

§143. Jesus Preaches at the Feast of Tabernacles(John 7:11–8:1)

Introduction

Jesus at Jerusalem during the feast of the tabernacle and all the associated Sabbath controversies

Exposition

10 But when His brothers had gone up, then He also went up to the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret.

1. We can infer that Father has signalled and Jesus obeyed. His action was opposite of what his brothers expected: that is not public display but secretly.

11 Then the Jews sought Him at the feast, and said, “Where is He?”

1. Jews are those from Jerusalem hostile to Jesus. They could do what they wanted in Jerusalem, since Galilee was under Herod Antipas.

12 And there was much complaining among the people concerning Him. Some said, “He is good”; others said, “No, on the contrary, He deceives the people.”

1. Jews from Galilee and diaspora was soft on Jesus, but those from Judea was harsh on Him. The opinion of Jesus went from one extreme to other.
2. Those who said that he was good cannot comprehend his deity.
3. Those who allege deception continues this even after His resurrection.

13 However, no one spoke openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

1. This indicates the hostility of the Jewish authorities understood by the whole nation and silently rejected Jesus.

2. John 9:22 His parents said these things because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed that He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue.
3. Jn 16:1-2. "These things I have spoken to you, that you should not be made to stumble. 2 They will put you out of the synagogues; yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers God service.

14 Now about the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and taught.

1. We do not know when Jesus reached the feast, what is important is that He obeyed His father's timing and not His brothers.
2. Rabbi's normally taught people in the temple during festivals and Jesus also did the same, but drawn large crowds.
3. Note that focus of Jesus was not privacy, but obeying His father.

15 And the Jews marveled, saying, "How does this Man know letters, having never studied?"

1. Jews from Galilee generally are simple people and appreciated the teaching of Jesus.
2. Mat 7:28 And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, 29 for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.
3. Never studied is not how to read or write. Jews from Judea was surprised since Jesus had not studied with any Rabbis but still had great understanding of the scripture.
4. This record eliminate many speculations such as Jesus went to India and leaned all magic!

16 Jesus answered them and said, "My doctrine is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

1. Teachers who studied under great Rabbis will derive their authority from the style and tradition of their gurus.
2. However, Jesus draws His authority by a life of complete obedience to the Father and declaring the revelation that His Father gives.
3. These words of Jesus does not diminish the authority of Jesus in any way. While those teachers cling to their gurus, prophets of OT used the words 'Thus says the Lord', Jesus state the truth that "I am the truth"

17 If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority.

1. How to know what Jesus taught is true?
2. Rabbi's decided truth by debate, intellectual discussion and human reason.
3. Basic consideration to verify Jesus teaching is not intellectual; but moral: i.e obedience to the Father.
4. It does not teach that unless one reach some level of maturity then only He can know God; but a basic honest willingness to obey what the Lord teaches.
5. The question is 'Are you verifying the truth then walk away like Pilate?' If so you will never reach the truth.
6. Note also that the impossibility of finite and fallen human to verify the authenticity of divine claims.
7. Heb 11:6. But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him
8. the person who chooses to do God's will discovers that Jesus' teaching authentic Word of God.
9. Application: Bible study without obedience and prayer is useless.

10. Application: Prerequisite of finding God's will: willingness to obey what ever the outcome may be.

18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.

1. This verse explains the reason why the crowds could not accept the words of Jesus.
2. People preach with at least a part to boost the ego and self glory. Honesty and authentic is lacking.
3. John 5:41 "I do not receive honor from men. 42 But I know you, that you do not have the love of God in you. 43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. 44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God?"
4. Application: Our authenticity of teaching come from conformity to the scripture.

19 Did not Moses give you the law, yet none of you keeps the law? Why do you seek to kill Me?"

1. Jesus cleverly show why the Jews could not believe in Him and that His teachings are authentic divine words.
2. Moses gave them the law; but they are not obeying. And hence could not verify the authenticity of Jesus.
3. Jesus proves that they do not follow the law by exposing their motive: they want to kill Jesus which is a direct violation of the law for the law says 'you shall not murder'.
4. Application: Obedience to the law is pre-requisite to comprehend spiritual matters.

20 The people answered and said, "You have a demon. Who is seeking to kill You?"

1. Remember: Mk 3:22 And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, "He has Beelzebub," and, "By the ruler of the demons He casts out demons."
2. This the reason some say Jesus is a deceiver. The crowd unaware of the plot of Jews to kill Jesus, when they heard suddenly the accusation of Jesus that 'why do you seek to kill me?'

21 Jesus answered and said to them, "I did one work, and you all marvel.

1. Jesus refers to the healing of the paralytic in chapter 5 which happened in Jerusalem.
2. This miracle was not well received for they accused Jesus of violating the Sabbath.

22 Moses therefore gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath.

1. Circumcision, unlike the emphasis given by Jews, it originated before Moses, for God commanded Abraham (Ge 17). Moses only formalized this at Sinai (Ex 12). Hence, Jesus said it came from fathers meaning patriarchs.
2. Law says no work on Sabbath and the law also says to give circumcision on eighth day. A child born on Sabbath day had to be circumcised the next Sabbath. Which law is to be kept and which one to follow.
3. They 'violated' the Sabbath for the sake of circumcision. In one sense Jews are consistently violating the Law.
4. Nevertheless, this does not justify Jesus violating the law even though it is only in one day?

23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath, so that the law of Moses should not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made a man completely well on the Sabbath?

1. Lord is not justifying his violation of the Sabbath because Jews regularly violate the Sabbath for the sake of circumcision.
2. Remember the words of Jesus in **Mt 12:5**. **Or have you not read in the law that on the Sabbath the priests in the temple profane the Sabbath, and are blameless?**. Here, the priests work on Sabbath with their priestly duties thus formally breaks the law. However, they are blameless because there is a hierarchy principle: i.e. administering priestly duties has a higher importance than Sabbath restriction. Thus the priests are blameless.
3. Circumcision is viewed by Jews as perfecting work of God and so is also the Sabbath. What Jesus did was perfecting this man who was paralytic for 38 years is exactly what is expected from a circumcision. In other words, Jesus did not violated the Sabbath, but fulfilled it.
4. There are other arguments to support the action of Jesus elsewhere. For example, **Mt. 12:10**. **And behold, there was a man who had a withered hand. And they asked Him, saying, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?"—that they might accuse Him. 11 Then He said to them, "What man is there among you who has one sheep, and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will not lay hold of it and lift it out? 12 Of how much more value then is a man than a sheep? Therefore it is lawful to do good on the Sabbath." 13 Then He said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." And he stretched it out, and it was restored as whole as the other.**

Mk. 2:23. **Therefore the Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."**

5. Thus, Jesus did not violated Sabbath, but fulfilled it.

24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

1. We are commanded to judge, but this judgement should not be on external ground, but based on righteous ground.
2. Wrong judgement: external based on man made social norms often extending what God has not indented.

3. Righteous judgement: based on the revealed moral will of God in the Scripture.
4. We need moral and theological discernment. Dt 17:8-10. "If a matter arises which is too hard for you to judge, between degrees of guilt for bloodshed, between one judgment or another, or between one punishment or another, matters of controversy within your gates, then you shall arise and go up to the place which the Lord your God chooses. 9 And you shall come to the priests, the Levites, and to the judge there in those days, and inquire of them; they shall pronounce upon you the sentence of judgment. 10 You shall do according to the sentence which they pronounce upon you in that place which the Lord chooses. And you shall be careful to do according to all that they order you.

Application

1. Obedience: prerequisite to understand the intend of in Scripture
2. Discernment: expected from the disciple while applying the biblical principle in our practical daily life