

WE HAVE SEEN HIS GLORY **The Glorious Hope of Christ**

Scripture Text: [John 7:25–36 \(ESV\)](#)

Like a sandwich around this part of Jesus' encounter with the crowds in Jerusalem attending the Feast of Tabernacles are two main issues:

1. They didn't know where he really came from; and
2. They didn't know where he was really going.

And more importantly their speculation was based upon dubious sources.

Where Did Jesus Come From?

The crowd becomes suspicious of the inaction of their leaders. Passivity in leadership arouses suspicion. If Jesus is not the Christ and he is claiming to be, then why aren't the authorities acting? Perhaps they too wonder if he is the Christ? Of course, this put the authorities into gear, and they did try to organize the arrest of Jesus, but to no avail!

The crowd thought they knew where Jesus came from. We read in verse 27, the following: *"But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from."* (John 7:27, ESV). John doesn't say why these people thought the Messiah's origin would be a mystery. There are two schools of thought:

- a. They may have been resting on a misinterpretation of Malachi 3:1¹; or
- b. They may have been resting on apocryphal literature like 1 Enoch 48:6²; 4 Ezra 7:28³; 13:51–52⁴; 2 Baruch 29:3⁵.

¹ *"Behold, I send my messenger, and he will prepare the way before me. And the Lord whom you seek will suddenly come to his temple; and the messenger of the covenant in whom you delight, behold, he is coming, says the Lord of hosts."* (Malachi 3:1, ESV)

² And because of this he was chosen, and hidden in front of Him, before the World was created, and forever.

³ For my son the Messiah shall be revealed with those who are with him, and those who remain shall rejoice four hundred years.

⁴ I said, "O sovereign Lord, explain this to me: Why did I see the man coming up from the heart of the sea? "He said to me, "Just as no one can explore or know what is in the depths of the sea, so no one on earth can see my Son or those who are with him, except in the time of his day.

⁵ And it shall come to pass when all is accomplished that was to come to pass in those parts, that the Messiah shall then begin to be revealed.

In either case they thought they knew, but they thought wrong. Jesus clarified his origin. It was a Divine origin. He came from the Father and was sent by the Father. Then Jesus levels this stunning indictment (one He will repeat again and again), “You do not know Him (i.e., the Father).” These people so wrapped up in religious ordinances and traditions; these that had the Torah and who were given covenant promises – they did not know God the Father! That is shocking!

Like any sermon, the crowd is split. To some, Jesus’ identification with and intimacy with God, along with the accusation that they didn’t know God prompted them to seek His arrest. To others, John writes, “Yet many of the people believed in him.”⁶ As we have learned in John’s Gospel, that may not mean saving faith, but it seems to be so in this case. John records that it is based upon shaky ground, but it may be true faith, albeit incomplete. A faith anchored in miraculous signs is preliminary to say the least. “Faith based on signs is not strongly encouraged (2:11, 23; 4:48; etc.), though it is better than nothing (10:38).”⁷

With that the authorities call out the guards to arrest Jesus. But there was a greater authority at work, and it wasn’t His time yet. They couldn’t touch him.

Where is Jesus Going?

Jesus has already said that they didn’t really know where He came from; and they really didn’t know God, the Father. Now He tells them they didn’t know where He was really going, and they can’t come with Him. “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. You will seek me, and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.”⁸

They wondered if Jesus might be taking His message to the scattered Jews among the Grecian world, but He simply said, “I’m going back to my Father and you can’t come with me.” The Jews did not understand the true meaning of Christ’s statement.

Why did Jesus say they can’t come with Him? It is very clear from the reading of the entire Gospel that Jesus was saying that death awaited him. This is the means by which He will return to His Father. At the point of his departure, no one could go with him, not even his disciples.

Why Is This Account Given by John and Why is it Profitable??

Let us recall John’s audience. John is writing in the late first century: 90 A.D. or more. His purpose is without doubt: “*but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name*” (John 20:31, ESV). His goal is not to write a

⁶ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 7:31). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁷ Carson, D. A. (1991). [The Gospel according to John](#) (p. 319). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.

⁸ [The Holy Bible: English Standard Version](#). (2016). (Jn 7:33–34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

comprehensive history of the life of Christ. His goal is to select those events in Christ's ministry that would enable someone to believe in who Christ is and what He offers.

"John's original audience consisted of both Jews and Gentiles living in the larger Greco-Roman world in Ephesus and beyond"⁹ through Asia Minor. If you were part of John's audience, what message would you think he's trying to convey to you? From the text I think it's this:

Don't base your eternal destiny on faulty interpretations and false authorities.

These Jews based their decision about who Jesus is on, selective reading of the Scripture and a misinterpretation of the Old Testament; plus, they were leaning on literature (apocryphal) that had no authority. What are you resting on to give you confidence for eternity? Jesus Christ, the One who came from the Father and the One who returned to the Father is the only authority and the only hope of eternal life.

APPLICATION

Back in the mid-1800s, a young man was apprenticing as a cabinetmaker in England. His mentor was a Christian and under his influence Edward Mote, too, became a Christian. Mote grew up in a home very hostile to Christianity. He became a skilled cabinetmaker and owned his own business. One day while walking to work and reflecting on the parable of the house built on a rock¹⁰, these words came to mind and he started to finish the lyrics. What was produced was this:

*My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ the solid rock I stand,
all other ground is sinking sand.*

The Gospel, in a nutshell, is found in 2 Corinthians 5:21 (ESV),

"²¹ For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God."

That is the only foundation to build your life on – the only hope that stands the test of time: that we might be found in Christ, not in our own righteousness, but clothed with His.

⁹ Crossway Bibles. (2008). [The ESV Study Bible](#) (p. 2015). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

¹⁰ [Matthew 7:24-27](#)