

28.67a At the Feast of Booths (John 7:10–53)

✓ “Check” it out; opinion, inference, supposed conversation, or fact one can verify follows
[. . .] indicates a remark to the teacher that usually should not be read. It also indicates answers to questions.

Visuals and Tools:

- Pictures and other visuals found at the end of this lesson. Please give credit to the sources of pictures.
- Check “Activities” and “Handwork” found below for additional materials.
- (optional) Use flannelgraph from CEF’s series on John, Volume 1, Lesson X

Bible Time Tips and Terms to Teach: Vocabulary words are enlarged for flashcards at the end of this lesson. Print, cut out, and glue to card stock, or just print on colorful cardstock.

- *Feast of Booths or of Tabernacles or Sukkot:* a seven-day festival held in September or October in which families lived in tents or booths or tabernacles to remember how their forefathers had lived in tents when they came out of Egypt. A daily ceremony during this feast was the drink offering. “On the first morning of Sukkot a procession of priests went down to the pool of Siloam to bring up to the Temple a golden container of water sufficient to last throughout the seven days of the feast. The water was brought up with great ceremony. The shofar was blown and the pilgrims who had come to Jerusalem for the feast waved their lulavs [four specific tree branches bound together] as the priests carried the water around the altar. The great Hallel (Psalms 113-118) were recited. Then the priest on duty poured out the contents of two silver bowls: one held water and the other held wine. This was an act of prayer and an expression of dependence upon God to pour out his blessing of rain upon the earth (<https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues/issues-v06-n07/sukkot-a-promise-of-living-water/>).
- *Sabbath:* seventh day of the week on which no labor was to be done
- *Jews:* scribes, Pharisees, chief priests (The Gospel of John uses the term almost exclusively of the leadership, not the common people.)
- *circumcision:* a rite performed on male babies on the eighth day after their birth
- *Jesus’ hour:* the time appointed by God when Jesus would be crucified, buried, and raised from the dead

Scripture Passage (NASV):

John 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. 11 So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, “Where is He?” 12 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.

14 But when it was now the midst of the feast Jesus went up into the temple, and began *to* teach. 15 The Jews then were astonished, saying, “How has this man become learned, having never been educated?” 16 So Jesus answered them and said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me. 17 If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. 18 He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.

19 “Did not Moses give you the Law, and *yet* none of you carries out the Law? Why do you seek to kill Me?” 20 The crowd answered, “You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?” 21 Jesus answered them, “I did one deed, and you all marvel. 22 For this reason Moses has given you circumcision (not because it is from Moses, but from the fathers), and on the Sabbath you circumcise a man. 23 If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, are you angry with Me because I made an entire man well on *the* Sabbath? 24 Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.”

25 So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, “Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill? 26 Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? 27 However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.” 28 Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, “You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. 29 I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me.” 30 So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come. 31 But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?”

32 The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him. 33 Therefore Jesus said, “For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me. 34 You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come.” 35 The Jews then said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He? 36 What is this statement that He said, ‘You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come?’”

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. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

40 Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.” 41 Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? 42 Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” 43 So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. 44 Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

45 The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?” 46 The officers answered, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” 47 The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you? 48 No one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? 49 But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.” 50 Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) said to them, 51 “Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” 52 They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.” 53 [Everyone went to his home.]

Introduction/Review:

Jesus had left Galilee for the last time. On His way to Judea, a Samaritan village had refused to allow Him hospitality. Jesus had encountered three men, two who offered to follow Him and one whom Jesus summoned to follow Him. We don’t know if any of these men actually did follow Jesus, but we do know they thought their personal immediate business was more important than prompt discipleship.

Story:

Believers

Jesus had been ministering about three years, and by this time opinions of Him were quite polarized. Some believed in Him. They said, “He is a good man,” “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has,” “This certainly is the Prophet (prophesied by Moses),” “This is the Christ.”

Unbelievers

Among the unbelievers were those who argued on the basis of His earthly origin. They said, “We know this man comes from Galilee, but when the Christ comes, no one will know where He is from.” Others had a different take on His origin: “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” These fellows had not checked the census records, but we know Jesus was from Bethlehem,

the city of David.

Arguments

Among the crowds, people grumbled and argued: “He is a good man.” “No, He leads the people astray.” “No, He is a good man.” “No, leads the people astray.” All of this back-and-forth was spoken in private; no one dared utter words about Jesus in public because they feared the Jews might hear and harass those who spoke.

The Jews—scribes, Pharisees, and chief priests, who out-and-out hated Jesus—did hear the grumbling and arguing among the people and wanted Jesus out of the way. “Let’s seize Him!” they said. “Send officers to get Him!”

Feast of Booths

Even Jesus’ own brothers didn’t believe Him. They had urged Him to get to Judea so that He could promote Himself, showing forth His “supposed” works. Jesus hadn’t gone to Judea with them but had waited to leave Galilee until after His brothers had left. When He later went to Judea to the Feast of Booths, Jesus did not go publicly but as quietly and unnoticed as possible.

Meanwhile, the Jews at the feast were looking around for Jesus, saying, “Where is He? ✓When is He going to get here?” They knew He should be there as any good Jew would be. We know He would go because He had come to fulfill all righteousness, which included all the feasts required by the Law.

Teaching

By the time Jesus showed up at the feast, which lasted seven days, it was half over. ✓He had likely been there from the beginning of the feast but had not revealed His presence. No longer keeping Himself hidden, Jesus went up to the temple and began to teach. As He did so, the Jews were amazed and perhaps puzzled by His excellent instruction. They exclaimed, “How has this man become learned, having never been educated?” In other words, they equated good teaching with being educated under the best rabbis.

Well, how had Jesus been trained? He said, “My teaching is not Mine, but His who sent Me.” Who *was* His teacher? It was God Himself. Jesus continued, “If anyone is willing to do His will, he will know of the teaching, whether it is of God or whether I speak from Myself. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who is seeking the glory of the One who sent Him, He is true, and there is no unrighteousness in Him.”

Much doctrine and wisdom reside in these words of Jesus. Now, let’s see if we understand. Who is the person that will know whether Jesus speaks from His own self or receives His teaching from God? [The one who is willing to do God’s will; *i.e.*, the one who believes in Jesus.] Whose glory was Jesus seeking? [“The One who sent Him,” God the Father.]

This information is cause for contemplation. Isn’t Jesus God just as much as the Father? Yes. Shouldn’t He be able to proclaim His own teaching and seek His own glory? Yes. But remember, He became man, laying aside His glory and submitting Himself to the Father as we humans should do. This He did so willingly and so completely that of Himself He could say, “I am true, and there is no unrighteousness in Me.”

Obeying

Further words from Jesus’ mouth provoked the Jews. He said, “Moses gave you the Law, right? Yet not one of you really obeys it? For example, if the Law states, ‘You shall not kill,’ and it does, why do you seek to kill Me?”

“What?!” the crowd answered. “You have a demon! Who seeks to kill You?”

Just who was in saying this in the crowd is unclear. If it was Jews, they likely knew that officers had been sent to arrest Jesus. Perhaps the “crowd” was lying. The common people, as we will see, understood clearly that Jesus was the object of homicidal plans.

Flashback

✓The main event that had triggered the Jews' murderous hatred was the healing of the man at the Pool of Bethesda. The healed man had [speak indignantly] "audaciously" broken Sabbath laws by carrying his pallet.

"I did one deed," Jesus said, "and you all marvel. You circumcise a man on the Sabbath. If a man receives circumcision on the Sabbath so that the Law of Moses will not be broken, why are you angry with Me when I made a man entirely well on the Sabbath? Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."

Seeking

So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, "Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill?" Aha! Somebody knew the Jews were seeking to slay Jesus! They continued, "Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? In our minds there's just that one problem about His coming from Galilee."

Coming

Then Jesus again cried out in the temple, "You both know Me and know where I am from. I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me."

At that point, the officers sent by the Jews sought to seize Him, but they just couldn't do it. No one could lay a hand on Him because His hour had not yet come.

Going

Jesus informed the crowd, "For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me. You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come."

What did Jesus mean? We know from reading the end of the story in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that He would ascend—go back to heaven. The Jews would not be able to find Him.

But at that time the Jews did not know the end of the story. They said to one another, "Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go and teach the Greeks, is He? What does He mean when He says, 'You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come'?"

Thirsting

Finally, the last day, the great day of the Feast of Booths—the high point of the whole week—dawned. On this day "the water libation rite [drink offering] reached its climax. Amid shouts of gladness the priests circled the altar seven times and then poured out the water with great pomp and ceremony" (<https://jewsforjesus.org/publications/issues/issues-v06-n07/sukkot-a-promise-of-living-water/>).

✓At that moment Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"

We had better stop a moment here and digest this statement. Jesus was, of course, speaking of spiritual, life-giving water, just as He had spoken of water to the woman at the well of Samaria early in His ministry. The water is free, the condition is need, the action is to drink, and the result is satisfaction—"From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water."*

Drinking of Jesus means the same as believing on Him even as eating the Bread of Life in John 6 is to believe on Him. "When you go without water your body gets thirsty. And the soul, when it goes without God, gets thirsty. Your body was made to live on water. Your soul was made to live on God" (<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/out-of-your-heart-will-flow-rivers-of-living-water>).

How can we be enabled to live on Christ? Through His Holy Spirit. This is what Jesus was talking about. In

fact, this passage in John 7 goes on to say, “But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”

“The Spirit was not yet given.” Jesus had to be glorified—raised from the dead and ascended to heaven—before that would happen. We who now believe in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour have the Holy Spirit within us, just as Jesus prophesied.

Officers

It was at this time that the crowd, divided by believers and unbelievers, became vocal in their opinions. Some wanted to seize him, but they couldn't. The officers sent by the Jews came back to their bosses without Jesus. “Why didn't you bring Him?” asked the chief priests and Pharisees.

“Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks!” answered the officers.

Pharisees

The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you? Not one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? [Speak derisively.] But this crowd—✓these common, low people—do not know the Law. They are cursed.”

“Are you cursing Jesus too?” asked Nicodemus, the man who had visited with Jesus at night in John 3. “Our Law doesn't judge a man unless it hears from him first and knows what he is doing, does it?”

They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

That's how this incident ended—with tension mounting and opinions solidifying. Crucifixion was looming.

*“[T]he Syriac version reads in the plural number, ‘as the Scriptures hath said’; referring to more than one” (<https://www.biblestudytools.com/commentaries/gills-exposition-of-the-bible/john-7-38.html>). Some of those scriptures might be Isaiah 41:17, 18; 43:20; 44:3; 58:11. No particular verse reads as Jesus quoted.

Lessons from this lesson:

- Jesus is God:
He said He is true and there is no unrighteousness in Him (John 7:18).
He said of God, “I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me” (John 7:29).
He prophesied that believers would receive the Holy Spirit (John 7:39).
- Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.
- “Not one of the rulers or Pharisees has believed in Him.” The crowd, even the intellectual, experienced majority, may not be right. [Personal note: At times when my husband has presented a teaching that differed from others' ideas, the litmus test for some was, “Does such-and-such a Bible college or university teach this?”]
- Old Testament Jewish feasts seem to be prophetic: Jesus' crucifixion on Passover, the Holy Spirit's coming at Pentecost, *etc.* “According to the prophet Zechariah, this holiday also has a prophetic dimension that is yet to be fulfilled. When Messiah returns and establishes His Kingdom, all the nations will be required to keep this holiday by coming up to Jerusalem to celebrate Sukkot. (Zechariah 14:16–17) In that day, Messiah Yeshua (Jesus) will become Israel's [all believers'] sukkah (tabernacle) (<https://free.messianicbible.com/holiday/sukkot-coming-messiah/>). Let's look for the second coming of our Saviour.

Activities:

- Play dough: booths; water pot; palm branches
- Place a transparent glass in a waterproof container. Pour water from a pitcher into the glass until it is overflowing. This represents the springs of water that flow from our innermost being—our satisfaction in Jesus.
- “He shall know the doctrine” quiz. Prepare two felt pieces, one with *Jesus* written on it and the other with *people* written on it. Prepare 10 to 18 smaller circles or squares from felt to place either with *Jesus* if the saying found below is biblical or *people* if the saying is unbiblical. Correct the unbiblical sayings.
 1. Money is the root of all evil. [People. The *love* of money . . .]
 2. Eve ate the apple in the garden. [People. The fruit is not specified.]
 3. Jesus is God. [Jesus.]
 4. Satan is a deceiver. [Jesus.]
 5. God helps those who help themselves. [People. Thus says the Lord, “Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind and makes flesh his strength” (Jeremiah 17:5).]
 6. Once saved; always saved. [People. God will keep those who truly are saved by the Spirit of God, but this saying doesn’t stress that important point.]
 7. Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. [Jesus.]
 8. The rod and reproof give wisdom. [Jesus. Proverbs 29:15.]
- Review questions: (Game: Continue to place markers with *Jesus* if Jesus spoke the saying or with *people* if the people spoke the saying.)
 1. “Where is he?” [People.]
 2. “He is a good man.” [People.]
 3. “He leads the people astray.” [People.]
 4. “Didn’t Moses give you the Law, and yet you don’t obey it?” [Jesus.]
 5. “Judge with righteous judgment.” [Jesus.]
 6. “Whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.” [People.]
 7. “He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know.” [Jesus.]
 8. “For a little while longer I am with you.” [Jesus.]
 9. “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.” [Jesus.]
 10. “This certainly is the Prophet.” [People.]

Memory Verse[s]:

- John 7:37—Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.”

Handwork:

- Print the water drop found below. Have students paint with water color. (If printing with an ink jet printer, words may smear. In that case, have students avoid the words as they paint.) Cut out the drop.

Feast of Booths

Sabbath

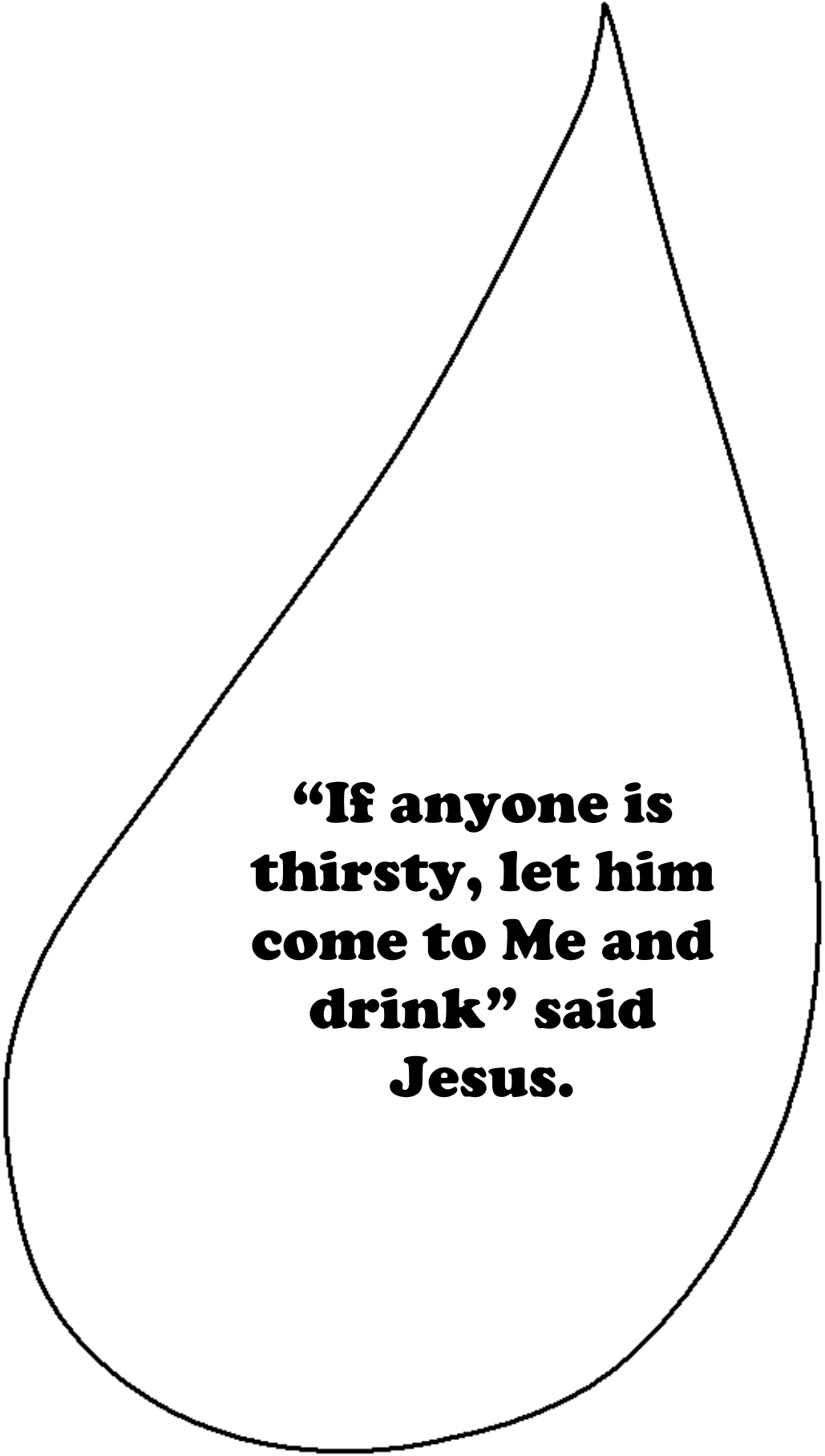
Jews

circumcision

Jesus' hour







**“If anyone is
thirsty, let him
come to Me and
drink” said
Jesus.**