

John 7-8. The Rejection of the Light of the World

“This is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved,” John 3:19-20. “The light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not,” John 1:5.

The assignment questions are answered briefly at the end of this paper, and in more detail throughout the exposition.

The Context

John chapters 7-8 comprise an episode about “The Rejection of the Light of the World” in the Gospel of John, as shown below.

Gospel of John									
	Book of Signs								
Sections	Life		Light		Love	Love		Light	Life
Episodes	Faith	Unbelief	Rejection	Judgment	Love				
Chapters	1-4	5-6	7-8	9-10	11-12	13-14	15-17	18-19	20-21

The episode begins, in John 7, with Jesus going up to the Feast of Tabernacles “not openly, but as it were in secret” (7:10). And the episode ends, in John 8, when “Jesus hid himself” (8:59). When men hate the light, they will eventually lose the light.

Whereas most episodes in this book are comprised of one or more narratives, followed by one or more discourses that explain the narratives; John 7-8 is one continuous narrative, interspersed with dialogues that explain the narrative. So, the healing of the man blind from birth in chapter 9, is not a case of a narrative or sign following a discourse. Rather, the discourse that explains the narrative of chapter 9, is at the end of chapter 9, and in the condemnation of the false shepherds in chapter 10. The

constant pressure and opposition to Jesus in chapters 7 and 8 provides the narrative for these two chapters, as shown in the following table.

Constant Opposition to Jesus in John 7 - 8	
Verses	Scripture
7:1	Jesus ... would not walk in Jewry because the Jews sought to kill him.
7:3-5	His brethren ... said, ... Go into Judaea. ... For neither did his brethren believe in him.
7:13	No man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews.
7:19	Why go ye about to kill me?
7:25	Is not this he whom they seek to kill?
7:30	Then they sought to take him, but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.
7:32	The chief priests sent officers to take him.
7:44	Some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.
7:45	Why have ye not brought him?
8:20	No man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come
8:37	Ye seek to kill me.
8:59	Then took they up stones to cast at him; but Jesus hid himself.

Exposition

7:1-9. After these things Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him. ²Now the Jew's feast of tabernacles was at hand. ³His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. ⁴For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. ⁵For neither did his brethren believe in him. ⁶Then Jesus said unto them, My time is not yet come: but your time is always ready. ⁷The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil. ⁸Go ye up unto this feast: I go not up yet unto this feast: for my time is not yet full come. ⁹When he had said these words unto them, he abode still in Galilee.

In the previous chapter, in John 6, Jesus celebrated his last Passover before his death in Galilee, rather than in Jerusalem, because the Jews there sought to kill him. He probably also missed going to Jerusalem for Pentecost, fifty days later. So when the time for the feast of Tabernacles arrived, it was important for him to attend that third of the three annual feasts all Jewish men were supposed to attend in Jerusalem.

Tabernacles is a feast that represents, not only the journey in the wilderness after the Exodus, but also the entrance into Canaan and the future Messianic Kingdom. So,

Jesus will go up to Jerusalem, despite his full knowledge of their desire to kill him, and he will proclaim himself clearly to be the Messiah that will bring in the kingdom.

But he couldn't travel with the caravans his brothers were travelling in, because that would have given the religious leaders of Jerusalem too much time to prepare for his arrival. Also, the crowds were fickle, and may have proclaimed him to be the Messiah and precipitated his arrest too soon. "When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him a king, he departed," John 6:15. "Much people that were come to the feast [Passover, six months later], when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord," John 12:12-13.

Jesus brothers would normally have said to Jesus, something like, "Show yourself to the nation," but the author has them saying, "Show yourself to the world." Of course, Jerusalem was the center of their world, but John wanted to portray a bigger picture of what this episode was about. Through his gospel, Jesus has shown himself to the world, and the world hates him, because every person who doesn't know God, is at enmity with truth.

"The world cannot hate you; but me it hateth, because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil," John 7:7. "All that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world," 1 John 2:16. "Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you," 1 John 3:13. "They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God

heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us,” 1 John 4:5-6. “We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness,” 1 John 5:19.

John 7:10-14. But when his brethren were gone up, then went he also up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. ¹¹Then the Jews sought him at the feast, and said, Where is he? ¹²And there was much murmuring among the people concerning him: for some said, He is a good man: others said, Nay; but he deceiveth the people. ¹³Howbeit no man spake openly of him for fear of the Jews. ¹⁴Now about the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and taught.

The people at the feast had been expecting Jesus. “Where is he?” vs. 11. Some thought he was a good man. Why did some think he deceived the people? Probably because he had healed the lame man on the sabbath in chapter 5, and they didn’t think a ‘sabbath-breaker’ could be a good man. And probably because Jesus claimed to be more than they were willing to accept him to be. So, it’s not until “about the midst of the feast” (vs. 14) that Jesus went into the temple and taught.

John 7:15-19. And the Jews marvelled, saying, How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? ¹⁶Jesus answered them, and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. ¹⁷If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. ¹⁸He 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. ¹⁹Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law? Why go ye about to kill me?

Jesus said his teaching was from his Father, and that the obstacle to accepting his teaching was not a lack of intelligence, etc., but a hatred of its source. Jesus denied having done anything unrighteous by having healed the lame man on the sabbath the last time he was in Jerusalem. They accused him of having broken the law by having healed on the sabbath, while at the same time they were breaking the law by wanting to commit murder. But was the people’s attitude towards Jesus really of wanting to kill him, or something less?

John 7:20-24. The people answered and said, Thou hast a devil: who goeth about to kill thee? ²¹Jesus answered and said unto them, I have done one work, and ye all marvel. ²²Moses

therefore gave unto you circumcision; (not because it is of Moses, but of the fathers;) and ye on the sabbath day circumcise a man. ²³ If a man on the sabbath day receive circumcision, that the law of Moses should not be broken; are ye angry at me, because I have made a man every whit whole on the sabbath day? ²⁴ Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment.

We see a bit into the hearts of unregenerate men by the people's reply. Instead of calmly considering the possibility of Jesus' accusation, and asking for more information even though they think it unlikely Jesus could be right, they are made offended and angry by it and respond with their own unfounded accusation, "Thou hast a devil" (vs. 20), showing their light regard for truth, by the carelessness of their words.

Jesus admitted his action put them in a dilemma where they have to choose between their idea of sabbath-keeping and his manifestation of healing. But he said this was not a novel kind of choice for them. They all choose to break the sabbath if the day commanded in the law for the circumcision of a newborn son the eighth day falls on a sabbath. What kind of heart sees a man miraculously healed who had been lame for thirty-eight years, and has nothing to say about it except, "It is the sabbath day: it is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed" (John 5:10)?

John 7:25-29. Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill? ²⁶ But, lo, he speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ? ²⁷ Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is. ²⁸ Then cried Jesus in the temple as he taught, saying, Ye both know me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of myself, but he that sent me is true, whom ye know not. ²⁹ But I know him: for I am from him, and he hath sent me.

The people were impressed that Jesus could sit there teaching in the temple while the religious leaders who were wanting to kill him did nothing. But they raised another objection. Apparently, their rabbi's had taught them the Messiah would appear suddenly, without anyone having previous knowledge of him. ("The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in,"

Mal. 3:1?) The irony of it is that they didn't really know where Jesus is from. Not only didn't they know he was born in Bethlehem, but they didn't know he was pre-existent in heaven and "came down from heaven" (John 6:38); from God, who is "he that sent me" (vs. 28).

John 7:30-34. Then they sought to take him: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come. ³¹ And many of the people believed on him, and said, When Christ cometh, will he do more miracles than these which this man hath done? ³² The Pharisees heard that the people murmured such things concerning him; and the Pharisees and the chief priests sent officers to take him. ³³ Then said Jesus unto them, Yet a little while am I with you, and then I go unto him that sent me. ³⁴ Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come.

Many people were beginning to believe Jesus might be the Messiah, and when news of this got back to the Pharisees and chief priests, they "sent officers to take him" (vs. 32). Jesus warned them all that their time to learn from him was limited, because he will soon return to the one who sent him, and they can't go there.

John 7:35-36. Then said the Jews among themselves, Whither will he go, that we shall not find him? will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles? ³⁶ What manner of saying is this that he said, Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come?

They said, "will he go unto the dispersed among the Gentiles?" but that is not a place they can't go. Heaven is the place they can't go.

John 7:37-39. In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. ³⁸ He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. ³⁹ (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)

This is the first of two proclamations that Jesus made during that feast of tabernacles. He "stood and cried" (vs. 37) for this proclamation, whereas he sat while teaching. Some historical sources say they used to take water from the pool of Siloam, and carry it to the temple in a procession, and pour it on the altar each day of the feast, as a

picture of God providing water from the midst of the rock in the wilderness. Jesus offered to satisfy the thirst of anyone whose spirits were thirsty, like the rock in the wilderness satisfied the bodies of all who were thirsty in the wilderness. Not only that, but just as the scripture describes the rock gushing water, everyone who believes on him will also be like a rock gushing water to those around them, meaning the Holy Spirit will one day empower every believer.

John 7:40-53. Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the Prophet. ⁴¹Others said, This is the Christ. But some said, Shall Christ come out of Galilee? ⁴²Hath not the scripture said, That Christ cometh of the seed of David, and out of the town of Bethlehem, where David was? ⁴³So there was a division among the people because of him. ⁴⁴And some of them would have taken him; but no man laid hands on him.

Jesus words caused “a division (schisma) among the people” (vs. 43). One of the attributes of the light is that it results in judgment, and one of the attributes of judgment, “krino”, is division, since it means “to pick out (choose) by separating,” according to Thayer. As Jesus said in the synoptics, “Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division: For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three,” Luke 12:51-52.

John 7:45-52. Then came the officers to the chief priests and Pharisees; and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought him? ⁴⁶The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. ⁴⁷Then answered them the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? ⁴⁸Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him? ⁴⁹But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. ⁵⁰Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) ⁵¹Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? ⁵²They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

The officers returned to the Pharisees without Jesus. When the Pharisees asked them why they didn't bring him, the officers kind of insulted the Pharisees, who were their teachers, when they said, “never man spake like” (vs. 46) Jesus. The Pharisees showed their pride and disregard of those they were responsible to teach the law to when they said, “this people, who knoweth not the law, are cursed” (vs. 49). They also said, “Have

any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him?” (vs. 48). Well, yes, actually. Nicodemus, who had probably come to Jesus by night, in John 3, because he didn’t want to be seen going to Jesus, was bold enough here to say, in effect, “You say the people don’t know the law, and yet we are not following the law if we’re unwilling to impartially consider Jesus’ claims.” Like the people responded to Jesus’ accusation that they break the law, by saying, “Thou hast a devil” (vs. 7:20); so the Pharisees responded to Nicodemus’ concern with anger and irrationality. “Art thou also of Galilee?” (vs. 52).

John 7:53-8:11. And every man went unto his own house. **8** Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. ² And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. ³ And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, ⁴ They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. ⁵ Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? ⁶ This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. ⁷ So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. ⁸ And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. ⁹ And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. ¹⁰ When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? ¹¹ She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more.

I’ll take this section as scripture, because I believe the Byzantine manuscripts are better quality than the Alexandrian manuscripts. (I’m so tired of hearing the Alexandrian family described as “the oldest and best” as if it’s a fact instead of an opinion, and most likely an incorrect opinion.)

This sub-narrative comes between Jesus two proclamations, to be the water in 7:38, and the next thing he says, apart from this sub-narrative, is that he’s the light in 8:12; like the sub-narrative of the woman healed of an issue of blood, in the middle of the narrative of the healing of Jairus’ daughter. I think it’s great that John brings in another narrative about a woman. Of course, the accusers didn’t bring the man along with her,

because women are widely mistreated throughout all generations, since as the weaker vessel, they are generally at the mercy of men who range from flawed to cruel. The religious leaders brought this woman to be judged (to trip Jesus up), but they ended up being the one's judged, by their cruel action and motives, even being willing to sacrifice her life for their political goals.

This sub-narrative is much like the challenges the religious leaders brought to trap Jesus in his words his last week in Jerusalem after the triumphal entry at Passover in the synoptics. Since John gives no coverage to that in his gospel, this is a good place for John to bring it in. This episode, and the next on judgment by the light in chapters 9 and 10, also provide the clearest admissions Jesus gave the Jewish leaders that he is the Messiah in John, which in the synoptic gospels occurred when he was questioned at his trial with Caiphas.

Jesus told the woman, “Neither do I condemn thee” (vs. 11); and he will say a few verses later, “Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man” (vs. 15).

John 8:12. Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.

Reportedly during Tabernacles, it was customary to light four giant menorahs in the court of the women to symbolize the shekinah glory that led their ancestors through the wilderness. Jesus is not claiming to be like those menorahs, but like the shekinah glory, which is ironic because he is the man-like one who was in the shekinah glory in Ez. 1:26, “Above the firmament, ... the likeness of a throne, ... and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man.” But Jesus shines beyond Sinai and Israel to the whole world, so all who know him will walk in truth, righteousness, and love.

John 8:13-18. The Pharisees therefore said unto him, Thou bearest record of thyself; thy record is not true. ¹⁴ Jesus answered and said unto them, Though I bear record of myself, yet my record is true: for I know whence I came, and whither I go; but ye cannot tell whence I come, and whither I go. ¹⁵ Ye judge after the flesh; I judge no man. ¹⁶ And yet if I judge, my judgment is true: for I am not alone, but I and the Father that sent me. ¹⁷ It is also written in your law, that the testimony of two men is true. ¹⁸ I am one that bear witness of myself, and the Father that sent me beareth witness of me.

It was impossible for Jesus to bring in more witnesses for himself, because he is the light, and only he knows these things, and by being the light, he makes them known, including being the only way to know the Father. The truth he speaks is self-evidencing. The alternative would be as if you wanted to show someone the sun, and you used the witness of a flashlight to try to illuminate it, since all spiritual light is only true inasmuch as it partakes of his light.

John 8:19-21. Then said they unto him, Where is thy Father? Jesus answered, Ye neither know me, nor my Father: if ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also. ²⁰ These words spake Jesus in the treasury, as he taught in the temple: and no man laid hands on him; for his hour was not yet come. ²¹ Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come.

Jesus can't show them the Father apart from showing them himself. And his time with them is limited. And if they don't see the Father through him before their time on earth is up, "there remaineth no more sacrifice" (Heb. 10:26) for their sins.

John 8:22-24. Then said the Jews, Will he kill himself? because he saith, Whither I go, ye cannot come. ²³ And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴ I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins.

"I am he," vs. 24. "He [that shall] come forth unto me [the Father] that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Mic. 5:2). He "that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning" (Luke 24:44). Who generations have awaited "for the consolation of Israel" (Luke 2:25), and "for the kingdom of God" (Luke 23:51),

and whom we now “wait for ... from heaven” (1 Thess. 1:10). “Even so, come, Lord Jesus,”
Rev. 22:20.

John 8:25-26. Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning. ²⁶ I have many things to say and to judge of you: but he that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things which I have heard of him.

Jesus said no more and no less than what he heard from the Father.

John 8:27-29. They understood not that he spake to them of the Father. ²⁸ Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things. ²⁹ And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

After the religious leaders lifted up Jesus on the cross, the gospel went to them and to all the world.

John 8:30-32. As he spake these words, many believed on him. ³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ³² And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Jesus dialogues in John 7 and 8 in Jerusalem, are parallel with his dialogues in John 6. First, he scandalized the general crowd in John 6:25-59 and 7:14-8:30; then he scandalized supposed disciples in John 6:60-66 and 8:31-59. But he said things that would strengthen the few who had truly believed on him also. They would abide and “continue in my word” (8:31).

John 8:33-38. They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? ³⁴ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. ³⁵ And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. ³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. ³⁸ I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father.

The ones who had not truly believed on him immediately manifested themselves by showing their irritation at what he had just said, responding, “We ... were never in

bondage to any man!” (vs. 33). Jesus perceived their irritation represented self-righteous hearts of hatred of the same kind that led to Cain’s jealous murder of Abel.

John 8:39-41a. They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. ⁴⁰But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. ⁴¹Ye do the deeds of your father.

They were not merely guilty of hatred, but hatred against what is good. Like “Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous” (1 John 3:12).

John 8:41b-47. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. ⁴²Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. ⁴³Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. ⁴⁴Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. ⁴⁵And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. ⁴⁶Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? ⁴⁷He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.

This paragraph sounds like John’s first epistle, as quoted at the beginning of this paper. “They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us,” 1 John 4:5-6. Jesus’ brethren had told him to go up to the feast of Tabernacles and “shew thyself to the world” (John 7:4). Jesus did go up to the feast and manifest himself as “the light of the world” (John 8:12). He showed them the Father and the result is as he predicted, “the world ... hateth [me] because I testify of it, that the works thereof are evil,” John 7:7. Because unregenerate men hate God, “for every one that doeth evil hateth the light” (John 3:20).

John 8:48-51. Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? ⁴⁹Jesus answered, I have not a devil; but I honour my Father, and ye do dishonour me. ⁵⁰And I seek not mine own glory: there is one that seeketh and judgeth. ⁵¹Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death.

Here Jesus gives more encouragement to those who remain and persevere by having truly believed; they shall never see death. Not merely they will be resurrected after dying, but even their dying will be without the sting of death, because he will soon bear it because of his revelation to Jerusalem.

John 8:52-56. Then said the Jews unto him, Now we know that thou hast a devil. Abraham is dead, and the prophets; and thou sayest, If a man keep my saying, he shall never taste of death. ⁵³Art thou greater than our father Abraham, which is dead? and the prophets are dead: whom makest thou thyself? ⁵⁴Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God: ⁵⁵Yet ye have not known him; but I know him: and if I should say, I know him not, I shall be a liar like unto you: but I know him, and keep his saying. ⁵⁶Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad.

As if they are not scandalized enough already, Jesus reveals his intimate relation with the Father to them through the truth of his eternal pre-existence. “In the beginning was the Word,” John 1:1.

John 8:57-59. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? ⁵⁸Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am. ⁵⁹Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

So, as stated earlier, this episode starts with Jesus hidden and ends with Jesus hidden, but in between, he had revealed himself as the light of the world!

2. Explain the passage’s possible purpose in the narrative. How does it fit into this part of the unfolding ministry of Christ in this Gospel? This passage completes the break between the Jews and Jesus to where they are now ready to crucify him as soon as they get an opportunity. However, by so rejecting Messiah and hanging him on a tree, they will accomplish his greatest act, his exaltation back to glory, and his provision of righteousness and eternal life for all who believe on him.

3. Describe what takes place, who is involved, how things happen? Jesus went up to the feast of tabernacles and taught in the temple. The characters are Jesus, his brothers, the people and the crowds of pilgrims at the feast from all over the world, the Jews of Jerusalem, the priests and Pharisees, the guards, new disciples who immediately fall away, and new disciples who persevere. On the surface, the Jews and Jesus challenge each other. In reality, Jesus shines as the Light of the World which causes the men of the world to hate him.

4. What are the most important 5 or 6 observations that you would share if you were teaching the passage? 1) The light of the world vs. the hatred of every person who is of the world for the light. 2) The scandalization of Jerusalem, first of the crowds, and then of the 'disciples,' according to the same pattern of John 6. 3) Jesus two proclamations as the rock in the wilderness that gushed water, and the shekinah glory in the wilderness that gave light, and that Jesus will fulfill the Feast of Tabernacles foreshadowed Messianic kingdom. 4) Jesus' unity with the Father in doing his will and speaking his words. 5) Light brings both knowledge and judgment. 6) Jesus' true disciples are promised true freedom and eternal life.

5. Describe any tension, plot development, important dialogue, and resolution that takes place in the episode. The tension is the Jews' desire and attempts to kill Jesus. The plot development is the increasing and widening opposition. The important dialogue includes Jesus' proclamations, his answers to their objections, and his accusations of them. The resolution is that a few believe, and are promised eternal life, and Jesus hides himself from his opponents.

6. What do you think is the main point of the episode? The rejection of Jesus, the light of the world, the Messiah, the Son of God, by his own people to whom he came, and by everyone in and of the world.

7. Why do you think the Gospel writer included this particular episode in his book? This episode, plus the one that follows and is connected to it, Judgment by the Light, is the final break between the Jews of Jerusalem with Jesus, to where they are now ready to kill him, as soon as they have opportunity.

8. How does the content of this episode apply to the believer today? Believers should walk as Jesus did, in perfect submission to the will of God; and realize that, despite any temporary appearances to the contrary, the world hates every believer as it hated our Lord.