

John Chapter 7 Second Continued

John 7:32 "The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him."

Both the Pharisees and also chief priests historically did not have harmonious relationships with each other.

Most of the chief priests were Sadducees, who were both political and religious opponents against the Pharisees.

John repeatedly links these two groups in his gospel, in order to emphasize that their cooperation stemmed from their mutual hatred of Jesus.

Both were alarmed at the faith of those indicated (in verse 31), and, in order to avoid any veneration of Jesus as Messiah, attempted unsuccessfully to arrest Him (verse 30).

These Pharisees and chief priests greatly feared losing their people to this man from Nazareth.

Their jealousy, because He could perform miracles that they couldn't do, nearly drove them mad.

They were afraid of losing their elevated place with the Jews.

They were not doing this for God, as they said, but for their own selves.

The fear the Pharisees had, was that these Jewish people would believe and follow Him, and the Pharisees and priests would not hold their lofty position any more.

"Officers":

Temple guards who functioned as a kind of police force composed of Levites who were in charge of maintaining order in the temple environs.

They could also be used by the Sanhedrin in areas outside the temple environs in religious disputes that did not affect Roman policy.

John 7:33 "Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and [then] I go unto him that sent me."

Jesus is speaking of His crucifixion, but they do not understand.

Jesus speaks of going to the Father in heaven who sent Him.

John 7:34 "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find [me]: and where I am, [thither] ye cannot come."

Jesus referred here to His return to His heavenly origin with His Father after both His crucifixion and resurrection.

The reason they will not be able to follow Him, is because He will ascend to heaven.

Verses 35-36:

John again highlights the ignorance of the Jews regarding Jesus' words.

The words were spoken to mock Jesus.

John 7:35 "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?"

The phrase "teach the Gentiles" probably had reference to Jewish proselytes, i.e., Gentiles.

John may have been citing this phrase with ironic force since the gospel eventually went to the Gentiles because of Jewish blindness and rejection of their Messiah.

Many of the Jews did not believe in life after death.

The Jews were conceited, believing that Messiah would have nothing to do with those who were not Jewish.

Little did they know that they were prophetically speaking of the very thing He would do.

He indeed, does go to the Gentiles when the Jews rejected Him.

It was unbelievable to them that anyone would go to teach the Gentiles.

They ask sarcastically, "Is that where you are going?"

John 7:36 "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?"

This is a confusing statement to them, because they think Jesus is a mere man.

They feel free to go anywhere any other man can go, so they feel it would be impossible for Jesus to go anywhere they could not go.

John 7:37 "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."

"In the last day":

Suggests that this occasion occurred on a different day than the controversy (in verses 11-36).

“If any man thirst”:

A tradition grew up in the few centuries before Jesus that on the 7 days of the Feast of Booth or Tabernacles, a golden container filled with water from the pool of Siloam was carried in procession by the high priest back to the temple.

As the procession came to the Watergate on the south side of the inner temple court, three trumpet blasts were made to mark the joy of the occasion and the people recited (Isaiah 12:3), “you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation.”

At the temple, while onlookers watched, the priest would march around the altar with the water container while the temple choir sang the Hallel.

The water was offered in sacrifice to God at the time of the morning sacrifice.

The use of the water symbolized the blessing of adequate rainfall for crops.

Jesus used this event as an object lesson and opportunity to make a very public invitation on the last day of the feast for His people to accept Him as the living water.

His words recall (Isaiah 55:1).

This is that spiritual water.

I sing a song *There is a river which flows from God above.*

It speaks of a fountain that is filled with His great love.

This river is from deep within the heart and soul of man.

The only way to have this river is to receive Jesus inside of you.

Jesus told the woman at the well, if she drank of that water, she would never thirst again, Jesus then and here also, was speaking of the Spirit of God.

The end of the Feast of Tabernacles commemorated the end of the wilderness wanderings and their new life.

What a celebration that will be, to know the old life is over *wandering in the wilderness*, and a new life of promise begins.

Perhaps, this is why this is spoken of as a great day.

It surely symbolizes salvation when our old life is over, and because we believe in Him, our new life begins.

“Thirst ... Come ... Drink:”

These 3 words summarize the gospel invitation.

This recognition of need leads to an approach to the source of provision, followed by receiving what is needed.

The thirsty, needy soul feels the craving to come to the Savior and drink, i.e., receive the salvation that He offers.

John 7:38 "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

The water pouring rite was also associated within Jewish tradition as a foreshadowing of the eschatological rivers of living water foreseen (in Ezekiel 47:1-9 and Zech. 13:1).

The significance of Jesus' invitation centers in the fact that He was the fulfillment of all the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles that was anticipated. I.e., He was the One who provided the living water that gives eternal life to man.

John 7:39 "(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.)"

The impartation of the Holy Spirit is the source of spiritual and eternal life.

This gift of the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of the risen Christ.

Verse 39, is a prophetic statement of the infilling of the believer with the Holy Ghost after Jesus' ascension into heaven.

John 7:40 "Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet."

It seems there was much confusion about who Jesus is, in these verses.

Many wanted to say that Jesus was the promised Prophet that would come right before Messiah.

They knew there was something great and wonderful about Him, but they still thought Him to be the son of Joseph instead of the Son of God.

The best thing they could think to say was that He is the great Prophet.

Thus they believed because of the miracles and because of the powerful undisputed message that He brought.

John 7:41 "Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee?"

This betrays the people's great ignorance, because Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea and not from Galilee.

They did not even bother to investigate His true birthplace, showing their lack of interest in messianic credentials.

Some believed because of His overwhelming power in miracles and His message that they declare "This is Messiah".

As soon as they say this must be Messiah, others say don't you know Messiah will not come out of Galilee?

They are overlooking the fact of His Bethlehem birth, and that was possibly because He has not reminded them.

John 7:42 "Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"

They know the letter of the law.

It does say just that.

Jesus fulfilled this, He [in the flesh] was in the lineage of David and He was born in Bethlehem.

You see, even this argument is in error.

They were working on hearsay, rather than on the realities.

John 7:43 "So there was a division among the people because of him."

You see, some believed He, "Jesus", was a great prophet, but they did not believe that He was indeed the Messiah.

Others believed He was an imposter, and still others believed He was truly Messiah because of His great miracles.

John 7:44 "And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him."

This was because it was not God's time for Him to suffer yet.

God must stand aside, before any man could take Jesus.

John 7:45 "Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him?"

It appears these officers were to go and capture Jesus and bring Him back to the chief priests and Pharisees, so that they could pass judgment on Him.

They said, "We sent you for Him, why didn't you bring Him back?"

The officers had failed in their attempt to arrest Jesus when they were confronted with His person and powerful teaching.

Since they were religiously trained, Jesus' words struck at their very heart.

John 7:46 "The officers answered, Never man spake like this man."

These officers were so impressed by what Jesus said and did, that they did not try to arrest Him.

They could see no wrong He was doing, only good.

John 7:47-48 "Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived?" "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?"

These Pharisees had their minds closed off.

The miracles Jesus did and the great power and wisdom He showed in His sermons had not swayed their fixed minds in the least.

Their jealousy had blinded them.

These Pharisees mocked the officers, not on professional (as police officers), but religious grounds (as Levites).

In essence, they accused them of being seduced by a deceiver (i.e. Jesus), in contrast to the Pharisees themselves who arrogantly and self-righteously felt that in their wisdom and knowledge, no one could ever deceive them.

These Pharisees were so afraid of losing their haughty positions, they would not fairly listen to what Jesus had said.

The officers had heard and seen enough that they were not convinced that there was any wrong doing by Jesus.

In fact, Jesus' words and deeds had swayed the officer's opinions toward Jesus.

John 7:49 "But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."

The Pharisees condescendingly labeled the people as a "crowd."

The rabbis viewed the common people (or people of the land), as ignorant and impious in contrast to themselves.

This ignorance was not only because of their ignorance of Scripture, but especially the common people's failure to follow the Pharisees' oral traditions.

The people were considered damned because they did not belong to the elite group or follow their beliefs regarding the law.

John 7:50 "Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,)"

In (verses 50-52), Nicodemus' mind had not closed regarding Christ's claims, so that while not defending Jesus directly, he did raise a procedural point in Jesus' favor.

Nicodemus believed Jesus, but he was afraid of his colleagues finding out.

He had come to Jesus by night "in secret".

Even though he believed, he would not stand up and be counted on Jesus' side.

Here he tries to take up for Jesus without saying that he believed the Nazarene.

He says in effect; you are judging Him before you have all the facts.

Give Him a fair trial.

John 7:51 "Doth our law judge [any] man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?"

No explicit Old Testament text can be cited that makes Nicodemus' point.

Most likely he referred to rabbinical traditions contained in their oral law.

John 7:52 "They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."

They are advising these officers to look at the law, when they themselves had not looked deeply into Jesus' background.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem where the promised Messiah was to be born.

These Pharisees are accusing the officers of being from Galilee, as if they were the only people who believed and followed Jesus.

The real ignorance lay with the arrogant Pharisees who did not carefully search out the facts as to where Jesus was actually born.

While they accused the crowds of ignorance, they too were really as ignorant (verse 42).

Furthermore, the prophet Jonah did come from Galilee.

Nahum was from El Kosh, which may have been Capernaum (Lit. "Village of Nahum"), renamed in honor of the prophet.

Also, Hosea is believed to have been from Galilee.

John 7:53 "And every man went unto his own house."

This could not be solved to the satisfaction of the Pharisees and priests, so they just all went home and forgot it for the moment.

John 7 Second Continued Questions

1. Who sent the officers to take Jesus?
2. Why did they want Jesus taken?
3. Who did Jesus tell them He was going to?
4. When Jesus said they couldn't go, where did they think He was talking about?
5. What were the Jews prophetically talking of, unawares to them?
6. Why is this statement Jesus made confusing unto them?
7. He that believeth on Me as the Scripture said, _____.
8. What water is Jesus speaking of?
9. What had Jesus told the woman at the well about this water?
10. The end of the feast of tabernacles represented the end of what?
11. Why was the Holy Ghost not yet given?

12. What is verse 39 prophetically speaking of?
13. Many people, when they heard this, said that Jesus was ____ ____.
14. Why did they believe?
15. When some said, this is Christ, what sarcastic remark did others make?
16. What 2 things did they say the Scripture say about Christ?
17. Why was there a division among the people?
18. What 3 different things were believed among the Jews about Jesus?
19. Who did the officers report back to?
20. What reason did he give for not taking Jesus?
21. What were the officers accused of being?
22. The Pharisees said, those who knew not the law were _____.
23. Who said “Doth our law judge any man before it hear Him?”
24. What had Nicodemus previously done?
25. What did the Pharisees and priests ask Nicodemus?
26. Where did they say the Scriptures say, ariseth no prophet?
27. When they ran out of argument, what did they do?