

### Heaven Sent

Jesus traveled place-to-place touching people's lives through miraculous signs and teachings. Many came to follow Him. About two years into His public ministry His popularity among the people began to wane. Some demanded more miraculous signs (John 6:30). Others turned back no longer willing to accept His teachings (John 6:66). The religious authorities' threats against Him intensified (John 5:16-18). One of His Twelve would soon betray Him (John 6:70-71). Even His own brothers didn't believe in Him (John 7:5).

**Drawing Near:** Dear Jesus, if I had been among Your followers when You walked our land would I have turned away from You too? I pray I would have echoed Peter's confession, "Lord, to whom shall we (I) go? You have the words of eternal life." (John 6:68) Because of Your grace and by Your power, my Jesus, keep me always close to You. Amen.

1. Have you ever had to stand alone being misunderstood, maligned or abandoned? If so what were the factors that helped you get through that difficult time?

**Read John 7:1-52 to get an overview of this week's study. Then re-read verses 1-10.**

2. Find Galilee on your map. Notice the distance this region is from the city of Jerusalem. At this time why did Jesus remain in Galilee rather than centering His ministry activities further south in Judea? (John 7:1)
3. What celebration was coming up that Jesus' brothers encouraged Him to attend?

**To Dig Deeper:** A million or more pilgrims filled the city of Jerusalem for this most popular celebration of the Jewish year. They came not only from the closer regions of Judea, Perea and Galilee but also from all the distant lands of the ancient world.-Josephus From a Study Bible or other reference guide, what more can you find out about this Feast?

4. a. In your own words what was Jesus' brothers' advice and their hopeful outcome? (See Mark 6:1-3 for more information about Jesus' brothers.)

- b. Did Jesus take His brothers' advice? Why or why not?

**Read John 7:11-14.**

5. From verses 1 and 11-13, characterize the atmosphere in Jerusalem as the people there anticipated that Jesus would be among the multitude of pilgrims coming for the Feast. (Remember, the "Jews" is a term John used to refer to the religious authorities who opposed Jesus.)
  
6. What amazes you about Jesus' decision mid-week through the celebration?

**Read John 7:15-24.**

7. Any respected Jewish rabbi earned his authority to teach from his teacher, another reliable rabbi and on down the line of authority to Moses who received the law from God Himself. These rabbis taught by discussing the interpretations of Scripture of other respected rabbis.
  - a. How did the Jews react to Jesus' teaching?
  
  - b. What did Jesus say about His own teaching from verses 16-18? Also see John 12:49.
  
8.
  - a. Read John 7:17-18 again several times. What is necessary before a person can validate for himself that Jesus' words are authentic, right, true?
  
  - b. Give an example of how this principle might be applied in a person's life. (In our spiritual lives the principle of "seeing is believing" does not apply.)

**Personal Reflection:** Are there areas in your own life in which you have not been willing to obey God? In light of Jesus' promises in John 14:21, talk over those areas with Him now.

9. Jesus continued to speak truth into the lives of those who opposed Him. Read John 7:19 along with Deuteronomy 5:17. What *life or death* issue was so important for these Jews to recognize? (Also see Galatians 3:10-11 and John 3:36.)
  
10. The religious authorities had accused Jesus of breaking the law when He healed the invalid on the Sabbath (John 5:1-9, 14-18). Yet their law accommodated the rite of circumcision when the eighth day of a newborn son's life (as required by the Jewish law) fell on the Sabbath. What do you think Jesus was asking of them (John 7:24)?

**Read John 7:25-36.**

11. a. As the crowd sized Jesus up against their idea of who the Messiah would be, what questions were on their minds (verses 25-27)?  
  
b. Many knew of Jesus' origin as a poor carpenter from insignificant Nazareth in Galilee. Where did Jesus say He was from and where was He going (verses 29, 33)?

**Read John 7:37-39.**

12. Threats and ridicule could have driven Jesus into hiding, anger or retaliation. But on the "last and greatest day of the Feast" when all of Jerusalem was watching, what amazing things did Jesus do and say?

The ceremony of the outpouring of water culminated the weeklong celebration. That morning worshippers followed a priest to the Pool of Siloam where he filled a golden pitcher with spring water. They returned to the Temple where pieces of lamb were sacrificed. The water was then poured out alongside the altar. Psalms were chanted and prayers said remembering back to God's provision of water from the rock in their wilderness journey (Numbers 20) and looking forward to the fulfillment of the outpouring of God's Spirit and the coming of their Savior (Joel 2:28-29, 32). When all songs were sung and prayers said, it became quiet. It was probably then that Jesus stood up so all could see and shouted so all could hear (verse 37).-Edersheim (The Life and Times of Jesus The Messiah)

13. In light of the outpouring ceremony, ponder the following phrases from verses 37 and 38 and then comment on the significance of Jesus' words.
  - a. "If anyone is thirsty" (See Psalm 63:1.)

- b. “come to Me and drink “ (Consider Isaiah 55:1.)
  
- c. “Whoever believes in Me” (Read John 3:18.)
  
- d. “streams (rivers) of living water” (Isaiah 58:11)
  
- e. “will flow from within him” (John 4:13-14)

**To Dig Deeper:** Read Ezekiel 47:1-12. Ezekiel’s vision gives us a picture of a river (streams of living water) originating from the Temple (God Himself). Take note of the difference this water makes as it flows eastward through the desert and into the Sea (Dead Sea).

**Pause and Worship:** Thank Him that as we believe in Jesus, the Spirit comes into our lives and we are never the same again. “Come Spirit. Refresh, replenish, restore and rebuild those areas in our lives that are dry and lifeless. Amen.”

**Read John 7:40-52.**

14. Read John 7 once again, listing all the different people and their conclusions about Jesus.

15. Jesus is the most non-neutral person the world has ever known. Either everything He said is true or as some people in this week’s passage concluded, He is crazy or a deceiver. Consider Jesus. What do you say about Him?