

JOHN

Chapter 7

Jesus at the Feast of Booths

After this Jesus went about in Galilee. He would not go about in Judea, because the Jews were seeking to kill him. 2 Now the Jews' Feast of Booths was at hand. 3 So his brothers said to him, "Leave here and go to Judea, that your disciples also may see the works you are doing. 4 For no one works in secret if he seeks to be known openly. If you do these things, show yourself to the world." 5 For not even his brothers believed in him. 6 Jesus said to them, "My time has not yet come, but your time is always here. 7 The world cannot hate you, but it hates me because I testify about it that its works are evil. 8 You go up to the feast. I am not going up to this feast, for my time has not yet fully come." 9 After saying this, he remained in Galilee. 10 But after his brothers had gone up to the feast, then he also went up, not publicly but in private. 11 The Jews were looking for him at the feast, and saying, "Where is he?" 12 And there was much muttering about him among the people. While some said, "He is a good man," others said, "No, he is leading the people astray." 13 Yet for fear of the Jews no one spoke openly of him. 14 About the middle of the feast Jesus went up into the temple and began teaching. 15 The Jews therefore marveled, saying, "How is it that this man has learning, when he has never studied?" 16 So Jesus answered them, "My teaching is not mine, but his who sent me. 17 If anyone's will is to do God's will, he will know whether the teaching is from God or whether I am speaking on my own authority. 18 The one who speaks on his own authority seeks his own glory; but the one who seeks the glory of him who sent him is true, and in him there is no falsehood. 19 Has not Moses given you the law? Yet none of you keeps the law. Why do you seek to kill me?" 20 The crowd answered, "You have a demon! Who is seeking to kill you?" 21 Jesus answered them, "I did one work, and you all marvel at it. 22 Moses gave you circumcision (not that it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and you circumcise a man on the Sabbath. 23 If on the Sabbath a man receives circumcision, so that the law of Moses may not be broken, are you angry with me because on the Sabbath I made a man's whole body well? 24 Do not judge by appearances, but judge with right judgment."

7:1–8:59 In chs. 7–8 John records strong opposition to Jesus, including repeated references to threats on his life (7:1, 13, 19, 25, 30, 32, 44; 8:37, 40, 59). The apostle seems to have gathered the major arguments against the Messiahship of Jesus and here answers them. (CSB)

7:1 *After this.* As in 5:1 and 6:1 the time is indefinite. However, 6:4 refers to the Passover Feast and 7:2 to the Feast of Tabernacles, making the interval about six months. (CSB)

because of the Jews - Jesus and His teaching posed a serious threat to religious parties such as the Heordians and the Pharisees, who shared a common goal - killing Jesus (cf. Mk. 3:6). (TLSB)

Herodians... This was the dynasty of Herod the Great and its political supporters. Descendants of Herod ruled the region of Israel on behalf of the Romans (63 BC-AD 100). (TLSB)

Herodians... The **Herodians** were a sect or party mentioned in the New Testament as having on two occasions — once in Galilee, and again in Jerusalem — manifested an unfriendly disposition towards Jesus (Mark 3:6, 12:13; Matthew 22:16; cf. also Mark 8:15, Luke 13:31-32, Acts 4:27). There is an allegation that the Herodians regarded Herod himself as the Messiah. (Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

Herodians... The party was, probably formed under Herod the Great, and appears to have had for its principle that it was right to pay homage to a sovereign who might be able to bring the friendship of Rome and other advantages, but who had personally no title to reign by law and by religion. On this question they differed from the Pharisees (Mt. 22:16-17), although the coalesced with them in disguised opposition, or in open union against Jesus, in whom they saw a common enemy. The Herodians were obviously something more than a political party, something less than a religious sect. (Unger's Bible Dictionary)

7:2 *Feast of Booths*. The great feast in the Jewish year, celebrating the completion of harvest and commemorating God's goodness to the people during the desert wanderings (see Lev 23:33–43; Dt 16:13–15; cf. Zec 14:16–19). The name came from the leafy shelters in which people lived throughout the seven days of the Feast. (CSB)

7:3 *brothers*. Though initially unbelievers (v. 5), at least some of Jesus' brothers came to faith after His resurrection (e.g., James; 1 Cor. 15:7). (TLSB)

leave - Jesus' unbelieving brothers did not understand His divine mission and mocked Him. (TLSB)

7:4 It is not clear whether the brothers claimed some knowledge of Jesus' miracles that other people did not have or whether they were suggesting that any claim to Messiahship must be decided in Jerusalem. Their advice was not given sincerely, for they did not believe in Jesus (v. 5). (CSB)

Working in remote Galilee, Jesus' brothers suggest, was the same as working "in secret." Someone who wanted to be a public figure would need to go to Jerusalem, the center of Jewish religious life. (TLSB)

7:6 *your time*. Jesus moved in accordance with the will of God. (CSB)

The hour of Jesus' glorification was on the cross (cf. 12:23-17). They could safely go to the feast, indeed the Law required it (Ex. 23:17). (TLSB)

7:7 *The world*. Either (1) people opposed to God or (2) the human system opposed to God's purposes. The brothers belonged to the world and therefore could not be the objects of its hatred. Jesus, however, rebuked the world and was hated accordingly. (CSB)

7:8 *not yet*. Jesus was not refusing to go to the Feast, but refusing to go in the way the brothers suggested—as a pilgrim. When he went, it would be to deliver a prophetic message from God, for which he awaited the "right time" (v. 6). (CSB)

Jesus does not intend to go to the feast with His brothers as just another worshiper. When He goes, He will go on His own terms (cf v 10) and for reasons very different from His brothers and the others in Jerusalem. He missed at least the first half of the feast (v 14) and may not have attended any of the festivities even after He arrived. (TLSB)

7:10 *not publicly*. Rejecting the brothers' suggestion to show Himself (v. 4). (CSB)

7:12 *muttering*. Because it was not safe to speak openly (cf. v. 13). (CSB)

7:13 *fear of the Jews* - Pressure - even threat of excommunication - was exerted against anyone who would speak out in favor of Jesus (cf. 9:13-34). (TLSB)

7:14 *middle of the Feast*. When the crowds would be at their maximum. Teaching in the temple courts at such a time would reach many. (CSB)

up to the temple - Jesus like other rabbis, often taught in the temple compound (cf. 10:23; Acts 5:12). (TLSB)

7:15 *The Jews*. Distinct from "the crowds" (v. 12), who were also Jews. (CSB)

has never studied. Under a rabbi. Jesus had never been the disciple of a recognized Jewish teacher. (CSB)

He did not have the ancient equivalent of a diploma or degree. (TLSB)

Acts 4:13, "When they saw the courage of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they were astonished and they took note that these men had been with Jesus."

7:16 *teaching is not mine*. The Father, from whom he came, had been his "rabbi" (see note on 4:34). (CSB)

Acts 2:22, "Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know."

7:17 *chooses to do God's will*.† Reflecting a whole change of life. A person sincerely set on doing God's will welcomes Jesus' teaching and believes in him (cf. 6:29). (CSB)

he will know. Augustine commented, "Understanding is the reward of faith ... What is 'If any man be willing to do his will'? It is the same thing as to believe." (CSB)

By faith alone, a person will recognize the divine origin of Jesus' teaching. Unlike the rabbis who quoted previous rabbis, Jesus' came directly from the Father. (TLSB)

Matthew 7:28-29, "²⁸ When Jesus had finished saying these things, the crowds were amazed at his teaching, ²⁹ because he taught as one who had authority, and not as their teachers of the law."

7:18 *in him there is no falsehood*. Or "is true." They should recognize that Jesus was not self-seeking. In this Gospel, no one is spoken of as being "true" except God the Father (3:33; 8:26) and Jesus (here). Once more John ranks Jesus with God. (CSB)

7:19 *the law*. The Jews congratulated themselves on being the chosen recipients of the law (cf. Ro 2:17), but Jesus told them that they all broke the law of which they were so proud. (CSB)

The Jews had knowledge of God's Law but did not keep it, as shown by their desire to kill Jesus. (TLSB)

7:20 *You have a demon.* The accusation of demon possession is made elsewhere in John (e.g., 8:48–52; 10:20–21; cf. Mt 12:24–32; Mk 3:22–30). (CSB)

Some may not have known about the plots against Jesus. Others knew but did not want their evil plans exposed, so they denied the truth. (TLSB)

the crowd. Probably the pilgrims who had come up to Jerusalem for the Feast—different from “the Jews” who were trying to kill Jesus (v. 1) and the Jerusalem mob that knew of the plot (v. 25). (CSB)

7:21 *one work.* Evidently that of healing the lame man (5:1–9), as the discussion about the Sabbath shows. (CSB)

7:22 *circumcision.* The requirement of circumcision was included in the law Moses gave (Ex 12:44, 48; Lev 12:3), yet it did not originate with Moses but went back to Abraham (Ge 17:9–14). The Jews took such regulations as that in Lev 12:3 to mean that circumcision must be performed on the eighth day even if it was the Sabbath, a day on which no work should be done. This exception is of critical importance in understanding the controversy (v. 23). Jesus was not saying that the Sabbath should not be observed or that the Jewish regulations were too harsh. He was saying that his opponents did not understand what the Sabbath meant. The command to circumcise showed that sometimes work not only might be done on the Sabbath but must be done then. Deeds of mercy were in this category. (CSB)

Circumcision for Israelites began with Abraham, c 500 years before Moses. (TLSB)

7:24 *not judge by appearances* - Application of the Law must not be done superficially, but in the context of God’s grace and mercy (cf. Mt. 12:1-8). (TLSB)

7:1–24 Despite growing opposition from Jewish leaders and unbelief within His own family, Jesus enters Jerusalem during the Feast of Booths as the time of His death draws near. People today still fail to see that Jesus is not just another lawgiver but a merciful Savior. He was “despised and rejected” (Is 53:3) that He might bear our sins on the cross. • O Lord, confirm the faith of all who experience persecution because of Your name. Grant us boldness to proclaim You. Amen. (TLSB)

Can This be the Christ

25 Some of the people of Jerusalem therefore said, “Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? 26 And here he is, speaking openly, and they say nothing to him! Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? 27 But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from.” 28 So Jesus proclaimed, as he taught in the temple, “You know me, and you know where I come from. But I have not come of my own accord. He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. 29 I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me.” 30 So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come. 31 Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, “When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done?”

7:25 *people of Jerusalem.* An expression found only here and in Mk 1:5 in the NT, probably referring to the Jerusalem mob. They did not originate the plot against Jesus, but they knew of it. (CSB)

Distinct from the Judean leadership (“the Jews”) and the multitudes there for the feast (“the crowd”). (TLSB)

7:26 *can the authorities really know.* In Greek, the question is in a form that expects a negative answer. (CSB)

7:27 *no one will know where he comes from.* Some Jews held that the OT gave the origin of the Messiah (cf. v. 42; Mt 2:4–6), but others believed that it did not. (CSB)

Although Micah 5:2 prophesied Christ’s birth at Bethlehem, some thought the Messiah would arrive supernaturally. Because they thought Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, He could not be the Christ in either case. (TLSB)

7:28 *you know me.* Irony, because in a sense they knew Jesus and that he came from Nazareth, but in a deeper sense they did not know Jesus or the Father (8:19). Jesus mentioned again his dependence on the Father (cf. 4:34) and went on to declare that he had real knowledge of God and that they did not. Both his origin and mission were from God. (CSB)

7:30 *seeking to arrest him.* Jesus’ enemies were powerless against him until his time came (see note on 2:4). (CSB)

Because of what He had just said (vv. 28-29), they regarded Him as Blaspheming (cf. 5:18). God’s timetable, not theirs prevailed (cf. 12:23-27). (TLSB)

7:31 *many of the people.* Of pilgrims (see note on v. 20). Many of them believed on the basis of the miraculous signs (cf. 6:26). (CSB)

7:25–31 Because Jesus does not fit their preconceived notions of the Messiah’s identity, residents of Jerusalem reject Him and join in the effort to kill Him for blasphemy. That Jesus is true God and true man still remains a stumbling block for those who judge Him by earthly standards. Yet, for our sake, Jesus was always conscious of the Father’s will and never allowed human opinions to sidetrack Him from His saving purpose. • Beloved Lord, preserve my faith when enemies seek to undermine the Christian faith. Amen. (TLSB)

Officers Sent to Arrest Jesus

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him. 33 Jesus then said, “I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. 34 You will seek me and you will not find me. Where I am you cannot come.” 35 The Jews said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him? Does he intend to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? 36 What does he mean by saying, ‘You will seek me and you will not find me,’ and, ‘Where I am you cannot come?’”

7:32 *the chief priests.* There was only one ruling chief priest, but the Romans had deposed a number of chief priests, and these retained the title by courtesy. (CSB)

Temple officials, including the chief priest. (TLSB)

officers -Temple police force, perhaps similar to court bailiffs. (TLSB)

7:33 *then I am going to him who sent me.* Jesus changed the topic from his miracles to his death, to which he referred enigmatically (v. 34). (CSB)

7:34 *where I am you cannot come* - When Jesus departed through death to His Father (cf. 6:62; 13:1), He would be inaccessible, removed from His enemies' grasp. (TLSB)

7:35 *Dispersion among the Greeks*. From the time of the exile, many Jews lived outside Palestine and were found in most cities throughout the Roman Empire. (CSB)

7:32–36 Jesus teaches that when He dies, He will return to His Father and become inaccessible to His enemies. Yet, He remains gracious toward all. The “window of opportunity” for the Gospel will soon close, both for the individual and for the world. But God now graciously extends the time for the Gospel’s proclamation that many others may hear and be saved (2Pt 3:9). • Make me alert, O God, to seize every opportunity to share Jesus’ saving love. Amen. (TLSB)

Rivers of Living Water

37 On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

7:37 *the last ... day of the Feast*. Either the seventh or the eighth day: This feast lasted seven days (Lev 23:34; Dt 16:13, 15) but had a “closing assembly” on the eighth day (Lev 23:36). (CSB)

In this section of John’s gospel, Jesus is revealing God’s glory and salvation. He proclaims himself as “the bread of life” (6:35). Some disciples take offense at Jesus’ bold claim and begin to fall away (Jn 6:66). His teaching at the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem prompts many to ask questions about his station and office as the Christ (7:25 ff). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

On the greatest and last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, Jesus proclaims this word designed to stem “the thirst” of those who seek “living water”: God’s gift of life and hope. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

en de tēi eschatēi tēi megalēi tēs heortēs. “On the last day of the feast [of Booths], the great day.” At the conclusion of this seven-day celebration, Jesus stood up (unusual, since Jewish teachers sat and talked) and cried out, “If anyone *dipsa* [“thirsts”], let him come to me and *pinetō* [“drink”].” To thirst and to drink describe the believer (cf. Jn 6:13–14). A believer craves forgiveness and finds satisfaction in Christ alone (cf. Ps 42:1; Is 55:1). “Where there is no spiritual hunger and thirst, the Lord Jesus is not received” (C. F. W. Walther, *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986], 249). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 21, Part 2)

stood and cried out. Teachers usually sat, so Jesus drew special attention to his message. (CSB)

All the threats and attempts to seize Jesus did not deter Him from telling His life-giving message. On the last day of the festival, He stood up and cried out loudly so all would listen to Him and hear His teaching. (PBC)

It was on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the “day of the great Hosannah,” on which the leaves of the willows and the other branches that had been used for the building of the booths were shaken off and the palm branches were waved against the altar, when the priests went around the altar seven times in a procession of thankfulness, and when a priest was commissioned to get a pitcher of water from the pool of Siloam and then pour it out at the side of the altar. All these ceremonies had been introduced in the course of time, and the Jewish teachers had explained some of them, especially the last, as a symbol which would find its fulfillment in the days of the Messiah. The proclamation of Jesus at this point was

therefore very important and significant. He not only applied the words Is. 12, 3 to Himself, but indicated that all other prophecies which were connected with this festival had found their fulfillment in Him. The water of the pool of Siloam was considered living water, since it was replenished from time to time by means of a natural siphon from a spring in the rock. But, after all, it was only earthly water, which could quench the thirst for only a short while. But those whose soul thirsts for God, as the heart panteth after the waterbrooks, Ps. 42, 1. 2, must go to the Savior for their soul's refreshment. For in the salvation earned through Christ's Passion and death there is full satisfaction for the desire of all humble souls for mercy and forgiveness. Jesus is the fountain of living water, for in Him there is true, everlasting life. (Kretzmann)

anyone thirsts- The word for thirst, *dipsaō*, often means physical thirst. However, it may also denote a thirsting for salvation or righteousness, as in Amos 8:11. In this latter sense, the Scriptures proclaim that Christ Jesus alone satisfies thirst (cf. John 4:14; 6:35). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

drink - Drinking (*pinō*) held a special meaning for those living in the desert culture. The common drinks of the day included water, milk from goats and cows, and wine. Drink, in fact, was probably viewed as more urgently necessary than food. People can survive for days without food, but not without water. Where there is water in the desert, there is plant and animal life, but where there is no water, life is absent, and death rules. In the OT Lesson the bones are twice described as dry (Ezek 37:2, 4), stressing the complete absence of spiritual life apart from God's Word. Yet even the driest of bones come to life by the power of God's Word and Spirit. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

It is important to note that God, the Author of all things, gives or withholds food and drink according to his pleasure (cf. 1 Kings 17). Jesus' Gospel invitation to come and drink is reminiscent of God's invitation in Is 55:1 to receive his satisfying spiritual water through his Word, which is given freely, without charge. The similar invitation in Rev 22:17 invites the hearers to partake of the "river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb" (Rev 22:1). (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

7:38 *believes* - Those with only a superficial thirst may easily be satisfied by a sip or swig of the beverages offered by the world, but their satisfaction is only temporary; their thirst will return. By contrast, those who slake their thirst through faith (*pisteuō*) in the Christ will find a river of water welling up deep within. Thus a serious and intense spiritual desire is satisfied by God in Christ with streams (*potamoi*) of spiritual relief. Those who were thirsty are transformed into springs that overflow with living water. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

ho pisteuōn eis eme. "Whoever believes in me." With thirst quenched, the believer now is brought by the Lord to have *potamoi* . . . *hudatos zōntos*, "rivers of living water," *hreisousin*, "flow" from within. From Christ through the Church to the world, water (Christ himself) that creates and sustains saving faith will pour out of the Church's soul from Pentecost to the parousia. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 21, Part 2)

Scripture has said - Jesus appears not to quote from a single OT text, but to refer to a host of OT citations that convey similar ideas. cf. Prov 18:4; Song of Songs 4:15; Is 43:19; Ezek 47:1-12; Joel 3 :18; Zech 14:8. Note also John 4:10 where Jesus, like an inexhaustible well, is the source and dispenser of the stream of God's blessings, given as a pure gift. According to Rev 7:16-17, in the final state thirst and hunger will be eradicated because the Shepherd will guide his sheep to "springs of living water." (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

living water. He applied the same image He had used to lead the Samaritan woman to faith at Jacob's well (4:14). The Scriptures had predicted this truth (Isaiah 58:11; Zechariah 14:8). Those who come to Jesus and drink are those who believe in Him, as His next words revealed. And everyone who believes not only has received life-giving water, but "streams of living water will flow from within him." (PBC)

Every one that accepts Him and His salvation will never again be tortured with thirst, for he will possess the fullness of God's mercy. And that is not all. The believer will himself become a fountain of living water, Is. 58, 11; 44, 3. The Spirit, who has entered into his heart in regeneration, has worked spiritual life in him. This life daily gains in strength and willingness. It must manifest itself in deeds of the Spirit, in good works. There will daily be a new and full supply of knowledge and love, through the work of the Holy Spirit, given to all believers. At that time indeed the great revelation of the Spirit, the Pentecostal miracle, had not yet taken place; Jesus had not yet finished His earthly work, to enter into the glory of His Father. But the work of the Spirit in the Word is efficient at all times; sanctification is His peculiar office and ministry. The Spirit has now been revealed as He that glorified Christ. We have a greater measure of His manifestations in our days than the believers of the Old Testament had, Joel 2, 28. " (Kretzmann)

7:39 *the Spirit*. Explaining the "living water" (v. 38). (CSB)

God's Holy Spirit leads thirsty souls to Jesus. He works the faith that drinks the refreshment Jesus offers. The Spirit enters the heart of a believer, and the believer calls others to learn of Jesus. (PBC)

On this day of Pentecost we recall the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, who empowered the apostolic disciples. In this event they experience the fullest expression of Jesus' power and comfort. It is hardly a coincidence that the verb *ekcheō*, "pour out," is used both for the bestowal of the Spirit on Pentecost (Acts 2:17, 18, 33) and for the bestowal of the Spirit through the "washing of rebirth and renewal" in Holy Baptism (Titus 3:5-6). The verb, while not present in our Gospel Lesson, may provide a helpful homiletical bridge from the image of flowing water to the gift of the Spirit in Baptism. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

For the contemporary application of our text, one need not spend much time discussing the necessity of water to sustain life in arid regions. Much more critical issues for our consideration are the spiritual necessities of our day. Most people to whom we speak can simply turn on a tap and get a stream of water. They can open a can or bottle as a means to satisfy their thirst. But what about the crying needs of the dry, parched, lifeless places in our hearts and souls? (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

Consider the needs of "nuclear man" as developed and expressed by Henri J. M. Nouwen in *The Wounded Healer*. "Nuclear Man" is thirsty for meaning in life, for connectedness to others, and for hope for the future. Can Jesus speak to us today, invite us to drink, and satisfy our search for meaning, our thirst for relationship, and our yearning for certain hope? We respond with a firm and resounding yes! (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 4, Part 2)

touto de eipen peri tou pneumatos. "This he said about the Spirit." Jesus now turns the Church to the Holy Spirit, who testifies to Christ and the divine power that would flow from heaven on Pentecost to those who had believed, *hoi pisteusantes* (constative aorist: all, including these, who would persevere in true faith). This worldwide evangelism would be a new event in the Church's mouth. Prophesied in Joel 2:28-32, Jesus, upon his being *edoxasthē*, "glorified," would send the Holy Spirit, at the moment determined by the Trinity, to begin the flooding of the earth with the Gospel through the dedicated voice of the Church. (Concordia Pulpit Resources - Volume 21, Part 2)

had not been given. In the manner in which he would be given at Pentecost (see Ac 2). (CSB)

Full outpouring of the Holy Spirit would not take place until Pentecost, after Jesus finished His work and returned to the Father (cf 16:5–11). (TLSB)

glorified. Here probably refers to Jesus' crucifixion, resurrection and exaltation. The fullness of the Spirit's work depends on Jesus' prior work of salvation. (CSB)

Hour of the crucifixion (cf 12:23–27). (TLSB)

When Jesus finished His work of salvation and entered into His glory, God's Holy Spirit was poured out upon the believers in special measure. This happened on Pentecost when the Spirit turned loose the streams of water from the disciples, and the water of life has flowed through believers to countless thirsting souls in every age since. (PBC)

At the time when Jesus preached, He promised the Holy Spirit, and therefore the Holy Spirit was not yet there; not that He was not in existence in His nature, in heaven, but that He was not manifested in His revelation and in His work. For that is the special work and office of the Holy Spirit that He reveal and glorify Christ, that He preach and give testimony concerning Him. This office was then not yet in active working; the office of glorifying Christ the Lord was not yet in use, that is, the preaching of the forgiveness of sins, and how one may be delivered from death, have comfort and joy in Christ, that it concerns us: all this was at that time unheard of and not mentioned; that deliverance, salvation, righteousness, joy, and life should be given us through that man, Christ, whom people did not know at that time. (Kretzmann)

7:37–39 On the final day of the Feast of Booths, Jesus promises that believers will receive the Holy Spirit (at Pentecost) after His death. "Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to Him" (Rm 8:9). But Christ's death and resurrection proclaimed in the Gospel brings life to all who thirst for Him and His blessings. • O Holy Spirit, bring refreshing showers of blessing each day of my life. Amen. (TLSB)

Division Among the People

40 When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This really is the Prophet." **41** Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee? **42** Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" **43** So there was a division among the people over him. **44** Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. **45** The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" **46** The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!" **47** The Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived? **48** Have any of the authorities or the Pharisees believed in him? **49** But this crowd that does not know the law is accursed." **50** Nicodemus, who had gone to him before, and who was one of them, said to them, **51** "Does our law judge a man without first giving him a hearing and learning what he does?" **52** They replied, "Are you from Galilee too? Search and see that no prophet arises from Galilee."

[The earliest manuscripts do not include 7:53–8:11.

7:40 *people.* The "crowd" of v. 20. (CSB)

7:42 *Bethlehem.* There were different ideas about the Messiah's place of origin (cf. v. 27). (CSB)

Passages attesting to the Messiah's lineage (e.g., 2 Sm. 7:13-14) and origin would have been widely circulated. Messianic fervor, though involving conflicting views, ran high before Christ's appearing. (TLSB)

7:44 *some* - Those who had firmly made up their minds (cf. 7:1, 13, 32, 45). (TLSB)

7:46 *the officers*. They knew they would be in trouble for failing to make the arrest, but did not mention the hostility of part of the crowd, which would have given them something of an excuse before the Pharisees. They (though unbelievers - TLBSB) were favorably impressed by the teaching of Jesus and were not inclined to cause him trouble. (CSB)

Even the officers sent to arrest Jesus—though unbelievers—were impressed with what He said and how He said it. (TLSB)

7:47 *the Pharisees answered*. They must have been greatly irritated. Ordinarily the chief priests would have rebuked the temple guards. (CSB)

7:48 The leaders exaggerated. Several prominent Jewish people believed in Jesus, including Nicodemus, a Pharisee and Council member (3:2, 10; 7:50; 19:38-39). (TLSB)

7:49 *this crowd*. The pilgrim crowd again. (CSB)

not know the law. The Pharisees exaggerated the people's ignorance of Scripture (cf. v. 42). But the average Jew paid little attention to the minutiae that mattered so much to the Pharisees. The "traditions of the elders" were too great a burden for people who earned their living by hard physical work, and consequently these regulations were widely disregarded. (CSB)

accursed. Pharisees regarded the common people as ignorant of the Law and esp the oral tradition associated with it. (TLSB)

7:50–51 There is irony here. The Pharisees implied that no leader believed in Jesus, yet Nicodemus, "a member of the Jewish ruling council" (3:1), spoke up. They called for people to observe the law, but Nicodemus pointed to their own failure to keep the law. (CSB)

7:51 *hearing* - Whether a formal hearing or an informal dialogue, firsthand information was required to judge a person in Jewish legal tradition. (TLSB)

7:52 *no prophet arises from Galilee*. See 1:46. They were angry—and wrong. Jonah came from Galilee, and perhaps other prophets as well. Moreover, the Pharisees overlooked the right of God to raise up prophets from wherever he chooses. (CSB)

Their anger and unbelief blinded them and led them to forget that Jonah, a Hbr prophet, came from Galilee, not far from Nazareth. God can raise up a prophet wherever and whenever He pleases. (TLSB)

7:40–52 Jewish leaders and the populace hold sharply different opinions regarding Jesus. Today, people continue to misjudge the Lord on the basis of their own feelings and perceptions. Truly, "no one ever spoke like this man" Jesus; His teaching exceeded all human expectations, imparting grace to those who heard. His words came directly from our heavenly Father. • Lead me, Lord Jesus, to hear the full message of Your Word. Amen. (TLSB)

7:53–8:11 This story may not have belonged originally to the Gospel of John. It is absent from almost all the important early manuscripts, and those that have it sometimes place it elsewhere (e.g., after Lk 21:38). But the story may well be authentic. (CSB)

Not clear that John wrote this passage. Even if he did not, it may preserve a genuine event in Jesus' ministry. (TLSB)

7:53 This verse (along with 8:1) shows that the story was originally attached to another narrative, since Jesus was not present at the meeting of the Sanhedrin described in vv. 45–52. (CSB)

went each to his own house -Jesus' enemies were still not sufficiently organized to stop His work, so they disbanded. (TLSB)