

Introduction

Timelines are part of most projects and plans in every industry. In the construction industry, the builder tries to coordinate with all the different contractors, as each piece of the job must be done in a certain order. Delays by any of the contractors, even if it is weather related, can cause a chain reaction of schedule changes by the remaining contractors. Contractors try to complete their piece of the job so that the whole job is finished on schedule.

Our passage today is John 7, and Jesus is very aware of the time schedule before Him. He knows that He will be put to death by the Jews. He knows that it is to take place at the Feast of Passover in Jerusalem. He knows that He must do His part, and that the Father is doing His part to keep everything on schedule. The Feast of Booths was near and Jesus holds off going with His brothers and everyone else, and said, “My time is not yet here.” Jesus did go to Jerusalem for the Feast, but He went secretly, instead of publicly, because He was being careful about the timeline.

In the middle of the Feast, He went to the temple and began teaching. He told people that He would be there a little while longer and then would be going to a place where they could not come. He was speaking of His death and going back to the Father. Some of the people declared that He was the Messiah, yet others wanted to seize Him and kill Him. However, no one laid hands on Him because “His hour had not yet come.”

Jesus also spoke of the Holy Spirit, who was going to be given to believers, after He was glorified. Jesus was fully aware of the whole timeline, not just His part of the plan. He and the Father had worked out a comprehensive timeline and plan, and Jesus was fully aware of it, and did His part to stay on schedule.

The chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to seize Jesus so they could put Him to death, but they were so awed by Jesus’ teaching that they did not arrest Him. They told the Pharisees, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” Finally, Nicodemus, who had come to Jesus secretly at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry, and who was part of the Sanhedrin Council, said that “our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from Him and knows what he is doing.” Again, Jesus was not seized and put to death because His hour had not come.

My Time is Not Yet Here (John 7)

1. Evidenced by His ministry in Galilee – Part 1 (Jn 7:1)
2. Evidenced by His Trip to the Feast of Booths – Part 1 (Jn 7:2-13)
3. Evidenced by His Teaching at the Feast – Part 2 (Jn 7:14-24)
4. Evidenced by Him Not Being Seized by the Crowds – Part 3 (Jn 7:32-44)
5. Evidenced by His Not Being Seized by the Officers – Part 3 (Jn 7:45-53)

1. Evidenced by His ministry in Galilee. (Jn 7:1)

In John 6, Jesus told the crowds that He was the Bread of Life and that they had to eat His flesh and drink His blood to have eternal life. This was a difficult concept for them, and many of His disciples grumbled, withdrew, and no longer walked with Him. Jesus told His twelve apostles that one of them would betray Him. Jesus knew that He had come to serve and to give His life as a ransom for us. He knew that He was the Lamb of God who was going to die in order to take away the sins of the world. He also knew and was keenly aware of exactly when it would happen. The Passover Lamb would be slain during the Feast of Passover.

Our text begins with “after these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.” Jesus was doing His part to keep the schedule that He and the Father had planned. If He had stayed in Judea, then the Jews would have tried to kill Him before His appointed time. We will see that the Father did things to protect Jesus from being seized and killed ahead of His time. We also see that Jesus was careful about what He did and where He did it so that He did not throw off the timeline of His departure.

(Jn 7:1) “After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him.”

John begins with “After these things...” It would appear that it is just after the Feast of Passover, which was covered in John 6. But this is now the Feast of Booths, so there are a lot of things that have happened in the interim period. The Feast of Passover begins on the fourteenth of Abib (Nisan), corresponding to our March/April time period. The Feast of Booths or Tabernacles begins on the fifteenth of Tisri, corresponding to our September/October time frame. It has been about seven months between John 6 and John 7. John does not cover this period of ministry in His gospel account, but it is covered in the other gospels. These things would include His time ministering in Tyre, Sidon, Phoenicia, Decapolis, and Galilee. It would also include His transfiguration. During this time that He was going through Galilee, He was teaching and telling His disciples that He was going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.” Jesus is very aware of what will happen to Him, and the timeline in which everything will happen.

(Mk 9:30–31) “From there they went out and *began* to go through Galilee, and He did not want anyone to know *about it*. {31} For He was teaching His disciples and telling them, “The Son of Man is to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill Him; and when He has been killed, He will rise three days later.”

Many businesses hold meetings to discuss the timelines so that everybody is on the same page about everything that will happen, when it will happen, and how it will be done. At Jesus’ transfiguration, something very similar happened. Moses and Elijah joined Jesus and they had a meeting. What did they discuss? Mark records that they were talking to Jesus about His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. His departure would happen at the Feast of Passover in Jerusalem, not the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles which was getting ready to take place.

(Lk 9:28–31) “Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray. {29} And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and His clothing *became* white *and* gleaming. {30} And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah, {31} who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”

The key thing here is that Jesus did not do things that could possibly throw everything off schedule. He and the Father planned for Him to avoid Jerusalem so that the religious leaders would not try to put Jesus to death before His hour had come. Jesus’ ministry in Galilee was evidence of Jesus’ keen awareness of the schedule, and that He was doing exactly what the Father told Him to do. When Jesus was tempted by Satan in the wilderness, Satan tried to get Jesus to throw Himself down from the temple, since it was written that “He will command his angels concerning You.” Jesus responded, saying, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord Your God to the test.’” Jesus did not test the Father by going into Judea ahead of schedule.

(Lk 4:9–12) “And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; {10} for it is written, ‘He will command His angels concerning You to guard You,’ {11} and, ‘On *their* hands they will bear You up, So that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.’” {12} And Jesus answered and said to him, “It is said, ‘You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.’”

In regard to this principle, Dr. J. Vernon McGee, a well-known Bible teacher was told by a man that he felt safe in God’s hand, no matter what he did, or how dangerous it was. He felt that God would protect him, even if he stepped out into a busy street against a red light, because his time had not yet come. Dr. McGee responded to the young man, “If you are foolish enough to step out into traffic against a red light at the rush hour, your time has come!” We are not to tempt God. We are to do what Jesus did; He only did what He saw the Father doing. His words and actions were in line with the Father. If we are doing God’s will, we can be confident that God will keep us safe until our time has come.

2. Evidenced by His Trip to the Feast of Booths (Jn 7:2-13)

“The Feast of Booths was near.” There were three feasts in Israel that men were required to go to: Passover Feast, Feast of Pentecost, and Feast of Booths (Tabernacles). Therefore, Jesus attended all of these feasts, and his brothers also attended them.

(Jn 7:2) “Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near.”

(Ex 23:14–17) “Three times a year you shall celebrate a feast to Me. {15} “You shall observe the Feast of Unleavened Bread; for seven days you are to eat unleavened bread, as I commanded you, at the appointed time in the month Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. And none shall appear before Me empty-handed. {16} “Also *you shall observe* the Feast of the Harvest *of* the first fruits of your labors *from* what you sow in the field; also the Feast of the Ingathering at the end of the year when you gather in *the fruit of* your labors from the field. {17} “Three times a year all your males shall appear before the Lord God.”

(Dt 16:16–17) “Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the Lord your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread and at the Feast of Weeks and at the Feast of Booths, and they shall not appear before the Lord empty-handed. {17} “Every man shall give as he is able, according to the blessing of the Lord your God which He has given you.”

What is the Feast of Booths? The Feast of Booths (Succa, Strong’s H5521) is also called the Feast of Ingathering, and the Feast of Tabernacles. We find out the details of the Feast of Booths in Leviticus 23. It was a seven-day feast that began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month, after they had gathered in all the crops of the land, which is why it was also called the Feast of Ingathering. The Jews were required to take foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches, and boughs of leafy trees and willows, and make booths with them. These booths were like tents or tabernacles, and they had to live in these booths for the duration of the feast, which is why it is called the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles. The purpose of the Feast was to remind the Jews in all future generations that they had to live in booths after they had been brought out of captivity in Egypt. God did not want them to forget their past, and how He had brought them out of Egypt. And He wanted all future generations to be reminded of how they were brought out.

(Le 23:39–43) “‘On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the Lord for seven days, with a rest on the first day and a rest on the eighth day. {40} ‘Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God for seven days. {41} ‘You shall thus celebrate it *as* a feast to the Lord for seven days in the year. It *shall be* a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. {42} ‘You shall live in booths for seven days; all the native-born in Israel shall live in booths, {43} so that your generations may know that I had the sons of Israel live in booths when I brought them out from the land of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.’”

The application for us is that we need to remember our own testimonies of how God saved our lives. Writing down our testimony will help us to remember, and it also preserves our testimony for future generations to read. Sharing our testimony with our children and grandchildren is another way of letting the next generation know about how God brought us out of darkness and into His marvelous light. The Feast of Booths graphically depicted and reminded everyone of how God had brought them out of bondage in Egypt into their own Promise Land.

The Feasts had literal purposes, but they also had prophetic implications. The Feast of Passover was a reminder of how the Lord passed over the houses marked with blood from the Passover lambs that were sacrificed, and killed the first-born of every house not marked with blood. This was a prophetic picture of the sacrifice that Jesus would make as the Passover Lamb for our sins. The prophetic fulfillment was carried out when Jesus died on the cross for our sins.

The Feast of Pentecost was fifty days after the Passover, and it was when the first fruits were brought in. The prophetic fulfillment was the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus, the Passover Lamb, had been sacrificed. The Holy Spirit was poured out and three thousand people were saved. This was the first fruit.

The Feast of Booths or Feast of Ingathering was after the last crops of the year had been brought in. The Feast of Pentecost was after the first fruits and the Feast of Ingathering is after the last fruits. The prophetic fulfillment of this feast is still in the future, having not yet been fulfilled. When Jesus returns, He will gather all the believers; it will truly be the Feast of Ingathering.

The Feast was seven days, with a rest on the first day and on the eighth day. In Numbers 29:12-39, we find the different types of offerings that were required to be made. On the first day, they were to present thirteen bulls, two rams, fourteen male lambs, a grain offering, and a male goat sin offering, and a drink offering. Each day the number of bulls was decreased by one, on the second day only twelve bulls were required. On the eighth day only one bull was required.

Historically, by the time this took place, the Jews had added some additional things to the Feast of Booths. Because the feast ended on the eighth day, and it was a day of great rejoicing, it was called the “great day” of the feast. The reading of the Law which began on the first day was finished on the eighth day.

Another important thing was added to the Feast of Booths was the daily drawing of water from the Pool of Siloam. One of the chief priests would draw water from the pool into a golden vial, and carry it to the altar of the burnt sacrifice. As the priest walked through the gate of the temple, the people would celebrate, rejoicing and praising God, and waving palm branches. Then the priest would mix the water with wine and pour it on the sacrifice on the altar. The people would

sing, Isaiah 12:3, “Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.” This commemorated the water gushing out of the rock at Meribah, and quenched the thirst of the multitude in the desert.

The Feast of Booths was near; therefore Jesus’ brothers said to Him, “Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If you do these things, show Yourself to the world.” Not this might sound like great advice, but His brothers were not aware of the time schedule that Jesus was on. They were operating for a natural mindset, and they offered worldly wisdom to Jesus.

(Jn 7:3-4) “Therefore His brothers said to Him, “Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. {4} “For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be known publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.”

John does not tell us who His brothers were, but Matthew tells us that He had four brothers, James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas, and that He also had some sisters. We do not know how many sisters or their names, but we know that He had sisters.

(Mt 13:55-56) “Is not this the carpenter’s son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? {56} “And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then *did* this man *get* all these things?”

What his brothers essentially said to Jesus was that if He wanted to grow His ministry, He needed to go public and get more public attention. He needed to show the world what He was doing so that He could get more followers. Sometimes churches can get caught up in trying to do things to attract bigger crowds by using worldly wisdom. We have to be careful that we always follow God’s plan, and do things His way. Jesus was following the Father’s time schedule, and He needed to stay out of the limelight and public eye at this time. Jesus was doing the will of the Father, and if it was in remote areas instead of populated areas, that was okay; He was doing God’s will.

Next, John tells us why Jesus’ brothers said what they did. His brothers were not believing in Jesus as the Messiah. They had seen the water turned into wine. They had seen people in Capernaum healed of all kinds of sicknesses. Yet despite all of the signs that He did, they were not yet believing in Him.

(Jn 7:5) “For not even His brothers were believing in Him.”

From a church history standpoint, I like the fact that John gave us this tidbit. James became the main leader in the church in Jerusalem, and He wrote the book of James. He played a prominent role in the early church, and the apostolic meetings that took place. His brother, Jude, wrote the book of Jude. At this point, half a year before Jesus’ death and resurrection, they are not believers. Then, in Acts 1, we find that Jesus’ brothers are gathered with the apostles and other disciples, and they are praying together. Something happened, and I believe it is because after Jesus rose from the dead, He went to Galilee to show Himself to His family. He met up with the apostles in Galilee, but I believe He went home and waited for them there. After He revealed Himself to them, they became believers. Paul confirms that Jesus did appear to James, and then to all the apostles.

(Ac 1:14) “These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with *the* women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.”

(Mt 26:32) “But after I have been raised, I will go ahead of you to Galilee.”

(1 Co 15:7) “then He appeared to James, then to all the apostles;”

After Jesus had heard the counsel that His brothers gave Him, He said to them, “My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune.” It was not time for Jesus to go to the Feast. Jesus was keeping a low profile, and not trying to draw attention to Himself. Jesus was going to go secretly, not with the large caravan of people that were going from Galilee to Jerusalem. Then Jesus told His brothers that their time is always opportune. There was nobody trying to kill them, so anytime they wanted to go was good or opportune. He said, “the world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.” Because there were many that hated Jesus and wanted to put Him to death, He needed to be careful of when and how He went.

(Jn 7:6-7) “So Jesus said to them, “My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. {7} The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil.”

Jesus told His brothers to go up to the feast. Then He said, “I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come.” After saying that, He stayed in Galilee. Because of this statement some believe Jesus did not tell the truth to His brothers. Jesus is the Way, the Life, and the Truth. Jesus never lied or deceived anyone. Jesus was without sin. When we don’t understand something, we have to know that the misunderstanding is on our end. Jesus did not say that He was not going to the feast, only that it was not yet time for Him to go to the feast. Jesus not only had a sense of time from the big picture, the time for His death, but He also kept a sense of time for all of His activities. Solomon said there is an appointed time for everything on earth, and Jesus was fully aware to the appointed time for every activity under the sun.

(Jn 7:8-9) “Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come.” {9} Having said these things to them, He stayed in Galilee.”

(Ec 3:1) “There is an appointed time for everything. And there is a time for every event under heaven.”

After His brothers had gone up to the feast, Jesus went up to the feast Himself. He did not go publicly with His brothers and with the caravan of people from Galilee, but He went in secret. Jesus kept all the commandments, and one of the commandments was for all the men to go up to Jerusalem three times a year for the appointed feasts; so He went to this required feast.

(Jn 7:10) “But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret.”

Not only did Jesus go up to the feast in secret, He kept a very low profile. The Jews were seeking Jesus at the feast, saying, “Where is He?” He was there, but not in the public eye.

(Jn 7:11) “So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, “Where is He?”

The crowds of people were talking about Jesus. There were probably over a million people there for the feast so these are large crowds of people. The focus of their conversation was Jesus. John records that there was much grumbling concerning Him. The ESV translates it as muttering about Him. The KJV says there was much murmuring about Him. There was a lot of chatter going on about Jesus. “Some were saying, ‘He is a good man’, and others were saying, ‘No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray.’” John records that no one spoke openly about Jesus for fear of the Jews. These are all Jewish people, so the Jews refers here to the Jewish religious leaders, the chief priests, Pharisees, and Sadducees. It was the religious leaders that were seeking to put Jesus to death. The crowds of people had mixed thoughts about Jesus, while the religious leaders were jealous of Him, and were afraid of losing power and control, and therefore had made the decision to put Him to death.

(Jn 7:12-13) “There was much grumbling among the crowds concerning Him; some were saying, ‘He is a good man’; others were saying, ‘No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray.’” {13} Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.”

Conclusion and Applications

There was a timeline in the plan that God had for sending Jesus, the Lamb of God, to die for our sins. He would be put to death during the Feast of Passover. The Jewish leaders had become increasingly hostile and now wanted to put Jesus to death. Therefore, Jesus stayed away from Judea, and was ministering in Galilee. He did not want the religious leaders to arrest Him and put Him to death at the wrong time. Jesus lived with this awareness of His time of departure, and His decisions reflected it.

When it was time for the Feast of Booths, one of the three major feasts that the men in Israel were required to attend, Jesus did not attend with His brothers and the caravans of people from His area. He told His brothers that His time was not yet, but it was always time for them. There was nobody trying to put them to death, and they were free to go anytime. Jesus lived with this sense of time. He did not put God to test; He always did the will of the Father. He went up to the feast, but He went up in secret, staying out of the limelight.

Our first application comes from the main point of the passage, that Jesus lived with a clear sense of time. He understood His mission, and the time schedule for that mission. He stayed in Galilee because He knew that His time was not yet, and the Jews were trying to kill Him. **We need to live with an understanding of the time.** In 1 Chronicles 12, the sons of Issachar were men who understood the times, and had knowledge of what Israel should do. We are in the last days, and we do not know when the Lord is returning, but we know that we are to share the gospel with those around us. When the apostles asked Jesus about the timing, He told them that it was not for them to know, but that they were to be His witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the remotest part of the earth. That is the time we are living in.

(1 Ch 12:32) “Of the sons of Issachar, men who understood the times, with knowledge of what Israel should do...”

(Ac 1:6–8) “So when they had come together, they were asking Him, saying, ‘Lord, is it at this time You are restoring the kingdom to Israel?’” {7} He said to them, “It is not for you to know times or epochs which the Father has fixed by His own authority; {8} but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth.”

Jesus said that those who are faithful when He returns will be blessed. We need to know what God has called us to do, and be faithfully serving in that capacity. Not all of us are called to go to the remotest parts of the world, but all of us have been gifted and called by God to be serving. We need to be those faithful and sensible stewards who are found doing those things when Jesus returns.

(Lk 12:42–43) “And the Lord said, “Who then is the faithful and sensible steward, whom his master will put in charge of his servants, to give them their rations at the proper time? {43} “Blessed is that slave whom his master finds so doing when he comes.”

Our second application comes from the Feast of Booths, which was a reminder of how God brought Israel out of Egypt. **We need to pass on our testimonies to the next generation.** Have you shared your testimony with your children? Have you shared your testimony with your grandchildren? Have you written out your testimony? Have you reflected on your testimony? When I reflect on my testimony, I break out in thanksgiving and praise to God for finding me and changing my life. I was not looking for God, and I was hostile towards God. He softened my heart and drew me to Himself. When I received Him, He changed my life. As I began to read the Word of God, my life began to change.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for the Feast of Booths and the reminder of how You brought out the Jews from Israel. Thank You for bringing me and all of us out of darkness into Your marvelous light. Help us to remember how You saved us, and to share our testimonies with the next generation. Help us to live with a clear sense of purpose and the time that we live in. Help us to be like the sons of Issachar, who understood the times and what they should be doing. Help us to be walk wisely, making the most of our time. Help us to be found faithfully serving You when Jesus returns. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Discussion Questions

- What is the significance of the Feast of Passover?
- What is the significance of the Feast of Pentecost?
- What is the significance of the Feast of Booths?
- Why is the Feast of Booths still important for us to know about?
- How did God bring you out of Egypt? (Share your testimony)
- The Jews had various feasts to remind them of things. What are some reminders that He has given the church to keep?
- Since Jesus was God, why did He have to remain in Galilee?
- How did Jesus remain anonymous at the feast until the middle of the feast?
- Have you ever received worldly counsel like Jesus' brothers gave Him, that appeared to be sound advice, but was not the right counsel?
- How did Jesus shrug off the counsel that His brothers gave Him? Did He do it graciously?
- What are some ways that we can live with a sense of the times?

My Time Is Not Yet Here – Part 1 (Jn 7:1-13)

Introduction

1. **Evidenced by His ministry in Galilee.** (Jn 7:1, Mk 9:30–31, Lk 9:28-31, 4:9–12)

2. **Evidenced by His Trip to the Feast of Booths** (Jn 7:2-13, Ex 23:14–17, Dt 16:16-17, Le 23:39–43, Is 12:3, Mt 13:55-56, Ac 1:14, Mt 26:32, 1 Co 15:7, Ec 3:1)

Conclusion and Applications

- 1.
- 2.