JOHN 7

Rivers of Living Water

the Feast of Booths, a divided crowd, and the cry of the last great day

> *"Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.'"*
> JOHN 7:37

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · FOUR VOICES: GUZIK · SPROUL · SPURGEON · HENRY

Where we are in John

1. John 6 ended with a sifting.

2. The setting is the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles, Hebrew Sukkot) — “the fifteenth of this seventh month … for seven days to the LORD” (Leviticus 23:34), with a holy eighth day after it.

3. The Old Testament roots run through the chapter.

My Time Is Not Yet Here

Unbelieving brothers, a world that hates Him, and a Son who keeps the Father's clock

JOHN 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.

DAVID GUZIK

Not cowardice but the Father's timing; God's timing expresses His will.

R.C. SPROUL

His brothers wanted a celebrity, not a Savior; do we trust the real Jesus?

C.H. SPURGEON

Near relations, no faith; Christ did everything by the clock.

MATTHEW HENRY

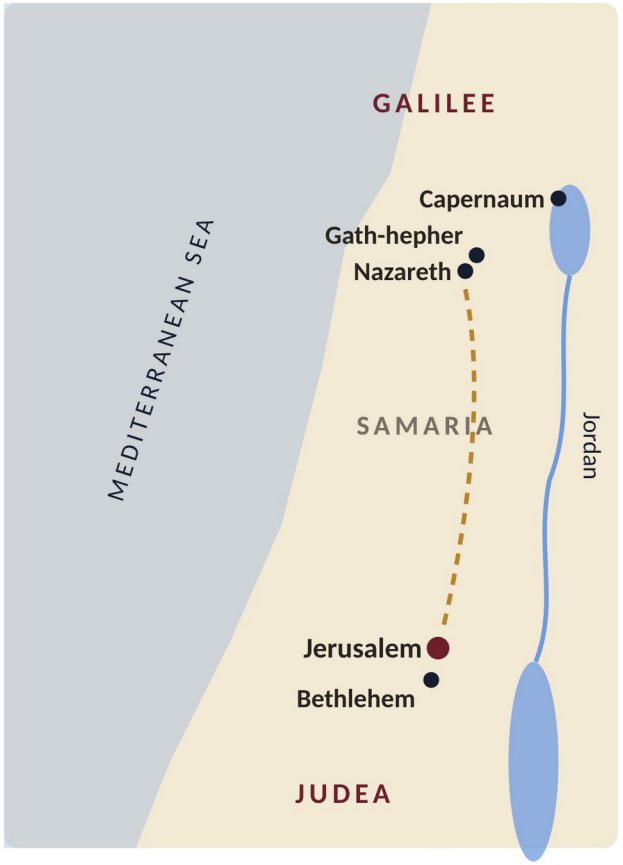
He would not, not durst not; same privileges, different use.

καιρός … ὥρα

KAIROS … HŌRA · "TIME … HOUR"

Jesus tells His brothers, ho kairos ho emos oupō parestin — "My time is not yet here" (v. 6).

Galilee, Judea and the question of origins



7:1, 9 · GALILEE

He stays north: in Judea "the Jews were seeking to kill Him."

7:10, 14 · UP TO JERUSALEM

"not publicly, but as if, in secret" — then teaching in the temple mid-feast.

7:41–42 · BETHLEHEM

"the Christ comes … from Bethlehem, the village where David was" (Micah 5:2).

7:52 · "NO PROPHET … OUT OF GALILEE"

yet Jonah "was of Gath-hepher," a few miles from Nazareth (2 Kings 14:25).

The crowd argued that Jesus came from the wrong place; the map shows Bethlehem, Nazareth, and Jonah's Galilean hometown a few miles away.

My Teaching Is Not Mine

An unschooled teacher, a test anyone can take, and a call to judge rightly

JOHN 7:16

So Jesus answered them and said, "My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.

DAVID GUZIK

Not self-taught but God-taught; appearances cannot decide.

R.C. SPROUL

Doctrine brought from heaven; verse 17 is a moral test, not an intellectual one.

C.H. SPURGEON

Godly living makes a better critic of truth than learning.

MATTHEW HENRY

Those who resemble God best understand Him; judge worth, not looks.

γράμματα οἶδεν

GRAMMATA OIDEN · "BECOME LEARNED"

Literally, "How does this man know letters, having not learned?"

Where Is He From?

The crowd thinks it knows His origin; the rulers send officers; He speaks of going away

JOHN 7:25

So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?

DAVID GUZIK

They knew His town, not His Father; Jesus was never confused about who He was.

R.C. SPROUL

"A little while longer" points to the ascension — the neglected doctrine.

C.H. SPURGEON

No man laid hands on Him; the Father kept the hour.

MATTHEW HENRY

God tied their hands to admiration, though not their hearts.

πιάσαι

PIASAI · "TO SEIZE"

Piazō (G4084) is to lay hold of, grip — used of catching fish (21:3, 10) and of arresting a man.

If Anyone Is Thirsty

On the great day of the feast, the water of the altar points to the Spirit He will give

JOHN 7:37

Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.

DAVID GUZIK

Thirst is a lack; any fool can drink; the rivers are the Spirit.

R.C. SPROUL

Water poured for the rock; the Spirit brings the Son's work to fruition in us.

C.H. SPURGEON

Bring nothing but your thirst; your unfitness is your fitness.

MATTHEW HENRY

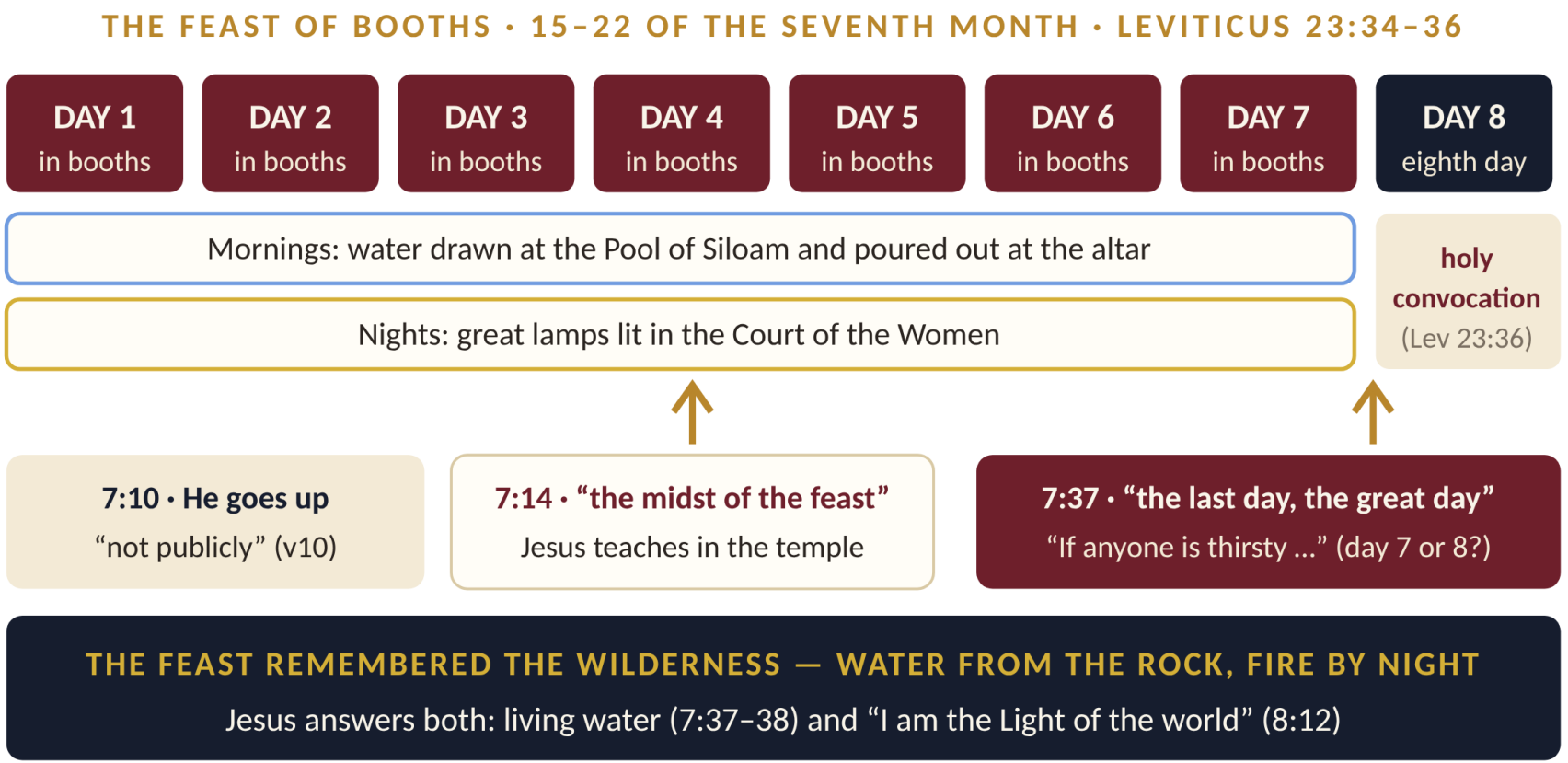
Believers drink of a rock in them; His death is His glorification.

ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας αὐτοῦ

EK TĒS KOILIAS AUTOU · "FROM HIS INNERMOST BEING"

Koilia (G2836) is the belly, the womb — the KJV's "out of his belly" is literal.

Jesus at the Feast of Booths



The feast's two temple ceremonies — water in the morning, light at night — are the backdrop for His cry in 7:37 and His claim in 8:12.

Never Has a Man Spoken Like This

A divided crowd, officers who come back empty-handed, and Nicodemus in the council

JOHN 7:42

"Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?"

DAVID GUZIK

Born in Bethlehem after all; Jonah was from Galilee.

R.C. SPROUL

Officers with their tails between their legs; the division continues today.

C.H. SPURGEON

They could not take Him, for He had taken them; not guesses but testimonies.

MATTHEW HENRY

A good opinion falls far short of faith; facts, not faces.

σχίσμα
SCHISMA · "DIVISION"

Our word "schism." Schisma (G4978) is a tear, as in a patched garment (Matthew 9:16), and then a split among people.

Twelve opinions, one division

"A DIVISION OCCURRED IN THE CROWD BECAUSE OF HIM" · JOHN 7:43

DOUBT AND OPPOSITION	OPENNESS AND FAITH
HIS BROTHERS · V4 "show Yourself to the world"	OTHERS IN THE CROWDS · V12 "He is a good man"
SOME IN THE CROWDS · V12 "He leads the people astray"	MANY OF THE CROWD · V31 they "believed in Him"
THE CROWD · V20 "You have a demon!"	SOME OF THE PEOPLE · V40 "This certainly is the Prophet"
PEOPLE OF JERUSALEM · V27 "we know where this man is from"	OTHERS · V41 "This is the Christ"
OTHERS · V41 "Surely the Christ is not … from Galilee"	THE OFFICERS · V46 "Never has a man spoken …"
THE PHARISEES · V47 "You have not also been led astray"	NICODEMUS · V51 the Law "first hears from him"

Henry: "a good opinion of Christ is far short of a lively faith in Christ."

Read down both columns: everyone in John 7 has an opinion about Jesus, and the chapter will not let any of them stay neutral.

What to carry from this chapter

1

Nearness is not faith.

His own brothers grew up with Him, saw His works, and “were not believing in Him” (v. 5).

2

Two words for time.

Kairos in verses 6 and 8 — the fit moment; hōra in verse 30 — the hour of the cross.

3

Jesus kept the Father’s clock.

Spurgeon: “Our Lord Jesus Christ did everything, as it were, by the clock.”

4

Obedience opens understanding.

“If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching” (v. 17).

More to carry

5

Judge rightly, not by the surface.

Kat' opsin, "according to appearance" (v. 24).

6

Jesus is the fulfillment of the feast.

While the priests poured water remembering the rock, Jesus stood and cried out, "let him come to Me and drink."

7

Thirst is the only qualification.

Spurgeon: "We must come to Christ and bring nothing of our own except our thirst, and that coming is believing."

8

The river waited for the glory.

"The Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified" (v. 39).

Talk it through

1. Who in my own family has watched my life and still doesn't believe? What does Jesus' patience with His brothers teach me about waiting for them?

2. Where am I pushing God to act on my timetable — "show Yourself" — instead of trusting His time?

3. Is there a truth in Scripture I keep arguing with because I'm not yet willing to obey it?

4. Where have I judged a man — or been judged — by appearance? What would "righteous judgment" look like there?

5. What am I thirsty for right now, and where have I been trying to drink instead of coming to Jesus?

CLOSING

John 7 is crowded with opinions about Jesus — good man, deceiver, Prophet, Christ, a man with a demon, a teacher like no other. Only one response answers His cry: if you are thirsty, come to Him and drink. The Spirit He gives does not trickle; He flows like rivers from the inside out.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

Full Deep Dive, O·I·A study and reflection journal: see the John study page.