

# Gospel of John

## Chapter 7

### **Jesus at the Feast**

The chapter begins with an unusual interaction between Jesus and His brothers of the flesh. We know that Jesus was the oldest of multiple brothers and sisters; we often do not consider the familial issues that may have arisen because He was the Messiah. His brothers desire Him to go to the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, and to make Himself known. John clarifies that they did not believe that He was the Christ at that time, which causes us to wonder what their motivation in this is. Once more Jesus announces that His time has not yet come; since the first verse tells us that they are now seeking to kill Him, it seems likely that these refer to the eventually death on the cross. Jesus tells them He will not go with them yet, but then goes in secret, alone and later.

John/Jesus mentions the “time” or “hour” of his departure seven times; four times in telling us that His time had not yet come, and three times telling us that His time had come.

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| <b>1. “My hour has not yet come”</b>   | <b>- John 2:4</b>   |
| <b>2. “My time has not yet come”</b>   | <b>- John 7:6</b>   |
| <b>3. His hour had not yet come</b>    | <b>- John 7:30</b>  |
| <b>4. His hour had not yet come</b>    | <b>- John 8:20</b>  |
| <b>5. “The hour has come”</b>          | <b>- John 12:23</b> |
| <b>6. His hour had come</b>            | <b>- John 13:1</b>  |
| <b>7. “Father, the hour has come.”</b> | <b>- John 17:1</b>  |

We need to understand that such language tells us that Jesus will not die until He arrives at the time He has determined it to occur. Jesus tells Pilate that it is the authority He has permitted him to have that allows Him to be put to death<sup>1</sup>

*John 10:17-18 “Therefore My Father loves Me, because I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This command I have received from My Father.”*

We can see that Jesus has made such a powerful presence in His teaching that the danger now is that He will be seized and made King by force, or seized and put to death. From here on many of the actions Jesus does are secretive, or not publically announced, until

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<sup>1</sup> John 19:11

the last week in Jerusalem. Chapter eight reflects a great deal of the impact of Jesus among the people of His time.

Jesus begins teaching at the Temple, and the people are amazed at His understanding. It reminds us of the events at the Temple when He was just 12 years old<sup>2</sup>. Jesus confronts them about their intentions: they seek Him dead. Perhaps they themselves have not realized yet it is their desire, as they seem to in chapter 11:49-55. Jesus commands that they, and we, need to make a righteous judgment about Him. Either acknowledge Him as Christ, and all that means, or reject Him.

Here marks a change in the minds of many. Some are beginning to esteem Him as the Christ, something that the Apostles have done for some time. They make an excellent analysis: what more could the Christ do that Jesus has not done, to prove He is the Christ? Others point to what they perceive as faults in Jesus that prevent Him from being the Christ; they know where Jesus is from (Nazareth), and that Messiah would be an unknown figure. Conversely, others reject Him because they see Messiah as only coming from Bethlehem<sup>3</sup>, and are unaware of the circumstances of Jesus' birth that the Gospels of Matthew and Luke relate to us.

Jesus finishes the feast with another reference to the living water, which we are clearly told here is the Holy Spirit, received when we believe (and obey<sup>4</sup>). With these words, many proclaim He is the Prophet or the Christ, perhaps not realizing that both are the

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<sup>2</sup> Luke 2:47

<sup>3</sup> Micah 5:2

<sup>4</sup> Acts 2:38

same. There is an attempt to seize Jesus which fails, because the guards are astonished as to the teaching of Christ. There will be other failed attempts to force Jesus, either to become Messiah, or to be stopped.

Perhaps we are seeing the division of those who believe, and those who do not. John is clear that those who demand answers for the Christ with the right heart, will receive them. Nicodemus in chapter three and Thomas after the resurrection reflect the “noble minded” attitude that does not accept on face value, but seeks proof of belief. The others, who reject Christ, seek proof that cannot be established, thus rejecting the Christ before He is revealed.