

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #151

Stage VI. Jesus' Later Judean Ministry B. Jesus' Ministry at the Feast of Tabernacles

3. Jesus' 2nd Teaching in the Temple: "I AM the Light of the World"

i. I AM the Light of the World JN 8.12-20

12 When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, *"I AM the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of eternal life."*

13 The Pharisees challenged him, "Here you are, appearing as your own witness; your testimony is not valid."

14 Jesus answered, *"Even if I testify on my own behalf, my testimony is valid, for I know where I came from and where I am going. But you have no idea where I come from or where I am going."*

15 "You judge by human standards; I pass judgment on no one. 16 But if I do judge, my decisions are true, because I am not alone. I stand with the Father, who sent me. 17 In your own Law it is written that the testimony of two witnesses is true. 18 I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the Father, who sent me."

19 Then they asked him, "Where is your father?"

"You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. *"If you knew me, you would know my Father also."*

20 He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts near the place where the offerings were put. Yet no one seized him, because his hour had not yet come.

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NOTE: We use superscript identification of the source gospel in "blended texts" as follows: Matthew = ^{MT}, Mark = ^M, Luke = ^L, John = ^J, Acts = ^A. This "superscript ID" is inserted at the beginning of the quoted text, identifying that Bible book until a different superscript appears. In addition, *red italics identify the words of Jesus*. Old Testament quotations are CAPITALIZED.

	CONTEXT DIGEST
Location	The Temple Courts in Jerusalem
Timeline	September (Month 31)
Jesus' Life Context	Stage VI: Jesus' Later Judean Ministry
	B. Jesus' Ministry at the Feast of Tabernacles
	3. Jesus' 2 nd Teaching in the Temple: "I AM the Light of the World"
Title	i. Jesus Declares: "I AM the Light of the World"

COMMENT:

In today's reading Jesus made his second (of seven) "I AM..." declaration in the gospel of John: "I AM the Light of the World." The Seven "I AM" statements of Jesus are:

1. I AM the Bread of Life (Jn 6)
2. I AM the Light of the World (JN 8)

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3. I AM the Door/Gate (Jn 10)
4. I AM the Good Shepherd (JN 10)
5. I AM the Resurrection and the Life (JN 11)
6. I AM the Way, the Truth, and the Life (JN 14)
7. I AM the True Vine (JN 15)

The “I AM the Light of the World” statement built directly on the celebration of light that was at the center of the Feast of Tabernacles.

John Chapters 8 and 9 feature Jesus using the "Light" theme of the Feast of Tabernacles as the background imagery for his words. In Chapter 8 Jesus presented himself as "the light of the world." In Chapter 9 he proved his claim to be so by "lighting" the darkness of a blind man's eyes with the gift of sight. These two chapters go together as a unit, revealing Jesus as the "Light of the World" which the Feast commemorated.

People in the first century lived in a world that was cloaked in deep darkness for half of each day. The phenomenon of brilliant, shining light in the midst of darkness was only experienced at the Feast of Tabernacles, for one week out of the year. The massive candles and numerous torches illuminating the Temple compound during this Feast literally lit up the sky from the top of mount Zion. It was something so spectacular that no one who witnessed it could ever forget it.

When Jesus said, "I AM the light of the world," and went on to promise that no one who believed in him would ever walk in darkness again, he was making a Divine claim. This was the first symbol John had used for Jesus at the beginning of his gospel: ***"In him was eternal life, and that life was the light of men."*** JN 1.4

The lights of the Feast were a reminder that the light of God shone over the Tabernacle as a blazing fire by night for 40 years in the wilderness. Just as God's people never experienced darkness during that time, Jesus claimed HIS people would never experience spiritual darkness. In the context of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus was declaring himself to be YHWH... the God of Light... in the most impressive, shocking way possible for a first century Jew.

Jesus qualified “the Light” by saying that it was in the realm of “eternal life.” There are many unexplained mysteries about life that Jesus left that way. However, Jesus came to make the reality of “eternal life” plain and clear to all of us.

“Eternal Life” is God’s own distinct quality of life, that is self-existent; depending on no one or nothing else. Furthermore, God’s “eternal life” is powerful enough to have birthed and sustain every other form of life in the universe. “Eternal life” includes God’s moral character of love and righteousness. Jesus demonstrated all these characteristics of God’s quality of the life in his life, death, and especially his resurrection. This is why Jesus linked “resurrection” and eternal life in his 5th I AM Statement.

Jesus promised eternal life to all who believe in him. This was one of the most dominant themes of his ministry. This is the eternal life that he demonstrated and revealed in every aspect of his own life. He is the radiant revelation of the Trinity--the God who gives eternal life to all who believe in Jesus.

APPLICATION:

Jesus is the light of God's revelation. He made God's gifts of forgiveness, eternal life, love, joy and peace plain for all to see.

How will you let Jesus' light shine on you today?