



# The Jews Sought to Kill Jesus

*John 7:25-53*

The Feast of Tabernacles was the closing gathering of the year. It was God's design that at this time the people should **reflect on His goodness and mercy**. The whole land had been under His guidance, receiving His blessing. Day and night His watchcare had continued. The sun and rain had caused the earth to produce her fruits. From the valleys and plains of Palestine the harvest had been gathered. The olive berries had been picked, and the precious oil stored in bottles. The palm had yielded her store. The purple clusters of the vine had been trodden in the wine press. (*DA* 447.2)

The feast continued for seven days, and for its celebration the inhabitants of Palestine, with many from other lands, left their homes, and came to Jerusalem. From far and near the people came, bringing in their hands a token of rejoicing. Old and young, rich and poor, **all brought some gift as a tribute of thanksgiving** to Him who had crowned the year with His goodness, and made His paths drop fatness. Everything that could please the eye, and give expression to the universal joy, was brought from the woods; the city bore the appearance of a beautiful forest. (*DA* 448.1)

In every church there should be established a treasury for the poor. Then let each member present **a thank offering to God** once a week or once a month, as is most convenient. This offering will express our gratitude for the gifts of health, of food, and of comfortable clothing. And according as God has blessed us with these comforts will we lay by for the poor, the suffering, and the distressed. I would call the attention of our brethren especially to this point. Remember the poor. Forego some of your luxuries, yea, even comforts, and help those who can obtain only the most meager food and clothing. In doing for them you are doing for Jesus in the person of His saints. He identifies Himself with suffering humanity. Do not wait until your imaginary wants are all satisfied. Do not trust to your feelings and give when you feel like it and withhold when you do not feel like it. (*CCh* 280.4)

This feast was not only the harvest thanksgiving, but the memorial of God's protecting care over Israel in the wilderness. In commemoration of their tent life, the Israelites during the feast dwelt in booths or tabernacles of green boughs. These were erected in the streets, in the courts of the temple, or on the housetops. The hills and valleys surrounding Jerusalem were also dotted with these leafy dwellings, and seemed to be alive with people.

*(DA 448.2)*

With sacred song and thanksgiving the worshipers celebrated this occasion. A little before the feast was the Day of Atonement, when, after confession of their sins, the people were declared to be at peace with Heaven. Thus the way was prepared for the rejoicing of the feast. “O give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good: for His mercy endureth forever” (Psalm 106:1) rose triumphantly, while all kinds of music, mingled with shouts of hosanna, accompanied the united singing. (*DA* 448.3)

The temple was the center of the universal joy. Here was the pomp of the sacrificial ceremonies. Here, ranged on either side of the white marble steps of the sacred building, the choir of Levites led the service of song. The multitude of worshipers, waving their branches of palm and myrtle, took up the strain, and echoed the chorus; and again the melody was caught up by voices near and afar off, till the encircling hills were vocal with praise. (*DA* 448.3)

As the sons of Joseph made preparation to attend the Feast of Tabernacles, they saw that Christ made no movement signifying His intention of attending. They watched Him with anxiety. Since the healing at Bethesda He had not attended the national gatherings. To avoid useless conflict with the leaders at Jerusalem, He had restricted His labors to Galilee.

*(DA 450.1)*



His apparent neglect of the great religious assemblies, and the enmity manifested toward Him by the priests and rabbis, were a cause of perplexity to the people about Him, and even to His own disciples and His kindred. In His teachings He had dwelt upon the blessings of obedience to the law of God, and yet He Himself seemed to be indifferent to the service which had been divinely established. (*DA* 450.1)

His mingling with publicans and others of ill repute, His disregard of the rabbinical observances, and the freedom with which He set aside the traditional requirements concerning the Sabbath, all seeming to place Him in antagonism to the religious authorities, excited much questioning. His brothers thought it a mistake for Him to alienate the great and learned men of the nation. They felt that these men must be in the right, and that Jesus was at fault in placing Himself in antagonism to them. (*DA* 450.1)

But they had witnessed His blameless life, and though they did not rank themselves with His disciples, they had been deeply impressed by His works. His popularity in Galilee was gratifying to their ambition; they still hoped that He would give an evidence of His power which would lead the Pharisees to see that He was what He claimed to be. What if He were the Messiah, the Prince of Israel! They cherished this thought with proud satisfaction. (*DA* 450.1)

As Jesus spoke in the temple court, the people were held spellbound. The very men who were the most violent against Him felt themselves powerless to do Him harm. For the time, all other interests were forgotten. (*DA* 453.2)

And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? (John 7:15)

- ✦ Marvelled—wondered, and in this verse, continued to wonder, marvel, be amazed
- ✦ Matthew 8:10—over the centurion
- ✦ Matthew 15:31—the multitude marveled over the dumb, the maimed, the lame, the blind
- ✦ Matthew 22:22—marveled over words
- ✦ Matthew 27:14; Mark 15:5—the governor marveled
- ✦ Luke 8:25—the disciples marveled
- ✦ John 5:20; 7:21; 3:7; 4:27; **9:30**
- ✦ Revelation 17:7, 8; 13:3; 15:3, 1
- ✦ Sense of astonishment—Matthew 21:20—fig tree; John 7:15; Acts 2:7
- ✦ 1 Peter 2:9—marvellous light

**Letters.** Gr. *grammata*. The word may denote the individual symbols of the **alphabet** (Luke 23:38), correspondence (Acts 28:21), **books** or writings (John 5:47), the “[holy] **scriptures**” (2 Tim. 3:15), or **learning**, whether elementary or more advanced. (*SDA BC*)

The Question?—How knoweth this man letters,  
having never learned?

His Answer?—My Father taught me.

His Counsel?—We can know, too, if we do his will.



“Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. **If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine**, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. He that speaketh of himself seeketh his own glory: but he that seeketh his glory that sent him, the same is true, and no unrighteousness is in him. Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me? The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee?”

John 7:14–20. (*10LtMs*, Ms 72, 1895, par. 16)

All wondered at His knowledge of the law and the prophecies; and the question passed from one to another, “How knoweth this Man letters, having never learned?” No one was regarded as qualified to be a religious teacher unless he had studied in the rabbinical schools, and **both Jesus and John the Baptist had been represented as ignorant because they had not received this training.** Those who heard them were astonished at their knowledge of the Scriptures, “having never learned.” Of men they had not, truly; but **the God of heaven was their teacher,** and from Him they had received the highest kind of wisdom. (*DA* 453.1)

“Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught. And the Jews marveled.” They hoped to catch something from His lips, that they might accuse Him. But His wisdom and His knowledge astonished them, so clear and forcible was **His reasoning from the Scriptures**, and yet this was the Man whose track they were upon that they might entangle Him. The words went from one to another, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned?” for Christ never placed Himself under the learned scribes and doctors of the law. (*10LtMs*, Ms 72, 1895, par. 16)

Standing thus, the center of attraction to that vast throng, Jesus addressed them as no man had ever done. His words showed a knowledge of the laws and institutions of Israel, of the sacrificial service and the teachings of the prophets, far exceeding that of the priests and rabbis. He broke through the barriers of formalism and tradition. The scenes of the future life seemed outspread before Him. As one who beheld the Unseen, He spoke of the earthly and the heavenly, the human and the divine, with positive authority.

*(DA 452.3)*

His words were most clear and convincing; and again, as at Capernaum, the people were astonished at His teaching; “for His word was with power.” Luke 4:32. Under a variety of representations He warned His hearers of the calamity that would follow all who rejected the blessings He came to bring them. He had given them every possible proof that He came forth from God, and made every possible effort to bring them to repentance. He would not be rejected and murdered by His own nation if He could save them from the guilt of such a deed. (*DA* 452.3)

- ✦ v. 27—knoweth whence he is—margin  
Isaiah 53:8; Matthew 13:55
- ✦ Isaiah 53:8—was taken—by death (cut off,  
made his grave); from prison—through  
oppression
- ✦ Matthew 13:55—a carpenter's son

- ✦ v. 32—murmur—grumble, but also speak secretly, whisper (a subdued discussion)
- ✦ v. 32—take—seize, arrest, take into custody
- ✦ v. 33—little while—from the Feast of Tabernacles to the Passover the following spring, when Jesus was crucified, was about six months. Three years of His ministry was in the past and but half a year remained.
- ✦ v. 40—the Prophet—Deuteronomy 18:15; John 1:21

- ✦ v. 41—out of Galilee—Micah 5:2
- ✦ vss 42, 52—The priests and rulers had been deceived, as Satan meant them to be, into believing that Christ came out of Galilee. Some who knew that he was born in Bethlehem, **kept silent**, that the falsehood might not be robbed of its power (*6LtMs*, Ms 31, 1889, par. 55)