. If the Spirit of God is in the minister, He will teach him what to say. "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13).

Not very many people realize how important it is to have the Spirit of God in them when they teach about Jesus. If they do not have the Spirit they do not know Jesus, and how can they tell others about Him? The things they learn in books do not make them acquainted with the Son of God who came from Heaven and paid the price of our redemption. The sinner cannot understand the Spirit, "even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17).

### For All

Jesus spoke more on the subject the last day of the feast. He was not afraid to preach among the people who hated Him, because He knew there were some people scattered through the crowd who wanted eternal life. He stood that day and cried: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink." Anybody who wants to may come to Jesus and be saved. Most of the Jews were not saved because they were not honest and did not want to obey the commandments of Jesus.

Jesus said still more about this Living Water. The Living Water is the Spirit of God; and we receive some of the Spirit when we are saved, more when we are sanctified; and when we are baptized with the Holy Ghost we have an "overflowing" amount of the Spirit. Jesus said of the person who receives the baptism, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The person who is baptized with the Holy Ghost has so much of the Spirit in his life that others will recognize it. It will flow out of his being and make him a witness in all the world. The Spirit will speak conviction to the sinners he meets and will reprove them for their evil deeds. Another Christian will feel the fellowship, the unity of faith, and be blessed by the Spirit in the life of the overcomer.

### Power

The Apostle Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, preached: "Ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you." Power to be witnesses for Jesus in spite of ridicule and opposition!

he is.

<sup>28</sup> Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not.

<sup>29</sup> But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

<sup>30</sup> Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.

<sup>31</sup> And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this *man* hath done?

<sup>32</sup> The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him.

<sup>33</sup> Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and *then* I go unto him that sent me.

<sup>34</sup> Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come.

<sup>35</sup> Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?

<sup>36</sup> What *manner of* saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find *me*: and where I am, *thither* ye cannot come?

<sup>37</sup> 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.

<sup>38</sup> He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

<sup>39</sup> (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.)

Peter knew what he was talking about. He had not learned to know Jesus by reading about Him in some book. He had lived with Him, and had been with Him perhaps every day for three and a half years. Still he denied his Lord even before a maid! He would never have had power to stand before the priests and the scribes as a follower of the Savior. And yet he wanted to. He loved Jesus, and had promised to die for Him; but he did not have the power to be a faithful witness. In a weak moment he fell. How bitterly he repented!

On the Day of Pentecost, after he had received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, he was not afraid of anyone. He stood right there in Jerusalem before all the religious people who had gathered for that feast, and was not afraid to tell them that it was they who had crucified the Son of God. He had received the power and the inspiration of the Spirit which told him that the prophecy of Joel had been fulfilled, that in the last days God would pour out His Spirit upon all flesh: "And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy ... and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit" (Acts 2:16-18).

### Comforter Sent after Ascension

When Jesus was speaking about the Spirit, "the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified" (John 7:39). Jesus had told His disciples that when He went away He would send the Comforter to abide with them; but unless He went the Comforter would not come. The great sermon Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost was after the Comforter had come, fifty days after Jesus died. If only the people would have believed that this was the fulfillment of the words of Jesus! Many did. Through that powerful sermon 3,000 persons were converted in one day.

### Hatred for Jesus

But on that last day of the Feast of Tabernacles when Jesus was pleading with the people to come and drink of the Living Waters, there was little belief. The people hated Him and wanted to kill Him. Some tried to defend Him, and said, "This is the Christ," and some believed that He was "the Prophet." Others would argue that no prophet came out of Galilee where Jesus lived. (The Prophet Jonah, and perhaps Elijah and Nahum, were of Galilee, but the Jews were not interested in that.) They argued that the Messiah must come from Bethlehem. Had they forgotten that night when the star shone over the stable in Bethlehem, and the angels appeared to the shepherds on the hillside, singing, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men"? The truth was before them, and if they had wanted to believe they would have remembered all these things. Their hatred had blinded them to the truth.

### Satan's Power Limited

When Jesus had first come to the feast the people had tried to take Him captive, but it was not God's time, and no one could touch Him. That is a happy thought for all God's children to remember: The devil can never do more to them than the Lord allows. If God says No, Satan is powerless.

Then at the end of the feast the priests sent men to take Him. When the officers returned to the priests without Jesus, they were asked, "Why have ye not brought him?" Their answer was very strange: "Never man spake like this man." His words

<sup>40</sup> Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet.

<sup>41</sup> Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?

<sup>42</sup> Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?

<sup>43</sup> So there was a division among the people because of him.

<sup>44</sup> And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

<sup>45</sup> Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?

<sup>46</sup> The officers answered, Never man spake like this man.

<sup>47</sup> Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?

<sup>48</sup> Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?

<sup>49</sup> But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed.

<sup>50</sup> Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)

<sup>51</sup> Doth our law judge *any* man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?

<sup>52</sup> They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

<sup>53</sup> And every man went unto his own house.

had defeated their purpose — words spoken in the Spirit and with power. The words of Jesus were always like that. His enemies never would have taken Him if it had not been necessary to fulfill the Scriptures, which prophesied that the Son of God would come and die an Atonement for sin. Even that night in the Garden when He was betrayed, just the words of His answer to the mob, "I am he," caused His enemies to fall to the ground.

### **The Son of God**

Jesus was not just a man; He was the Son of God, with the power of Heaven. His disciples today must have more than man's knowledge of Him if they wish to go to Heaven. We must have spiritual understanding; we must be born again and have that Living Water in our hearts, if we want to be the children of God. And we must go on and be sanctified, and receive the baptism of the Holy Ghost, so we will have enough of the Living Water to flow out and help others to know Jesus, too.

### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 Why did the people in Jerusalem hate Jesus?
- 2 Why did they not hate His brothers?
- 3 What was the Feast of Tabernacles?
- 4 How did Jesus observe the feast?
- 5 What is the Living Water of which Jesus spoke?
- 6 Who can be saved?
- 7 What difference did the baptism of the Holy Ghost make in Peter?
- 8 What do we receive with the baptism of the Holy Ghost?



### **QUESTIONS**

- 1 What was the Feast of Tabernacles?
- 2 Where, and at what time of year was it held?
  - 3 Why did the Pharisees and chief priests want to put Him to death?
- 4 What was the opinion of the people about Jesus?
- 5 Why did not the officers arrest Him?
- 6 What did Jesus' brethren think about Him?
- 7 Give the substance of the message Jesus preached on the last great day of the feast.