

The DAILY JESUS NEWS #153

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

iii. Who is Jesus? The Crucified One! John 8.25-30

25 "Who are you?" they asked.

"Just what I have been telling you from the beginning," Jesus replied. 26 "I have much to say in judgment of you. But he who sent me is trustworthy, and what I have heard from him I tell the world."

27 They did not understand that he was telling them about his Father.

28 So Jesus said, *"When you have lifted up the Son of Man in exaltation (on the cross), then you will know that 'I AM,' and that I do nothing on my own initiative, but speak just what the Father has taught me. 29 The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him."*

30 Even as he spoke, many believed in him.

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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	iii. Who is Jesus? The Crucified One!"

COMMENT:

In John Ch. 8 Jesus was asked a crucial question two different times: "Who are you?" (8.25), and "Who do you think you are?" (8.53). In today's reading the question was posed the first time, and Jesus gave the definitive answer. It is the shining light of revelation about his identity.

"Who are you?"

How would you answer that question in one sentence? What defines you as an individual? What is it about you that makes you different from everyone else? Jesus was certain about what made him unique, and was central to his identity. It was the cross.

When Jesus was asked this question he answered: **"When you have lifted up the Son of Man in exaltation (on the cross), you will know that I AM the One I claim to be..."** (8.28) These verses (8.25-29) are full of deep, rich insight about Jesus. We will only point out one aspect of Jesus' answer here.

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Jesus referred to his future death on the cross as "being lifted up." The verb Jesus chose had a double meaning: to physically lift up, and to exalt. I have included both of these meanings in the translation because Jesus had both of them in mind--it was a word-play that is common in the gospel of John. Throughout this gospel both Jesus, and the author John use this verb to describe Jesus' death on the cross.

The cross was the supreme act of humiliation and shame in Jesus' day. It was reserved for the most reviled and degenerate criminals. Jews believed it was sure evidence of being cursed by God forever. Yet Jesus considered it to be his "exaltation." It was his glory--the apex of revelation about his nature and character as the God-man, the Savior of the world. The cross identified him as "I AM"-- as God-- more than anything else in his entire life.

Who is Jesus? He is the God who considers it a high honor to love his enemies enough to die for them, even when they continue to reject his sacrifice for them. Jesus is unconditional love, expressed impartially for all people. Only GOD loves like that. Only God is kind, compassionate, merciful, faithful, and good enough to love others enough to consider their humiliation and hatred of him to be his supreme opportunity for exaltation!

Jesus taught unconditional love, and demonstrated it by his death in a way that can never be equalled or duplicated again. It was an expression of love for his Father, of love for sinners, and even love for himself. The cross was possible because of the love of the Holy Spirit that strengthened and sustained Jesus in his sufferings. The cross was the Father's love-gift of his Son for his enemies. Everything about Jesus' death revealed Divine love in every relationship that was involved, and human and satanic hatred against God at the same time.

Jesus' crucifixion is what identifies him, more than anything else, as "I AM." The scars in his resurrection body memorialize his exaltation on the cross forever.

APPLICATION:

As believers in Jesus, we need to think long and hard about our Lord's cross. All the time. With the deepest reverence and worship. This is how we participate in his exaltation with our feeble attempts at praise. He is the Crucified One!

How will you praise and proclaim Jesus as the Crucified God today?