

## Worksheet #8: John 7:1–53

**Summary:** Chapters 7 and 8 include a cycle of events set in Jerusalem during the Feast of Tabernacles. The cycle is introduced with a brief account of controversy within Jesus' family (7:1–9), as his brothers attempt to convince him to seek public notoriety. In so doing, the brothers demonstrate their own misunderstanding and rejection of Jesus and his mission. The rest of the chapter describes Jesus' public teaching in the temple. The passage accomplishes two purposes, showing first that "Jesus fulfills the symbolism underlying [the Feast of Tabernacles]," but also "featuring representative questions regarding Jesus' messiahship" that serve to guide us as we evaluate the things Jesus said about himself.<sup>1</sup>

### Abbreviated Outline<sup>2</sup> (current passage in bold):

- I. INTRODUCTION: THE WORD MADE FLESH (1:1-18)
- II. THE BOOK OF SIGNS: THE SIGNS OF THE MESSIAH (1:19-12:50)
  - A. *The Forerunner and the Coming of the Messiah (1:19-51)*
    - 1. The Testimony of John the Baptist (1:19-34)
    - 2. The Beginning of Jesus' Ministry (1:35-51)
  - B. *The Cana Cycle: Jesus' Inaugural Signs and Representative Conversations (2:1-4:54)*
    - 1. Sign 1: Changing Water into Wine at the Wedding in Cana (2:1-12)
    - 2. Sign 2: One of Jesus' Jerusalem Signs: The Clearing of the Temple (2:13-22)
    - 3. Representative Conversations: Nicodemus the Jewish Ruler, the Samaritan Woman (2:23-4:42)
    - 4. Sign 3: The Second Sign in Cana: The Healing of the Royal Official's Son (4:43-54)
  - C. ***The Festival Cycle: Additional Signs amidst Mounting Unbelief (5-10)***
    - 1. Sign 4 at an Unnamed Feast in Jerusalem: The Healing of the Lame Man (5:1-47)
    - 2. Sign 5: Galilean Passover: Feeding the Multitude and Bread of Life Discourse (6:1-71)
    - 3. **Jesus at the Feast of Tabernacles (7:1-8:59)**
    - 4. Sign 6: The Healing of the Blind Man and the Good Shepherd Discourse (9-10)
  - D. *Final Passover: Climactic Sign, the Raising of Lazarus, and Other Events (11-12)*
    - 1. Sign 7: The Raising of Lazarus (11)
    - 2. Final Events of Jesus' Public Ministry (12)
- III. THE BOOK OF EXALTATION: PREPARING THE NEW MESSIANIC COMMUNITY AND THE PASSION OF JESUS (13-20)
  - A. *The Cleansing and Instruction of the New Covenant Community, including Jesus' Final Prayer (13-17)*
  - B. *The Passion Narrative (18-19)*
  - C. *Jesus' Resurrection and Appearances, Commissioning of Disciples (20:1-29)*
  - D. *Concluding Purpose Statement (20:30-31)*
- IV. EPILOGUE: THE COMPLEMENTARY ROLES OF PETER AND THE BELOVED DISCIPLE (21)

<sup>1</sup> Andreas Köstenberger, *Encountering John: The Gospel in Historical, Literary, and Theological Perspective*, Second Edition., Encountering Biblical Studies (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2013), 92.

<sup>2</sup> Adapted from Köstenberger, L. Scott Kellum, and Charles L. Quarles, *The Cradle, The Cross, and The Crown: An Introduction to the New Testament* (Nashville, Tenn: B & H Academic, 2009), 307–308.

**Interpretation:** *Read through the passage, and then review and make notes under the questions below.*

1. Consider Lev. 23:33–44, Num. 29:12–40, and Deut. 16:13–17. What do we learn from these texts about Jewish ritual during the Feast of Tabernacles?

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2. John 7:12–13 contrasts popular opinions of Jesus. What is the key question under debate?

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3. How does Jesus' statement in 7:18 answer the question stated in 7:15?

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4. Do the people of Jerusalem know where Jesus is from (7:27, cf. 7:41)? Based on your answer, explain why Jesus' statement in 7:28–29 was so controversial.

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5. Consider Isaiah 12:3 and 58:11. How do these texts connect with Jesus' claim in John 7:37–38, and what is Jesus' basic point?

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**Application:** *Take time to reflect on the implications of this passage for your own life today.*

6. What does this passage tell us about Jesus? How does it help us to understand "his place in the sweep of redemptive history"?<sup>3</sup>

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7. What does this passage mean for your walk with the Lord?

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8. How does this passage challenge the way you think about situations in daily life? What should you do about that?

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<sup>3</sup> D. A. Carson, *The Gospel according to John*, Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1991), 102.