

STUDY 14 - John 7.1-52

Chapters 7.1 - 10.21 give an account of Jesus' visit to Jerusalem at the Feast of Tabernacles, six months before His death. The passages vividly portray various attitudes toward Jesus among different groups. These groups fall into two main classes: one, 'the Jews', who included the chief priests, Pharisees, rulers, and 'the people of Jerusalem'; and the other, 'the people', that is, the general multitude from all parts, all of whom were attending the Feast. The first of these two classes was, in the main, hostile to Jesus.

1 How do the words of Jesus' brothers in verses 3-8 show that they did not understand / rightly perceive Him? What did Jesus mean by 'my time' (v. 5)? The world's attitude to Jesus prevented Him from revealing Himself to them, as others might have chosen to (verses 4, 7). Can we expect any different reception (cf. 15.18-21)? How much does v. 13 relate to the Church today?

2 Verses 17, 18. What two tests does our Lord suggest by which someone can discover whether Jesus' teaching was true and of divine origin? What may it cost us, to apply these tests?

3 What illustrations are found in vv. 25-52 (a) of the deep impression made by the Lord upon many; and yet (b) how their incipient faith was checked by ignorance (vv. 27-29), prejudice (vv. 35,36), or pride (vv. 48-52)?

Note. v. 39. The Spirit was already present and active in the world, but the particular promise of Joel 2.28 was not fulfilled until the ascended and enthroned Christ gave the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. See Acts 2.16-18, 33.

STUDY 15 - John 7.53 - 8.11

The section 7.53 - 8.11 is omitted by all the oldest Greek manuscripts now extant, with just one exception; its style and vocabulary are much closer to those of Luke (in whose Gospel, four manuscripts actually place it) than those of John.

1 How might this passage serve as an introduction / illustration of 8.15? What two different 'types' of sinner do we see revealed (a) in the Pharisees, and (b) in the woman?

2 The woman was actually 'caught in the act' of adultery - why then did Jesus treat her with such gentleness? (Cf. Leviticus 20.10). How would His words none-the-less bring her conviction of her sin?

STUDY 16 - John 8.12-30

1 In vv. 13-29 what does Jesus say about (a) His origin, (b) His ultimate destination, (c) His relation to the world, and (d) His relation to God?

2 What was lacking in the Pharisees which prevented them from recognizing the truth of Jesus' words? How can one see the light of truth? How does light lead to life? See vv. 12, 24.

Notes

1 8.12. An allusion to the pillar of fire which guided the Israelites on their journey through the wilderness (see Nu 9.15-23). This was commemorated during the Feast of Tabernacles by lighting of huge bowls of oil near the Temple, producing brilliant light, which could be seen for many miles distance.

2 Verses 13, 14. This is an apparent contradiction to 5.31, where Jesus says that if He had been the sole witness in His own cause, His witness would not have been true. But in both passages, He goes on to point out that He is not alone in His witness. See vv. 17, 18.

STUDY 17 - John 8.31-59

1 The form of expression in the Greek of v. 31 shows that 'the Jews' here did not commit themselves to Jesus ('believe') as much as did the 'many' in v. 30. What steps leading to complete freedom are shown in vv. 31 - 36? What exactly is this freedom? In what sense did (do!) the Jews claim to be free? Are we?

2 This passage is concerned with the real meaning of 'parentage'. For what reasons did Jesus argue that the Jews were not truly the children of Abraham or of God, but rather of the devil? What evidence did Jesus give that He is God's Son? Why were they unable to see this?

Notes

1 Verse 51. "He will never see death": *ie.* know the experience of that death which is God's judgement upon sin; *cf.* Gn 2.17; Jn 5.24; 11.26.

2 Verse 56. "My day": Abraham in faith saw ahead to the day of Christ's incarnation, anticipating His saving work.

3 Verse 58. "I am": the divine Name, as in Ex 3.14.

STUDY 18 - John 9.1-41

1 This is the 6th of the 7 'signs'. To which aspect of Jesus' work does it point (see vv. 5, 39)? In how many ways can the opening of this man's eyes be compared with the giving of spiritual sight? How can a personal experience of Jesus' power give the same assurance in answering His critics, as this man's?

2 Translate vv. 39-41 in your own words. Detail some ways in which the words and actions of the Pharisees (vv. 13-34) help illustrate this passage.

Note. Verse 14. The 'work' for which the Pharisees condemned Jesus for breaking the Sabbath commandment was simply making clay, as well as healing. Healing was permitted, but only in some emergency.

STUDY 19 - John 10.1-21

Compare with Jer 23.1-4: by their attitude towards the blind man of chapter 9 the Pharisees, who claimed to be the spiritual guides of Israel - the people of God - had shown themselves to be 'thieves and robbers' (vv. 1,8) like the false prophets of the Old Testament.

1 Vv. 1-10. Why does Jesus call Himself 'the door of the sheep'? What are privileges, and blessings, for those who enter in? How do the sheep recognize the true Shepherd? What does He do for them?

2 What are marks of a good shepherd shown in this passage? Find in vv. 11-18 (a) proof that the Lord's death was not mere martyrdom; (b) the purpose of His life, and death; and (c) an incentive to missionary work. *Cf.* Rev 7.9, 10, 15-17.

Notes

1 Verse 3. 'Hear': *ie.* to listen attentively, and thus obey

2 Jesus is both 'door' and 'shepherd'. Others are under-shepherds (*cf.* Acts 20.28-29; 1Pet 5.2-4) who must themselves first enter through the 'door'.

STUDY 20 - John 10.22-42

1 Why would a plain answer to the Jews' question in v. 24 have been useless? What indications of the nature of Jesus' Person were already being given (*cf.* vv. 25, 32, 37, 38)? Why were the Jews utterly incapable of seeing this? How should works corroborate words, in the Christian life?

2 In the statements of vv. 27 & 28, how is the relationship between sheep and shepherd described; how should the shepherd relate to the sheep? What grounds are given in vv. 28 & 29 for never perishing

Notes

1 Verse 30. The word 'one' is neuter in the Greek: it means 'a unity', not 'one person'.

2 Verses 34-36. Cf Ps 82.6. The judges of Israel, acting as God's representatives, were called 'gods!' The Jews should have seen that Jesus was far, far superior to them. This comparison with the men of the Old Testament is sufficient argument to refute the charge of blasphemy. Jesus does not imply that He is merely a man, like them.

STUDY 21 - John 11.1-44

The seventh 'sign'.

1 Compare v. 4 with 9.3. Explain the apparent contradiction both in v. 4 and also in vv. 5-6 (cf. vv. 14-15). Discuss why God sometimes seems to 'delay' answering prayers.

2 In vv. 21-24 Martha makes three correct, but limited statements. In respect to each, Jesus' answers in vv. 25-26 reveals that He has within Himself infinitely-greater powers than she knew. What are they?

3 What is the special significance of this seventh sign. Why did Jesus pray aloud before calling Lazarus from the tomb? What does this reveal about the means by which His miracles were accomplished? Cf. Jn 5.19, 20; 14.10.

Note. Vv. 33-38. The word 'weep' in v. 33 is the wailing of mourners; that in v. 35 implies silent tears of sympathy. The rendering of ESV in v. 33, 'he was deeply moved in spirit' doesn't give the full force of the Greek, for which scholars have suggested could best be, 'He was *enraged* in spirit, and troubled.' This righteous anger was roused against the evil powers of death, which caused such distress to mankind, and which He was about to conquer - here by a mighty display of divine power, and finally upon the Cross by His own death.

STUDY 22 - John 11. 45-57

1 Observe the varied effects of the miracle. See especially 11.45, 46; 47-53, 54; and cf. Lk 16.31.

2 How is it that the same act quickens faith in some, and hatred in others? Cf. 11.47, 48; Mt 27.18.

Note. v. 48. The Jewish leadership feared that Jesus might lead a revolt, for which the Romans would exact severe punishment.

STUDY 23 - John 11.55-12.19

1 In 12. 1-8 what insights does Mary's action reveal? How far does love for the Lord lead to our understanding of Him and service for Him, without counting the cost?

2 In 11.47-53 and 12.12-16 there are two examples of God over-ruling people's words and actions to fulfil His own purposes, What is the *real* purpose to which each points?

STUDY 24 - John 12.20-50

The Greeks who inquired for Jesus were a token of the world of people beyond Israel who would be saved through Jesus' atoning death and resurrection (cf. 10.16; 12.32). Their coming therefore introduces the consummation of Jesus' work; (see v. 23). The passage also presents the problem of unbelief in the face of manifest evidence of God's power and presence.

1 Give examples of the ways in which you can love your life, or hate it (cf. 11.47, 48). To whom does Jesus primarily refer, in v. 24? In view of this, what is involved in truly following Him (v. 26)?

2 In what sense did the coming "hour" (v. 23) bring about the glorifying of the Son of man, and the Father (v. 28)? How did His being lifted up (vv. 31-34) portray God's judgement of this world?

3 Both quotations from Isaiah in vv. 38-40 speak of Christ, the latter because Christ's glory is included in the vision of God's glory in Isaiah 6. Who has, and who has not, 'believed our report'? Why has God blinded some eyes? How does this apply today to (a) Jews, and (b) non-Jews?

4 The gravity of rejecting Jesus is the subject of vv. 44-50, in which John summarizes the teaching of Jesus Himself on this matter. Why is it so serious to reject Him (*nb.* vv. 45, 46, & 50)? Why will Jesus' Word be the judge (v. 48)?

Notes

1 v. 42. "Put out of the synagogue": *cf.* 9.22. This was a severe punishment involving separation from public worship and from social discourse ('sending someone to Coventry' was the 17th century Anglican equivalent).

2 v. 45. "Sees": here is the concept of careful observation, leading to spiritual insight.

STUDY 25 - John 13

1 "Teacher and Lord" v. 13. What 'degrees' of Lordship are revealed in vv. 1 & 3? Did Jesus perform the task of a servant in spite of, or because of, His relationship to the Father? *Cf.* Phil 2.5-8.

2 What lesson did Jesus teach in response to Peter's interruptions (vv. 8, 10)? *Cf.* Titus 3.5; 1Jn 1.7. What further application did Jesus make of His action as an example to His followers (*cf.* Lk 22.22-27)?

3 Trace the movements of Satan upon the heart of Judas as shown in this Gospel (6.70; 12.4-6; 13.2, 27). If the giving of the morsel to him was Jesus' last appeal of love, what state of heart does v. 27a reveal? What connection does v. 30 have with 12.35, 36?

Notes

1 v. 10. 'Bathed': the disciples had been cleansed, all except Judas (v. 11). *Cf.* 15.3

2 v. 20. 'Anyone whom I send': *ie.* the apostles and all subsequent witnesses to Christ. So also v. 16.

STUDY 26 - John 14.1-14

1 In what respect were the questions of both Thomas and Philip short-sighted? How is Jesus the way, the truth, and the life - especially in relation to the Father?

2 What prospect does Jesus set before His disciples as a consequence of His return to the Father (vv. 12-14)? How much of this should we expect ourselves? Why are the works of believers today called 'greater'?

STUDY 27 - John 14.15-31

3 In what sense does Jesus "come" to us (v. 18)? How is this related to the coming of 'another Advocate' (see note 1)? What ways did Jesus prove Himself to be the first Advocate.

4 Why cannot the world 'see' the Spirit, nor Jesus (vv. 17, 19)? *Cf.* 1.11; 2.19; 5.37; 7.34; 8.19, 47; 12.37-40. What explanation did Jesus give here, in answer to Judas? How can eyes be opened to perceive Him?

Notes

1 v. 16. "Counsellor": literally, 'one called to one's side to plead on one's behalf'. "Advocate" is a better translation. (*Cf.* 1Jn 2.1)

2 v. 18. "Desolate": better, 'bereaved'.

3 v. 22. *Cf.* v. 7.4. The disciples also naturally expected that the Messiah would display His power to the world.

STUDY 28 - John 15.1-17

- 1 What does the parable of the vine teach about (a) the purpose for which the branches exist; (b) the vinedresser's dealing with the branches; and (c) the dependence of the branches upon the vine? With vv. 3 & 7, cf. 14. 15, 21, 23; see also 8.31, 32. What kind of fruit ought we to bear? Cf. Gal 5.22, 23.
- 2 Non-Christians sometimes characterize the Christian life of faith as 'joyless observation of many rules'. What answers to this idea, to be shown in a believer's life, are contained in vv. 9-17?

STUDY 29 - John 15.18 -16.15

- 1 As disciples, why should the world hate us? What was the cause of such hatred directed at Christ? By what actions is (a) the love of the Father shown to the Son; (b) the love of the Son shown to His disciples; and, (c) the love of the disciples displayed to one another (cf 3.35; 5.20; 1Jn 3.16-18)?
- 2 What evidence is there in 16.1-7 that the disciples were cast down by Jesus words? Why did He say that He had not spoken of these things before, and why did He speak of them now, (*nb.* the 'deepening shades' of v. 2)?
- 2 What new force does Jesus say will be brought to bear upon the world, and through whom (15. 26,27)? What threefold result will follow (16. 8-11)? How does this make Jesus' departure an advantage, instead of a loss?
- 3 With the Spirit to enlighten (cf. vv12-15) and the Father to supply our needs, what do we learn in vv. 23-28 about the place of prayer? On what do we rely, when we pray 'in the Name of Jesus Christ' (cf. 14.13, 14; 15.16)?

Notes

- 1 16.2. "Put you out of the synagogues": cf. Notes on 12.42
- 2 16.5. The questions of Thomas (14.5) and Peter (13.36, 37) concerned their own following of Jesus. No-one was now asking about the glory to which Christ was going, in His return to the Father.
- 3 16.8-11. The Holy Spirit will convince men of their false standards - of sin, righteousness, and judgement (cf. Is 55.8, 9). He will show them that the essence of sin is unbelief in Christ; that true righteousness is not like that of the Pharisee (*ie.* 'works of the Law'), but the righteousness seen in Christ, and declared in the Gospel; and that (negative) judgement awaits all who follow the Ruler of this world.
- 4 16.13. 'Declare to you the things that are to come': *ie.* interpret the significance of Christ's impending crucifixion and resurrection, as well as God's further divine actions.

STUDY 30 - John 16.16-33

- 1 'A little while'. In the light of vv. 16-22, do you consider this refers to the time between the death of Jesus and His resurrection, between His ascension and Pentecost, or both?
- 2 Note the ESV of v. 23: 'you will ask nothing of me.' With the Spirit to enlighten (cf. vv. 12-15) and the Father to supply our needs, what do we learn from vv. 23-28 about the place of intercessory prayer? Upon what exactly do we rely when we pray 'in the Name of Jesus Christ' (cf. 14.13, 14; 15.16)?
- 3 In v. 33 Jesus sums up the situation. In what two opposing spheres would the disciples live? What would be their experience in the one, and in the other? What is to be the ground of Christian confidence?

STUDY 31 - JOHN 17

Jesus' prayer falls into three clear divisions: (a) vv. 1-5, for Himself; (b) vv. 6-19, for His immediate circle of disciples; (c) vv. 20-26, for the great company who should afterwards believe. Notice especially the significance of "the word" and "words" of the Father and the Son in this passage.

1 The "hour" of supreme sacrifice has at last come (v. 1; cf. 2.4; 7.6, 30; 8.20; 13.1). How is this related to the glorifying of the Son and the Father (vv. 1-4)? Already, the glory of God has been seen in Jesus (1.14); how is it now seen also in His disciples (v. 22)? When will they see the 'full' glory of the Son (vv. 5, 24)?

2 Note from vv. 6-14 how many things Jesus has already done for His disciples, and their significance. What does the Lord pray the the Father will do for those whom He has given Him? How is this prayer being answered in us, and what does 'consecrated in truth' (v. 19) mean?

Notes

- 1 Verse 2. 'Authority'. The whole of humanity lies within the sphere of Christ's commission. Cf. Ps 2.8; Mt 28.18,19.
- 2 Verse 5. A prayer that the glory, of which for a time He had 'emptied himself' (Phil 2.6,7), might be restored to Him.
- 3 Verses 17, 19. Notice the repetition of the word 'sanctify'/'consecrate'. Jesus consecrated Himself to the Father in fulfilment of His perfect will, particularly in offering Himself as *the* sacrifice for sin (cf. Heb 10.5-10), a true picture of what consecration must involve.

STUDY 32 - John 18.1-27

Jesus' arrest and trial before Caiaphas, and Pilate.

1 In vv. 4-11 & vv. 19-23 what qualities of our Lord's character appear in relation to (a) those who came to arrest Him, (b) His disciples, and (c) His accusers?

2 How did Peter's own actions contribute to his fall? Of what was he afraid, and how does such an emotion always prevent wholehearted association with Jesus?

3 Trace through vv. 28-40 the attempts made by Pilate to spare Jesus from death, and the steps taken by the Jewish authorities to counter his initiative. What features of both Pilate and the Jews are revealed here; how are they still a feature today for some people?

Notes

- 1 v. 28. 'Praetorium': the headquarters of the Roman Governor.
- 2 v. 31b. The Romans did not permit the Jews to inflict capital punishment. Hence Pilate's words in 19.6, implying there was no ground in Roman law for Jesus' death. (However, Pilate spoke a deeper truth than he realized).

STUDY 33 - John 18.28-19.22

The trial before Pilate.

1 'The King of the Jews'. Trace how this title forms the central focus from 18.33 - 19.22. What is the real nature of Jesus' Kingship, and how does it differ from kings' in the world? How is Jesus' royal dignity displayed here? How does the use of the title reveal the sin of the Jews, and the glory of Christ's sacrifice?

2 The narrative of the crucifixion is told in 7 incidents. How does each display some fresh aspect of the glory of the suffering Saviour? (17-18; 19-22; 23-24; 25-27; 28-29; 30; 31-37).

3 Which Scriptures are quoted in this passage as having found fulfilment, in this 'hour'? To which aspects of Christ's suffering, and saving work, do they point?

Note. v. 39. About a hundred pounds weight': this is an exceptionally large amount, very suitable for a Royal burial.

STUDY 34 - John 20.1-31

- 1 What made both Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus (they were both members of the Sanhedrin) now come out into the open? With 19.38 *cf.* Lk 23.50, 51. Trace Nicodemus' growing faith, from 3.1-15,, 7.45-52, and here.
- 2 How do vv. 1-10 show that the disciples were not expecting the resurrection of the Lord? What is revealed of the temperaments of Peter and John as they visit the tomb? What was it that John 'believed' (v. 8)?
- 3 Does v. 19 show that the disciples were still doubting, or merely afraid? What convinced them that Jesus truly was raised from the dead? Why was Thomas moved to make such open confession of faith, to which none of the others had yet attained?

Note. v. 17. Note the distinction, 'my Father, and your Father'. Jesus never said of Himself and His disciples, 'Our Father', as though their relationship to God was identical to His. He of course is the only-begotten Son of God; we are 'sons' of God, in Him.

STUDY 35 - John 21

- 1 In 20. 21-23 the risen Christ commissions His apostles: by what authority, with what power, and for what purpose, does He send them? Compare vv. 21.1-14 with Lk 5.1-11, noting similarities and differences. Why did the disciples take up their old work again? What do these verses significantly-reveal (a) about Jesus, (b) about the ministry to which the disciples were being called (*cf.* 6.11-14).
- 2 Although Peter had massively failed Him, Jesus re-commissions him, revealing His nature and Peter's spiritual plight. What is the significance (a) of Jesus' use of the name 'Simon' in addressing him (*cf.* 1.42); (b) of the phrase "more than these" (v. 15, *cf.* Mk 10.28-30; 14.29); (c) of Jesus asking Peter three times of his love for Him (*cf.* 13.38)?
- 3 What are we shown in vv. 18-23 about (a) the different ways in which the Lord directs His people, and (b) what our main concern ought to be?

Notes

- 1 vv. 18,19. According to tradition, Peter died as a martyr in Rome.
- 2 v. 23. A statement introduced to correct a contemporary misunderstanding of what the Lord had said about the apostle John.