

# Jesus Christ in the temple



John 7:9-46

*Thousands of people have made the annual pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Feast of Tabernacles. Many people expected to see the Lord Jesus there, but he was in Galilee and came to Jerusalem later during the feast.*

*He taught the people in the temple, pointing out: "The doctrine which I proclaim, is not mine, but that of my Father who has sent me. If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." Some saw in him the promised Messiah, but most did not.*

6

The children learn that Jesus Christ tells the people that he is the Son of God.

A great feast is being celebrated in Jerusalem—the Feast of Tabernacles. People are streaming into the city from all sides. With branches from palm and deciduous trees they erect booths in the streets, courtyards and on roofs. The people live in these huts during the seven days of the festival which is celebrated in commemoration of the forty-year long journey through the desert, and the wonderful preservation of the people of Israel. They also bring thank-offerings for the harvest which has recently been brought in. It is a joyful festival. Many of the people travelling to Jerusalem would also like to see Jesus of Nazareth. Some have already heard of his teaching and of the miracles he performs. Will he be there? Has anyone seen him yet? He is being talked about in many huts and all kinds of rumours are going around. Some say: "Jesus is a good man, he is very pious." Others retort: "No, he deceives the people." It is already a few days into the festival, but no one has seen the Lord Jesus yet.

1

Jesus Christ is in Galilee, his homeland. He does not want to travel with the large procession of pilgrims. He arrives in Jerusalem quietly and unnoticed a few days into the festival.

He goes to the temple and begins to teach. The people listen attentively to him. They marvel at his words and ask

him: "You were never trained to be a rabbi, how come you know the Holy Scriptures so well?" He replies: "The doctrine which I proclaim is not mine, it comes from God who has sent me. One who is prepared to do God's will will know that I speak the truth. I am not concerned with seeking glory for myself, I speak for my sender."

More and more people are thronging to hear Jesus. Some say when they see Jesus preaching: "Look at that! That's the man they wanted to kill. He is speaking publicly and no one is contradicting him. Is he the promised Messiah?

Impossible! He is only a carpenter's son, after all.

Everybody knows where he comes from." But the Lord Jesus calls out in a loud voice: "Do you really know who I am and where I come from? I have not come on my own authority. What I teach is not my own doctrine, but comes from God who has sent me." Many people believe and trust him. Some say: "When the promised Messiah comes, will he perform more miracles than this man has?" Others believe him to be the Redeemer.

Jesus Christ continues to teach in the temple: "I shall be with you a little while longer, but then I shall return to my Father who has sent me. You will look for me, but you will not find me because you cannot go where I will be." His listeners are confused; they do not understand him. "Where is he going?"

2

The last day of the Feast of Tabernacles dawns. The people are happy and excited as this is the highlight of the festival. They specially remember the people of Israel again—how, when they suffered thirst in the desert, God cared for them

## Jesus Christ is the Son of God

by providing water from the rocks. To thank God for this, the priest fills a golden jug with water at a specific fountain and carries it to the forecourt of the temple amid loud jubilation by the people, and to the sound of trumpets. He pours the water out at the sacrificial altar. Whilst he does so, the people sing: "With joy you shall draw water from the holy fountain." Suddenly the Lord Jesus steps forward and calls out loudly to the people: "Whoever is thirsty should come to me and drink. As the scripture says: 'Whoever believes in me, streams of life-giving water will flow from him.'" With these words the Son of God promises the Holy Spirit to those who believe in him. The people have listened attentively. Everywhere they are putting their heads together. They are very excited. Some say: "This man is really the prophet who has been promised." Others maintain: "He is the promised Messiah." Still others say: "Christ can surely not come from Galilee. It says that he will be born in Bethlehem." Some of the Israelites believe him to be Christ, others not. The Pharisees and high priests want to have him arrested, but the guards come back without him.

When they are asked why they did not bring him, they answer: "Nobody has ever spoken as impressively as this man."

Soon calm returns to Jerusalem. The huts are taken down and the people return home.

3

*Jesus Christ made himself known to the people as the Son of God. He explained to them: "I do not teach by my own authority. My Father in heaven has sent me. I come from above. I speak in the name of my Father. I am the fountain of life. Whoever is thirsty should come to me and drink."*



**1 Why did many people wish to see the Lord Jesus?**

**2 What does he mean with these words? (He will return to his heavenly Father. Many people do not understand this.)**

**3 We discuss the picture with the children. We read and discuss the text in the workbook. (Christ knows from where he has come / his heavenly Father has given him a task / he brings redemption from guilt and sin / he is a fountain for thirsting souls / he promises the Holy Spirit.)**

**What do these words mean to us? (We believe that Jesus is the Son of God. We are children of God. We want to profess this. Today Apostles and other ministers are active in Jesus Christ's name. They are led by the Holy Spirit. Through their word souls are refreshed time and again.)**