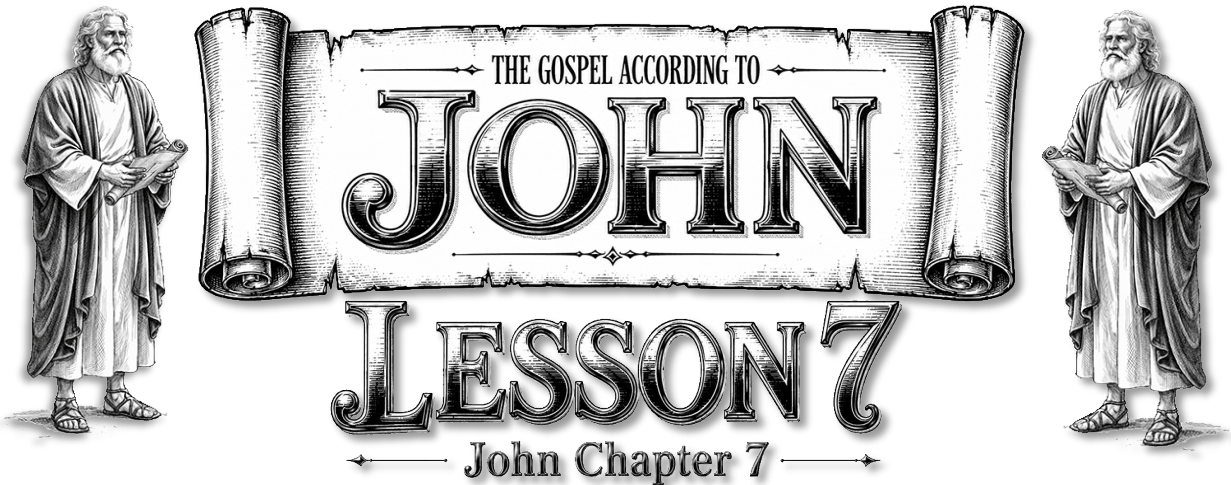




## Introduction

John has been carefully building an overwhelming case that Jesus of Nazareth is far more than a great teacher or miracle worker—He is the eternal Son of God, the promised Messiah, and the Creator Himself who entered His own creation. Unlike the Synoptic Gospels, John structures his account around carefully selected signs (*semeia*) that reveal Christ's identity rather than simply displaying His power. As John himself explains, these signs were chosen "that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name" (John 20:30-31). So far we have watched Jesus progressively reveal Himself:



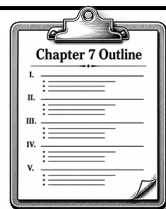
- **Chapter 1** introduced the eternal **Logos**, the Word who became flesh and tabernacled among men.
- **Chapter 2** revealed His glory at Cana and His authority in cleansing the Temple.
- **Chapter 3** proclaimed the necessity of the new birth through His nighttime conversation with Nicodemus.
- **Chapters 4–5** expanded His ministry beyond Judea, demonstrating that salvation is offered to Jew and Gentile alike while presenting some of Scripture's strongest claims to Christ's deity.
- **Chapter 6** climaxed with the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus walking on the Sea of Galilee, and His profound declaration that He is the **Bread of Life**, resulting in many superficial followers abandoning Him.

Notice the progression. The miracles have become increasingly public, the claims increasingly unmistakable, and the opposition increasingly hostile. The nation is now approaching a point where every individual must answer one unavoidable question: **Who is Jesus Christ?**

**John Chapter 7** marks a significant turning point in Jesus' public ministry. The setting shifts to the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)—one of Israel's three great pilgrimage feasts, when Jerusalem overflowed with worshipers from across the Jewish world. Jesus deliberately appears in Jerusalem according to the Father's timetable rather than according to man's expectations. His own brothers misunderstand Him. The crowds are sharply divided over His identity. The religious authorities intensify their determination to arrest Him, yet they remain powerless because **His hour has not yet come**.

Jesus Alternates between Judea and Galilee:

- ✓ Chap. 1 – Judea
- ✓ Chap. 2:1-12 – Galilee
- ✓ Chap. 2:13 – Jerusalem (Judea)
- ✓ Chap. 4:3 – Galilee
- ✓ Chap. 5:1 – Jerusalem
- ✓ Chap. 6:1 – Galilee
- ✓ Chap. 7:1 – Jerusalem



### Chapter 7 Outline

- ✓ Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles
- ✓ Rivers of Living Water
- ✓ The Unbelief of the Pharisees

Chapter 6 transpired about 1 year before the Cross in April, and Chapter 7 occurs about six months later in October.

For the last six months, Jesus largely remained in Galilee because the hostility in Judea had intensified to the point that the religious leaders were actively seeking His death.



**John 7:1-2]** *"After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him."*

The Greek expression is **meta tauta** ("**After these things**"), one of John's favorite chronological markers that functions almost like a literary partition, separating one major movement from another. It becomes especially significant in the Book of Revelation, where John repeatedly uses the same expression to divide prophetic scenes.

John alternates Jesus' ministry between **Galilee** and **Judea**. The Synoptic Gospels devote much more attention to the Galilean ministry, whereas John repeatedly brings us back to Jerusalem because his emphasis is the growing rejection of Israel's leadership.

"**Jewry**" simply refers to **Judea**, the southern region surrounding Jerusalem. This was not fear on Jesus' part. Rather, His ministry unfolded according to the Father's precise timetable.



**John 7:2]** *"Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand."*

At first glance, verse 2 appears to be nothing more than a chronological note. In reality, John is preparing us for one of the richest prophetic chapters in his Gospel.

The **Feast of Tabernacles** (Hebrew: **Sukkot**, "Booths") was the final feast in Israel's annual cycle. It began on the **15th day of Tishri**, five days after the Day of Atonement, and lasted seven days, followed by an eighth-day assembly. It commemorated Israel's forty years of wilderness wanderings, when the nation dwelt in temporary shelters while God faithfully provided for them (Lev. 23:33-43; Deut. 16:13-15).

It was also one of the **three compulsory pilgrimage feasts**. Every able-bodied Jewish male was commanded to appear before the Lord in Jerusalem for:

- Passover
- Feast of Weeks (Pentecost)
- Feast of Tabernacles

This explains why, in verse 3, Jesus' brothers will urge Him to travel to Jerusalem since attendance at this feast was expected (Deut. 16:16).

## A Closer Look: Why the Feast of Tabernacles Matters

The Feasts of Israel are not merely Jewish holidays—they are **God's prophetic appointments**. The Hebrew word '*moed*' means an appointed meeting or appointed time. These appointed meetings carry the idea of a rehearsal. Israel celebrated these feasts every year, but at the same time they were rehearsing God's entire plan of redemption.



This perspective becomes especially important in John 7 because Jesus deliberately arrives in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles. John assumes his readers understand the significance of the feast, and everything that follows in the chapter is built upon its symbolism.

The **first four feasts** were fulfilled with astonishing precision during Christ's First Coming.

The **final three feasts** point toward His return and the establishment of His Kingdom.

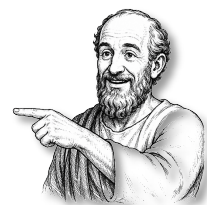
That is why John Chapter 7 is so important.

| God's Seven Appointed Feasts |                                      |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Spring Feasts                | Fulfillment                          |
| Passover                     | Christ our Passover sacrificed       |
| Unleavened Bread             | Sinless sacrifice                    |
| Firstfruits                  | Resurrection                         |
| Pentecost (Shavuot)          | Birth of the Church                  |
| Fall Feasts                  | Future Fulfillment                   |
| Trumpets                     | Regathering/announcement of the King |
| Day of Atonement             | Israel's national repentance         |
| Tabernacles                  | Messiah dwelling with His people     |

Jesus is attending the feast that celebrates God's dwelling with man while simultaneously **pointing forward** to the day when He will literally tabernacle among His people forever.



Each feast has an historic, memorial context, and each feast is also prophetic. **Paul** tells us why they exist: *"For whatsoever this were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scripture might have hope"* Rom. 15:4. We are not to "become Jewish" but look to this information to unlock the full meaning of scripture. Paul gives us an important clarification here:



*"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of the holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days: Which are a **shadow of things to come**; but the body is of Christ"* (Colossians 2:16,17)



**The New Testament is in the Old Testament Concealed  
The Old Testament is in the New Testament revealed.**

**The Jewish Month of Tishri:** Tishri is the seventh month of the Jewish religious calendar (the first month of the civil calendar), usually falling in September or October. It is often called the **"month of the appointed times"** because it contains the **Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah)**, the **Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur)**, and the **Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot)**—three of Israel's most significant prophetic festivals, each pointing to God's future work in the establishment of His Kingdom (Lev. 23:23-44). Here is the sequence:



- Trumpets awaken the nation.
- Ten Days of Awe (Days of Affliction).
- Day of Atonement.
- Five days later, Tabernacles begin.

The progression is intentional. Trumpets call the nation to attention. The Days of Awe lead to repentance. Atonement brings cleansing. Only then does joyful fellowship at Tabernacles begin.

**That sequence beautifully anticipates Israel's future restoration.**

On the **Day of Atonement**, two goats were selected. One was sacrificed before the Lord; the other—the **scapegoat**—symbolically bore away the sins of the nation into the wilderness (Leviticus 16). Together they are a **type** that portrays Christ, who both died for sin and removed it forever.

# TYPES

Scripture frequently uses historical people, institutions, and ceremonies as divinely designed pictures of greater realities. These are called **types**. The Tabernacle, sacrifices, priesthood, feasts, and many Old Testament events all anticipate the person and work of Jesus Christ. Recognizing these patterns does not replace the literal meaning of Scripture—it reveals the remarkable unity of God's plan from Genesis to Revelation.

## Hermeneutics, Figures of Speech, and Caveats



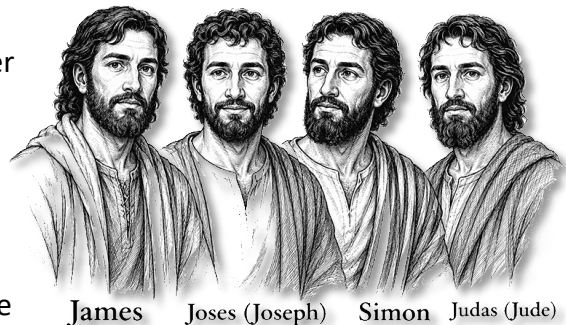
God communicates through many literary forms—history, poetry, prophecy, parables, symbols, and types. Sound interpretation of Scripture begins by taking the text literally unless the context clearly indicates figurative language. Even figures of speech communicate literal truth.

**Why Does John Mention Tabernacles?** During this feast, the priests poured water at the altar and illuminated enormous lampstands in the Temple courts. Both ceremonies anticipated the coming Messiah. Later in John 7 and John 8, Jesus will declare Himself to be the source of Living Water and the Light of the World. The feast becomes His sermon illustration.



**John 7:3-5]** *"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."*

This passage quietly affirms that Jesus had younger brothers born to Mary after His virgin birth. Their names are given elsewhere as **James, Joses (Joseph), Simon, and Judas (Jude)** (Matt. 13:55; Mark 6:3).



Jesus' brothers urge Him to leave Galilee and go to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. On the surface, this sounds like good advice. If Jesus truly is

the Messiah, why remain in Galilee? Their advice is not born of faith but of unbelief. The rejection of Jesus by His own family was anticipated prophetically: **"I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children"** (Ps. 69:8). Psalm 69 is one of the great Messianic psalms, and this verse finds a striking fulfillment in the unbelief of Jesus' own brothers. Ironically, two of these skeptical brothers would later become pillars of the early Church. **James** would become the leader of the Jerusalem church and write the Epistle of James, while **Jude** would write the Epistle of Jude. Their transformation came **after the Resurrection**, when the risen Christ appeared to James (1 Cor. 15:7).



**John 7:6-8]** *"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. Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast; for my time is not yet full come."*

Jesus now explains why He will not accompany His brothers publicly to Jerusalem.

The issue is not whether He will attend the Feast of Tabernacles—He is required to do so under the Law—but **when** and **how** He will go. He then contrasts His mission with theirs: **"...but your time is always ready."** His brothers were free to travel whenever they pleased because they were not the objects of the religious leaders' murderous hostility.

Jesus continues: **"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth..."** The world's hostility was not personal in the ordinary sense. It was a reaction against **truth** itself. Jesus exposed sin, hypocrisy, and false religion. His presence forced people to choose between repentance and rebellion. The reason for that hatred is unmistakable: **"...because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil."** Light always exposes darkness.



**John 7:9-10]** *"When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee. But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret."*

Jesus remains in Galilee only long enough for His brothers to depart. Then, in perfect harmony with the Father's timetable, He quietly travels to Jerusalem—not as a public celebrity seeking attention, but as the obedient Son carrying out the Father's will.



**John 7:11-13]** *"Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? 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. Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews."*

The **religious leadership**—the chief priests, Pharisees, and other authorities—who increasingly oppose Jesus—are not searching for Him to learn from Him but to arrest Him. The conflict that began after the healing at Bethesda (John 5) has now become an organized effort to eliminate Him.



The word translated as **"murmuring"** refers to whispered conversations, quiet debates, and subdued discussions rather than open public discourse. Opinions quickly divided into two camps. Some concluded: **"He is a good man."** Others insisted: **"Nay; but he deceiveth the people."**

Notice that neither group fully understands Him. One group admires Him as an unusually good man; the other rejects Him as a dangerous deceiver. Neither confession rises to John's stated purpose—that Jesus is **the Christ, the Son of God** (John 20:31).



**LESSON**

There is an important lesson in the crowd's assessment of Jesus. Calling Him **"a good man"** may sound complimentary, but it falls **far short of the truth**. Jesus **never** invited people merely to admire His moral character. His claims **demand a far greater response**. He declared Himself to be the Son of God, the Bread of Life, the Light of the World, and the only source of eternal life. Again, Jesus cannot simply be reduced to a great moral teacher. His claims require every person to decide whether He is exactly who He said He was. Verse 13 also reminds us how easily fear suppresses truth. Many remained silent because they feared the religious establishment more than they feared God. Throughout history, social pressure has often discouraged open confession of biblical truth.



**John 7:14]** *"Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught."*

The Feast of Tabernacles is now well underway. After arriving quietly in Jerusalem, Jesus suddenly appears in the Temple and begins teaching publicly. His actions completely overturn the expectations of both His brothers and His enemies. His brothers wanted Him to announce Himself publicly at the beginning of the feast. The religious leaders expected either a dramatic appearance or complete absence. Jesus does neither.

 **John 7:15]** *"And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?"*

Jesus' teaching immediately astonishes the religious leaders. They cannot deny the depth, authority, or wisdom of what He is saying, yet they cannot explain its source. They measured truth by academic credentials and rabbinical training; Jesus' authority came directly from the Father.

 **John 7:16-17]** *"Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself."*

Jesus now answers the religious leaders' question about the source of His authority. Rather than defending His education or credentials, He points directly to the Father. Then He makes one of the most remarkable statements in all of Scripture about knowing truth: A genuine willingness to obey God becomes the doorway to recognizing divine truth. The word **"doctrine"** is **singular**, not plural. This is a subtle but important detail. Jesus is speaking of one integrated body of truth, not a collection of disconnected religious ideas.



The promise follows: **"...he shall know of the doctrine..."** Jesus does not present blind faith. He promises that obedient hearts will receive increasing certainty regarding the truth of His teaching. This principle also explains why two people can hear the same sermon or read the same passage and respond so differently.

 **John 7:18-20]** *"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. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?"*

Jesus now exposes the true issue confronting Israel's religious leaders. Their problem is not a lack of evidence or scholarship—it is the condition of their hearts. Those who genuinely seek God's glory will recognize the truth, but those seeking their own reputation inevitably distort it. Jesus then boldly confronts their hypocrisy by revealing that the very men who prided themselves on keeping Moses' Law are plotting murder, while much of the crowd remains unaware of the conspiracy.

The expression **"Thou hast a devil"** was a common idiom meaning that someone was irrational or delusional.

 **John 7:21-22]** *"Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. 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."*

Jesus now answers the charge that He violated the Sabbath by taking His listeners back to the miracle at the Pool of Bethesda (John 5). That single healing had ignited the hostility of the religious leaders. Jesus masterfully argues from **their own accepted practice** and exposes their inconsistency: if circumcision—a procedure affecting one part of the body—is permitted on the Sabbath, why condemn Him for making an entire man well?

 **John 7:23-24]** *"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? Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."*

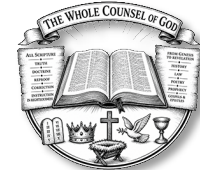
Jesus now brings His argument to its unavoidable conclusion. If the Jewish leaders permit circumcision on the Sabbath in order to keep the Law of Moses, why are they angry because He restored an entire man on the Sabbath? Their judgment is inconsistent because it is based on appearances rather than God's purposes. Jesus closes this exchange with one of the great principles of biblical discernment: **"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."**



#### LESSON

John 7:24 is one of the most frequently misunderstood statements in Scripture. Many people quote **"Judge not"** (Matt. 7:1) out of context and use it as though Christians should never evaluate truth or error. Jesus teaches exactly the opposite here. He commands His followers to exercise **righteous judgment**. Biblical discernment requires more than reacting to outward appearances. It asks:

- Does this align with the whole counsel of God?
- Does it reflect God's character?
- Does it harmonize with the intent of Scripture?



God condemns hypocritical judgment, not righteous discernment.



Our culture increasingly encourages snap judgments based on headlines, social media, personalities, or first impressions. Jesus calls believers to something far better: **righteous judgment** grounded in truth. Spiritual maturity requires looking beyond appearances, testing every claim by the Word of God, and refusing to let emotion, public opinion, or tradition replace careful biblical discernment.

 **John 7:24-27]** *"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is."*

Jesus' command in verse 24, **"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment,"** becomes the lens through which we are to read the next several verses. Why? Because the very next conversation illustrates how easily people fail to do exactly that. Instead of evaluating Jesus by the Scriptures, they rely upon rumor, assumptions, and popular opinion.

Unlike many pilgrims attending the feast, **the people of Jerusalem** were well aware of the growing hostility between Jesus and the religious leaders. They knew there was an active plot against Him following the healing at Bethesda. Jesus is teaching openly in the Temple courts, yet no one arrests Him. The crowd begins to wonder whether the rulers have changed their minds.

If the authorities truly believe Jesus is dangerous, why do they allow Him to continue speaking publicly? The irony is profound. The crowd assumes they know Jesus' origin because they know He grew up in Nazareth. At the same time, a popular Jewish tradition held that the Messiah's appearance would be sudden or mysterious. Because they believed they knew Jesus' hometown and family, they concluded He could not be the Messiah.

 **John 7:28-30]** *"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. But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come."*

Jesus now answers the crowd's mistaken assumptions about His identity. The verb "**cried**" indicates that Jesus raised His voice publicly. They believe they know where He comes from because they know His hometown, but they completely misunderstand His true origin. Jesus boldly declares that He has been sent by the Father, exposing their spiritual ignorance.



His words are understood as a direct challenge to the religious establishment. The leaders possess both the desire and the authority to arrest Him, yet they are unable to carry it out. The reason is not hesitation, fear, or lack of opportunity. The reason is theological: "**His hour had not yet come.**"

 **John 7:31-32]** *"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? The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him"*

 **John 7:33-34]** *"Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come."*

John records a sharp contrast in the crowd: "**And many of the people believed on him...**" Despite the religious leaders' hardening of hearts and growing hostility, Jesus' ministry is bearing fruit: "**And many of the people believed on him...**" The people begin reasoning among themselves. This is not yet mature faith, but it is honest reasoning. They have witnessed Jesus' signs and conclude that it is difficult to imagine the Messiah performing greater miracles than those already seen.

Public opinion is shifting, and the leadership recognizes the danger. What they could not defeat through debate, they now seek to silence through arrest. The phrase "**...the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him,**" is significant. The **Pharisees** and the **chief priests** were not natural allies. The Pharisees generally represented the popular religious party, while many of the chief priests were Sadducees. The opposition to Jesus united groups despite significant theological differences. Their common enemy became stronger than their own disagreements.

Jesus responds—not to the officers—but to the crowd: "**Yet a little while am I with you...**" He knows precisely where these events are leading. His earthly ministry has entered its final months. Then Jesus says a sobering statement...

**"Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me..."** Jesus is not saying that sincere seekers will be turned away. Rather, He is speaking to those who reject Him while He stands before them. A day will come when they desire the Messiah they have refused, but the opportunity presented during His earthly ministry will have passed.

Finally, He declares: **"...where I am, thither ye cannot come."** The religious leaders think only in earthly categories. They have no comprehension that Jesus is speaking of His return to the Father. Unbelief has left them unable to follow where only faith can go.



#### LESSON

Divine revelation never leaves a person neutral. It either softens the heart in faith or hardens it in unbelief. As God's light increases, so does human accountability. Those who receive the light grow in understanding, while those who reject it often become increasingly resistant (Ex. 7-14; 1 Sam. 18-26; John 5:16-18; John 11:45-53; Acts 7:54-60).



**John 7:35-36]** *"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? 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?"*

The Jewish leaders do not understand Jesus' words. They do not ask Jesus directly. Instead, they speculate among themselves. This is a recurring pattern. Rather than sincerely seeking understanding and truth, they debate among themselves while missing **the very truth** standing before them.

They ask each other: **"Will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles?"** The **"dispersed"** (Greek: *Diaspora*) refers to Jews living outside the land of Israel among the nations. Their question is probably intended as sarcasm. In effect, they ask, *"Is He going to leave Judea and become a teacher of Jews scattered among the Gentiles?"* The irony, of course, is that they unknowingly come remarkably close to what would eventually happen. After Christ's death, resurrection, and ascension, the Gospel would indeed spread throughout the Jewish Diaspora and then to the Gentile world through the apostles.



**John 7:37-38]** *"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."*

During the Feast of Tabernacles, the priests conducted an elaborate procession each morning. Water was drawn from the **Pool of Siloam**, carried to the Temple, and poured out in generous quantities before the Lord. On the final day, the ceremony reached its greatest climax with an especially abundant outpouring of water, commemorating God's miraculous provision of water from the rock during Israel's wilderness wanderings. During the ceremony, Jesus suddenly stands and cries out with a loud voice. Taking one of the feast's central symbols, Jesus publicly identified Himself as the fulfillment of that picture. **He Himself is the source of the living water** that Israel has been celebrating for centuries.





**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.)"*

John now pauses the narrative to explain exactly what Jesus meant by the "living water." This is one of the few places in the Gospel where the apostle inserts his own inspired commentary. The living water is not a symbol of salvation itself, but of the **Holy Spirit**, whose ministry would begin in a new and fuller way after Christ's death, resurrection, and glorification.



This statement does not mean the Holy Spirit did not exist or had never worked before Pentecost. Throughout the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit empowered prophets, priests, judges, and kings. He came upon individuals for specific ministries and purposes. What had not yet occurred was the permanent, universal indwelling ministry that would characterize the Church after Christ's ascension.



**John 7:40-42]** *"Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was?"*

Jesus' invitation to come and drink produces exactly what John has been emphasizing throughout this Gospel—**division**. John records three very different responses to Jesus:

1. The first group declares: **"Of a truth this is the Prophet."**
2. A second group goes even further: **"This is the Christ."**
3. But a third group objects: **"Shall Christ come out of Galilee?"**

This objection by the third group appears reasonable on the surface. The Old Testament plainly teaches that the Messiah would descend from **David's royal line** and be born in **Bethlehem** (Mic. 5:2; 2 Sam. 7:12-16). There is an irony in verse 42. The objectors actually quote the Scriptures correctly. The Messiah **must** come from Bethlehem and from David's lineage. Their error lies in assuming they already know everything about Jesus' background. Had they investigated further, they would have discovered that **Jesus fulfilled those very prophecies**.



**Never substitute rumor for careful biblical investigation.** Throughout this chapter, people repeatedly make confident assertions without possessing all the facts. The Berean principle remains the safeguard against such errors: **"Search the scriptures daily, whether those things were so"** (Acts 17:11).



Think  
about  
it.

Much of today's confusion arises not because people reject Scripture outright, but because they build confident conclusions on incomplete information. John's account reminds us to be careful investigators of both Scripture and evidence. Mature discernment requires more than knowing isolated verses—it requires patiently assembling the whole picture (the whole counsel of God) before reaching a conclusion (Acts 17:11).



**John 7:43-44]** *"So there was a division among the people because of him. And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him."*

**Division** is one of the inevitable consequences of Christ's ministry. Jesus Himself declared that He did not come to bring peace in the superficial sense of **universal agreement**, but a sword that would separate those who receive Him from those who reject Him (Matt. 10:34-36). Neutrality toward Christ is never presented as an option.

 **John 7:45-49]** *"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? Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."*

The Temple officers finally return to those who had commissioned them. Instead of presenting Jesus in chains, they face an angry question: **"Why have ye not brought him?"** Their assignment had been simple: arrest Jesus. Yet after hearing Him teach, they return empty-handed. Their explanation is remarkable: **"Never man spake like this man."** Instead of arresting Jesus, they themselves have been captivated by Jesus' testifying to the unparalleled authority of Jesus' words.



The Pharisees immediately dismiss the officer's testimony: **"Are ye also deceived?"** Rather than considering the officers' report, they attack the officers themselves. This is a common response when evidence becomes difficult to refute—discredit the witness rather than address the testimony.

They then appeal to authority. In effect, they argue: **"If Jesus were truly the Messiah, surely the educated experts would believe Him."** Their confidence rests not on Scripture but on institutional consensus. Finally, they reveal their contempt for the ordinary people: **"But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed."** The Pharisees regarded the common people (*am ha'aretz*, "people of the land") as religiously ignorant and spiritually inferior. The irony is striking. The very people they despise are beginning to recognize the Messiah, while those who boast in their knowledge remain blind to Him.



Our culture often assumes that truth is determined by experts, institutions, or majority opinion. The Pharisees made the same mistake. The believer's confidence rests elsewhere—in the authority of God's Word. Titles, positions, and credentials have value, but they can never replace humble submission to Scripture. As these Temple officers discovered, a sincere encounter with the words of Christ is often enough to overturn long-held assumptions and change the direction of a life.

 **John 7:50-53]** *"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. And every man went unto his own house."*

Just when it appears that every influential voice has turned against Jesus, an unexpected defender quietly speaks up. Nearly a year and a half has passed since Nicodemus visited Jesus under the cover of darkness (John 3). John deliberately reminds us of that encounter because Nicodemus' spiritual journey is still unfolding. He is not yet ready to identify publicly with Christ, but neither can he silently join the conspiracy against Him.



Nicodemus

Nicodemus does not argue that Jesus is the Messiah. Instead, he raises a question rooted in the Law itself: **"Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?"** His appeal is remarkably restrained. He simply asks that Jesus receive the same due process required by the Law of Moses. Before a man is condemned, he must first be heard (Deut. 1:16-17; 17:2-6). Rather than answering his question, the Pharisees attack Nicodemus personally: **"Art thou also of Galilee?"** Once again, they abandon reasoned discussion in favor of ridicule. They imply that anyone defending Jesus must share His supposed Galilean background.

They continue: **"Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet."** Ironically, they were either lying or, at best, ignorant, since this statement is inaccurate. Jonah, Nahum, Elijah, Elisha, Amos, and perhaps Hosea all had Galilean connections. Furthermore, Isaiah specifically foretold that the Messiah's ministry would shine forth in **Galilee of the nations** (Isa. 9:1-2; Matt. 4:13-16).

John closes the chapter quietly: **"And every man went unto his own house."** The debate ends without resolution, but the conflict has only intensified.

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Nicodemus quietly becomes an illustration of **growing faith**. Not every believer moves from unbelief to bold confession in a single moment. **Most** follow what John's Gospel traces out: Nicodemus' gradual journey:



**PATTERN**

- **Night** — curious but cautious (John 3).
- **Twilight** — willing to defend justice (John 7).
- **Daylight** — openly identifying with Christ at the Cross (John 19).

Nicodemus' story reminds us that genuine faith often matures step by step.



**LESSON**

There is an important lesson in Nicodemus' question. He does not ask the Sanhedrin to agree with Jesus. He simply asks them to **hear Him first**. Truth has nothing to fear from honest investigation. Throughout John's Gospel, those willing to examine the evidence move toward faith, while those determined to protect their own conclusions refuse even to listen. The Pharisees' response also reminds us that ridicule is never a substitute for evidence. When arguments become weak, personal attacks often become stronger.



Our culture often rewards quick conclusions and loud opinions while discouraging careful investigation. Nicodemus reminds us that genuine justice begins by listening before judging. As believers, we should never fear honest questions or careful examination of Scripture. Truth welcomes investigation, and God's Word consistently stands up to those who are willing to "search and look" for themselves rather than simply repeating popular opinion. Acts 17:11.



Lesson materials can be found at:  
**[www.TrustingInGrace.com](http://www.TrustingInGrace.com)**



**Judging Others:** Throughout the Gospel of John, Jesus continually compels people to judge Him. Is He merely a Galilean carpenter, or is He the eternal Son of God? John never discourages judgment; he calls readers to make the **right** judgment based on the evidence. That is exactly the point of John 20:30-31: John presents the signs so that his readers will rightly judge who Jesus is and believe in His name.



One of Satan's most effective distortions has been to turn "**Judge not**" into a slogan that discourages biblical discernment. Yet the same Jesus who warned against hypocritical judgment also commanded His followers to "**judge righteous judgment.**" The issue is not whether Christians should make judgments, but **how** they make them. Scripture repeatedly calls believers to test doctrine, expose error, evaluate fruit, exercise church discipline, and defend the truth. Genuine discernment is not contrary to love; it is one of love's essential responsibilities (Matt. 7:1-5; John 7:24; Acts 17:11; 1 Cor. 5:12-13; 1 John 4:1).

### Conclusion

John Chapter 7 reveals that Jesus Christ inevitably divides humanity. Every group encounters the same evidence, yet each reaches a different conclusion. Some recognize Him as the Prophet or the Christ; others reject Him, and the religious leaders harden their hearts even further. The issue is never a lack of evidence—it is whether people are willing to believe what God has revealed. At the heart of the chapter stands Jesus' timeless invitation: "***If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink,***" declaring Himself to be the true source of Living Water.

The chapter also reminds us that God's purposes unfold according to His perfect timetable. Repeated attempts to arrest Jesus fail because "**His hour was not yet come.**" As the opposition intensifies and the nation becomes increasingly divided, John continues to point us toward the Cross, where the Father's redemptive plan will be fulfilled exactly as He ordained. The same sovereign God who directed every moment of Christ's earthly ministry continues to govern history today, inviting all who thirst to find life in His Son.

| Seven Opinions of Jesus From the Crowd in John Chapter 7 |                                                                              |
|----------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Opinion                                                  | Correct?                                                                     |
| 1. He is a good man (John 7:12)                          | <b>Partially</b> – Jesus is good, but He is far more than merely a good man. |
| 2. He deceives the people (John 7:12)                    | <b>False.</b>                                                                |
| 3. He is the Prophet (John 7:40)                         | True, though incomplete if separated from His Messiahship.                   |
| 4. He is the Christ (John 7:41)                          | <b>True.</b>                                                                 |
| 5. The Christ cannot come from Galilee (John 7:41-42)    | <b>False</b> conclusion based on incomplete information.                     |
| 6. He has a devil [He is deluded] (John 7:20)            | <b>Completely false.</b>                                                     |
| 7. Never man spake like this man (John 7:46)             | <b>True</b> , recognizing His unique authority.                              |

**Next Lesson:** Read John Chapter 8. Prepare for a serious confrontation with Jesus, who explains Himself more clearly!

# GOD'S PROPHETIC CALENDAR

The Seven Appointed Feasts of Israel

✓ = Fulfilled (First Coming)  
○ = Awaiting Fulfillment (Second Coming)

| MONTHS OF THE BIBLICAL YEAR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | SPRING (First Fruits)                                                                                              |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       | SUMMER                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                 | FALL (Harvest)                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Nisan (Mar/Apr)                                                                                                    | Iyar (Apr/May)                                                                                                                | Sivan (May/Jun)                                                                                                       | ←----- Church Age -----→                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                 | MONTH OF TISHRI (Sep/Oct)                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       | 1 Tishri                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                  | 10 Tishri                                                                                                                                  | 15–21 Tishri                                                                                                                         |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>1 PASSOVER</b><br>14 Nisan<br> | <b>2 UNLEAVENED BREAD</b><br>15–21 Nisan<br> | <b>3 FIRSTFRUITS</b><br>16 Nisan<br> | <b>4 PENTECOST (Shavuot)</b><br>50 Days After Firstfruits<br> | <b>CHURCH AGE</b><br><br>A mystery hidden in God from the ages... now revealed.<br><br>Eph. 3:5 | <b>5 TRUMPETS (Yom Teruah)</b><br>1 Tishri<br> | <b>6 DAY OF ATONEMENT (Yom Kippur)</b><br>10 Tishri<br> | <b>7 TABERNACLES (Sukkot)</b><br>15–21 Tishri<br> |
| HISTORICAL MEANING                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Israel delivered from Egypt. Blood of the lamb spared their lives.                                                 | Seven days of no leaven. Israel separates from sin.                                                                           | First sheaf of the harvest waved before the Lord.                                                                     | Wheat harvest completed. Offering of two loaves.                                                                                               |                                                                                                 | New civil year. Trumpets blown throughout the land.                                                                              | Nation afflicts soul and seeks atonement for sins. High Priest enters Most Holy Place.                                                     | Israel dwells in booths for seven days. God's presence with His people.                                                              |
| PROPHETIC FULFILLMENT                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | ✓ Christ Crucified<br><i>Our Passover Lamb</i><br>1 Cor. 5:7                                                       | ✓ Christ's Sinless Body<br><i>In the Tomb</i><br>1 Cor. 5:8                                                                   | ✓ Resurrection<br><i>Firstfruits from the Dead</i><br>1 Cor. 15:20                                                    | ✓ Holy Spirit Given<br><i>Birth of the Church</i><br>Acts 2                                                                                    |                                                                                                 | ○ Future Second Coming Program<br>(Rapture/Regathering)<br>1 Thess. 4:16–17<br>Zech. 9:14                                        | ○ Israel's National Repentance<br>Zech. 12:10<br>Rom. 11:25–27                                                                             | ○ Messiah Dwelling With His People<br>Millennial Kingdom<br>Rev. 21:3<br>Zech. 14:16                                                 |
| SCRIPTURE                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Ex. 12:1–14<br>Lev. 23:5                                                                                           | Ex. 12:15–20<br>Lev. 23:6–8                                                                                                   | Lev. 23:9–14<br>Num. 28:26                                                                                            | Lev. 23:15–21<br>Deut. 16:9–12                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                 | Lev. 23:23–25<br>Num. 29:1–6                                                                                                     | Lev. 16:29–34<br>Lev. 23:26–32                                                                                                             | Lev. 23:33–44<br>Deut. 16:13–15                                                                                                      |
| DIVINE PLAN IN HISTORY                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | FIRST COMING – FULFILLED                                                                                           |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                | SECOND COMING – TO BE FULFILLED                                                                 |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | ✓<br>PASSOVER<br>Christ Died                                                                                       | → ✓<br>UNLEAVENED BREAD<br>Christ Buried                                                                                      | → ✓<br>FIRSTFRUITS<br>Christ Rose                                                                                     | → ✓<br>PENTECOST<br>Holy Spirit Given<br>Church Born                                                                                           | ○<br>TRUMPETS<br>Christ Returns for His Church                                                  | → ○<br>DAY OF ATONEMENT<br>Israel Repents                                                                                        | → ○<br>TABERNACLES<br>Messiah Reigns on Earth                                                                                              |                                                                                                                                      |
| TIED TO JOHN'S GOSPEL                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | JOHN 6<br>Passover (Feeding of the 5,000)                                                                          |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                | THE BIG PICTURE                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                      |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | → JOHN 7<br>TABERNACLES<br>Living Water Ceremony<br>"If any man thirst..."                                         |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                | → JOHN 8<br>LIGHT OF THE WORLD<br>Temple Lamp Ceremony<br>"I am the light..."                   |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                            |                                                                                                                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The first four feasts (Spring) point to Messiah's first coming and the establishment of the Church.</li><li>• The last three feasts (Fall – Tishri) look forward to Messiah's return and the Kingdom.</li><li>• The Feasts are God's prophetic calendar, revealing His plan from redemption to restoration.</li><li>• John 7 takes place during the Feast of Tabernacles – when Israel remembered God's provision in the wilderness. Jesus stood in their midst and offered Living Water and Light.</li></ul> |                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                               |                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                            |                                                   |

These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. Leviticus 23:4

## JOHN CHAPTER SEVEN

N T S I S T D D O N A T A Y E Z  
I E S K R O S L R P A E R E T T  
A T E A R E U L R U E O A I E E  
R L P L E O E G G O L N E D C W  
W E W Y I F W H H G W B L N U A  
D A E A T L T H T T W D E Y F J  
N E L S Y E A Z I O L H A T E E  
R E D K L D I G H E S E E E K L  
I I V P E F A D L G S R D A N I  
M G M E J D E E E E N U P O A H  
C E F E R N H V R T T S A O B F  
T A W S R K E C E J E T X C L A  
O R N A B I N R R O E W E E E T  
Y T E N L H C O G A U S S R O B  
B L I E O E X A W M E Y U E S C  
I F B F S T O T A N M S S S T N

ABODE  
AFTER  
ALWAY  
BECAUSE  
BELIEVE  
CANNOT  
DEPART  
FEAST  
GALILEE  
GLORY  
HENCE  
HOWBEIT  
JESUS  
JEWRY  
JUDAEA  
KNOWN  
LEARNED  
LETTERS  
MIDST  
MYSELF  
NEVER  
OPENLY  
READY  
SEARCH  
SECRET  
SOUGHT  
SPAKE  
TAUGHT  
TEMPLE  
WALKED  
WORKS  
WORLD