

John 7:37 Commentary

PREVIOUS

NEXT

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**: En de te eschate hemera te megale tes heortes eistekei (Pluperfect Active) ho lesous kai ekrazen (AAI) legon (PAP), Ean tis dipsa (PAS) **erchestho** (PMid or PPass Imperative) pros mekai **pineto**. (PAM) :

THE GREAT INVITATION

J C Ryle introduces his comments on **John 7:37-39** - The text which heads this message contains one of those mighty sayings of Christ which deserve to be printed in letters of gold. All the stars in heaven are bright and beautiful; yet even a child can see that one star excels another in glory. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God; but that heart must indeed be cold and dull which does not feel that some verses are peculiarly rich and full. Of such verses, this text is one. ([Thirst Relieved](#))

Now (de) - This (Greek "de") is an adversative, but frequently notes transition and here serves to introduce one of the greatest invitations in the Bible. Recall that in the first few chapters of John, Jesus was widely accepted and praised, but beginning in John 6 and John 7 we see a rising tide of resentment to His ministry and message (Jn 6:66, 7:1, 19-20, 25). He was beginning to disturb the status quo and ruffle the religious feathers of the Jewish leaders.

As you read the Scriptures and encounter words like "now," always take a moment to pause and ponder asking questions (depending on the context) such as when and where is now?

In this case (as usually happens), we are forced to examine the context of John 7, in which John records....

Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near...But when His brothers had gone up to the **feast**, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret. So the Jews were seeking Him at the **feast** and were saying, "Where is He?" (Jn 7:2, 10, 11)

So the setting of Jn 7:37-39 is in Jerusalem at the time of the **Feast of Booths**. The Feast of Booths occurred in late September, to early October and was one of the three great feasts all males (if they were able) were required to celebrate (Dt 16:16). Josephus, the Jewish historian, referred to the Feast of Booths as the holiest and the greatest of the feasts.

Ryle adds that Jerusalem was "the metropolis of Judaism, and the stronghold of priests and scribes, of Pharisees and Sadducees." (Shorthand for the "religious people"!)

BACKGROUND ON FEAST OF TABERNACLES

(See also **excursus below**)

The Jewish historian **Alfred Edersheim** writes that **The Feast of Tabernacles** was "the most joyous of all festive seasons in Israel was that of the 'Feast of Tabernacles.' It fell on a time of year when the hearts of the people would naturally be full of thankfulness, gladness, and expectancy. All the crops had been long stored; and now all fruits were also gathered, the vintage past, and the land only awaited the softening and refreshment of the 'latter rain,' to prepare it for a new crop. It was appropriate that, when the commencement of the harvest had been consecrated by offering the first ripe sheaf of barley, and the full ingathering of the corn by the two wave-loaves, there should now be a harvest feast of thankfulness and of gladness unto the Lord." (**For much more detailed discussion see [Feast of Tabernacles - note the link to next page of article is at bottom right of the page](#)**)

The **Feast of Tabernacles** (2Chr. 8:13; Ezra 3:4; Zech. 14:16), also called the **Feast of Ingathering** (Ex. 23:16; 34:22), the **Feast to the Lord** (Lev. 23:39; Jdg. 21:19). Sometimes it was simply referred to as **'the feast'** (1Ki 8:2; 2Chr 5:3; 7:8; Neh 8:14; Isa 30:29; Ezek 45:23,25) presumably because it was so well known. Its observance combined the ingathering of the labor of the field (Ex 23:16), the fruit of the earth (Lev 23:39), the ingathering of the threshing floor and winepress (Dt. 16:13), and the dwelling in booths (or tabernacles), all of which was to be a joyful celebration for Israel (Lev 23:41; Dt 16:14). The **"booth"** in Scripture is not an image of privation and misery, but of protection, preservation, and shelter from heat and storm (Ps 27:5; 31:20; Isa. 4:6). The rejoicing community included family, servants, widows, orphans, Levites, and sojourners (Dt. 16:13-15).

To summarize, the **Feast of Booths** was a time of thanksgiving for the harvest. It was a happy time. Devout Jews lived outdoors in booths made of tree branches for seven days as a reminder of God's provision in the desert during the wilderness wanderings. (**See excursus on the Feast of Booths below**) There were two practices that were not mentioned in Scripture but were included in the

oral tradition passed on from Moses. One was the "special commandment of the willow," and the other was the water libation. Each morning there was a solemn procession from the temple mount to the pool of Siloam for a pitcher of water. A priest would fill a gold pitcher with water as the people sang together from Isaiah 12:3 (**See Commentary**) The procession would return to the Temple Mount with trumpets blasting and great fanfare; there the priest would pour the water into a silver basin by the altar of burnt offering each day for the first seven days....

SUKKOT LINKS TOGETHER THE PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE

Cecil summarizes the "three directions" the participants should have been pondering when they celebrated the **Feast of Tabernacles** for the Feast **"looked back** and reminded the people of how God had provided water from the rock during the wilderness wanderings (Ex 17:6, Nu 20:8-11). It looked **at the present** and praised God for the provision of the harvest and most likely acted as a prayer for the coming year (Ps 118:25). But the ritual also **looked toward the future** and spoke prophetically of the coming days of the Messiah when God's blessing would be poured out on the nation (Zech 14:8 = "living waters will flow out of Jerusalem," Zech 14:16-19 = "to celebrate the Feast of Booths")."

Notice in the chart below that the last great Feast of Israel is Sukkot and on the Jewish calendar it follows the last ingathering of the harvest of grain, but it surely points to the last great ingathering of souls when the Messiah returns, an event regarding which He prophesied declaring "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and **THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds** from one end of the sky to the other." (Mt 24:30-31, see parallel passages that speak of this great harvest of souls which coincides with the re-gathering of the Nation of Israel - Isa 11:12-note, Ezek 36:24-27-note, Ezek 37:21-28-note, Ezek 38:8-note, Ezek 38:12-note, Ezek 39:27-29-note).

A few thoughts on these OT prophecies of the Feast of Booths, the future fulfillment and Jesus' invitation at the Feast of Booths in Jn 7:37-39. Recall that one reason for the Feast was to celebrate God's good provision of "living water" during their 40 years of "wilderness wanderings." It is notable that the OT descriptions of the "wilderness wanderings" state very clearly there was **"NO WATER."** (Read Ex 15:22, 17:1, Nu 20:2, 21:5, 33:14, Dt 8:15). No water in the wilderness meant certain physical death in only a few days. God saw their physical need and provided for their physical need, "painting" a beautiful picture of His desire and ability to provide for their (and every man's) spiritual need that they might not remain spiritually dead throughout eternity! Moses summarized the dry, desert times of Israel's wandering, writing "He (Jehovah) led you through the great and terrible wilderness, with its fiery serpents and scorpions and **thirsty ground** where there was **no water**; He **brought water** for you (supernaturally) **out of the rock** of flint." (Dt 8:15). And so the Jews who were celebrating the Feast in John 7 would have (should have) been very familiar with God's provision of life giving physical "living (springing up, gushing forth, running, flowing) water" in the Old Testament. As they celebrated the rituals associated with the Feast for seven days, the Jews were in a sense re-enacting the picture of God's OT provision as they would dip living (running) water from a pool (which came from a spring) and joyously transport it back up the hill, through the Water Gate and to the Temple priests who poured it out on the altar. Onto this scene came Jesus, crying out to dry, parched, thirsty souls living in the "wilderness of this world," and with **NO WATER** that gives life to one's soul. Instead they had forsaken the fountain of living water and constructed their own cisterns and systems of Law keeping, of doing "good" works, etc. And yet these religious activities failed to satisfy the spiritual "thirst" God had placed in each of them. Into this "spiritually dry desert", Jesus came and stood and cried out offering them a drink from Himself (the same One from Whom their ancestors had drunk physical water! 1Cor 10:4!). He offered them living water that they might live spiritually, even as their ancestors were enabled to live physically in the OT after receiving the physical water. As **Wiersbe** says "At the feast, the Jews were reenacting a tradition that could never satisfy the heart. Jesus offered them living water and eternal satisfaction!" Could God have "painted the picture" more clearly? Even as Jesus was the Source of the physical water in the OT, He declares that He is the Source of the spiritual water in the NT. In so doing, He is showing that He is ultimate fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles! What a gracious, merciful, mighty God we are privileged to worship! And worship we will at the Millennial Feast of Tabernacles, celebrating the final ingathering of souls into the His glorious Kingdom. Hallelujah! Hosanna! Maranatha! Amen!

THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL		
1st Month = Nisan Festival of Passover (Pesach)	3rd Month = Sivan Feast of Pentecost	7th Month = Tishri Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) (Sukkot)

Passover Pesach	Unleavened Bread	First Fruits	Feast of Weeks	I N T E R L U D E	Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Booths
Lamb's blood on Door Ex 12:6-7	Purging Leaven (Sin)	Wave Offering (Promise of Harvest to come)	Wave Offering of two loaves of leavened bread (promise of harvest to come)		Trumpet Blown - A Holy Convocation	Atonement shall be made to cleanse you Lev 16:30	Celebrates harvest, memorial of God's care in wilderness
1st Month, 14th Day Lev 23:5	1st Month, 15th Day Lev 23:6-8 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)	Day after Sabbath Lev 23:9-14	50 Days after first fruits Lev 23:14-21		7th Month, 1st Day Lev 23:23-25 (A Sabbath)	7th Month, 10th Day Lev 23:26-32 (A Sabbath)	7th Mo, 15th Day 7 Days; Convocation on 8th Day Lev 23:33-44 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)
Christ our Passover has been sacrificed	Clean out the old leaven...just as you are in fact unleavened	Christ has been raised...the first fruits	Promise of the Spirit, Mystery of Church - Jews and Gentiles in one body		Regathering of Israel before final day of atonement Jer 32:37-41	Israel repents and looks to Christ in one day Zech 3:9-10, 12:10, 13:1, 14:9	All families come to Jerusalem for Feast of Booths Zech 14:16-19
1Cor 5:7	1Cor 5:7-8	1Cor 15:20-23	Acts 2:1-47 1Cor 2:13 Eph 2:11-12		Ezekiel 36:24	Ezekiel 36:25- 27 Heb 9-10 Ro 11:25-29	Ezek 36:28

Now on the last day - While some feel the **last day** was the seventh day of the Feast of booths, a large percentage of commentators interpret the **last day** as an added eighth day.

LAST DAY SEVENTH DAY

If the **last day** is the 7th day of the feast, this would have been the last day a pitcher of water was carried from the Pool of Siloam. The famous Jewish historian Alfred Edersheim favors this as the last day - see his discussion - [The Feast of Tabernacles](#)

Douglas Cecil (foreword by Howard Hendricks) favors the **last day** and in light of that belief offers an interesting description of how the events may have unfolded...

This ritual had taken place for six days by the time Jesus spoke to the people in...(Jn 7:37). Six times the procession to the pool of Siloam had taken place. This was the **last day**. It was early in the morning after a night of worship. They had all gathered waiting for the sun to come up. What I envision possibly happening, even though Scripture doesn't tell us, is that the priest had returned to the temple mount with the pitcher of water. He climbed the long ramp to the top of the altar. Once at the top, he would turn to where the libations were poured. Two silver cups were on top of the altar, one filled with wine, the other awaiting the libation. The priest began to slowly pour the water out of the pitcher. It is at this moment that Jesus stood in the midst of the crowd and cried out, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink." (**Ed: Again I want to emphasize this is Cecil's imagining what transpired on the last day, so while it is certainly dramatic, it is still speculation and not recorded in Scripture!**) What was He saying? In effect, Jesus was declaring, "You have just tasted the best that religion and ritualism has to offer. This is it! This is as good as it gets! If you are still thirsty, and if you don't find all of this ritual satisfying, then come to Me and drink." ([The 7 Principles of an Evangelistic Life](#))

LAST DAY EIGHTH DAY

From my personal survey of a large number of John commentaries, it appears that most observers feel that the **last day** was

actually the day after the seven day Feast of Booths. Scripture specifically describes this day which was to be a day of **rest** (a Sabbath) from all laborious work.

As **Westcott** says "It is uncertain whether the libations (libations were offered on the altar each day of the Feast of Booths) were made upon the eighth day. If they were not made, the significant cessation of the striking rite on this one day of the feast would give a still more fitting occasion for the words.

Below are passages that describe this "**eighth day**".

(1) Lev 23:36 'For **seven days** you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On **the eighth day** you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work.

(2) Lev 23:39 'On exactly the fifteenth day of the seventh month, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the **feast** of the LORD for seven days, with a **rest** (Hebrew = Shabbathon = Sabbath observance; Lxx = **anapausis** = a rest with restoration) on the first day and a **rest** (Hebrew = Shabbathon = Sabbath observance; Lxx = **anapausis** = a rest with restoration) **on the eighth day**.

Comment: It is notable that this same Greek noun, **anapausis**, was used by Jesus in another of His great invitations to **COME** in Mt 11:28-30 (see below and also **see commentary**) in which He says "**Come** (command) to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest** (Verb form = **anapauo**). **Take** (command) My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND **REST** (Noun form = **anapausis**) FOR YOUR SOULS.

How fitting that if indeed the last day, the great day in Jn 7:37 was the eighth day, the day of rest(assuming one accepts the last day = the eighth day), **and onto the scene came the only One Who could ever give genuine, eternal rest to our restless hearts, crying out for anyone to come to Him and receive the perfect rest of salvation in Him!**

(3) Nu 29:35 (**Context** = Description of Feast of Booths = Nu 29:12-34) 'On **the eighth day** you shall have a solemn assembly; you shall do no laborious work.

(4) Neh 8:18 (**Context** = the memorial had not been remembered! That is what sin will do to us! It will cause us to forget what we should remember! But as these forgetful sons of Israel read their Holy Word, they discovered the ordinance of the Feast of Booths = Read Neh 8:14-17) And he read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast (of booths) seven days, and on the **eighth day** [there was] a solemn assembly according to the ordinance.

Comment: Notice that a return to the Book, brought about a return to God's will for their nation. A return to reading the Book of books is always a return to reality. But the sons of Israel were not merely hearers who deluded themselves, but they were doers of the Word. And notice one of the first effects they experienced - "there was great rejoicing." (Neh 8:17) **Is your Christian life one of great joy? If not, could it be because you have become lax is your intake of daily spiritual nourishment** (cp Mt 4:4)? **When we are in the center of God's will as manifest in His Word is when we are most likely to experience great joy!**

As **Ryle** says "The time was '**the last day of the feast**', when all the ceremonies were drawing to a close, when the water drawn from the fountain of Siloam, according to traditional custom, had been solemnly poured on the altar, and nothing remained for worshipers but to return home." (**Thirst Relieved**)

The great day - So whether it was the **seventh day** or the **eighth day**, John makes it clear that it was in some regard a **great day**. This implies that the it may well have been the most well attended of all the days, for the Jews knew it was a **great day**. In any event, unbeknownst to the Jews, it was a **great day**, in fact the greatest day, because the greatest Person would issue the greatest invitation ever offered to sinful men. In an abbreviated form, Jesus would proclaim to them the Good News, the Gospel of their salvation. But sadly, it was not as some say "I'll make you an offer you can't refuse," because this was (and is) an offer that **can** be refused by the one who has no ears to hear nor heart to receive what Jesus is offering. Jesus spoke to this dullness of hearing and hardness of heart with he quoted from Isaiah 6:9-10-**note** in Mt 13:10-15. In fact God considers Isaiah 6:9-10 so significant that it is quoted no less than six times in the NT (Mt 13:14, 15; Mk 4:12; Lk 8:10; Jn 12:40; Acts 28:25, 26, 27, 28; Ro11:8)!. Compare the Jewish response to the Gospel in Jn 1:9-11 with a Gentile response in Acts 16:14.

Pulpit Commentary - It may, moreover, have been called '**the great day**' because it was the closing day of all the festivals of the year. Josephus calls it "the very sacred close of the year."...Meyer, Alford, Godet, Lange, and many others regard the eighth day as that here referred to by the word "great," and find, in the very absence of the ceremonial of drawing water from the Pool of Siloam, the occasion which provoked the reference of our Lord to his own power to meet the spiritual thirst of mankind, thus repeating what he had said to the woman of Samaria

Colin Kruse has an excellent discussion of the context of John 7:37-39 - On the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles **Sukkot**)

Jesus promised living water to those who believed in him (Jn 7:37). To appreciate the impact of Jesus' promise we need to understand the first-century water-pouring ritual during this feast. For the first six days of the feast they used to fill a golden [flagon](#) with water from the [Pool of Siloam](#) and carry it back to the Temple. When they reached the Water Gate, three blasts on the [Shofar](#) (ram's horn trumpet) were sounded. When they arrived at the temple, they processed around the altar and sang the [Hallel](#) (Ps 113–118, eg see allusions to salvation in Ps 118:14, 15, 21, 25-26, partially fulfilled in Messiah's first advent = Mt 21:9), the people shaking their [Lulavs](#) (bundles of myrtle, palm and willow bound up with a [Citron](#)), while the priests shook theirs (made from willow [poplar] branches). The flagon was taken to the priest on duty at the altar who had two silver bowls, one for the water and the other for wine. These bowls were filled and then the contents poured over the altar. On the seventh day they processed around the altar seven times (Sukkah 3:9; 4:4–10; 5:1–4). People believed that when the Messiah came he would provide water (as he would provide manna) just as Moses had done: "*As the former redeemer made a well to rise, so will the latter Redeemer bring up water, as it is stated, And a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim* (Joel 3:18). (Qohelet Rabbah 1:9.1)" The evangelist sets the context of Jesus' promise/proclamation: On the last and greatest day of the Feast. As noted above, the Feast of Tabernacles began with a solemn assembly on the first day, continuing for seven days, and was followed by another solemn assembly on the eighth day. When the evangelist refers to 'the last and greatest day of the Feast', it is difficult to know to which day he refers. **If it was the eighth day**, there would be no more water-pouring ceremonies, no more processions. These ceremonies had ceased. **If it was the seventh day**, when the priests and people processed around the altar seven times, singing the Hallel, shaking their [Lulavs](#), and rejoicing before the Lord while the water was poured over the altar, the symbolism in Jesus' proclamation would be striking. On the day when the last of the water-pouring ceremonies was performed amid much singing and rejoicing, Jesus invited people to come to Him, the One Who provides the rivers of living water. It seems preferable to say that 'the last and greatest day' was, in fact, the seventh day, when the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles reached its climax. ([The Gospel According to John- An Introduction and Commentary Tyndale New Testament Commentaries](#))

Of the feast (1859)(heorte) means feast, feast day, festival, holy day. In the NT heorte always denotes Jewish feasts or pilgrimage festivals (Passover = Lk 2:41, Feast of Unleavened Bread = Lk 22:1, Feast of Tabernacles = Jn 7:2).

Mounce - Jesus and His disciples celebrated the feasts (Jn 2:23; 5:1; 7:10, 14). More than half of the occurrences of heortē are found in John (Jn 12:12; 13:1), where the beloved disciple demonstrates that the **OT feasts find their true significance in Christ** (Jn 7:37). There is only one usage of heortē outside of the gospels (Col 2:16). Here Paul teaches that believers are free to eat, drink, and celebrate feast days without condemnation. But they must always remember that these feasts are "a shadow of the things that were to come" and that Christ fulfilled these feasts (Col 2:17). (Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words)

The derived verb **heortázo** (1858) means to keep a feast or celebrate a holiday (1Co 5:8; Ex 5:1; Ps 42:4)

BDAG on **heorte** - a day or series of days marked by a periodic celebration or observance,

Homer used **heorte** for a feast or festival. Later writers (Aeschylus, et al) sometimes used it with the meaning of "sport" or "play" (holidaymaking, amusement, pastime).

NIDNTT - **heortē** has the basic meaning of performance, fulfilment (for the benefit of a deity). In its usual meaning of festival it is attested since Homer (Od., 20, 258 f.). Among the Greeks a great many events were elevated by means of festivals out of the common run of daily life: the change of the seasons and the high points of the year's work from seed-time to harvest (fertility festivals); family events and the relationship between the individual and the community (family and tribal festivals). In later times especially, these festivities were practically always associated with certain deities and named after them. In addition to many festivals of local significance, there was an increasing number which were general throughout Greece. The list of these "legally sanctified portions of time" (Plato, *Definitions*, 415a) produced a well-filled calendar of feasts which covered the whole year (in Roman times about a third of the total number of days in the year!) and every area of human life. It was not until later that important political events were also given festivals (memorial feasts), e.g. the battle of Marathon and the victory of Salamis....Spanning the whole realm of nature, every kind of occupation, and every special situation in life, numerous gods were honoured with a festival. Processes that were natural in origin were not only continued, but exaggerated to excess by celebrations involving immoderate indulgence in wine-drinking and love (especially in connection with the cult of Dionysus. Preparation for such feasts included fasting, washings and changes of clothing. The festival itself was celebrated with prayer and song, music and dancing, processions, sacrifice, sport, games and competitions. Markets and fairs were also part of the festival, and hostilities were usually interrupted. (New international dictionary of New Testament theology)

In the present context the **feast** refers to is the Feast of Booths.

The LXX uses **heortē** to translate the Hebrew **hāg**, which referred to a procession, round dance or festival (1 Kings 12:32–33; Neh 8:18). The LXX also uses heorte to translate **mo'ed** which refers to the appointed time (Lev 23:4 = "these are the appointed times"; Nu 28:2, Zeph 3:18).

See Dictionary Articles -

[Feasts - American Tract Society Bible Dictionary](#)

[Feasts - Fausset's Bible Dictionary](#)

[Festivals - Holman Bible Dictionary](#)

[Feasts and Festivals of Israel - Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology](#)

[Festivals - Kitto's Popular Cyclopaedia of Biblical Literature](#)

[Festivals - The 1901 Jewish Encyclopedia](#)

Heorte - 25x in 23v - **NAS** = feast(23), festival(3). notice 6 uses in John 7 = Jn 7:2, 8, 10, 11, 14, 37

Matthew 26:5 But they were saying, "Not during the **festival** ([Passover - Pesach](#)), otherwise a riot might occur among the people."

Matthew 27:15 Now at the **feast** ([Passover - Pesach](#)) the governor was accustomed to release for the people any one prisoner whom they wanted.

Mark 14:2 for they were saying, "Not during the **festival** ([Passover - Pesach](#)), otherwise there might be a riot of the people."

Mark 15:6 Now at the feast ([Passover - Pesach](#)) he used to release for them any one prisoner whom they requested.

Luke 2:41 Now His parents went to Jerusalem every year at the **Feast** of the [Passover](#). **42** And when He became twelve, they went up there according to the custom of the **Feast**;

Luke 22:1 Now the **Feast** of Unleavened Bread, which is called the [Passover](#), was approaching.

NET Note - The Feast of Unleavened Bread was a week long celebration that followed the day of Passover, so one name was used for both feasts (Ex 12:1–20; 23:15; 34:18; Deut 16:1–8).

John 2:23 Now when He was in Jerusalem at the [Passover](#), during the **feast**, many believed in His name, observing His signs which He was doing.

John 4:45 So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things that He did in Jerusalem at the **feast**; for they themselves also went to the **feast**.

John 5:1 After these things there was a feast of the Jews, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

John 6:4 Now the Passover, the **feast** of the Jews, was near.

John 7:2 Now the feast of the Jews, the **Feast** of Booths, was near.

John 7:8 "Go up to the **feast** yourselves; I do not go up to this **feast** because My time has not yet fully come."

Comment: Jesus perfectly fulfilled the OT prophecies of the Messiah which had been symbolized by each feast, and He knew that as the Lamb of God He was to die at the Feast of Passover not the Feast of Booths.

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?"

John 7:14 But when it was now the midst of the **feast** Jesus went up into the temple, and began to teach.

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.

John 11:56 So they were seeking for Jesus, and were saying to one another as they stood in the temple, "What do you think; that He will not come to the **feast** at all?"

John 12:12 On the next day the large crowd who had come to the **feast**, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem,

John 12:20 Now there were some Greeks among those who were going up to worship at the **feast**;

John 13:1 Now before the **Feast** of the [Passover \(Pesach\)](#), Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He

would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

John 13:29 For some were supposing, because Judas had the money box, that Jesus was saying to him, "Buy the things we have need of for the **feast**"; or else, that he should give something to the poor.

Colossians 2:16-note Therefore no one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a **festival** or a new moon or a Sabbath day--

Heorte - 84x in the **Septuagint** - Ex 10:9; 12:14; 13:6; 23:15f, 18; 32:5; 34:18, 22, 25; Lev 22:21; 23:2, 4, 6, 34, 37, 44; Num 10:10; 15:3; 28:2, 17; 29:12, 39; Deut 16:8, 10, 13f, 16; 31:10; Jdg 21:19; 1Kgs 8:65; 12:32f; 2Kgs 23:16; 1Chr 23:31; 2Chr 2:4; 5:3; 7:8f; 8:13; 30:13, 21f, 26; 31:3; 35:17; Ezra 3:4f; 6:22; Neh 8:14, 18; 10:33; Esther 8:12; Ps 74:4, 8; 81:3; 118:27; Isa 1:14; Jer 31:8; Lam 1:4; 2:6f, 22; Ezek 23:34; 36:38; 44:24; 45:17, 21, 23, 25; 46:9, 11; Hos 2:11; 9:5; 12:9; Amos 5:21; 8:10; Nah 1:15; Zeph 3:17; Zech 8:19; 14:16, 18f; Mal 2:3;

(Ex 12:14) 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as **a feast** (Heb = hag/chag; Lxx = heorte) to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance.

(Mal 2:3) "Behold, I am going to rebuke your offspring, and I will spread refuse (heb = peresh = fecal matter!) on your faces, the refuse (fecal matter!) of your **feasts** (Heb = hag/chag; Lxx = heorte); and you will be taken away with it. (**Woe!**)

THE CRY HEARD AROUND THE WORLD

While Jesus' original cry was in Jerusalem, His words immortalized in Scripture have been heard around the globe, on every continent. And yet how tragic that there are still so many thousands of unreached people groups who have yet to hear Jesus' great cry! Perhaps God's Spirit is calling you take Jesus' cry to them. As Paul asks "how shall they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? Just as it is written, "HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THOSE WHO BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!" (Ro 10:14 -15) How many nameless souls, like those who first heard Jesus' words, stand on the brink of eternity not having heard Jesus' invitation, for they have never even heard the Name "**Jesus**" by which they must be saved (Acts 4:12). Consider praying daily for these thirsting, unreached people groups, for Jesus wants to offer them a drink through you ("from his innermost being will flow rivers of living water" - Jn 7:38)! I highly recommend the daily prayer devotional [Global Prayer Digest](#) which specifically seeks to target the most unreached people groups in the world. Make it part of your daily devotional time - your eternity (and many of those you pray for) will be richer because you prayed (see 1Thes 2:19-20-note)

Jesus stood - This translation obscures a subtle word picture. The verb **stood** is more literally translated "**was standing**," "which gives us a graphic touch" (Vincent) of Jesus standing and watching the ceremonial proceedings. Some commentaries observe that when teachers instructed in ancient Israel, they would do so for a sitting position, but here Jesus is standing to teach.

Robertson adds that **stood** is "Past perfect active of histēmi used as imperfect and intransitive and first aorist active of krazō. Picture Jesus standing (linear) and suddenly crying out (punctiliar)."

Jesus' standing and crying out surely must have arrested the attention of the crowd. **Boice** calls this "the most important and happy invitation you and I can ever receive, and the great promise that goes with it."

Jesus...cried - "This invitation emphasizes that main issue in life is Jesus Christ. It is not politics, race relations, economics or health—but Jesus....Christ presents Himself symbolically as the water of life and indicates that all who come to Him for salvation will receive the Holy Spirit (cp. I Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:13). It is an invitation to all with a great promise. (Analytical Bible Expositor: John)

Ray Pritchard - Note that Jesus stands and cries out with a loud voice. He pleads with people to come and drink the living water. You would think it would be the lost world that cries out for help, but it is the Lord himself who pleads with us. This is a strange thing. We are the ones who choose to die. It is God who pleads with us to live. He doesn't say, "Clean yourself up and then I'll give you living water." Thank God, we can come begrimed with the dirt of our sin, and the living water itself will wash us clean. ([When God Comes Near- "I Believe in the Holy Spirit"](#))

Cried out ([2896](#))(**krazo**) refers to a loud cry, one expressive of deep emotion and occasionally translated **shouting** (Mt 21:15, 27:23). **Krazo** is an onomatopoeic word for the very pronunciation imitates the hoarse cry (croak) of a raven ("caw, caw" - [Listen](#)). Thus figuratively, **krazo** described one crying out loudly even with an urgent tone! When Peter was sinking in Jn 14:30 "he **cried out** (**krazo**), 'Lord, save me!'" Imagine Jesus' loudly crying out with deep emotion - "Come and drink!"

In the Septuagint (Greek version of the OT) we see this same verb describing the Seraphim cry out "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of hosts." (Isa 6:3) **Krazo** is used in Jeremiah to warn the people of Judah and Jerusalem of impending judgment (Jer 4:5, 25:34). In Jer 11:11 (cp Mic 3:4) **krazo** describes the cry of the people to Jehovah when judgment comes, but He says "I will not listen to them." Jer 11:12 depicts the people crying out to their idols which "surely will not save them in the time of their disaster." But **krazo** is also used in one of the most mercy filled verses in the OT - "**Call** (**krazo** in the aorist imperative) to Me and I will answer you, and I will tell you great and mighty things, which you do not know." (Jeremiah 33:3)

Krazo was used 3 times by Jesus including the present passage - (1) A second use in this same chapter - "Jesus therefore **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." (Jn 7:28) and (2) In His last words on the Cross - "Jesus **cried out** again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit." (Mt 27:50) So John's use of **krazo** gives us a sense of the dramatic effect as our Lord on the last day shouted out these great words. He wanted all present to hear and heed His cry! There must have been a great throng present and surely all present heard His gracious invitation to "**Come!**" **Dear reader, are you thirsty? Are you thirsty? Let me rephrase that "Is your soul thirsty?" Does your innermost being feel a gnawing sense of imminent dehydration spiritually speaking? Have you come and drunk of Jesus? Does the Spirit flow out of you like a mighty life giving river to the dying world?**

THE ESSENCE OF THE GOSPEL Jn 7:37b

Ray Pritchard writes that "Jesus' words must have shocked His hearers with their stunning simplicity: "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink" (Jn 7:37). **That short statement contains the essence of the Gospel message**. It is centered in a person-**Jesus Christ**. It is offered to all without restriction-**if anyone**. It is predicated upon human need-**if anyone is thirsty**. It demands a personal response-**Let Him come to me**. It invites personal participation-**and drink**.

If - Jesus introduces this invitation with a crucial condition. Without thirst for the things of God, we won't seek Him (Ro 3:11b). The mystery is that no one seeks for God, so that any thirst for the things of God that a sinner has reflects His working on our hearts to prompt that holy desire!

A UNIVERSAL INVITATION

Anyone - This promise is open to **anyone!** So no one is too bad to be lost, even as no one is too good to be saved. No one is too guilty, too miserable, too bad to come. If they sense their soul is dry (dead) and parched (spiritually), the sense a need and they are simply to come and drink.

Ray Pritchard - Here is good news for the worst of sinners. Christ turns no one away. Here is good news for homosexuals trapped in their sin. Here is good news for murderers and adulterers and liars and thieves and cheaters. Here is good news for angry men and woman. Here is good news for defeated, despairing, discontented souls who feel like giving up. Here is good news for those ruined by drugs and alcohol. Here is good news for prisoners—and for all who are trapped in the prison of sin. Here is good news for the worst of sinners. If you are thirsty, come and drink the Living Water. ([When God Comes Near- "I Believe in the Holy Spirit"](#))

Douglas Cecil applies this truth of Jesus' universal offer to personal evangelism, noting that "the flow of living water is available to "whoever believes." Notice that Jesus' offer is all-inclusive. It is open to everyone—"whoever believes." In other words, becoming a source of living water to a lost world is not just for those who are more gifted in evangelism. It is not just for those who have the "bent" for evangelism; it is for everyone who believes. In our Christian culture we tend to believe that evangelism is only for the gifted. I often hear phrases like, "I just do not have the ability to be able to be involved in evangelism." However, that mind-set contradicts what the passage says. The passage tells me that anyone who believes has the ability to reproduce in Christ." (Ibid)

THE AGE OLD QUESTION... ARE YOU THIRSTY?

Thirsty - This **metaphor** speaks not of physical thirst but spiritual thirst. In the OT we see the related phrase "my soul thirsts" for God.

Spiritual thirst is a picture of one of our greatest physical needs, our need for water. A man can live many days without food, but cannot survive long without water (cp Amos 8:13). By analogy our greatest spiritual need is for Jesus and the new birth His Spirit brings about when we place our faith in Him.

Remember the Sprite commercial which had the tagline [Obey your Thirst?](#) Jesus is saying "**Obey your spiritual thirst. Come and**

by faith drink of Me." No matter how much we drink from the wells of worldly wealth, fame and pleasure, we will only become more thirsty.

**The only real thirst quencher of our parched soul is Jesus
The Giver of living water.**

So the devout sons of Korah cry "My soul **thirsts** for God, for the living God." (Ps 42:2). And David cries "O God, You are my God ([Rich Mullins uses this phrase in his song "Sometimes by Step"](#)); I shall seek You earnestly; My soul **thirsts** for You, my flesh yearns for You, in a dry and weary land where there is no water." (Ps 63:1)

Spurgeon commenting on Ps 42:2 observes that **spiritual thirst** "is more than hungering; hunger you can palliate, but thirst is awful, insatiable, clamorous, deadly. O to have the most intense craving after the highest good! Not merely for the temple and the ordinances, but for fellowship with God Himself (cp "Come to **ME** [JESUS]," in Jn 7:37). None but spiritual men can sympathize with this thirst for the living God. Because (Jesus) lives, and gives to men the living water; therefore we, with greater eagerness, desire Him. A dead god is a mere mockery; we loathe such a monstrous deity; but the ever living God, the perennial fountain of life and light and love, is our soul's desire. What are gold, honour, pleasure, but dead idols? May we never pant for these." ([Ref](#))

Commenting on Ps 63:1, **Spurgeon** adds that "**Thirst** is an insatiable longing after that which is one of the most essential supports of life. There is no reasoning with it, no forgetting it, no despising it, no overcoming it by stoical indifference. **Thirst** will be heard; the whole man must yield to its power; even thus is it with that divine desire which the grace of God creates in regenerate men; only (Jesus) Himself can satisfy the craving of a soul really aroused by the Holy Spirit." Commenting on "**a dry and thirsty land, where there is no water**" he adds that "A weary place and a weary heart make the presence of (Jesus) the more desirable: if there be nothing below and nothing within to cheer, it is a thousand mercies that we may look up and find all we need (Heb 12:2, 1Pe 1:13, Col 3:1-2). How frequently have believers traversed in their experience this dry and thirsty land, where spiritual joys are things forgotten! And how truly can they testify that the only true necessity of that country is the near presence of their (beloved Jesus)! The absence of outward comforts can be borne with serenity when we walk with God; and the most lavish multiplication of them avails not when He withdraws. Only after God, therefore, let us pant. Let all desires be gathered into one. Seeking first the kingdom of God--all else shall be added unto us (Mt 6:33). ([Ref](#))

Nothing can quench our spiritual thirst but Jesus (Thus He says "come to **ME**!") The dirty wells of this world can never satisfy the deepest need of our soul, which can only be filled by Jesus. As **Augustine** said "You have made us for yourself, O Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

Ray Pritchard discusses the Biblical depiction of the Spirit as **Living Water** - In short, Jesus was offering something brand new in the history of the world, a complete inner transformation by means of the Holy Spirit. Jesus' words must have shocked His hearers with their stunning simplicity: "**If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink**" (Jn 7:37). **That short statement contains the essence of the Gospel message. It is centered in a Person-Jesus Christ. It is offered to all without restriction-If anyone It is predicated upon human need-If anyone is thirsty. It demands a personal response-Let Him come to me. It invites personal participation-and drink.** What a wonderful picture of how the Spirit works in the human heart. Those who come to Christ find "**living water**" that satisfies the deep thirst within. Through the indwelling Holy Spirit, that "**living water**" produces a new life that eventually bubbles to the surface (**Ed:** Cp Jn 4:14-note "a well of water springing up to eternal life") and becomes evident to others. **Living water** won't become stagnant. It always produces a dynamic, abundant, exciting new life. Those who respond to the call receive the Holy Spirit as a permanent, indwelling, life-changing presence. To speak of "**streams of living water**" highlights four facts about the Spirit's ministry in the believer: (1) He takes up residence within the "inner being." (2) He "flows" with an inexhaustible supply. (3) He brings the life of God to the soul. (4) He satisfies the deep thirst inside every heart. Finally, this word picture also seems to imply a "flowing out" from inside the believer to the lives of those around him or her. As the "living water" flows from within, other thirsty people will wonder, "He (or she) used to be thirsty just like me. Where did all that water come from?" If we are dying in the desert, the most important thing in the world is a cup of cold water. Jesus promises more than a cup. He promises a never ending flow of clear, cool, clean living water. Streams without pollution. Rivers that will never run dry. The Holy Spirit brings the life of God to the thirsty soul. That's what the Holy Spirit provides for us. He will fill our lives with **living water**. If we are thirsty, we are invited to take a drink and see for ourselves. **Have you ever felt like spiritually "dry ground"?** Have you ever felt "thirsty" for more of the Lord? Have you ever felt empty and needing to be filled? The Holy Spirit is God's answer for our deep inner thirst. When He comes into our lives, He comes like a river rushing over dry ground. He pours out His blessings and our lives begin to blossom again. No one need stay "dry" or "empty" or "thirsty" forever. We weren't made to live in a desert. God's river called the Holy Spirit can flow through our lives, slaking our thirst, filling our emptiness, covering the arid ground with the water of life. ([Four Pictures of the Holy Spirit - Water, Wine, Wind, Fire - Keep Believing Ministries](#))

Blaise Pascal alluded to **soul thirst** asking "What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around

him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself." (Pensées VII, p 425)

"**Is anyone thirsty?**" has been the call of God to sinful man throughout the ages. In a parallel passage Isaiah records a very similar invitation in the Old Testament

"**Ho!** (Heb = hoy = almost exclusively used by the prophets usually with a sense of warning - see Spurgeon's note below) Every one who **thirsts**, **come** to the waters; and you who have no money **come, buy** and **eat. Come, buy** wine and milk without money and without cost. (**Why free?** The price has been "**Paid in Full**" [**tetelestai**] = Jn 19:30) 2" Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? **Listen** carefully to Me, and **eat** what is good, And **delight** yourself in abundance. 3 "**Incline** your ear (a synonym of "listen") and **come to Me. Listen**, that you may live; And **I will make an everlasting covenant with you**, according to the faithful mercies (**hesed/chesed/heced**) shown to David (Paul quotes from the Septuagint version this last phrase in Acts 13:34 = "I WILL GIVE YOU THE HOLY *and* SURE blessings OF DAVID" - the context is "Good News" and the resurrection of Christ). (Isaiah 55:1-3)

Observe - Note that there are 12 commandments (all in **red** - read through those verbs again in light of the message of the Gospel) in these 3 verses! Note that **come** is repeated four times! **Listen** is repeated twice. To whom is the invitation given? **Every one**, not just to the Jews. **Every one** who thirsts for that which satisfies their soul is welcome to come. But only those are thirsty for what the Lord offers will come! "Why do you spend money (representative of self-sufficiency and self-effort - cf the wages of self-effort in Ro 6:23!) for what is not bread (contrast the true "Bread of life" which satisfies eternally - Jn 6:35, 48), and your wages for what does not satisfy (spiritually your soul)?" should be a banner announcement running across every advertisement on television! Only Jesus satisfies a person's deepest need! Isaiah's picture is powerful in the arid, water poor middle east, where an abundance of water was esteemed to be a special blessing. In this desert like terrain, the people had to work hard (digging wells, carrying water pots, etc) to gather enough water for sustenance (**See a modern day illustration = [Jesus Wells - Gospel for Asia](#)**). Isaiah says that God's "water" is freely given, but must be received. The group in Isa 55:2 has money but have sadly discovered that it garners no real, lasting satisfaction. Vanity, vanity, all is vanity, like chasing after the wind! (cp Eccl 1:1-18) They are self sufficient but their self-sufficiency does not satisfy. All men are either in the needy group or the self-sufficient group. Both are invited to come, but not all in either group have ears to hear! And just as in John 7:37 they are to come to Me, to Jehovah, to Jesus. What do they receive? Isaiah refers to an **everlasting covenant**, possibly a prediction of the New Covenant, which like the Davidic Covenant (2Sa 7:16), will be everlasting.

Spurgeon - "**Ho!** - this is the Gospel note; a short, significant appeal, urging you to be wise enough to attend to your own interests. Oh, the condescension of God! That He should, as it were, become a beggar to His own creature, and stoop from the magnificence of His glory to cry, '**Ho!**' to foolish and ungrateful men!"

To the Samaritan woman at the well Jesus had expressed His physical thirst to introduce her need for spiritual thirst saying...

"If you knew the gift of God, and Who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' (Jn 4:7) you would have asked Him, and He would have given you **living water**."...Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks (present tense = continually drinks) of this (physical) water shall thirst again; but **whoever** (cp ANYONE in Jn 7:37) drinks (aorist active = speaks of a one time action ~ belief in Jesus) of the water that I shall give him shall never (double negative = never, not ever) **thirst**; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well (different word than "well" mentioned by the woman who used phrear = a hole in the ground, more like a cistern, with water at the bottom, but Jesus used word pege = a spring or fountain) of water springing up (hallomai [root of **agalliao** = jump for joy!] in present tense = continually leaping, jumping, gushing, bubbling up) to eternal life (Remember eternal life does not begin when you die, but when you believe - see Jn 5:24 where "has eternal life" = our present possession! How can you lose what is your eternal possession? You can't and it logically, clearly follows that you cannot lose your salvation!)." (Jn 4:10-note, John 4:13-14-note)

And even in some of the last words in the Bible, God seeks those who are thirsty, as John records in the Revelation of Jesus Christ...

And He (Glorified Christ) said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to **the one who thirsts** (present tense = literally "he who is continually thirsting") from the spring of the water of life (cp "living water") without cost. (Rev 21:6-note)

And the Spirit and the bride say, "**Come.**" (**present imperative**) And let the one who hears **say** (aorist active imperative), "**Come** (**present imperative**)." And let the **one who is thirsty come**; (**present imperative** - notice three commands to **come!**) let the one who wishes take the water of life ("living water") without cost (**dorean**). (Rev 22:17-note)

John Phillips comments - How strange is the insanity that keeps men from flinging themselves on their faces before God and drinking deep of the water of life. The rich man in hell wanted just a single drop to ease the torment of his thirst (Lk 16:24 The rich man in hades "cried out and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus so that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool off my tongue, for I am in agony in this flame.'). When he was alive, he might have come and received eternal access to the river of life. But he never came. Now for all eternity he must be tormented, **with his cravings and longings forever unquenched**. So then, this last welcome rings out from the Spirit of God-**Come!**" (Revelation Commentary)

Are you thirsty? The words of Horatius Bonar's great hymn beautifully testify of **Christ the Smitten Rock** and the Living Waters that flowed forth His pierced side on Calvary's Cross...

[I HEARD THE VOICE OF JESUS SAY](#)

"Behold, I freely give
The living water; thirsty one
Stoop down and drink and live."

I came to Jesus and I drank
Of that life-giving stream;
My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
And now I live in Him.

Or listen to Michael Card's Version of

["I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say"](#)

Robert McCheyne - All believers should be thirsty; alas! few are. Signs: 1. Much thirst after the Word.—When two travellers are going through the wilderness, you may know which of them is thirsty, by his always looking out for wells...(2.) Much prayer.—When a little child is thirsty for its mother's breast, it will not keep silence; no more will a child of God who is thirsty. Thirst will lead you to the secret well, where you may draw unseen the living water. It will lead you to united prayer... (3.) Desire to grow in grace.—Some persons are contented when they come to Christ. They sink back, as it were, into an easy chair, they ask no more, they wish no more. This must not be. If you are thirsty believers, you will seek salvation as much after conversion as before it. (The Works of the Late Rev. Robert Murray McCheyne)

Ray Pritchard on spiritual thirst - Inside all of us there is a thirst that nothing in this world can satisfy. We all have a "God-shaped vacuum" that only God can fill. Some people thirst for sexual fulfillment, so they hop from one relationship to another. Some people think career advancement is the key to happiness, so they move from job to job. Husbands leave their wives for other women, and still they are not happy. Wives leave their husbands for other men, and they aren't happy either. Some of us are adrenalin junkies, always on the move, looking for the next jolt of excitement, the next big adventure, the next battle to fight, trying to fulfill the "Wild at Heart" impulse we feel on the inside. But adventure itself never lasts very long. Life returns to the ordinary and we wonder, "What do we do now?" Some people thirst for significance, others thirst for power, others thirst for fame or wealth or close relationships to fill the lonely void inside. There is the thirst of the intellect—we want to know the truth. There is the thirst of the conscience—we are guilty and need forgiveness. There is the thirst of the heart—we desperately search for happiness and don't know where to find it. We come to Christ because we are thirsty, and until we see our need and cry out for help, we will never come at all. As Jesus said, only the sick need a physician. Only the hungry will be fed. Only the lost are found. Only the thirsty drink the living water. ([When God Comes Near- "I Believe in the Holy Spirit"](#))

As **J Vernon McGee** says Jesus' "invitation is open to everyone, but it's limited to those who are thirsty. Are you thirsty? Are you discontent?...Oh, friend, go to Him! He has the water of life....If you are enjoying drinking at the cistern of this world, you will never come to Him, but if you are thirsty, come to Him, the (Ed: ONLY) One Who can and will satisfy." (David a Man After God's Own Heart)

Thirsting and hung'ring for Thee, Jesus,
With blessed hunger here,
Looking for home on Zion's mountain
No thirst no hunger there.
-J L Lyne

"If Any Man Thirst" - "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty." Isa. 44:3 But who is thirsty? Casually wanting a drink of water is not thirsting. We know nothing of thirst, with water on tap at our elbows. When every pore cries, "water"; when lips swell; when every thought, hope and desire is concentrated in a fever for one cooling drink—that is thirst. Do we have such craving for fulness of the Spirit? Do we pant after God as the hart after the water brooks? We talk lightly about the need of more power. Five minutes later we

have changed to some other subject; it is merely a topic for polite conversation among the saints. We are too shallow, we do not go to the deeps of any subject, we flit like butterflies from theme to theme. And never even in dreams have seen, The things which are more excellent. We are inclined nowadays to discount the experiences of the giants of another day who were so consumed with fever for deeper blessing that food lost its taste and sleep could not be had. More comfortable routes to Beulah Land, have been devised. But deep desire brings deep delight and when one compares the mighty preaching of those days with the thin pipings of these times it is evident that a shallow sense of poverty has brought a shallow sense of power. **The living water has not been poured upon us for we are not thirsty.** (Vance Havner - Consider Jesus)

Ray Pritchard on what how to experience a river of living water flowing out from our innermost being (Jn 7:38) - The first step is coming to Jesus. It's all very personal. Jesus said, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me." He doesn't say, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to the church." Or "let him come to the pastor." Or "let him walk an aisle or sign a card." Or even "let him learn Bible doctrine." Jesus invites a thirsty world to come to him. Christianity is Christ. It's not a religion; it's a relationship. ([When God Comes Near- "I Believe in the Holy Spirit"](#))

Is thirsty (1372) (**dipsao** from **dipsa** = thirst) is used to refer to literal thirst (Mt 25:35, 37, 42, 44; Jn 19:28) and figurative thirst (Mt 5:6, Jn 4:13, 14, 6:35, 7:37, Rev 7:16, 21:6, 22:17). And so we see that dipsao is used to describe both physical thirst and the deep spiritual longing that is in every heart.

Thayer - Figuratively, those are said to thirst who painfully feel their want of, and eagerly long for, those things by which the soul is refreshed, supported, strengthened: John 4:13f; 6:35; 7:37; Rev. 7:16; 21:6; 22:17;

It is worth noting that in John 7:37 in Jesus' invitation He uses three verbs, each one in the **present tense**. One could amplify His invitation this way "If anyone is continually thirsting, let him keep coming to Me and keep drinking from Me." Note that in Jn 7:38 the verb **believe** (which parallels the verb **drink** in Jn 7:37) is also in the **present tense**, conveying the sense of "keep on believing in Me," something genuine believers are enabled to accomplish by the Spirit. **May the Spirit Who ever seeks to glorify Jesus, continually make us thirsty for more of Him, and less of the world, so that we keep coming to Him, drinking from Him, believing in Him, that His Name might be glorified among the nations. Amen.**

Dipsao - 16x in 16v - Usage: am thirsty(1), thirst(5), thirsts(1), thirsty(9).

Matthew 5:6-**note** "Blessed (**makarios** = fully satisfied, independent of one's circumstances) are those who hunger and **thirst** for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

Comment: Note that both **hunger** and **thirst** are in the **present tense** which calls for these longings of our soul to be our lifestyle (this reason alone indicating that Jesus refers not to justification but to sanctification). Think for a moment - if you eat only one meal, does it satisfy you for the rest of the week? Of course not. Even though that meal might have satiated you for the moment (especially if you gorged yourself like I do on my favorite dishes), your body will naturally grow hungry again as time passes. In the same way, as believers we will **continually** (and I would submit daily) hunger and thirst for God's righteousness, ultimately found in the Righteous One, Christ Jesus.

Notice that the prerequisite condition to receive blessing and satisfaction is **thirst**, and a thirsty soul Jesus promises to satisfy. (Mt 5:6) Are you thirsty? More on point, are you thirsty for Jesus? Christ is the answer to the cry of our soul for God. As noted, in Mt 5:6 Jesus gives two benefits which should motivate continual thirst for the Righteous One, first blessedness (which itself conveys the idea of fully satisfied independent of one's circumstances) and second, satisfaction, not of the physical appetite but of the deeper hunger of our soul, a hunger which is only satisfied by a Jesus kind of righteousness. The idea is to long earnestly for or have strong desire for divine (Christ's) righteousness, which in theological terms is another way to describe progressive sanctification or growth in righteousness or growth in holiness and Christ-likeness.

Stephen Olford on **hunger and thirst** in Mt 5:6 - This calls for spiritual appetites created by the Spirit of God....The fullness of God has been made available to us in Christ, for we read: "For in Him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and [we] are complete in Him ..." (Col. 2:9-10). Hungering and thirsting after righteousness is another way of expressing a deeper and fuller commitment to God and, consequently, a deeper and fuller satisfaction in God."...Hunger and thirst are not feelings that go away. They are an evidence of spiritual health, and represent a desire that is deep and continuous. In fact, they become greater by what they feed on. We can test our spiritual position before God by asking the questions: Do I hunger and thirst after God? Did I meet Him in the Word this morning? Did I drink deeply of the Spirit? Am I desperate for God, for revival, for blessing? By contrast, a sick person has no appetite. Spiritually speaking, if he ceases to hunger after God, to pray, to obey, to serve, or to witness, he will be a living corpse. Alive, yes, but dead even while he lives. This accounts for the sterility in the Christian church today. We are hungry for so many other things:

pleasure, power, popularity, prosperity (Stephen Olford - Institutes of Biblical preaching, Vol 7)

Matthew 25:35 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was **thirsty**, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in;

37 "Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, and feed You, or **thirsty**, and give You something to drink?

42 for I was hungry, and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was **thirsty**, and you gave Me nothing to drink;

44 "Then they themselves also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or **thirsty**, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not take care of You?'

John 4:13-**note** Jesus answered and said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will **thirst** again;

14 but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never **thirst**; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

15 The woman said to Him, "Sir, give me this water, so I will not be **thirsty** nor come all the way here to draw."

Comment: Notice that the world's "water" does not satisfy our soul thirst (Jn 4:13), but only Jesus' living (life giving) water can satisfy a weary soul.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never **thirst**.

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.

John 19:28 After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I **am thirsty**."

Romans 12:20-note "BUT IF YOUR ENEMY IS HUNGRY, FEED HIM, AND IF HE **IS THIRSTY**, GIVE HIM A DRINK; FOR IN SO DOING YOU WILL HEAP BURNING COALS ON HIS HEAD."

1 Corinthians 4:11 To this present hour we are both hungry and **thirsty**, and are poorly clothed, and are roughly treated, and are homeless;

Revelation 7:16-**note** "They will hunger no longer, nor **thirst** anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat;

A T Robertson notes - Future tense of **dipsaō**, the two strong human appetites will be gone, a clear refutation of a gross materialistic or sensual conception of the future life.

Revelation 21:6-**note** Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who **thirsts** from the spring of the water of life without cost. (The NT equivalent of the invitation in Isaiah 55:1).

Revelation 22:17-**note** The Spirit and the bride say, "**Come**." And let the one who hears say, "**Come**." And let the one who is **thirsty come**; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. (The NT equivalent of the invitation in Isaiah 55:1).

Dipsao - 29v in the **Septuagint (Lxx)** - Ex 17:3; Jdg 4:19; 15:18; Ru 2:9; Job 18:9; 22:7; 29:23; Ps 42:2; Ps 63:1; Ps 107:5; Pr 25:21, 25; 28:15; Isa 21:14; 25:4-5; 29:8; 32:2, 6; 35:1, 6-7; 41:18; 48:21; 49:10; 53:2; Isa 55:1; 65:13; Jer 31:25.

Notice the first use in Ex 17:3 speaks of literal physical thirst, which prompted the Israelites to come to Moses and grumble!

Here are some interesting OT uses of **dipsao**...

Ruth 2:9 (Boaz to Ruth) "Let your eyes be on the field which they reap, and go after them. Indeed, I have commanded the servants not to touch you. When you are **thirsty**, go to the water jars and drink from what the servants draw."

Comment: Many commentators see Boaz as an OT symbol or picture of Christ and here we see him offering water without cost to a poor Moabite woman!

John Piper has a good word on **if any one is thirsty** - My father has been in evangelism for about forty years, and he told me one time that the hardest work is not getting men **saved** but getting them **lost**. To put it another way, the hardest thing is not to satisfy their thirst but to make them feel thirsty for God. All men thirst. But not all thirst for God. We are the only species of God's creation

afflicted and blessed with chronic longing. Dolphins are content to frolic in the sea, dogs are content to lie in the sun, frogs are content to bump their bellies from pond to pond. But man is not content. He is afflicted with chronic restlessness. Everything we set our hand to gets old. We fight without success against an epidemic of boredom. **Fad after fad, fashion after fashion, challenge after challenge leave us thirsty in the end.** Why? It's a hidden blessing. George Herbert describes the blessing beautifully in a poem called "The Pulley."

When God at first made man,
Having a glass of blessings standing by—
Let us (said He) pour on him all we can;
Let the world's riches which disbursed lie,
Contract into a span.

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honor, pleasure:
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone, of all His treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

For if I should (said He)
Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore My gifts instead of Me,
And rest in nature, not the God of nature:
So both should losers be.

Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to My breast.

(Piper continues) We are afflicted and blessed with a chronic restlessness, an insatiable soul-thirst, for this reason: that we might keep looking until we find Christ. And that having found him we might be turned back to him again and again when we taste of other springs and find them bitter. We were made for God. The taste buds of our souls were made to relish fellowship with the Son of God. But we have become sinners, and the fundamental meaning of sin is thirsting for things other than God. Our sinful nature is a condition of diseased spiritual taste buds. Therefore, the prerequisite for coming to Christ and finding joy in him is renewal of our spiritual taste buds. Paul said, "The unspiritual man does not receive the gifts of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him" (1 Corinthians 2:14). The unspiritual man looks at a believer who delights in drawing near to Christ in worship, prayer, study, and witness, and all he can see is a fool or a hypocrite. He cannot imagine that any of those things is a delight. He has no thirst for Christ, and so the invitation of Jesus is a dead issue. But God is gracious. He frustrates the human race again and again. He causes every wreath to wither, every gold cup to tarnish, every muscle to sag, every face to wrinkle, every sexual exploit to go sour, every sin to sting, until we have put him off too long. He wants us for himself. He wants everything but himself to grow dim in our eyes. He offers to heal our spiritual taste buds. ([Rivers From the Heart](#))

Bernard of Clairvaux, wrote the following hymn...

Jesus, Thou Joy of Loving Hearts
Jesus, Thou Joy of loving hearts,
Thou Fount of life, Thou Light of men,
From the best bliss that earth imparts,

We turn unfilled to Thee again.
Thy truth unchanged hath ever stood;
Thou savest those that on Thee call;
To them that seek Thee Thou art good,
To them that find Thee all in all.

**We taste Thee, O Thou living Bread,
And long to feast upon Thee still;
We drink of Thee, the Fountainhead,
And thirst our souls from Thee to fill.**

Jerry Bridges - The greatness of Christ's merit is known best by sinners in deep distress. The **thirstier** a man is, the more he'll prize a cup of water; the more our sins break and burden us, the more we'll treasure our Healer and Deliverer. Join us in letting this quote resonate deeply within you. Don't avoid the voice of your conscience; instead deliberately and regularly remember your past sin and acknowledge your present sin. Then return to the cross, the epicenter of the unfathomable greatness of Christ's merit. Don't be reluctant to feel **thirst**; it points you to **living water** where you can cherish every drop of it he gives for what it really is—precious beyond comparison. (The Bookends of the Christian life)

Dennis Fisher - This thirst-quenching water is a picture of the spiritual satisfaction that only He can provide....Christ departed so that the Holy Spirit could be imparted. God can quench our spiritual thirst in the most unlikely circumstances. When by faith we believe the promises of God's Word, we can experience rivers of living water and grace for our daily needs.

Oswald Chambers on **if anyone is thirsty** - Our Lord begins where we would never begin, at the point of human destitution. The greatest blessing a man ever gets from God is the realization that if he is going to enter into His Kingdom it must be through the door of destitution. Naturally we do not want to begin there, that is why the appeal of Jesus is of no use until we come face to face with realities; then the only One worth listening to is the Lord.... (He shall glorify me: talks on the Holy Spirit and other themes)

The **Pool of Siloam** (Siloam = sent) is located at the at the southern extremity of the [The Tyropoeon Valley](#), at the southern end of [Hezekiah's tunnel](#) and is mentioned in John 9:7, 11. "The pool was fed by the waters of the [Gihon Spring](#), carried there by two [aqueducts](#)." ([Wikipedia](#)) Note that the Hebrew name of the pool is Shiloah, the Greek name is Siloam and the Arabic name is Silwan. For a fascinating review of the history and archeology (including many pictures ancient and recent) click [Shiloah \(Siloam\) Pool](#).

Pool of Siloam (Greek)
(Note Hebrew = [SHILOACH](#) - 07975)

[Click to Enlarge](#)

Let him come to Me - Note first that Jesus is not making a suggestion but giving a commandment. Note also that he does not say "Come to the Spirit," but "Come to Me!" Jesus gives an invitation to everyone to experience a PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP, not a call to a RELIGION, a RITUAL or a REGULATION (Law). "**To Me**" emphasizes that Jesus Alone is the Source of Soul Satisfying "water" of salvation. In a sense, Jesus invitation is a partial fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy "Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation" (Isa 12:3), a prophecy which will see it's fulfillment in the Millennial reign when "all Israel will be saved."

Come ([2064](#))([erchomai](#)) means to come, to accompany, to go. The verb is in the **present imperative**, indicating that it is a command to keep on coming to Him. The NASB marginal note more accurately and literally renders Jesus' invitation as "Let him **keep coming** to Me and let him **keep drinking**."

Jesus' invitation here is similar to another well-known invitation in Matthew...

Come (Verb = *deute* = **aorist imperative** - a command to come) to Me, all (no exceptions or exclusions or favoritism) who are weary and heavy-laden (these are the only "requirements" - that you are weary and heavy-lade!), and I will give you rest. 29 "**Take** (another command which can only be fulfilled supernaturally, which means we must cry out for and depend upon the supernatural enabling power of the Holy Spirit!) My yoke upon you, and **learn** from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and YOU SHALL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. 30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light." (Matthew 11:28-30-**note**)

Comment: The same focus on the personal and the experiential is also found in Jesus' words in Matthew 11:28....The Lord explicitly declares that He did not come to call 'the righteous, but sinners, to repentance' (Mt. 9:13). It is not that there were any righteous people who did not need to be called. Jesus' point is that those who believe themselves to be righteous already will not feel the need of His salvation. The only people who will come to Him are those who first admit to themselves and to God that they are sinners and need a Saviour. (G Keddie - EP Study Commentary)

And drink - Notice that Jesus is calling for a response - (1) come and (2) drink. One must take personal responsibility come and drink. Salvation is from God but is not one sided. Jesus is not saying He will force any to come or to drink. His only requirement is that they be thirsty and sensing their thirst they come to Him and drink. How does one **drink** of Jesus? Clearly in context he believes in Jesus (Jn 7:38).

Drink ([4095](#))([pino](#)) means literally to consume liquids or take in a liquid internally. Clearly Jesus is using **pino** metaphorically to speak of a command (like "**come**" **pino** is also **present imperative**) to spiritually experience Jesus. And so to drink of the water Jesus gives is to receive "living water," (Jn 4:10), to "become...a well of water springing up to eternal life." (in Jn 4:14) and to receive the Holy Spirit (Jn 7:37-38).

Once we have believed (taken our first drink of Jesus, so to speak), thereafter how do we continue to drink of Jesus? Jesus is the Living Word represented in the written Word and as we read the Word, we in a sense "drink" of Jesus. When we read, it is not to be mechanical, but reading with faith, believing and receiving (and obeying - cp Jn 7:17) what we read (cp receiving and believing in Jn 1:11-13) Remember that it begins with recognizing that you are **thirsty. We admit our need. He meets our need** Balance our responsibility with God's sovereignty for Jesus said that "No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day." (Jn 6:44)

Maclaren commenting on **Christ the substance** fulfilling the **OT shadows** in John 7:37-39 - "So here is one more instance to add to those to which I have directed your attention on former occasions, in which, in this Gospel (of John), we find Christ claiming to be the fulfilment of incidents and events in that ancient covenant, Jacob's ladder, the brazen serpent, the manna, and now the Rock that yielded the water." ([John 7:37-38 The Rock and the Water](#)) Paul taught that "(These) things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ." (Col 2:17)

John 7:37 Cup or Bucket - "Lord, I crawled across the barrenness to You with my empty cup, uncertain but asking any small drop of refreshment. If only I had known You better I'd have come running with a bucket." (Nancy Spiegelberg, Decision, November, 1974)

Quenching the Eternal Thirst - Many years ago, a crew of Peruvian sailors were heading up the Amazon River when they happened upon an unusual sight. A Spanish ship was anchored off the coast and all the sailors were stretched out weakly on the deck of the ship. As the Peruvians drew closer, they saw that the Spaniards were in terrible physical condition. They looked as if they were one step away from death, their lips parched and swollen. Here, in this ship, these Spanish sailors were literally dying of thirst. "Can we help you," shouted the Peruvians? The Spaniards cried out, "**Water! Water! We need fresh water!**" The Peruvian sailors, surprised at this request, told them to lower their buckets and help themselves. The Spaniards, fearing they'd been misunderstood cried back, "**No, no we need FRESH water!**" Again the Peruvians told the Spanish sailors to lower their buckets. Finally, the sailors did as the Peruvian sailors commanded and when their buckets were brought up to the surface, they discovered fresh water. **Little did they know that they were at the mouth of the fresh-water Amazon River** All they had to do was take a drink and their thirst would be quenched. Jesus Christ offers Living Water to quench man's spiritual thirst. Man doesn't have to do anything but drink this Water. Sadly, many will die thirsty, because they do not know about Jesus Christ, the Living Water. It is our job to tell them. (James Scudder - Living Water)

An Allusion to John 7:37 - The Christian Novelist - (excerpt from article on C S Lewis - Christian History - Volume 7) - Take an instance from the beginning of the Narnian adventure, The Silver Chair. Jill Pole has played the egotist and gotten her friend Eustace Scrubb into trouble. Shortly afterwards she comes upon a Lion (the capital is Lewis's) which turns and moves slowly back into the forest. Jill then hears running water and finds herself very thirsty, whereupon she plucks up her courage and steals carefully from tree to tree in its direction. She comes upon an open glade from which the sight of the enticing water ahead mightily increases her thirst. Ready to rush forward, she suddenly checks herself because there, between her and the stream, is the Lion lying quietly with its head raised and its paws out in front. It is looking straight at Jill. The two face each other for a long time.

Jill's thirst is now so persistent that she must have water even if the Lion catches her. In a "heavy, golden voice" the Lion finally asks, "Are you thirsty?"

"I'm dying of thirst," Jill promptly responds.

"Then drink," said the Lion.

Hesitantly Jill suggests that the Lion go away while she drinks, to which a low growl is the only response. Then she says, "I daren't come and drink."

"Then you will die of thirst."

Taking a step nearer, Jill says, "I suppose I must go and look for another stream then."

"There is no other stream."

Now frantic with thirst, Jill proceeds to the sparkling stream and drinks "the coldest, most refreshing water she has ever tasted."

Apart from "no other stream," this whole episode is simply good narrative. Yet we can imagine the many Scriptures which ran through Lewis's mind as he wrote: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink ... none other name under heaven whereby we must be saved ... whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst ... Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him ... The wages of sin is death," and more.

We must not of course suppose that the manner in which Lewis presents this episode is the only possible way. What it does infer

beyond question is that The Silver Chair is a story and therefore must above all keep literary faith. At the same time the record is abundantly clear that Lewis's Narnian stories have conveyed the Christian way to millions of children and adults. One of my friends wrote me at some length of how, over a period of some ten years, he had slowly lost total contact with God, and how one day while reading The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe to his children he was suddenly overcome with remorse and tearfully recommitted himself to the Savior. (Christian History Magazine-Issue 7: C. S. Lewis: His Life, Thought & Theology)

Salty Christians - Alan Carr - Salt creates a thirst for water in those who are exposed to it!) As salt, the Christian has the wonderful opportunity to promote a thirst for Jesus in the world. Remember what the Lord told us? He said that out of our bellies would flow rivers of living water - John 7:37-38. When we live as Christians should live. When we take the call of Jesus seriously and live right, look right, act right, talk right, worship right, dress right, etc. Then we have the ability to create a thirst for Jesus in the hearts of those around us. When that happens, we can point men to Jesus and share with them the water of life. Sadly, most Christians do not promote thirst, but ridicule instead. Too often, we live substandard immoral lives and the world sees it and says, "Why should I receive Jesus? I live just as good as that crowd down at the church!" The sad truth is, they are often right! Let's so live that we ever prove them wrong. Our lives must be above reproach if we are to create a thirst for God in the world around us!

Swindoll - (Nice Summary) One ritual observed each day of the Feast of Tabernacles involved a solemn procession in which a priest carried a goblet of water from the Pool of Siloam (fed by the Gihon Spring), through the Water Gate, and into the inner temple court. As the congregation sang a hymn based on Isaiah 12:3-note, the priest poured the water on the altar, commemorating the Lord's provision of water in the wilderness (Nu 20:8-11). The Feast of Tabernacles thus built toward a climactic convocation (Lev. 23:36). During this climax, Jesus stood to address temple throngs. Perhaps just before or even during the priest's procession from the Pool of Siloam, Jesus called all people to receive from Him "living water," not unlike his offer to the Samaritan woman (4:13-14). John's editorial comment clarifies for the reader that the "living water" is indeed the Holy Spirit, who would not be given to believers until after Jesus' resurrection and ascension. (Insights on John)

D L Moody devotional on John 7:37 - How this world is thirsting for something that will satisfy! What fills the places of amusement, the dance houses, the music halls, and the theatres, night after night? Men and women are thirsting for something they have not got. The moment a man turns his back upon God, he begins to thirst; and that thirst will never be quenched until he returns to "the fountain of living waters." (Jer 2:13) As the prophet Jeremiah tells us, we have forsaken the fountain of living waters, and hewn out for ourselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water. There is a thirst this world can never quench: the more we drink of its pleasures, the thirstier we become. We cry out for more and more (**Ed**: Or the latest and greatest hi tech gadget!), and we are all the while being dragged down lower and lower. But there is a fountain opened to the House of David for sin and for uncleanness (Zech 13:1). Let us press up to it, and drink and live. (The D. L. Moody Year Book: A Living Daily Message from the Words of D. L. Moody)

Vine - The controversy died down till the last day, "the great day of the Feast," the Hosanna Rabba. The eighth day was, like the first, observed as a Sabbath (Lev. 23:39); special sacrifices were offered (Num. 29:36-38). During the seven days preceding, pilgrims, leaving their booths, marched in procession seven times round the city, shouting "Hosanna." Crowds followed the priests and Levites daily bearing the golden vessels to the brook of Siloam to carry the water thereof up to the temple, where it would be poured into a silver vessel on the eastern side of the altar of burnt offering, and all to the chanting of Isaiah's words, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," and "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." This ritual was apparently not observed on the eighth day, for whereas the preceding ritual symbolized the water from the rock in the wilderness, the eighth day commemorated their entrance into the "land of springs of water." "**Rivers of Living Water**" - This day therefore provided the occasion for the giver of the water of life to interpose His invitation to the spiritually needy. Standing before the crowds with a solemn and authoritative dignity, and with a kindly summons that rang out over the whole scene, He cried, "If any man thirst, let Him come unto Me, and drink. He that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow the rivers of living water" (Jn 7:38).

Hughes - On the seventh day, the priest would circle the altar seven times in succession—as the people of Israel had encircled the walls of Jericho. When he came around for the sixth time, he'd be joined by another priest carrying the wine. They would ascend the ramp to the altar of holocaust where they were together to pour out the water and wine on the altar. When they were in place, there would come a pause as the priest raised up his pitcher. Always the crowd shouted for him to hold it higher and he would do so. It was considered to be the height of joy in a person's life if he could see the water being poured out onto the altar (Preaching the Word, p. 139).

Vance Havner Devotional on John 7:37 - "Come and Drink" My soul thirsteth. Psalm 63:1. If any man thirst... John 7:37. "But how can my thirsting soul find God? He is too abstract, I can form no mental picture of Him. How can I drink of the Living Water?" That is why Jesus came. In Him the Word became flesh. No man comes to the Father but by Him, and whosoever comes to Him will in no wise be cast out. "If any man thirst, let Him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, from within him shall flow rivers of living water." Thirsting, coming, drinking, believing, overflowing—the thirsting soul comes and receives and believes that it has received (Mk. 11:24). The overflowing is a natural—a supernatural—consequence—"shall flow." A little tenement child in a hospital,

presented with a large glass of cool, rich milk, asked hesitantly, "How deep may I drink?" Drink deeply of the Living Water! "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." (Day by Day)

Depository or Dispenser? Freely ye have received, freely give. Matthew 10:8. Jesus speaks of the instructed scribe as a householder who brings forth out of his treasure things new and old. We are stewards of the manifold grace of God, not to keep it but to share it. We have a treasure in earthen vessels. The Gospel is not a secret to be hoarded but a story to be heralded. From the carcass of the lion Samson carried handfuls of honey. Our Lord said that the Living Water should be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life, and that from within us should flow rivers of living water (Jn 4:14, 7:38). Peter said to the lame man, "Such as I have give I thee." "To have is to owe, not own," and we are dispensers of God's grace, not depositories. It is a day of good tidings, and if we hold our peace it will go ill with us. Too many Christians are stuffing themselves with Gospel blessings, while millions have never had a taste. We are debtors to all men to give freely what we have freely received. (Day by Day)

More Than Tea Tasters - There are professional teatasters, I am told, but we do not need their counterpart in Christian experience. We are not meant to sip lightly of this truth and that but to drink regularly and habitually of the Living Water. We have a treasure in earthen vessels and something to pass on worth infinitely more than a better cup of tea! (Vance Havner - Song at Twilight)

Filled - To be filled with the Spirit, we must believe and receive. Some one has said that **believe** and **receive** are two of the hardest words to spell, because it is "ie" in one and "ei" in the other. Certainly these two words are often difficult to understand in Christian experience. Yet "believe" and "receive" is the principle of the new birth (John 1:12), the law of prayer (Mark 11:24), and **the basis of the Spirit-filled life** (John 7:37-39). **The Christian believes there is such an experience as being filled with the Spirit; he receives that filling and then believes he has received.** Prayer and preparation empty the heart of sin, and then faith receives the Spirit's filling. We must also share. We are not only filled; we are to overflow. From within the Spirit-filled Christian, flow rivers of living water as our Lord said. I have seen too many church members "enjoy" revivals who never tried to bring anyone else to share its blessings. That is selfishness of the worst sort. If we do not overflow, we become stagnant swamps. (Havner, Vance, Living in Kingdom Come)

Spurgeon - Morning and Evening Devotional on John 7:37 - Patience had her perfect work in the Lord Jesus, and until the last day of the feast he pleaded with the Jews, even as on this last day of the year he pleads with us, and waits to be gracious to us. Admirable indeed is the longsuffering of the Saviour in bearing with some of us year after year, notwithstanding our provocations, rebellions, and resistance of his Holy Spirit. Wonder of wonders that we are still in the land of mercy! **Pity** expressed herself most plainly, for Jesus cried, which implies not only the loudness of his voice, but the tenderness of his tones. He entreats us to be reconciled. "We pray you," says the Apostle, "as though God did beseech you by us." What earnest, pathetic terms are these! How deep must be the love which makes the Lord weep over sinners, and like a mother woo his children to his bosom! Surely at the call of such a cry our willing hearts will come. **Provision** is made most plenteously; all is provided that man can need to quench his soul's thirst. To his conscience the atonement brings peace; to his understanding the gospel brings the richest instruction; to his heart the person of Jesus is the noblest object of affection; to the whole man the truth as it is in Jesus supplies the purest nutriment. Thirst is terrible, but Jesus can remove it. Though the soul were utterly famished, Jesus could restore it. **Proclamation** is made most freely, that every thirsty one is welcome. No other distinction is made but that of thirst. Whether it be the thirst of avarice, ambition, pleasure, knowledge, or rest, he who suffers from it is invited. The thirst may be bad in itself, and be no sign of grace, but rather a mark of inordinate sin longing to be gratified with deeper draughts of lust; but it is not goodness in the creature which brings him the invitation, the Lord Jesus sends it freely, and without respect of persons. **Personality** is declared most fully. The sinner must come to Jesus, not to works, ordinances, or doctrines, but to a personal Redeemer, who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree. The bleeding, dying, rising Saviour, is the only star of hope to a sinner. Oh for grace to come now and drink, ere the sun sets upon the year's last day! No waiting or preparation is so much as hinted at. Drinking represents a reception for which no fitness is required. A fool, a thief, a harlot can drink; and so sinfulness of character is no bar to the invitation to believe in Jesus. We want no golden cup, no jewelled chalice, in which to convey the water to the thirsty; the mouth of poverty is welcome to stoop down and quaff the flowing flood. Blistered, leprous, filthy lips may touch the stream of divine love; they cannot pollute it, but shall themselves be purified. Jesus is the fount of hope. Dear reader, hear the dear Redeemer's loving voice as he cries to each of us, "IF ANY MAN THIRST, LET HIM COME UNTO ME AND DRINK."

James Smith - THE PROHIBITED AND THE INVITED. John 7:32-39. "God, being so great, great gifts most willingly imparts; But we continue poor that have such narrow hearts."—Trench.

At this great temple feast Jesus twice cried. The first was the cry of rebuke (v. 28), the second was the cry of pity and compassion (Jn 7:37). To them, as to many now, Jesus Christ was a great mystery. They knew Him, yet they knew Him not. They could not reconcile the "carpenter's son" with the Son of God. But, nevertheless, Jesus fearlessly declares His unique relationship to the Father, and the purpose of His coming into the world (Jn 7:29). It was to those "officers" sent by the Pharisees and chief priests to take Him, that this hard, searching statement was made, which we might call—

I. The Prohibition. "Ye shall seek Me, and shall not find Me, and where I am ye cannot come" (Jn 7:34). He did not say here, "Where I go, ye cannot come," but "Where I am ye cannot come." This could not refer to His bodily presence, for they were now standing together within the precincts of the temple, but to His moral and spiritual attitude toward the Father. Two questions arise here: (1) Where was Jesus that they could not come; and (2) How could they not come where He was.

1. WHERE THEY COULD NOT COME. "Where I am ye cannot come." Then where was He? He was living in the presence of God. He was filled with the love of God. He was rejoicing in the will of God. He was guided by the Spirit of God. He was kept by the power of God. In Spirit this was where He was, and this is where they could not come.

2. WHY THEY COULD NOT COME. Because of their ignorance. They knew not the Father (Jn 7:28). Because of their pride. They were self-satisfied. Because of their unbelief. They believed not Him as the true witness from God. So that, in their present condition of mind and heart it was morally impossible for them to come where He was. The lesson for us is very obvious, for the principle at work here is eternal and unchangeable. We cannot come to where Christ is, without possessing the Christ-like nature. Into His holiness, peace, and power, we cannot come, unless we forsake our own thoughts and ways, and yield ourselves entirely in obedience to His Word and will. "Where I am ye cannot come," unless ye come the way that I came, by being "born of God" and baptised of the Holy Spirit.

II. The Invitation. "If any man thirst let him come unto Me" (Jn 7:37). In your pride and unbelief "ye cannot come," but if you are thirsting for a deeper, truer, holier life, then here is your great opportunity. "Come unto Me and drink." To drink of His truth and Spirit is to come where He is. The self-satisfied cannot come, the thirsty may.

1. THE INVITED. It is the thirsty who are invited to drink. The invitation is to Himself: "Come unto Me." It is not, "Come to the temple, or to the Church, or to any particular form of worship." Apart from Him, every other source is polluted, every other cistern broken. It is not the gifts of Christ thirsty souls need, so much as Christ Himself. To drink of Him is to receive of His fullness, which alone can quench and satisfy the thirst of a soul after righteousness and God. A thirst for the living God is capacity for Him. Jesus Christ is the only One who ever could honestly challenge the thirsty souls of men to prove Him as all-sufficient to meet their every need.

2. THE PROMISE. "He who believes in Me, from within him, as the Scriptures has said, rivers of living water shall flow" (Jn 7:37, Weymouth's translation). When we have come into this place of fullness of blessing, then we have come to "where He is." When we believe on Him, as He believed on His Father, then from within us, as from within Him, there will flow rivers of living water, because the Holy Spirit will have free access into the inner life, and full control of the whole being. As good food received into a healthy stomach will manifest itself in vigorous, useful action by sending fresh rivers of life through the entire system, so will it be when the Spirit of Truth is received by an obedient heart. The fountains of the old life will be dried up, and another fountain opened within, which has its source in the Living God, and whose streams are for the healing and salvation of others. "Ye shall not find Me" (Jn 7:34), said Christ to His fault-finders, for fault-finders shall never find Him in all the true riches of His glorious character. But "he that believeth on Him" shall enter into the blessed fullness of that wondrous life. Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely (Rev. 22:17).

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A devoted follower of Socrates asked him the best way to acquire knowledge. Socrates responded by leading him to a river and plunging him beneath the surface. The man struggled to free himself, but Socrates kept his head submerged. Finally, after much effort, the man was able to break loose and emerge from the water. Socrates then asked, "When you thought you were drowning, what one thing did you want most of all?" Still gasping for breath, the man exclaimed, "I wanted air!" The philosopher wisely commented, "When you want knowledge as much as you wanted air, then you will get it!" The same is true with our desire to drink of Jesus. When we want Him more than we want the passing pleasures of the world, we will come to Him and drink! **Could this explain why so many of us are not more thirsty for Christ?** (Our Daily Bread)

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An illustration of **thirsting** to the point of near dehydration - Driving up from Beersheba, a combined force of British, Australians and New Zealanders were pressing on the rear of the Turkish retreat over arid desert. The attack outdistanced its water carrying camel train. Water bottles were empty. The sun blazed pitilessly out of a sky where the vultures wheeled expectantly. "Our heads ached," writes Gilbert, "and our eyes became bloodshot and dim in the blinding glare. Our tongues began to swell. Our lips turned a purplish black and burst." Those who dropped out of the column were never seen again, but the desperate force battled on to Sheria. There were wells at Sheria, and had they been unable to take the place by nightfall, thousands were doomed to die of thirst. "We fought that day," writes Gilbert, "as men fight for their lives. We entered Sheria station on the heels of the retreating Turks. The first objects which met our view were the great stone cisterns full of cold, clear, drinking water. In the still night air the sound of water running into the tanks could be distinctly heard, maddening in its nearness; yet not a man murmured when orders were given for the battalions to fall in, two deep, facing the cisterns. He then describes the stern priorities: the wounded, those on guard duty, then company by

company. It took four hours before the last man had his drink of water, and in all that time they had been standing twenty feet from a low stone wall on the other side of which were thousands of gallons of water. (From an account of the British liberation of Palestine by Major V. Gilbert in *The Last Crusade*, quoted in [Christ's Call To Discipleship](#) J. M. Boice)

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Spurgeon - I have heard of hungry travelers who were lost in the wilderness and came upon a bag which they hoped might yield them a supply of food. They eagerly opened the bag, but it contained nothing but pearls, which they poured out contemptuously upon the desert sand. Even so, when a man is hungering and thirsting after things of this life, and all his thoughts are taken up with carnal appetites, he will reject as worthless the priceless promises of God.

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THE GOSPEL IN A NUTSHELL (Jn 7:37) - How simply our Lord presented the Gospel. He often depicted the sinner's response to the salvation He offered in terms of everyday activities like eating, drinking, and receiving. During a Gospel meeting in a town in Ohio, a man was greatly convicted of his need of the Lord Jesus. He concealed his feelings even from his wife, who was a lovely Christian. One evening when she was away, he became so anxious about his condition that he began pacing the floor. His daughter, noticing her father's agitation, asked him what was wrong. "Oh, nothing," he replied, trying in vain to relieve his pangs of conviction. The youngster, with the profound simplicity of childhood, said, "**Daddy, if you were thirsty wouldn't you go and get a drink of water?**" Her words startled the father. He thought of his **thirsty soul**, so parched and empty. Then he remembered what he had heard in the meeting—that the Gospel was like a freely flowing fountain. He resisted no longer. That night he asked Jesus to save him. Nothing can quench our spiritual thirst but Jesus. The wells of the world only make us more thirsty. Jesus said, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst" (John 4:14). —P. R. Van Gorder (Our Daily Bread).

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Robert Murray M'Cheyne - When two travelers are going through the wilderness, you may know which of them is thirsty by his always looking out for wells.... So it is with thirsty believers; they love the Word, read and preached—they thirst for it more and more. Is it so with you, dear believing brethren? In Scotland, long ago, it used to be so. Often, after the blessing was pronounced, the people would not go away till they heard more. Ah! children of God, it is a fearful sign to see little thirst in you. I do not wonder much when the world stays away from our meetings for the Word and prayer; but ah! when you do, I am dumb—my soul will weep in secret places for your pride.

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Spiritual Thirst - Do you hunger and thirst after righteousness? Have you ever really been thirsty? What kinds of things would real thirst drive you to do? In the midst of a drought in Kenya, thirsty monkeys attacked Ali Adam Hussein and his fellow herdsman who stopped to water their herd. The wild monkeys barraged them with rocks, resulting in Hussein's death. When hunger and thirst reaches a critical stage, it becomes a primary motivator. It causes the thirsty to do things they wouldn't ordinarily do. What would happen if our spiritual thirst for righteousness was as strong as our natural thirst for water? Society needs righteousness. We need righteousness, and God will give it to us if we hunger and thirst for it. (Jim Wilson)

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Spurgeon- Since our Lord Jesus Christ has taken away the curse due to sin, a great rock has been lifted out from the river-bed of God's mercy, and the living stream comes rippling, rolling, swelling on in crystal tides, sweeping before it all human sin and sorrow, and making glad the thirsty who stoop down to drink thereat.

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Desert Pete - In the 1960s, the Kingston Trio released a song called "Desert Pete." The ballad tells of a thirsty cowboy who is crossing the desert and finds a hand pump. Next to it, Desert Pete has left a note urging the reader not to drink from the jar hidden there but to use its contents to prime the pump. The cowboy resists the temptation to drink and uses the water as the note instructs. In reward for his obedience, he receives an abundance of cold, satisfying water. Had he not acted in faith, he would have had only a jar of unsatisfying, warm water to drink. This reminds me of Israel's journey through the wilderness. When their thirst became overwhelming (Ex. 17:1-7), Moses sought the Lord. He was told to strike the rock of Horeb with his staff. Moses believed and obeyed, and water gushed from the stone. Sadly, Israel would not consistently follow Moses' example of faith. Ultimately, "the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith" (Heb 4:2). Sometimes life can seem like an arid desert. But God can quench our spiritual thirst in the most unlikely circumstances. When by faith we believe the promises of God's Word, we can experience rivers of living water and grace for our daily needs. - Dennis Fisher ([Desert Pete - Our Daily Bread](#))

Drink deep of God's goodness, His faithfulness too,

Leave no room for doubting and fear;
His Word is the water of life pure and true,
Refreshing and cooling and clear.
—Hess

**Only Jesus, the Living Water,
can satisfy our thirst for God.**

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Bibles And Buckets (Read: Isaiah 12:1-6) - With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. —Isaiah 12:3 - At a women's retreat, one person was carrying a Bible and a bucket. It's easy to understand why she was carrying the Bible, but why the bucket? With a twinkle in her eye, she explained, "The bucket reminds me to draw all the living water I possibly can." Pointing to a crack in the bucket, she said, "Like me, my bucket leaks, reminding me to keep coming back to the Lord for more!"

Isaiah 12 is a hymn of praise to God, our source of living water—the water that forever quenches spiritual thirst (Jn. 4:14). The prophet said we could freely draw this water from God's "wells of salvation" (Isa. 12:3).

Believers of all generations can testify: "The Lord is my strength . . . [my] song . . . my salvation" (Isa 12:2). F. B. Meyer wrote, "The little possessive pronoun **my** is the bucket with which we draw water from the depths of God. Our pilgrimage way is lined by these wells of saving help."

Yet how often we seem oblivious to God's desire to provide for us! Joanie Yoder [Bibles And Buckets - Our Daily Bread](#)

Nancy Spiegelberg has expressed her own unawareness of that lavish provision:

Lord, I crawled across the barrenness to You
with my empty cup, uncertain in asking
any small drop of refreshment.

If only I had known You better,
I'd have come running with a bucket.

© 1974 Nancy Spiegelberg

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Are You Depleted? - Mexico City is sinking. According to a New York Times article, "So much water has been pumped out from the aquifer beneath [the city] to satisfy [its] 18 million residents that the ground is collapsing at a stunning rate." The city has sunk 30 feet in the past century.

Is a similar thing happening to you spiritually? You've given so much to others that your energy is gone. You feel drained, depleted, as if your life is collapsing in on itself. What started as a noble venture to help thirsty people has become a journey through the desert for you.

Jesus said, "**If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, . . . out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.' But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive**" (Jn. 7:37-39). Jesus painted a picture of abundant supply—not a trickle but rivers of living water produced by the Holy Spirit, who is given to everyone who trusts in Christ.

What are you thirsting for? Do you need the forgiveness and peace of God? Or do you need your spiritual reservoir replenished so you can refresh the parched souls around you? Jesus invites all of us to find our deep satisfaction and inexhaustible supply in Him. -- David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread](#))

The Lord wants us to come to Him
To quench our thirsty soul,
For from Him flow life-giving streams
To heal and make us whole.
— Sper

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The Unfailing Spring - Joseph Campbell, a well-known authority on mythology, said that his friends were living "wasteland lives."

He said they were “just baffled; they’re wandering in the wasteland without any sense of where the water is—the Source that makes everything green.”

That could also be said—and with deepest sorrow—about countless people today. They try one thing after another to quench the thirst of their souls. Many people even resort to an empty spirituality, which Campbell did so much to popularize. But as the prophet Jeremiah said, they’ve made for themselves “broken cisterns that can hold no water” (Jer. 2:13).

Whatever Campbell himself may have believed, “the Source that makes everything green” is Jesus Christ our blessed Savior. He is the One who gives “living water,” which becomes “a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn. 4:10,14).

If you have responded to the gospel and personally received Jesus Christ as your Savior from sin, you have that fountain springing up within your soul (Jn. 7:37-38). Now you can pray for the “baffled” people around you, and offer the “living water” to those who are thirsty and wandering in a parched, Christless wasteland. - Vernon C. Grounds ([Our Daily Bread](#))

**Only Jesus, the Living Water,
can satisfy our thirst for God.**

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Wrong Places - My people have committed a double evil: They have abandoned Me, the fountain of living water, and dug ... cracked cisterns that cannot hold water.—Jer 2:13 - **One of the major problems with which we are all confronted is that we have at the core of our being a deep thirst for God, which makes us entirely dependent on Him for satisfaction.** Our sinful human nature resents this, because it dislikes the feeling of helplessness that such dependence brings; it prefers to have a hand in bringing about its own satisfaction. This terrible tendency of the human heart to try to satisfy its own thirst independently of God is brought out clearly in the passage before us today. The Prophet Jeremiah indicts Israel—the people of God—for depending on “cracked cisterns” in their efforts to quench their spiritual thirst (cisterns which they themselves made but which can hold no water). Note the two observations our text for today suggests. **First, the people were thirsty, and second, they moved in the wrong direction to satisfy their thirst.** God said it was as if they walked right past the clear waters He provided and chose instead to dig their own well. They wanted to run their own lives and refused to come to God, allowing Him to quench their deep thirst. This stubborn commitment to independence is responsible more than anything else for preventing us from having feet like “hinds’ feet.” (Hab 3:19, Ps 18:33) **Prayer** - Gracious Father, I see that the problem You had with the nation of Israel is my problem, too. For far too often I try to dig my own well. You are searching deeply into my life. Help me not to evade or avoid any issue. In Jesus’ name. Amen. (Selwyn Hughes - Every Day with Jesus)

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Are You Thirsty Again? - Household sponges are amazingly versatile. We use them to wash dishes, mop floors, bathe children, and clean cars. What makes them so useful is that they can absorb and release liquid over and over again. There’s a spiritual principle here, expressed by author **Andrew Murray**: “Wherever there is life, there is a continual interchange of taking in and giving out....The one depends on the other—the giving out ever increases the power of taking in. . . . It is only in the emptiness that comes from the parting with what we have, that the divine fullness can flow in.”

Jesus invited thirsty people to come to Him and drink (John 7:37). First and foremost, He was speaking to people who needed to put their faith in Him, allowing His Spirit to fill them with the joy of salvation. In another sense, when you live for Christ and serve Him, you will recognize the continual need for His Spirit to fill you so He can work in and through you. Perhaps you are experiencing a heart-wringing trial and you feel dry and thirsty today. Imagine a dry sponge in your hand, ready to absorb more water. Let it teach you that only those who recognize their need for living water will find their thirst satisfied by Christ. —Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread](#))

**A thirst for God can only be satisfied by Christ,
Who gives Living Water.**

(Jn 4:10-11)

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Spurgeon- Yonder shipwrecked man has constructed a raft, and far out on the wild expanse of pitiless waters he has floated wearily day after day, sighing for a friendly sail or for sight of land; what would he not give for a little water, for water has become the essential of his life; his tongue is like a firebrand, and his mouth is as an oven, and he himself all dried and parched, sighs and cries to heaven, hoping that perhaps a merciful shower may drop refreshment upon him. Now, Jesus Christ is the water of life, and the bread of life, to such as live unto God. It is absolutely necessary for the continuance of their spiritual life that they should live upon him; and as they do live upon him, their thirst is quenched, their hunger is removed, and their spirit rejoices with a “joy unspeakable

and full of glory." Life and the food that sustaineth life are among the most precious things man can possess, and these are for your souls stored up in Jesus

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Andrew Murray - WHEREVER there is life, there is a continual interchange of taking in and giving out, receiving and restoring. The nourishment I take is given out again in the work I do; the impressions I receive, in the thoughts and feelings I express. The one depends on the other,—the giving out ever increases the power of taking in. In the healthy exercise of giving and taking is all the enjoyment of life. It is so in the spiritual life too. There are Christians who look on its blessedness as consisting all in the privilege of ever receiving; they know not how the capacity for receiving is only kept up and enlarged by continual giving up and giving out,—how it is only in the emptiness that comes from the parting with what we have, that the Divine fulness can flow in. It was a truth our Saviour continually insisted on. When He spoke of selling all to secure the treasure of losing our life to find it, of the, hundredfold to those who forsake all, He was expounding the need of self-sacrifice as the law of the kingdom for Himself as well as for His disciples. If we are really to abide in Christ, and to be found in Him,—to have our life always and wholly in Him,—we must each in our measure say with Paul, 'I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, that I may win Christ, and be FOUND IN HIM.' ([Abide in Christ: Thoughts on the Blessed Life of Fellowship with the Son of God](#))

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Reversing the Flow - Chicago is a world-class city. It's known for its great pizza, architecture, symphony, sports teams, and lakefront setting. I love Chicago! If you were to visit Chicago, you'd see the beautiful Chicago River winding its way through the towering skyscrapers. The river adds a calming dynamic to the noisy rush of the city. But if you lived in Chicago in the late 1800s, you wouldn't have been happy to have this river in your town. The people were plagued by it—literally. A poorly-designed sewage system dumped the raw sewage from the city into the river. The river in turn carried the sewage into Lake Michigan. Since the city drew its water from the lake, the pollution from the river contaminated the city's drinking water, which resulted in deadly outbreaks of cholera, typhoid fever, and dysentery. So, in desperate need of a remedy, someone had the brilliant idea to reverse the flow of the river. If they could pull the project off, the power of the water from the deep blue lake would wash the sewage away from the city and the lake would be purified to provide safe drinking water. After great effort and expense, engineers succeeded in their plan to reverse the flow of the Chicago River. Reversing the flow of the river made Chicago a better city to live in and blessed it with the presence of a clean, beautiful river.

The river problem in Chicago reminds me that I need to be careful about where I get my drinking water. Not literal drinking water, but the water that offers to satisfy the thirst of my passions and needs. Satan shamelessly dumps his sewage into the river of our desires and then welcomes us to drink. And when we drink, the damage begins to do its work in terms of guilt, regret, shame, and brokenness. But God has a better idea! Instead of the downward cycle of taking in the contaminated pseudo-thirst-quenching offerings of our world, He offers us the water of His pure, satisfying presence and wisdom every day in limitless supply. **For too long we have lived with the water of our own desires and passions flowing the wrong way. When everything flows toward self, our own happiness, the satisfaction of lusts, and personal pleasure, we dump a lot of contaminants into our churches, families, and friendships. God paid a high price to reverse the flow when Jesus died to change the direction of our lives.** Reversing the flow begins when we open the floodgates of our hearts and surrender to the flow of God's wisdom and will into every area of our existence. We'll know it's flowing the right way when the water quality of our lives matches the pure quality of the source. And, it's not just about us. Getting the flow right means that the massive energy and supply of God's love for others, His selfless acts of forgiveness and mercy, His care for the needy and poor, His willingness to go the extra mile, and His willingness to surrender Himself for the good of others will flow through us and bless all who live downstream. Letting God do His work to reverse the flow of your life will give you a healthier existence and bless everyone around you with the beauty and strength of His presence flowing through you. **What is the primary source of satisfaction in your life?** Could you honestly say that it is the flow of God's wisdom and will into your heart and life? Is there pollution muddying the waters of your life? If so, what can you do to reverse the flow to bring purity into your life? Read Isaiah 43:1-28, and note all of God's promises to His people. How has He fulfilled those promises through Jesus, and how have you personally reaped the benefits? What is it about your life that brings the flow of God's blessings to those who live "downstream" from you? Read Psalm 42:1-2 and pray it back to God as an expression of your desire to have your life satisfied with the water of His presence and power. -- Joe Stowell (Strength For The Journey)

The Only Way To Be Happy - **There is no lasting earthly satisfaction.** Marriage, family, money, fame, enlightenment, travel, athletics, academic achievement—nothing completes our joy. Any satisfaction we gain in our quest fades quickly and becomes a vague memory, if it can be remembered at all. Oh, to be sure, there are happy events along the way, unexpected moments when we experience pure delight. But those moments are fleeting, and we can never go back in time to relive them and recapture the sensation. **Why then do we keep seeking for something to satisfy us? Simply put, it's because we have to. Whether we realize it or not, our souls are thirsting for God. Every desire, every aspiration, every longing of our nature is nothing less**

than a yearning for God. We were born for His love and we cannot live without it. He is the happiness for which we have been searching all our lives. Everything that we desire is found in Him—and infinitely more. And so, when you find yourself restless and thirsting for something more in life, respond to Jesus' invitation, "**Come to Me and drink**" (John 7:37). Go to Him, drink freely of His grace and forgiveness, and experience true joy. -- David H. Roper ([Our Daily Bread](#)) Happiness depends on happenings, but joy depends on Jesus!

Related Resource -

- Christian Contentment

John 7:37 MISCELLANEOUS NOTES

James Alexander - This is not a well in the desert, of which you may only once taste and must then leave forever, but a river of life, at which you may perpetually slake your thirst. The Israelites all drank of that Spiritual Rock which followed them; and that Rock was Christ (1Cor 10:4). The current from the smitten rock pursued the journeyings of the camp. The unchanging Redeemer in His fulness is always beside you and within your reach. "**As you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him**"....You may be already justified indeed; but are there not a thousand wants within you which crave supply? Has not your path been through a wearisome land, and are you not sensible of an inward thirst, which nothing but spiritual refreshment can assuage? You need daily purifying; you need daily increase of knowledge; you need strength for the remaining journey, and healing for the fevered wounds of your conflict. Behold the boundless provision and hearken to the liberal summons. Approach anew to Him Who is the Source of all your life and Who cries anew "If any man thirst, let him come to Me and drink." (Col 2:6) (Discourses on Common Topics of Christian Faith and Practice)

Though you may have for days without number forsaken the fountain of living water and hewed out cisterns, broken cisterns, which can hold no water, rest assured beloved believer that none who will be turned away from the Fountain, Christ Jesus, for the Diffuser of gracious refreshment is ever ready to take us back and satisfy us with His love. Again the sound of falling waters is in your ears. From the clefts of the saving Rock the holy stream breaks forth in profusion. "**And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.**" (Rev 22:17)

It is the final feast of the seven great Jewish feasts.

It is called the Feast of Ingathering.

It began one day after the Day of Atonement

The Temple held at least 6000 within the walls.

Even as water is indispensable for the natural life of man, so too "living water" from Jesus is indispensable to the supernatural life of man, for the non-believer bringing spiritual life, for the believer bringing abundant life. Partake of Jesus or perish.

If anyone also implies that there will always be enough, that the supply of **living water** found in Jesus is ever springing, inexhaustible source, sufficient to satisfy in this short life and the eternal life to come.

Jesus' invitation is large, and the provision is vast, for His righteousness is infinite.

Here is Jesus the most unpopular and most popular in the midst of the Temple - teaching earlier

Jesus at the right place, right time with the right word!

It has not yet been celebrated by the church.

Estimates are there were more than 1 million in Jerusalem.

Ecc 6:7 All a man's labor is for his mouth and yet the appetite is not satisfied.

Nothing can satisfy the deepest needs of our soul except the Water of Life, Christ Jesus.

7:39 is a prophecy

Cry - a voice of anguish (?) - the last day, the last feast, the last time!

The Bread of Life, the Water of Life, the Door of Life, the Resurrection and the Life

Our part is to seek. His part is to satisfy.

The trumpets sounded and the people sang, "Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation." (Isaiah 12:3^{note}). This water symbolized salvation. (Constance, Mrs. T. M.)

If the 7th day, it would have corresponded with the finale - marched around altar 7x before pouring out the water. If the 8th day, there was no water ceremony. His offer would be in juxtaposition to the physical water the day before.

Pr 11:25 - He who waters will himself be watered.

John 14:17 with you and will be in you (helps understand He was always present but not as He would be)

Ezek 36:25 "Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Criswell - God's promise to "sprinkle clean water" is a figure of the purification and forgiveness of all the sins of Israel, including idolatry.

Appetites of the body are used to set forth the desires of the soul.

The waters of this wilderness world yield no pure, refreshing stream.

"Piety is influential." (Jabez Burns) God blesses a man that he may be a blessing. As Paul said "What would you have me do?" Not to merit blessing, but to spread blessing. And not to gain honor for us, but to bring glory to God.

Isaiah 12:3 (See **Isaiah 12 Commentary**) was recited at the Feast of Booths "Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation." (**See devotional on Isaiah 12:3**)

When we "draw" from the Well Who is Jesus, He becomes our salvation, a well of living water within us and our lives become like (supernatural) artisan wells gushing forth streams of living (life giving) water! Hallelujah! Does this describe my life? It should! It can! Come and drink of Jesus by reading, meditating, obeying and praying His trustworthy Word and His Spirit will flow through you, cleansing and purifying your innermost being, yea, even flowing forth onto other thirsty souls in dire straits and in great need of supernatural satisfaction! The Rolling Stones were right on one thing - "I can't get no satisfaction!" The best this natural world has to offer will never match the supernatural source of satisfaction found in our precious Savior, Christ Jesus! Men without Christ are like mariners adrift on a sea surrounded by water they can't drink.

The context of Isaiah's original words is clearly prophetic ("in that day" at beginning of Isa 12:1, 4 and speaks of a time that many know as the Millennium or Messianic Age when Messiah returns to redeem Israel and reign in righteousness.

Constance - The emphatic word "**thirst**" means all the needs of the soul and the deep cravings of mankind. The word "**drink**" is equally as strong. Jesus offers Himself as a complete satisfaction to man. The claim here is the same as that given in Isaiah 55:1, "**Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat.**" Coming and drinking are two sides of one action, that of believing in Jesus. Those who respond to the invitation of Jesus are given promise of blessing and of being a blessing to others. The believer, having received Jesus, becomes himself a fountain of eternal blessing. Jesus strengthens what He promises the believer by anchoring this promise in the Old Testament scriptures. His entire mission and work, with all the blessings He came to give, are the fulfillment of God's promises. This fact proved the genuineness of His Messiahship. His reference to scripture is a direct answer to the rulers who scoff at His claims. It is through Jesus that every believer actually attains what God promised by His holy prophets. That is evidence for the truth of Christianity. The Feast of Tabernacles was celebrated to renew the old promises of God to the people. Then Jesus gave the invitation to the multitudes in fulfillment of these promises. The Christian is a channel through whom the grace of God flows to bless others. This is the effect of the regenerating and sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. This is secured by the atonement of Jesus Christ. The cross has two sides: one turned toward God the Father, reconciling Him to man, a sinner; the other turned toward man, securing for him redemption and sanctification by the Holy Spirit. Under these two aspects Christ's sacrifice is always presented in the Bible. (Constance, Mrs. T. M.)

D L Moody - What does a hungry man want? Fame? No. Good clothes? No, he wants food. **What does a thirsty man want?** Stocks and bonds? No, he wants water. **When we really hunger and thirst for Holy Spirit power, nothing else will satisfy us** God has commanded us to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18). We have His promise that He will pour water on him that is thirsty

(Isa 44:3KJV). Claim that promise now in faith, fulfill the conditions laid down in the Word, and God will not disappoint you. (Talks to Christians)

Henry Clay Trumbull - What want in the world equals **thirst**, and how vain and mocking are man's endeavors to supply what in this realm is longed for!..." **Living water** " is water from a perennial spring, as distinct from ordinary well water, or cistern water. And " living water " is to this day, in the East, cried by the water-carrier in the crowded city streets as " The gift of God! The gift of God! "...**No appetite or passion, no craving or desire, is so universal, so constant, so fierce, and so resistless, as thirst** Thirst was the first want of the first-born babe. Amid the awful terrors of Calvary, thirst forced an agonized cry from the lips of the dying Redeemer (Jn 19:28). The one cry that has come back to us from a spirit in torment was for a drop of water to cool a tongue parching with thirst (Lk 16:24). And one of the promises precious to the children of God is that in heaven they shall not thirst any more (Rev 7:16). To slake another's thirst but for a moment, is a bounty acknowledged gratefully by man, and not unnoticed by God. (Mt 10:42, 25:34-35, cp Acts 20:35)...One whose lips have parched with thirst in an army-prison, or on a sandy march, or while lying wounded on a field of battle, can realize the preciousness of "a cup of cold water only" as others cannot. After one of the battles of our Civil War, a member of the government ambulance corps was moving among the wounded on the field, assisting in their removal. He came to a dying Southern soldier, too far gone for hope through removal. As he stooped over the dying man with a kindly word, the parching lips asked for water. The lips were tenderly moistened. "Thank you! Now please lay my cap over my face, and let me die." As this service was rendered lovingly, there came another call from the dying man: " Will you please tell me your name, my friend ?" " Why, of course I will ; but why do you ask it ?" "Oh, so I can pray God through all eternity to bless you for giving me that water!" To bring water for his thirst, man has poured out millions upon millions for costly aqueducts, the very ruins of which are among the world's wonders. He has bored the artesian well into depths which could never be reached by cutting. He has tunneled under the lake's bottom, miles beyond the shore, for a purer supply. He has linked the desert with the river by chains of canals. Yet at the best, pure water has not always satisfied man's thirst ; so he has searched the world over for tempting beverages, and has taxed the ingenuity of his fellows for new and refreshing drinks....The longing for drink has been neither satisfied nor removed. Men still drink and thirst, and thirst and drink again. Only one person in all the world, and he that travel-worn pilgrim by the well of Jacob, has ever dared confidently to say, " Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst."....even as fainting travelers have been deluded by the mirage of the desert into one more vain effort to reach the water which they longed for, even so, also, thirsting souls have been mocked with the wine of superstition, have famished at the exhausted cistern of a false religion, or have wasted their latest strength in pursuing the mirage of some delusive philosophy of first causes and ultimate destiny. When Philip V, of Spain, first saw in full play the magnificent new fountains he had erected at La Granja, it is said that an expression of pleasure passed over his sad face ; then his melancholy look returned, and he said, bitterly : " Thou hast given me three minutes' distraction from my cares ; and thou hast cost me three millions." Might not his words be spoken of many a costly fountain erected to gratify man's spiritual longings? The ruins of such fountains dot the world over. What else are the crumbling, but still magnificent, temples at Nineveh and Nuffar, at Memphis and Thebes, at Susa and Persepolis, at Athens and Rome, at Mexico and Cuzco! Their cost was millions. Their relief to soul-thirst was momentary. " Broken cisterns" are they all, "that can hold no water." (Jer 2:13)....Myriads have turned, with thirsty souls, to Jesus;

never one, never one, never one has been refused or disappointed. Men and women and children who rested on this promise have gone calmly into the fires of martyrdom, and with moistened lips have sung the praises of Jesus while the flames were purifying their bodies. Others have sorrowed on alone in life, but not as those who had no hope (1Th 4:13). They have been "troubled on every side, yet not distressed; . . . perplexed, but not in despair ; persecuted, but not forsaken ; cast down, but not destroyed " (2 Cor. 4:8, 9). They have been " as chastened, and not killed; as sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things " (2 Cor 6:9-10). Many of you here before me are also witnesses of these things. You could rise up, one by one, and say in grateful confidence:

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,

'Behold, I freely give

The living water; thirsty one,

Stoop down, and drink, and live ! '

I came to Jesus, and I drank

Of that life-giving stream;

My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,

And now I live in Him." (Col 3:4, Jn 20:31, 1Jn 4:9, 5:11)

I never yet heard one say that he had drunk of the water which Jesus proffers and not had his soul-thirst quenched. [Henry Clay](#)

[Trumbull - A Sermon on Thirst - 1903](#)

Imagine the scene - Jesus standing and shouting out that He had water His hearers should drink and yet all could plainly see He had no pitcher, no glass, no real physical water. Imagine how the hearers must have processed this Man's offer!

DO YOU MAKE OTHERS THIRSTY? - A little Chinese girl said, "I know why Christ said, 'You are the salt of the earth.' Because salt makes folks thirsty and Christians should make others thirsty for Christ." Are you making folks thirsty? People are too lazy to look up. Few try to find Christ. So Christ wants others to see Him reflected in us. In the famous Sistine Chapel in Rome, the beauty of the art is in the ceiling. As you enter, you are given a mirror. It seems strange to see people walking around looking down when the paintings are above. But they see all the glory reflected in the mirrors before them, without breaking their necks. Be a reflector. Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in you. - Henrietta Mears

These rivers of living water are to flow to us and through us as waters which are living, perennial and inexhaustible, yielding supplies to wants which are perpetually returning.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

On March 29, 1848, Niagara Falls stopped for several hours due to an obstruction at the mouth of the river upstream, causing the falls to come to a trickle. What a picture of a believer who has drunk of the living water of Jesus for salvation, but now instead of experiencing rivers of living water flowing forth, is experiencing just a "trickle." Jesus desires that we "have life and have it abundantly." (Jn 10:10) And yet the flow of His Spirit through us has been obstructed by something in our lives.

Nu 20:7-9 (Num 20:7) and the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, (Num 20:8) "Take the rod; and you and your brother Aaron assemble the congregation and speak to the rock before their eyes, that it may yield its water. You shall thus bring forth water for them out of the rock and let the congregation and their beasts drink." (Num 20:9) So Moses took the rod from before the LORD, just as He had commanded him;

Isaiah 44:3 'For I will pour out water on the thirsty land And streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants;

Isaiah 49:10 **"They will not hunger or thirst,** Nor will the scorching heat or sun strike them down; For He (Messiah the Good Shepherd) Who has compassion on them will lead them and will guide them to **springs of water.**

Jeremiah 31:25 "For I satisfy the weary ones and refresh everyone who languishes."

Ps 23:2 He leads me beside quiet waters.

Rev 7:16-17 "They will hunger no longer, nor thirst anymore; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their Shepherd, and will guide them to **springs of the water of life;** and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

Rev 21:6 Then He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.

Re 22:1 Then he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,

Amos 8:11-13 (Amos 8:11) "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. (Amos 8:12) "People will stagger from sea to sea And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find it. (Amos 8:13) "In that day the beautiful virgins And the young men will faint from thirst.

Mt 25:40

Jn 4:13-15

Jn 6:35

Ro 12:20, Pr 25:21

Pr 25:25 Like cold water to a weary soul, So is **good news** (aggelia agathe = message good - that is "good news" which when from God is called the Gospel) from a distant land. - Jesus came from a distant land to bring good news which was like water to weary souls! In Lk 2:10 when the angels announced "good news of great joy" the verb they used was euaggelizo which elsewhere means to proclaim the Gospel! **William Arnot** comments "The "peace on earth" which was proclaimed by angels and procured by Christ—which is offered in the word and enjoyed by the faithful, is like cold waters to a thirsty soul....The message of mercy is to most men

like cold water to a soul that is not thirsty. Where there is a burning thirst perhaps there is no material blessing that affords to a human being such a lively pleasure as cold water; but, on the other hand, scarcely anything can be more insipid in the absence of thirst. When it is applied to the lips of a satisfied man, it is not indeed actively or violently offensive, but it is utterly tasteless, and is therefore set aside and forgotten....Thirst is a blessed thing, if cold water be at hand; cold water is a blessed thing to those who thirst. Needy sinners get; a gracious Saviour gives. When thirst drinks in cold water, when cold water quenches thirst, the giver and the receiver rejoice together. While the redeemed obtain a great refreshment in the act, the Redeemer obtains a greater; for Himself was wont to say, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Laws from Heaven for Life on Earth: Illustrations of the Book of Proverbs)

Isaiah 55:1 "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.

Ps 42:1-2 For the choir director. A Maskil of the sons of Korah. As the deer **pants** (Heb = arag = longs for; Lxx = **epipotheo** = longs for desire, present tense = continually) for the water brooks, So my soul **pants** (Heb = arag = longs for; Lxx = **epipotheo** = longs for, desires, present tense = continually - same verb in 1Pe 2:2 = like a newborn babe longing for the Word) for You, O God. 2 My soul **thirsts** for God, for the living God; When shall I come and appear before God?

Thirst produces a craving in the mind and body of a person which is not satisfied until the person drinks. This metaphor is cleverly used by the writer. Notice that the verb in the Lxx is *epipotheo* which describes a strong desire, an intense craving of possession, a great affection for, a deep desire, an earnest yearning for something with implication of need.

Spurgeon - As the hart pants after the water brooks, so pants my soul after the, O God. As after a long drought the poor fainting hind longs for the streams, or rather as the hunted hart instinctively seeks after the river to lave its smoking flanks and to escape the dogs, even so my weary, persecuted soul pants after the Lord my God. Debarred from public worship, David was heartsick. Ease he did not seek, honour he did not covet, but the enjoyment of communion with God was an urgent need of his soul; he viewed it not merely as the sweetest of all luxuries, but as an absolute necessity, like water to a stag. Like the parched traveller in the wilderness, whose skin bottle is empty, and who finds the wells dry, he must drink or die -- he must have his God or faint. His soul, his very self, his deepest life, was insatiable for a sense of the divine presence. As the hart brays so his soul prays. Give him his God and he is as content as the poor deer which at length slakes its thirst and is perfectly happy; but deny him his Lord, and his heart heaves, his bosom palpitates, his whole frame is convulsed, like one who gasps for breath, or pants with long running. Dear reader, dost thou know what this is, by personally having felt the same? It is a sweet bitterness. The next best thing to living in the light of the Lord's love is to be unhappy till we have it, and to pant hourly after it -- hourly, did I say? thirst is a perpetual appetite, and not to be forgotten, and even thus continual is the heart's longing after God. When it is as natural for us to long for God as for an animal to thirst, it is well with our souls, however painful our feelings. We may learn from this verse that the eagerness of our desires may be pleaded with God, and the more so, because there are special promises for the importunate and fervent.

Ps 63:1 A Psalm of David, when he was in the wilderness of Judah. O God, You are my God; I shall seek You earnestly (early will I seek Thee); My soul **thirsts** (Heb = tsame = to be thirsty; Lxx = dipsao) for You, my flesh yearns (Heb = kamah = faints; Lxx =) for You, In a dry and weary land where there is no water.

Observe - A thirsty soul, a dry land, a satisfying God! Does your soul pant after Jesus like a deer in the desert pants for water? Jesus the personification of Living Water promised "Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts for righteousness, for he will be satisfied." (Mt 5:6) They are blessed because their soul shall be spiritually satiated (satisfied)! **Vance Havner** adds that Jesus is "A satisfying God. 'O God, Thou art my God.' A lot of praying gets no further than 'O God.'" There is the personal appropriation, 'Thou art MY God.' 'Early will I seek Thee.' 'Those that seek Me early shall find Me. (Pr 8:17KJV). Early in life: "Remember your Creator in the days of your youth.' (Eccl 12:1) Early in the day like Jesus 'in the morning.'" (Mk 1:35)

Warren Wiersbe - Are You Thirsty? Read Psalm 63 King David wrote this psalm when he was in the wilderness of Judah. I never really appreciated what he wrote until my wife and I visited the same spot. What a dry and barren place it is! Look at what David wrote, "O God, You are my God; early will I seek You; my soul thirsts for You; my flesh longs for You in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water" (Psalm 63:1). In other words, David says, "Here I am in this dry, hot, dangerous wilderness, and I really would love to have some water. However, what I really want is God." When you find yourself in a dry wilderness situation in life, what do you do? Follow the stages in David's experience. First, he seeks God. He wanted to see God's power and glory as he had seen it in the sanctuary. He wanted to see that wilderness turned into a sanctuary. David had been in the tabernacle. He had seen the glory of God, but he wasn't satisfied with that. We are satisfied to hear about God and sing about Him in church. Then we come to the wilderness. We should be like David and say, "I want to see God's glory through this wilderness experience just as though I were worshiping God in the church service." Next, he blesses God. "Thus I will bless You while I live" (Psalm 63:4). David also is satisfied with God. Satisfaction doesn't come from circumstances on the outside. It comes from blessing on the inside. "When I remember You on my bed, I meditate on You in the night watches" (Psalm 63:6). Finally, he rejoices in God. "But

the king shall rejoice in God" (v. 11). That's what God wants from us, even in the wilderness. * * * **Wilderness experiences are good for you, for they teach you an important truth: You draw satisfaction from blessing on the inside, not from circumstances on the outside. When you face a wilderness experience, follow David's response. God will meet your needs.** (Prayer, Praises and Promises)

Ps 107:9 For He has satisfied (Lxx = chortazo = feed, fill, satisfy) the **thirsty** (Lxx = kenos = empty, devoid of spiritual truth in one's) **soul** (one's deepest innermost being), and the hungry soul He has filled with what is good (Lxx = agathos - of gifts beneficial; of words useful; of deeds good).

Spurgeon - The Lord sets us longing and then completely satisfies us. That longing leads us into solitude, separation, thirst, faintness and self-despair, and all these conduct us to prayer, faith, divine guidance, satisfying of the soul's thirst, and rest. The good hand of the Lord is to be seen in the whole process and in the divine result...As for thirst He gives satisfaction, so for hunger He supplies filling. In both cases the need is more than met, there is an abundance in the supply which is well worthy of notice: the Lord does nothing in a stingy fashion; satisfying and filling are His special modes of treating His guests.

Ps 143:6KJV I (David) stretch forth my hands unto thee: my soul thirsteth after thee, as a thirsty land. Selah.

Rev 7:16-17 "They will hunger no longer, **nor thirst anymore**; nor will the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; 17 for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their shepherd, and **will guide them to springs of the water of life**; and God will wipe every tear from their eyes."

Rev 21:6 And He said to me, "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost.

Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come." And let the one who hears say, "Come." And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost.

Judges 15:17-19 When he had finished speaking, he threw the jawbone from his hand; and he named that place Ramath-lehi. 18 Then he became very thirsty, and he called to the LORD and said, "You have given this great deliverance by the hand of Your servant, and now shall I die of thirst and fall into the hands of the uncircumcised?" 19 But **God split the hollow place that is in Lehi so that water came out of it. When he drank, his strength returned and he revived.** Therefore he named it En-hakkore, which is in Lehi to this day.

S D Gordon on John 7:37-39 (see below chapter 1 - "Choked Channels") - Four words - **thirst, glorified, drink, believe** - tell the whole story. Thirst means desire, intense desire. There is no word in our language so strong to express desire as the word thirst. Physical thirst will completely control your actions. If you are very thirsty, you can do nothing till that gnawing desire is satisfied. You cannot read, nor study, nor talk, nor transact business. You are in agony when intensely thirsty. To die of thirst is extremely painful. Jesus uses that word thirst to express intensest desire. Let me ask you -- Are you thirsty for power? Is there a yearning down in your heart for something you have not? That is the first step. No good to offer food to a man without appetite. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst." Pitiably are they that need and do not know their need. Physicians find their most difficult work in dealing with the man who has no desire to live. He is at the lowest ebb. Are you thirsty? There is a special promise for thirsty ones. "I will pour water on him that is thirsty." If you are not thirsty for the Master's power, are you thirsty to be made thirsty? If you are not really thirsty in your heart for this new life of power, you might ask the Master to put that thirst in you. For there can be nothing before that. The second word is the one added long afterwards by John, when the Spirit had enlightened his understanding-"**glorified.**" "For not yet was the Spirit given, because not yet was Jesus glorified." That word has two meanings here: the first meaning a historical one, the second a personal or experimental one. The historical meaning is this: when Jesus returned home all scarred in face and form from His trip to the earth, He was received back with great enthusiasm, and was glorified in the presence of myriads of angel beings by being enthroned at the Father's right hand. Then the glorified Jesus sent the Holy Spirit down to the earth as His own personal representative for His new peculiar mission. The presence of the Spirit in our hearts is evidence that the Jesus whom earth despised and crucified is now held in highest honor and glory in that upper world. The Spirit is the gift of a glorified Jesus. Peter lays particular stress upon this in his Pentecost sermon, telling to those who had so spitefully murdered Jesus that He "being at the right hand of God exalted . . . hath poured forth this." That is the historical meaning-the first meaning of that word "glorified." It refers to an event in the highest heaven after Jesus' ascension. The personal meaning is this: when Jesus is enthroned in my life the Holy Spirit shall fill me. The Father glorified Jesus by enthroning Him. I must glorify Him by enthroning Him. But the throne of my heart was occupied by another who did not propose to resign, nor to be deposed without resistance. So there had to be a dethronement as well as an enthronement. I must quietly but resolutely place the crown of my life, my love, my will upon Jesus' brow for Him henceforth to control me as He will. That act of enthroning Him carries with it the dethronement of self.

Let me say plainly that here is the searching test of the whole matter. Why do you want power? For the rare enjoyment of ecstatic moods? For some hidden selfish purpose, like Simon of Samaria, of which you are perhaps only half conscious, so subtly does it

lurk underneath? That you may be able to move men? These motives are all selfish. The streams turn in, and that means a dead sea. Better stop before you begin. For thy heart is not right before God. But if the uppermost and undermost desire be to glorify Jesus and let Him do in you, and with you what He chooses, then you shall know the flooding of the channel-ways of your life with a new stream of power. Jesus Himself, when down here as Son of Man, met this test. With reverence be it said that His highest purpose in coming to earth was not to die upon the cross, but to glorify His Father. That memorable passage opening the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, which Jesus applied to Himself in the Nazareth synagogue, contains eight or nine statements of what He was to do, but closes with a comprehensive statement of the underlying purpose "that He might be glorified." As it turned out, that could best be done by yielding to the awful experiences through which He passed. But the supreme thought of pleasing His Father was never absent from His thought. It drove Him to the wilderness, and to Gethsemane, and to Calvary. Is that the one purpose in your heart in desiring power? He might send some of us out to the far off foreign mission field. He might send some down to the less enchanted field of the city slums to do salvage service night after night among the awful social wreckage thrown upon the strand there; or possibly it would mean an isolated post out on the frontier, or down in the equally heroic field of the mountains of the South. He might leave some of you just where you are, in a commonplace, humdrum spot, as you think, when your visions had been in other fields. He might make you a seed-sower, like lonely Morrison in China, when you wanted to be a harvester like Moody. Here is the real battlefield. The fighting and agonizing are here. Not with God but with yourself, that the old self in you may be crucified and Jesus crowned in its place. Will you in the purpose of your heart make Jesus absolute monarch whatever that may prove to mean? It may mean great sacrifice; it will mean greater joy and power at once. May we have the simple courage to do it. Master, help us! Thou wilt help us. Thou art helping some of us now as we talk and listen and think.

Power Manifest In Action. Well, then, if you have won on that field of action, the rest is very simple. Indeed, after a victory there, your whole life moves up to a new level. The third word is drink. "Let him come unto Me and drink." Drinking is one of the easiest acts imaginable. I wish I had a glass of water here just to let you see how easy a thing it is. Tip up the glass and let the water run in and down. Drink simply means take. It is saying, "Lord Jesus, I take from Thee the promised power I thank Thee that the Spirit has taken full control." But you say, "Is that all?" Yes. "Why, I do not feel anything." Do you remember saying something like that when you were urged to take Jesus as your Savior? And some kind friend told you not to wait for feeling, but to trust, and that when you did that, the light came? Now, the fourth word is believe. The law of God's dealing with you has not changed. Jesus says, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." You are to believe His word. "But," you say, "how shall I know I have this power?" Well, first, by believing that Jesus has done what He agreed. He promised the Spirit to them that obey Him. The Holy Spirit fills every surrendered heart. Then there is a second way-will experience the power as need arises. How do you know anything? Here is this chair. Suppose I tell you I have power to pick it up and hold it out at arm's length. Well, you think, I look as though I might have that much power in my arm. But you do not know. Perhaps my arm is weak and does not show it. But now I pick it up and hold it out-(holding chair out at arm's length)-now you know I have at least that much power in my arm. Power is always manifest in action. That is a law of power. How did that man by the pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem, who had not walked for thirty-eight years-how did he know that he had received power to walk? He got up and walked! He did not know he had received the power till he got up. Power is shown in action always. Faith acts. It pushes out, in obedience to command. And when you go out of here today, as the need arises you will find the power rising within you to meet it. When the hasty word comes hot to your lips, when that old habit asserts itself, when the actual test of sacrifice comes, when the opportunity for service comes, as surely as the need comes, will come the sense of His power in control. Believe means expect. "Thirst," "glorify," "drink," "believe"-desire, enthrone, accept, expect-that is the simple story. Are you thirsty? Will you put Jesus on the throne? Then accept, and go out with your eyes open, expecting, expecting, expecting, and He will never fail to reveal His power. Shall we bow in silence a few moments and settle the matter, each of us, with the Master direct? ([S D Gordon - Quiet Talks on Power](#))

A W Pink - Here ("If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink") is the Gospel in a single short sentence. Three words in it stand out and call for special emphasis—"thirst," "come," "drink." The first tells of a recognized need. Thirst, like hunger, is something of which we are acutely conscious. It is a craving for that which is not in our actual possession. There is a soul thirst as well as a bodily. The pathetic thing is that so many thirst for that which cannot slake them. Their thirst is for the things of the world: pleasure, money, fame, ease, self-indulgence; and over all these Christ has written in imperishable letters, "Whosoever drinks of this water shall thirst again."...He speaks of that intense longing for Himself which only the Spirit of God can create in the soul..."**Come**" is one of the simplest words in the English language. It signifies our approach to an object or person. It expresses action, and implies that the will is operative. To come to Christ means, that you do with your heart and will what you would do with your feet were He standing in bodily form before you and saying, "Come unto me." It is an act of faith. It intimates that you have turned your back upon the world, and have abandoned all confidence in everything about yourself, and now cast yourself empty-handed, at the feet of incarnate Grace and Truth. But make sure that nothing whatever is substituted for Christ. It is not, come to the Lord's table, or come to the waters of baptism, or come to the priest or minister, or come and join the church; but come to Christ Himself, and to none other. "**And drink.**" It is here that so many seem to fail. There are numbers who give evidence of an awakened conscience, of heart-exercise, of a conscious need of Christ; and there are numbers who appear to be seeking Him, and yet stop short at that. But Christ not only said, "Come unto me," but He added, "and drink." A river flowing through a country where people were dying of thirst, would

avail them nothing unless they drink of it. The blood of the slain lamb availed the Israelite household nothing, unless the head of that household had applied it to the door. So Christ saves none who do not receive Him by faith. "Drinking" is here a figurative expression, and signifies making Christ your own. In all ages God's saints have been those who saw their deep need, who came to the Lord, and appropriated the provision of grace....Christ was not addressing a company of profligates, but a religious crowd who were observing a Divinely-instituted Feast! What an example for each of His servants! Brother preacher, take nothing for granted. Do not suppose that because those you address are respectable people and punctual in their religious exercises they are necessarily saved....Twice before had Christ employed "water" as a figure, and it is striking to observe the progressive order. In John 3:5 He had spoken of a man being born "of water and of the Spirit": here the "water" comes down from God—cf. John 3:3 margin, "born From above." In John 4:14 He says, "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Here the "water" springs up to God, reaching out to the Source from whence it came. But in John 7:38 He says, "Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Here the "water" flows forth for God in blessing to others. ([Exposition of the Gospel of John-Christ in the temple](#))

IF ANY MAN THIRST

Vance Havner - "If Any Man Thirst" - "Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water. "But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believed on him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet given; because Jesus was not yet glorified."—John 7:37-39, R.V.

OUR Lord was at the feast of tabernacles. It is very likely that He had just been observing a peculiar ceremony which was a custom at that time. It seems that each day a priest with a golden pitcher went to the pool of Siloam followed by a throng of people. Filling the pitcher at the pool, he bore it down the streets amid the shouting and singing of the multitude and the sound of trumpets and cymbals. When he reached the temple he poured out the water by the altar while all the people sang, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (Isaiah 12:3-note). It was such a hilarious occasion that, according to Lightfoot, it was said, "Whoever has not witnessed it has never seen rejoicing at all."

Doubtless our Lord had just witnessed this ceremony and, although it was very impressive, He must have been struck with the futility of it all. For, although these jubilant multitudes sang and shouted and went into raptures, after it all was over they went home with their same old heartaches and cares and fears. Then, too, it was a perfect picture of the fact that the law, represented by the priest, and legalism and religiousness and ceremony, represented by the pouring out of the water, could never assuage the thirst of the human heart. And more than that, it symbolized the utter inability of the waters of earth, its pleasures and possessions and philosophies, to satisfy the weary soul. Men might make great ado over these things, might for the moment rejoice in them, but always they must go away thirsty, because they have forsaken the fountain of living waters and hewn them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water (Jeremiah 2:13).

But there stood among the throngs on this feast day One Who could satisfy the thirsty soul. While the worshippers sang, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," little did they realize that the fulfilment of that prophecy stood among them! And now, with the vivid contrast of the water-pouring ceremony before Him, the Lord Jesus did a most unusual thing, He stood and cried aloud to the throngs around Him. "He stood and cried" —very rarely is that phrase used of our Lord. "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear his voice in the streets" (Matthew 12:19), but here He went out of the ordinary, did the exceptional thing of standing, probably in some elevated position, and crying aloud to the multitude. Why did He do it? Because He had something exceptional and extraordinary to say! His soul had been moved within Him by the vain ceremony of the feast day and now He sets Himself against the hollow observance of the empty pitcher and cries, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink! He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water!"

It is as though He cried: "Ah, you thirst for something, you know not what. These hollow ceremonies, these ecstasies of the flesh, these empty pitchers from Siloam, these waters of earth can never satisfy. Come unto me and drink and I will give you living waters which shall become in you fountains of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14), and rivers of water forever overflowing. 'Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters' (Isaiah 55:1). 'Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely'" (Revelation 22:17).

Nineteen centuries have gone their way, and today a thirsting world still hews its broken cisterns and seeks in poured-out waters of Siloam living waters that fail not. Ponce de Leon still looks for the fountain of youth. Modern fads and isms, psychologic tricks and philosophic cure-alls—these are golden pitchers from Siloam which are soon poured out. And what shall we say of thousands who go through all the motions of religion, even grow ecstatic like these Jews at the feast, yet go away unsatisfied as ever? Amidst it all stands One Who is the Bread of Life, Who invites the labouring and the laden to come unto Him and rest (John 6:35; Matthew

11:28). Whosoever lives and believes in Him shall never die (John 11:26). In Him, though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day (II Corinthians 4:16). He is the soul's fountain of youth. If any man thirst, let him come unto Him and drink and he shall have within himself a fountain of living waters overflowing in torrents of blessing.

That, of course, is the first application of this precious passage—Christ's invitation to a lost world. But I am thinking now of another situation painfully evident today: thousands of Christians, believers, saved people, whose actual, daily experience is more like the emptied pitcher from Siloam than it is like the living fountain with its rivers of water. As I go about over the land, I am continually meeting preachers grieved over a defective experience, who are convinced that they have missed something and that surely there must be more in the filling of the Spirit than they have ever understood. They are good men, able men, devout men, but many of them seem to have stopped short of that utter abandon in which men lose themselves to become blazing firebrands for God, flaming torches by which He sets on fire a smug and sanctimonious church and awakens to burning conviction a sleeping world. Some are willing to miss a blessing rather than give up a prejudice, but others are worried and deeply conscious that their fire is not Pentecostal fire but painted fire which does not burn!

I am continually meeting Christians whose experience is like getting all of a story except the point. Like the Jews at the feast, they have a happy day once in a while when they "scale the utmost height and catch a gleam of glory bright," but these are few and far between and soon "a sense of things real comes doubly strong." After one of his sermons, Andrew Murray asked a very pious woman, "How are you going on?" Her answer was, "Oh, just the way it always is, sometimes light and sometimes dark." "My dear sister," he asked, "where is that in the Bible?" She said, "We have day and night in nature, and just so it is in our souls." "No, no," he replied, "in the Bible we read, 'Thy sun shall no more go down.'" But most believers today live in an eclipse.

Naturally, all this shows up in the fellowship of believers. Our churches go forth often, like Samson, to shake themselves, as at other times before, and know not that the power of the Lord in fulness of blessing has departed. There is no listening for the sound of a going in the mulberry trees. Having begun in the Spirit, they would perfect themselves in the flesh. Instead of more power, more wheels are added to the machine. There is no ministering to the Lord and fasting, so the Spirit has nothing to say. There being no devotion, there is no Dynamic and no direction. There is nothing about the average Christian or church to remind one of rivers of living water issuing from a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Indeed, one is reminded more of the occasional pouring out of water from the golden pitcher filled at Siloam.

It is plainly stated here that our Lord spoke of the Holy Spirit, so the whole difficulty today lies in a failure rightly to appreciate and appropriate the fulness of the Spirit. It is interesting to note that many of these thirsty Christians today have been much taught if not well taught; they have studied the Word carefully, have prayed earnestly, have sought deeper blessing, have gone from Bible conference to Bible conference, returning home in the fall laden with notebooks crammed with epigrams from teachers galore. I fear that altogether too many have "eagerly frequented doctor and saint, and heard great argument about it and about, but evermore have come out the same door wherein they went." Some have "surrendered" dozens of times; have followed Andrew Murray's "steps" for the blessing; have "claimed the blessing," and then tried to believe they had it, meanwhile driving off the fowls from the offering, like Abraham, until God should send the witness of the burning lamp. They have tried not to confuse the filling with the feeling, but after months or years they still do not wear the garments of praise instead of the spirit of heaviness, and many break down in defeatism or else move into extremist circles. (And right here remember the words of a mighty man of God of the last generation: "It were almost better for one to overstate the possibilities of sanctification in his eager grasp after holiness, than to understate them in his complacent satisfaction with a traditional unholiness. Certainly it is not an edifying spectacle to see a Christian worlding throwing stones at a Christian perfectionist.")

Now, it is evident that if our Lord meant for us to be living fountains sending forth torrents of living water then we have no business standing along Jordan's stormy banks casting wishful eyes toward Canaan's fair and happy land, where our possessions lie. We ought to be dwelling over there in that blessed experience which the saints have called, "the rest of faith," "perfect love," "the Spirit-filled life," "the victorious life," or "Christian perfection." On this feast day the Lord invited us to the fulness of the Spirit as well as to salvation, and it behooves us rightly to appreciate and appropriate what is here set forth.

We recognize, of course, that when we come to the Lord Jesus Christ at conversion and receive Him, the Holy Spirit indwells our hearts from regeneration. We know also that the Holy Spirit was given at Pentecost once for all. But here we believe with A. J. Gordon, that "it does not follow that every believer has by faith received that baptism. God's gift is one thing; our appropriation of that gift is quite another thing. As Christ, the second Person of the Godhead, came to earth to make atonement for sin and to give eternal life, and as sinners we must receive Him by faith in order to forgiveness and sonship, so the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Godhead, came to earth to communicate the 'power from on high'; and we must as believers in like manner receive Him by faith in order to be qualified for service. Both gifts have been bestowed, but it is not what we have but what we know we have by a conscious, appropriating faith which determines our spiritual wealth."

The baptism of the Spirit is ours positionally, but, alas, what is ours positionally is not always our actual condition. It is one thing to

have the blessing as our right and privilege, but quite another to be blessed experimentally. The average Christian is so ignorant of, or indifferent to, the filling of the Spirit that when he does realize and receive fulness of power, it truly is a second blessing to him, second only to regeneration. Said McConkey: "There is a fulness of the Holy Ghost which does not come to most Christians at conversion and, therefore, is, in point of time, a second blessing." And Dr. James M. Gray makes it clear: "I believe that the second work of grace.. is a later crisis in the history of the believer, when he comes to realize the need of a holier life and a deeper experience of Christ. He then surrenders himself as a Christian to Christ more fully than he has yet done and comes into the Spirit to which he has been a stranger theretofore. It is the privilege of every believer to have this experience at the moment of his acceptance of Christ as Saviour and some do enter into its enjoyment then. Many do not, however, and when it comes to them, if it does, they regard it as a second work of grace and a baptism of the Holy Spirit."

In our zeal to escape false doctrines of a "second blessing" most Christians, we fear, have gone too far and denied any need of crisis or deeper experience in the life of the believer, except a gradual growth in grace. Now, for believers who recognized and appropriated the filling of the Spirit at conversion and who are being filled continually that is sufficient. But very few have done that, and, besides, it has been asked with real insight: "If we conceive of the Christian life as only a gradual growth in grace, is there not a danger that we come to regard this growth as both invisible and inevitable and so take little responsibility for its accomplishment?"

Many arguments have been employed against this experience, even by established Christians. The subjective aspect of just yielding and receiving has taken the place of the old emphasis our fathers placed on being overwhelmed with power coming down. The mighty old-fashioned down-crashing floods of power that inundated and submerged waiting saints have been ignored in favour of a rather tame and pale "receiving" that fails somehow to receive. Some say we are not to pray for power. If that is true, then the mighty men of God through the ages have been mistaken. Others contend that we do violence to the personality of the Holy Spirit in speaking of being filled as though He were like electricity. We can say only that "filled" is the New Testament word.

And what shall we say of the testimony of history? Think of George Fox, lying for days in a trance, and coming through to a new experience; Wesley and Whitefield praying until three in the morning, when the Spirit fell in great power; Christmas Evans convicted of a cold heart while on his way to preach and led to pray until his heart thawed out like the breaking up of a hard winter, and going on to preach with power, so that a gracious revival began and swept the country roundabout. Think of Burns of Kilsyth saying to his mother after a night of prayer, "God has given me Kilsyth today," and going forth to reap souls not only in Kilsyth but in all Scotland and in Inland China. And what shall we say of Finney who saw the Lord and then, set burning with the heavenly flame, moved out into a ministry of evangelism so marvelous that I am astounded that few Christians today seem to know anything of this giant of the Gospel. One thinks of the Moravians at Herrnhut, of A. J. Gordon in his midnight prayer meeting with George Needham, of Moody receiving such a blessing that he had to ask God to stay His hand, and testifying of it later: "I would not be back where I was before that blessed experience if you should give me all the world—it would be as the small dust of the balance." Say what you will, these men knew a day of crisis and, although salvation dated from an earlier day, mighty power for service dated from this day. When one reads the story of these powerful fountains of living water, he is more than ever impressed with the thought that most of us today are strangely like pitchers from Siloam! It ill becomes us dwarfs to differ with such giants of yesterday.

Well does F. B. Meyer ask us: "Are we experimentally possessed of the Pentecostal enduement? Are we willing to pay the price of it?" Pentecost is on the church calendar but it is not the churches' condition. Moody declared in Boston: "See how He came on the day of Pentecost! It is not carnal to pray that He may come again and that the place may be shaken. I believe that Pentecost was but a specimen day. I think the Church made this woeful mistake that Pentecost was a miracle never to be repeated. I have thought, too, that Pentecost was a miracle never to be repeated. I believe now, if we looked on Pentecost as a specimen day and began to pray, we should have the old Pentecostal fire here in Boston." Now some of us may find fault with Moody's viewpoint, but remember he lived in Pentecost!

It was to this fulness of the Spirit that our Lord invited us on the great feast day: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water." You will observe that our Lord sets forth here a simple process, a fivefold experience of thirsting, coming, drinking, believing and overflowing. If we are suffering from a defective experience of the Spirit it is because somewhere along that fivefold experience we have failed to appreciate or appropriate His Word.

Indeed, it is easy to see that most of us have failed at the very outset of this matter,—**"IF ANY MAN THIRST."** God has promised, "I will pour out water upon him that is thirsty" (Isaiah 44:3), but who is thirsty? I talk with Christians who say they want more power and joy and peace and victory. But within a few minutes they have changed to some other subject, and soon some other topic is being discussed, and one feels that the fulness of the Spirit is, with them, just one of a variety of themes for polite after-dinner conversation. We poor Americans have become so shallow and superficial along all lines that we never really go deeply into any matter; we flit like butterflies from subject to subject, and never even in dreams have seen the things which are more excellent.

"IF ANY MAN THIRST-----" Just wanting a drink of water is not thirsting. We know nothing about thirst here in a land with water on

tap at our elbows. Dr. Torrey tells us that he knew nothing of thirst until he was with soldiers of the Spanish-American war in camp, where dust filled the air day and night and where, as he put it, they ate dust, drank dust, slept dust and dreamed dust, and there was no water anywhere fit to drink. Again, he was in China when cholera was raging and he could drink no water on the boat, but drank soft drinks as long as he dared, then lay all night suffering with thirst and thinking of his well at Northfield, far away. Ask some missionary to tell you what thirst is, when every pore of the body cries, "Water, water, water;" when the desert seems to be inside of you, and the lips swell, and every desire, hope and thought is just concentrated in one burning fever for a cooling drink. That is thirst, not just a casual, ordinary, normal inclination to drink water.

Do we know anything about that sort of spiritual thirst? Has your soul ever panted after the fulness of His Spirit as the hart pants after the water brooks? We are inclined nowadays to discount the agonies of the John Bunyans of another day who were so consumed with a vehement thirst for deeper blessing that food lost its taste and sleep could not be had. A more comfortable route to Beulah land has been discovered, but it is doubtful that men fully appreciate the blessedness of living in the eighth chapter of Romans who have not fully realized the bitterness of living in the seventh. It is true that some of these godly men of old unduly neglected the flesh, but we have unduly pampered the flesh, and it is clearly evident on all sides that a shallow thirst has brought a shallow satisfaction. It is quite true that God puts no special value on tears and all-night prayers and fastings, but He does reward a thirst so intense that time and food are forgotten and tears are not repressed. Very few Christians rejoice today with the deep joy of salvation, because they have never been deeply conscious of sin and, consequently, have no profound sense of deliverance. And it is just as true that few rejoice in fulness of the Spirit because, feeling self-sufficient, they have never known desperate thirst,—and one must thirst deeply to drink deeply. "I will pour water upon HIM THAT IS THIRSTY." Deep desire is followed by deep delight.

We live in a soft generation that lives on the surface and feeds at ethical soda fountains and spiritual delicatessen shops. If we are ever to know the profound, mountain-moving, soul-stirring torrents of living water surging upward into everlasting life, we must go deeper than pink-tea conversation and academic hair-splitting over theories of the baptism and filling of the Holy Ghost. We must join the company of men dreadfully, even though sometimes dimly, in earnest; who wrestled at Jabbok and came away with shrunken sinews but also as princes of God having power with God and men. The way to a personal and experimental Pentecost is not by a shallow and superficial prayer-meeting request for more power, easily uttered and soon forgotten; it is the road of a burning and blistering thirst that will not be denied; that importunes in spite of the mockery of feelings and the misunderstanding of friends and the misery of doubt and deadness and dulness until loaves have been granted from heaven and we have been set on fire to burn up for God. This road is not easy nor popular, and shorter cuts have been devised for those who will not pay the price; but, just as he who has forgiven most loved most, he who has thirsted most has been most deeply filled, and the fuller the fountain the mightier the rivers of living water that issue forth in torrents of blessing.

Pray, therefore, first of all, for a genuine thirst and a holy heartburn such as struck the Emmaus disciples of old; and look diligently into the mirror of the Word and wait patiently before the Lord that the Spirit may show you yourself in your awful need, your heart in its exceeding sinfulness, your life in its emptiness—that you may burn in raging fever and thirst for Him in His fulness.

Only then are you ready for the next move: "If any man thirst, LET HIM COME UNTO ME." There must be a drawing near unto the Lord, not only in prayer, but in utter and absolute surrender. Everything that offends must be renounced, and we must lay all we are and have at His disposal. Not only must all be surrendered but abandoned—for surrender is not abandon, we do not always leave with Him what we commit to Him. We must be sure that we seek His blessing not for personal enjoyment, not just to boast about it, but for power in service. Just as wives often pray for the conversion of husbands not to the glory of God but only that they may have better husbands, so believers pray for fulness of the Spirit and have not because they ask amiss, that they may consume it on their lusts.

Now this matter of consecration, or surrender, or yielding, is one of those favourite topics of Christian conversation, part of that coinage of our speech which has grown familiar with much exchange, and yet, for all the handling, few of us examine it closely or know what image and superscription it bears. Christians march glibly to the front in our churches to "lay all on the altar" just as sinners file forward nowadays to "accept Christ," and then complain for the rest of their lives that they cannot see that it made any difference. It is no wonder! The depths have never been stirred, and so the depths have not been filled! We recognize that consecration as well as conversion outwardly may be manifested as quietly as an autumn sunset, but when one follows up the results of hundreds of public confessions and consecrations nowadays, he wishes there had been more noise. For all the sermons about the still, small voice, it is also well to remember that the Acts of the Apostles who turned the world upside down is not exactly what one would call a quiet book!

Coming to the Lord Jesus Christ in utter surrender and abandon for fulness of the Spirit is a profound experience that is second only to conversion, and it is amazing how men can profess it with far less concern than they go forward to receive a college diploma or marry a wife. Many who claim to follow Him are of the mixed multitude and soon turn back (Exodus 12:38; Numbers 11:4). Some are soon drawn away because of the uncounted cost, the unburied corpse and the unforsaken circle (Luke 9:57-62). Our Lord does not commit Himself to such, for He knows what is in man (John 2:23-25). Others "rededicate their lives," but the "high places" are not

removed (I Kings 15:14). Among others, the bushel of business and the bed of pleasure have not been taken from the candle of testimony (Mark 4:21). In one way or another, superficial. Christians come in shallow consecration, but they cannot drink deeply because, being still partly full of self, they cannot be completely filled with Him!

The whole matter goes back again to "IF ANY MAN THIRST." There is no way around that "if." Let a man thirst for water deeply enough and he will gladly renounce anything else for a drink. LET A MAN CRAVE THE FULNESS OF THE SPIRIT DEEPLY ENOUGH AND HE WILL GLADLY MAKE FULL SURRENDER. But this he must do, he must be emptied of all else to drink deeply of the Spirit.

And now the thirsting and the coming are followed by the drinking: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me AND DRINK." Right here many earnest seekers grow sadly confused. We are so confirmed in the "seeing-is-believing" viewpoint that it is not easy for faith to receive what sight does not first perceive. Anyone who has experienced conversion, receiving Christ by faith for salvation, ought have no difficulty with this further step. Just as we receive the Saviour for forgiveness and sonship, just so do we receive the Holy Spirit for power in service. Of course, the Spirit came at Pentecost in a special sense at the beginning of the dispensation. Also, He regenerates the believer and indwells Him (John 3:5, 6; I Corinthians 6:19), and by the Spirit we are baptized into the body of Christ (I Corinthians 12:13). The filling of the Spirit has been provided and should be ours from the very outset, but what is ours by provision is not always ours in conscious possession. Therefore, the Christian who, although saved, is conscious of lack of power and peace and joy must definitely appropriate the Spirit, receive the power, drink of the living water, just as he received Christ for salvation.

The Scriptures speak of being "baptized" with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5), "filled" with the Spirit (Acts 2:4; 4:31), of the Holy Ghost "falling" upon believers (Acts 10:44) and "coming" upon them (Acts 19:6), and of believers "receiving" the Spirit (Acts 8:17). Good men have differed greatly about the meaning of these terms. It has been pointed out that baptism is the act and the filling the result, just as a cup is filled when it is immersed. As usual, Christians have argued over the expressions more than they have enjoyed the experience. Just as we speak of regeneration as the work of God, and believing as the "under side"—our side of regeneration—so the experience of the Spirit's fulness is spoken of as a falling upon or coming upon believers from above, while the believer's part is, of course, the receiving. We cannot afford to minimize either side. There is much teaching today about "claiming promises" that would have us easily take what we want and go lightly along imagining we have it, only to realize down the road that we are acting a sort of glorified auto-suggestion and self-hypnosis. The emphasis is upon the subjective and not enough attention is paid God's side, the tremendous overwhelming from above. Many teachers discredit long prayers and waitings before the Lord, failing to see that, although sometimes they are false exercises, they are necessary to humble and quiet the believer before God and do indicate a real thirst. It is natural that this generation, not disposed to "wait" for anything, should prefer a quicker way to get the blessing with the least amount of trouble. But such short cuts tend to magnify the human side and obscure the stupendous truth that this blessing is God overwhelming men and submerging them in His flood tides of power, by which we become not mere pitchers to be filled but fountains sending forth torrents of living water. And the results of this teaching are evident today in rather tame experiences which, for all their receiving, seem poor products of Pentecost.

But it is also possible so to think of this blessing as a coming-down from above that men expect God to do it all, and so they wait and pray for what they should receive. When one genuinely thirsts, and has come to the Lord in utter surrender and abandon, and has waited until the depths have been sounded and the soul quieted, then we must drink, faith must appropriate the Spirit's filling. "Drink" is not passive, it is something we are to do. The thirsting man might contemplate and appreciate water set before him, might wait before it for "something to happen," but the next thing to happen is for him to drink. Here earnest seekers have lost sleep and fasted and beaten their heads on the floor, even as Whitefield lived for some time on sage tea without sugar, and coarse bread, and prayed one night under a tree in the coldest weather, and practiced severe austerities in vain until he learned to look unto Christ. Others have fancied that they must have rare experiences like Finney, with waves of feeling like electricity sweeping hungry nerves, and so have dictated terms to the Lord. All this is beside the point. There must come that definite moment of contact when faith takes what the eye cannot see. It takes both giving and receiving to complete the gift. All God's giving without our receiving would be an incomplete transaction. To come to Christ and drink, therefore, is to receive, after the antecedent conditions have been met—the filling of the Spirit as provided and promised in the Word. It should be a fixed and definite step at a certain hour and moment, a clear-cut act of faith regardless of feeling.

Dr. Torrey waited for days in his study until the Lord spoke to his heart, "The blessing is yours. Now go and preach." Dr. Len G. Broughton tells of attending a convention after he entered the ministry and was convicted of powerlessness. Invited to come forward to kneel and surrender wholly to Christ and by faith accept the blessing, he went and received. A friend asked how he felt. "I didn't ask for feeling," he replied, "I was asking for the Holy Spirit." "How do you know you have anything more than you have had?" "I know it," he said, "just as I know I have Christ; I know it by faith." He had gone for filling, not feeling, and he received.

On this feast day our Lord not only invited us to drink, but said further: "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water." "He that believeth on me" applies first of all, of course, to the initial faith in Christ for

salvation, but it is also the secret of the Spirit-filled life. We are not only to drink of Christ in one initial filling of the Spirit but we are to drink and keep on drinking—"being filled with the Spirit"—and that is done by faith that continuously believes on Him and looks unto Him. Christ lives in the believer, and this life is lived "by the faith of the Son of God" (Galatians 2:20).

Here is the supreme difficulty with earnest seekers after the fulness of the Spirit. Many have thirsted, have come to the Lord, have surrendered, have received the Spirit's filling, yet they dolefully lament that they see no difference; it did not last, the peace and power have departed. The reason is evident: they drank but they have not kept on drinking. "He that believeth on me" means more than believing on Him for the first filling; it means a continuous believing, an off-looking unto Jesus day by day. The rivers of living water are not flowing because the fountain of the heart is clogged and choked with doubt. "YET BELIEVING, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8). "Said I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?" (John 11:40).

Right at this point we fail to walk by faith and try to walk by sight. For a few days after receiving the blessing it is easy usually to walk in the light of the new experience. But soon one is struck with a dull mood; he may withdraw something that has been committed, or fail to obey on some point; he may look away from Jesus to his own feelings, circumstances, problems; he may have expected one filling to carry him through; he may become self-centered and seek merely to enjoy the blessing instead of overflowing in blessing to others. At any rate, crisis is not followed by continuance, and we forget that the same faith which appropriates the blessing at the outset keeps on drinking, so that the fountain keeps on springing up and overflowing in torrents of living water.

Our Lord said to the woman at Jacob's well: "Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life" (John 4:14). We are accustomed to speak of ourselves as empty vessels, to be filled each day with the Spirit, but that is not Scriptural. We are not empty pitchers to be refilled each morning: we are fountains that should evermore be springing up and overflowing, and our part is not to come empty each morning to be filled, but so to abide in Him by faith that we shall continually, night and day, be active channels of His Spirit. We are empty only as we allow the heart to be choked with sin, so that the stream cannot flow. It is not service that exhausts our power so that we need replenishing; sin clogs the inflow and needs to be removed. We are never emptied because of the outflow of blessing but because of trouble with the inflow of power.

So, as we drink and keep on drinking by believing on Him, there is the blessed experience of overflowing: "From within him shall flow rivers of living water." This, our Lord said, is according to what the Scriptures had said. There is no such statement given verbatim in the Old Testament, but the blessed figure of the well-watered life runs throughout. "I will pour out my spirit upon you" (Proverbs 1:23). "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters" (Song of Solomon 4:15). "I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water" (Isaiah 41:18). "I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert" (Isaiah 43:19). "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah 44:3). "And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not" (Isaiah 58:11). "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh" (Joel 2:28).

Certainly the Scriptures describe for us a life continually-well watered and abundant, a fountain springing up and overflowing. But when one looks around at most Christian lives, he sees not gardens with waters that fail not, but dried-up and unproductive hearts living in a spiritual drought, with only occasional showers of blessing, perhaps at the annual revival. In the Acts it was surprising to meet believers who were NOT filled with the Spirit (19:1-7); now it is a surprise to meet a believer who IS filled with the Spirit!

And where is that exuberant joy of those who draw water from the wells of salvation? If these Jews at the feast could so rejoice over a hollow ceremony of pouring out water from Siloam that it was said "whoever has not witnessed it has never seen rejoicing at all," how hilarious should we be who drink of His living water! Leaving our figure of water for a moment, it is interesting to note that three times in the New Testament wine and the Holy Spirit are spoken of in the same connection. John the Baptist was not to drink wine but to be filled with the Spirit (Luke 1:15); the Spirit-filled believers at Pentecost were accused of being full of new wine (Acts 2:13); we are exhorted, "Be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit" (Ephesians 5:18). Wine changes the face, the walk, the talk, creates a commotion, and stimulates to hilarity, though it be a false joy; but the Holy Spirit fires the soul with heavenly wine and produces a holy hilarity. Immediately after reading in Ephesians, "Be filled with the Spirit" we read, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord" (5:19). There is the fountain overflowing with melodious joy!

It must ever be remembered that these rivers of living water must overflow in testimony and service. There is no reference to the blessing of the Spirit in the Bible that is not connected with its practical outflowing for the good of others. So long as this blessing is sought as an end in itself, it never can be obtained, because the purpose of it is to give power for service. It is not a true fountain that keeps its waters within itself and does not overflow. The primary purpose of His infilling is neither to make us holy nor happy, although it does both, but to empower us to testify and serve. If it does not issue in love for souls and testimony and faithful labour

for the Lord, it is a false blessing. "Ye shall receive power, when the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8, R.V.).

Some think the gift of an evangelist is the mark of every Spirit-filled believer. Some think every one who has received must have a spectacular experience like Finney's, and fall into a trance or see visions. Others expect a certain rush of feeling or ecstasy of joy, and are disappointed when they must go on "dry faith," trusting the plain promise in the Word. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal, the Spirit dividing gifts to every man severally, as He will. We are not to dictate to Him the manner of His manifestation. It may take the form of a wonderful joy or a vision. It may issue in a quiet peace. We may see the evidence in new freedom in preaching or testimony, in greater results in soul-winning. There will be a manifestation, you may be sure of that. But ours is to drink and then believe the work is done because of the statement of the Word, leaving God to give the witness when and as He will.

The dissatisfaction so evident among Christians today arises, therefore, from many causes. Some have never really thirsted, so the satisfaction is shallow. Others have thirsted but have not come in utter surrender to the Lord or, if they have, they have not abandoned what has been committed, or else they have withdrawn something that was committed. Others have never taken the definite step of drinking, by faith receiving the filling. With some the fountain has become clogged by disobedience at some point, by failure to read the Word and pray, and by looking away from Christ to self. Others have sought the blessing for personal enjoyment, or have wanted some peculiar manifestation which the Spirit was not pleased to give. And perhaps by far the most have thought that one experience would automatically take care of everything from then on, instead of daily believing on Christ, yielding to Him, abiding in Him, keeping the channel clear so that Spirit may ever well up and out in rivers of living water. There is no experience which will, as if by magic, relieve us of the need of moment-by-moment looking unto Jesus, for then we would not need faith.

If the experience is defective, it is always because somewhere along this road of thirsting, coming, drinking, daily believing and overflowing, there has been neglect or disobedience. The doctrine is true: the defect lies somewhere in the lapse of duty.

Observe, finally, that the Spirit within the believer is "a well of water springing up into everlasting life." Just as Christ in us is but the hope of glory, greater glory to come (Colossians 1:27), and as the Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, foretaste of more to follow (Ephesians 1:14), so the Spirit-filled life ever increases from joy to joy, from power to more power, until it comes to perfection in heaven. "Spiritual life springs up toward its own perfection in eternal life." The Spirit-filled believer abounds more and more, day by day, in holiness and love and testimony and service, ever rising toward the glorious consummation in glory. "The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day" (Proverbs 4:18).

There is all the difference between this life of conscious power and peace and victory and the cheap "believism" current today,—as much difference as between the pouring out of the water from Siloam and the living waters of the Lord. This is no vague experience of trying to imagine that one has what it is more and more evident that he does not have. Whoever has known vividly this consuming thirst, who has come and received by true faith, not an easy assent to a fact, will find that the Spirit will soon bear witness with his spirit to the reality of the transaction. The confirmation will come: it may not come immediately; it may not come in blinding, dazzling fashion; it may not come in the manner expected or desired; but come it will if we drink and keep on drinking by simple faith in Him. Mind you, we are distinctly promised that we shall not thirst again (John 4:14). If we have received and are still drinking, and the channels are clear, we shall never thirst again. That part of the experience need never be repeated. Meet His simple conditions, and you will be conscious day by day of His Spirit welling up into everlasting life and flowing out in rivers of living water. "Up" and "out," those are the two directions of His power, upward ever toward perfection, outward ever in streams of blessing.

Hear Him Who still stands among the hollow ceremonies of earth, the futile outpourings of water from Siloam, calling, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters." "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." ([The Secret of Christian Joy](#))

EXCURSUS ON THE FEAST OF BOOTHS

Context is always critical for accurate interpretation in Bible study, but is especially important to set the stage for Jesus' dramatic invitation in John 7:37-39. Therefore it is important to be familiar with the historical and cultural context of the **Feast of Booths** (**Feast of Tabernacles, Feast of Ingathering, Festival of Shelters, Festival of Tabernacles, Sukkoth, Sukkot**). We will begin with the Biblical command to Israel to celebrate this feast and then look at the extra-Biblical descriptions.

In Leviticus 23 Moses records God's commandment to celebrate the Feast of Booths which was to begin on the 15th day of Tishri (the 7th month), which was five days after the Day of Atonement. ...

Again the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 34 “Speak to the sons of Israel, saying, ‘On the **fifteenth of this seventh month (Tishrei/Tishri - first month of civil year, seventh month of the ecclesiastical year)** is the **Feast of Booths** for **seven days** (Dt. 16:13; Ezek. 45:25) to the LORD. 35 ‘On the first day is a holy convocation; you shall do no laborious work of any kind. 36 ‘For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the **eighth day** you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work. 37 ‘These are the appointed times of the LORD which you shall proclaim as holy convocations, to present offerings by fire to the LORD—burnt offerings and grain offerings, sacrifices and drink offerings, each day’s matter on its own day— 38 besides those of the Sabbaths of the LORD, and besides your gifts and besides all your votive and freewill offerings, which you give to the LORD. 39 ‘On exactly the **fifteenth day of the seventh month**, when you have gathered in the crops of the land, you shall celebrate the feast of the LORD for seven days (Note **Sukkot** was a celebration - the harvest had been brought in - how interesting that Sukkot is the feast that will be celebrated in the **Millennium** when Messiah returns [Zech 14:16-21] and "all Israel will be saved," [Ro 11:25-26-notes] when the last harvest of souls is brought in!), with a rest on the first day and a **rest on the eighth day**. 40 ‘Now on the first day you shall take for yourselves the foliage of beautiful trees, palm branches and boughs of leafy trees and willows of the brook, and **you shall rejoice** (Heb = samach - be glad; Lxx = **euphraino** = celebrate, be jubilant - Lk 15:32 = celebrate return of prodigal son; Rev 18:20 - last use in Bible) before the LORD your God for seven days. 41 ‘You shall thus **celebrate** (Heb = chagag - make a pilgrimage; Lxx = **heortazo** = celebrate a festival) it as a feast to the LORD for seven days in the year. It shall be a perpetual statute throughout your generations; you shall celebrate it in the seventh month. 42 **You shall live in booths** (Heb = sukkah; Lxx = skene = tents, temporary abode - see verb **skeno**) for seven days; all the native-born in Israel **shall live in booths**, 43 **so that (terms of purpose or result)** your generations may know (Heb = yada; Lxx = **horao** = literally to see with eyes but figuratively to know experientially and personally) that I had the sons of Israel live in **booths (see all OT uses)** when I brought them out from the land of Egypt (**NB**: So Sukkot was a time of celebration of the last ingathering of the year and a time to remember what God provided then and now). I am the LORD your God.” 44 So (**term of conclusion**) Moses declared to the sons of Israel the appointed times of the LORD. (Leviticus 23:33-43)

The **Feast of Booths** was a memorial ordained by God to help Israel remember how He had graciously and tenderly cared for them during their 40 years of wilderness wandering. In Exodus 16 Israel grumbled against the Lord and He provided them with meat and manna (Ex 16:12-13) to satiate their hunger and water to quench their thirst. In Exodus 17 we read of the Jehovah's provision of water in a no water environment which created a deep physical thirst in the people of Israel...

Then all the congregation of the sons of Israel journeyed by stages from the wilderness of Sin, according to the command of the LORD, and camped at **Rephidim** (Means "Rests" or "Resting places"), and there was **no water for the people to drink**. 2 Therefore (**term of conclusion**) the people quarreled with Moses and said, “Give us water that we may drink.” And Moses said to them, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the LORD?” 3 But **the people thirsted there for water**; and they grumbled against Moses and said, “Why, now, have you brought us up from Egypt, to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst?” 4 So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, “What shall I do to this people? A little more and they will stone me.” 5 Then (**expression of time**) the LORD said to Moses, “Pass before the people and take with you some of the elders of Israel; and take in your hand your staff with which you struck the Nile (Ex 7:20-21), and go. 6 “Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock at Horeb (Horeb means "barren, desolation, dryness, desert") **Note**: God Himself stood on the Rock! How? Very possibly His **Shekinah glory cloud** ; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink.” And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. 7 He named the place **Massah (note)** and **Meribah (note)** because of the quarrel of the sons of Israel, and because they tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us, or not?” (Exodus 17:1-7, for other mentions of Jehovah bringing forth water from a rock see Nu 20:8, 10-11, Dt 8:15, Ps 78:16, 20, Ps 105:41, Ps 114:8 [a psalm in the Hallel], and for the meaning see below 1Cor 10:1-4)

The dedication of Solomon's Temple took place at the Feast of Tabernacles at which time the **Shekinah glory of Jehovah** also dramatically appeared. One cannot help but see in these events a foreshadowing of the time when **Jesus** (Who displayed "glory as of the only begotten from the Father" = Jn 1:14-note) appearing in the Temple area at the Feast of Tabernacles some 900 years later in John 7:37-39!.

All the men of Israel assembled themselves to King Solomon **at the feast**, in the month Ethanim (Means "perennial" in reference to the streams that still contained water during this normally dry month in September-October. It was later called Tishri), which is the seventh month....It happened that when the priests came from

the holy place, the cloud (**Shekinah glory**) filled the house of the LORD, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for **the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD** Then Solomon said, **"The LORD has said that He would dwell in the thick cloud** I have surely built You a lofty house, A place for Your dwelling forever." (1Kgs 8:2, 10-13)

Even before the destruction of Solomon's Temple by the Babylonians, the glory of the Jehovah departed from the house of the LORD (Read about this progressive departure in Ezekiel 8-11 - see especially Ezek 8:4, Ezek 9:3, 10:4, Ezek 10:18-19, Ezek 11:22 and the last description of God's glory in Ezek 11:23 = "The glory of the LORD went up from the midst of the city and stood over the mountain which is east of the city." - **Click for pictorial description of the departure of the Shekinah Glory**). As an aside Ezekiel envisioned not only the departure but also the return of God's glory returning to the Millennial Temple (Ezekiel 43:2-5). However before this will be fulfilled in the future, we note that the glory did return for a brief time in the presence of Jesus (Jn 1:14-note), but Israel "did not recognize the time of their visitation." (Luke 19:44) Jesus' statement in Luke clearly indicates that the nation of Israel (especially the religious leaders) should have been able to discern the time when the Messiah was coming the first time!

After the 70 years of exile in Babylon, a portion of the Jews returned to Jerusalem. At this time Ezra read from the Book of the Law about the celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles (Neh 8:1-11). Read this great section of Scripture, which records the returning exile's great reverence for the Word of God and the impact the Word had on their hearts! O Father, might this to be the Spirit wrought effect in every church, every time the Word of Christ is read and explained! Amen. Indeed, the Word of God is living and active and cutting! Heb 4:12-13.

All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them. 13 Then on the second day the heads of fathers' households of all the people, the priests, and the Levites were gathered to Ezra the scribe that they might gain insight into the words of the law. 14 And they found written in the law how the LORD had commanded through Moses that the sons of Israel should **live in booths during the feast of the seventh month**. 15 So they proclaimed and circulated a proclamation in all their cities and in Jerusalem, saying, "Go out to the hills, and bring olive branches, and wild olive branches, myrtle branches, palm branches (**see Lulab**), and branches of other leafy trees (**see Etrog**), to make booths, as it is written." 16 So the people went out and brought them and made booths for themselves, each on his roof, and in their courts, and in the courts of the house of God, and in the square at the Water Gate, and in the square at the Gate of Ephraim. 17 And the entire assembly of those who had returned from the captivity made booths and lived in them. The sons of Israel had indeed not done so from the days of Joshua the son of Nun to that day. And there was great rejoicing. 18 And he read from the book of the law of God daily, from the first day to the last day. And they celebrated the feast seven days, and on the eighth day there was a solemn assembly according to the ordinance. (Neh. 8:12-18).

In Nehemiah 9 after reading **the book of the law of the LORD their God for a fourth of the day** (Neh 9:3), the Levites offered up a long, profound prayer (Neh 9:5-38) of praise to God, including praise for His provision during their wilderness wanderings...

You (Jehovah) provided bread from heaven for them for their hunger, You **brought forth water from a rock** for them for their **thirst**, And You told them to enter in order to possess The land which You swore to give them...20 "You gave Your good Spirit to instruct them, Your manna You did not withhold from their mouth, And **You gave them water for their thirst**. 21 "Indeed, forty years You provided for them in the wilderness and they were not in want; Their clothes did not wear out, nor did their feet swell. (Neh 9:15, 20-21)

In the NT, **Paul** explains God's physical provisions in Exodus 16 and Exodus 17 were a foreshadowing of God's spiritual provision in Christ (cp Col 2:16-17) writing

For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea; 2 and all were baptized into (identified with) Moses in the cloud and in the sea; 3 and all ate the same spiritual food (the manna = Ex. 16:1-36; Ps. 78:25); 4 and all drank the same spiritual drink, for they were drinking from a spiritual rock which followed them; and the rock was Christ. (1Cor 10:1-4-note) (**See related discussion - Typology-Study of Types** = Great caution and discernment is necessary when interpreting OT stories as types!)

Thus Paul explains that the SMITTEN ROCK in Exodus 17 was in fact a type of Christ, "a SPIRITUAL ROCK which followed Israel; and the ROCK WAS CHRIST." (1Cor 10:4) Fanny Crosby pictured this NT fulfillment writing "Though my weary steps may falter, And my soul a-thirst may be, Gushing from the ROCK before me, Lo! A Spring of joy I see." Amen! Just as life giving waters flowed from the rock smitten by Moses to quench the thirst of a multitude, the smiting of the rock prefigured the life giving waters that flowed from Christ's pierced side (Jn 19:34-note), providing "**LIVING WATER**" to many, the Rock Himself declaring that "whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall become in him a well of water springing up to

eternal life." (Jn 4:10, 14-[note](#)). All who drink of this water may joyfully sing "I've got a river of life flowin' out of me. Makes the lame to walk and the blind to see. Opens prison doors, sets the captives free. I've got a river of life flowin' out of me. Spring up Oh Well. Within my soul. Spring up Oh Well And make me whole. Spring up Oh Well And give to me That life abundantly." (P. Wickham)

The Jews were required to attend **3 festivals** each year, Moses recording that...

Three times in a year all your males shall appear before the LORD your God in the place which He chooses, at the Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) and at the Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) and at the Feast of Booths (Tabernacles), and they shall not appear before the LORD empty-handed. (Deut 16:16)

Jewish Encyclopedia on **etrog** - **Etrog** is the Hebrew name of the [citron fruit](#) of a tree of the orange and lemon family....The **etrog** is used with the "**lulab**" at the Feast of Booths or Sukkot. Of the four species of plants enumerated in Leviticus 23:40, on which the carrying of the lulab is based, tradition takes "the fruit of splendid trees" (ESV)...to designate the **citron**....It is evident from Josephus and the Talmud that the custom of carrying the lulab and the etrog was well established in the time of the Maccabees.

Jewish Encyclopedia on **lulab** - Name given to the festive palm-branch which with the **Etrog** is carried and waved on the Feast of Tabernacles (Sukkot). The three constituents of the lulab are: (1) a shoot of the palm-tree in its folded state before the leaves are spread out this must be at least three handbreadths long, so that it may be waved, and must be bound round with a twig or tendril of its own kind (2) three twigs of myrtle of the species which has its leaves in whorls of three and (3) two willow-branches of the kind of which the wood is reddish and the leaves are long and entire (Suk. 29b, 32b, 34a). In the Temple...The use of the lulab is closely connected with the reciting of the Hallel (Ps 113-118). In the Second Temple it was waved during the recitation of the passages expressive of thanksgiving or prayer...After the additional sacrifices of the day had been offered the **lulab** and **etrog** were carried in procession around the altar in the court while Ps 118:25 ("O LORD, do save, we beseech You; O LORD, we beseech You, do send prosperity!") or the refrain, was chanted....The ordinance of the **lulab** is derived from Leviticus 23:40 : "And ye shall take you on the first day the fruit of goodly trees, branches of palm-trees, and the boughs of thick trees, and willows of the brook: and ye shall rejoice before the Lord your God seven days." Aside from the palm-branch and the willows the passage does not specify what shall be used and the interpretation of the "fruit of goodly trees" and the "boughs of thick trees" to mean the **etrog** and **myrtle** respectively, as also the precise manner of using the four species, rests on tradition

Sukkot (Festival of Booths ["tabernacles" Leviticus 23:34 Deuteronomy 16:13]), lasting seven days, from the fifteenth to the twenty-second of the tenth month (Tishri), the first day being a holy convocation. For seven days offerings had to be brought (Numbers 29:13), the eighth day being also a holy convocation (" Aḡ eret" Numbers 29:35). Labor ceased on the first and eighth days. This feast was also known as "H ag ha-Asif" ("the festival of ingathering" Exodus 23:16). The celebration was marked by the erection of booths, in which to dwell during seven days, and by the waving of palm-leaves with the fruit of the " eḡ hadar" ("goodly tree" Leviticus 23:40). See Tabernacles, Feast of .

Kent Hughes on the celebration associated with the Feast of Booths - Rabbinical literature tells us that each morning great multitudes would gather at the Temple of Herod. They would come with a citrus fruit in their left hands, known in Hebrew as an [etrog](#). The etrog was a reminder of the land to which God had brought them and of their bountiful blessings. In their right hands the people would carry a [lulab](#), which was a combination of three trees—a palm tree, a willow, and a myrtle, emblematic of the stages of their ancestors' journey through the wilderness. Each morning the people gathered together, and after the priest was sure everything was in order, he would hold out a golden pitcher. The crowds would then follow the priest to the Pool of Siloam, chanting some of the great Psalms and waving their lulabs in rhythm. As they approached the Pool of Siloam, the priest would dip his pitcher into the water,] and the people would recite some beautiful words from Isaiah 12:3-[note](#): "**With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.**" (**Editorial Comment:** The Hebrew word for **salvation** is **yeshuah** derived from yasha which means to deliver gives us the Greek name "**Jesus**" = transliteration of Hebrew Yeshua - 03091. And so this sentence could be read: "You will joyously draw water from the springs of Jesus!") Then the crowd would march back to the temple, entering through the Water Gate to the blast of the priests' trumpets. The priest would then circle the altar once, ascend with accompanying priests to the platform, and pour the water out. This was a daily event.

Isaiah recalls God's kindness and His gracious gift to ungrateful grumblers...

They did not **thirst** when He led them through the deserts. **He made the water flow out of the rock for them**; He split the rock and the water **gushed forth** (Heb = zub = flowed; Lxx = **rheo** = flow, as river and the very verb used by John in Jn 7:38 = "will flow", the only use in the NT). (Isa 48:21)

Comment: The world is a spiritual desert for both saints and sinners alike, but believers need not traverse this spiritually barren land in thirst, for they can ever drink from the Rock of Ages, Christ Jesus. We drink from Him the first time for salvation, but must drink continually from Him for sanctification by His Spirit. Is your soul dry and parched spiritually? Perhaps the cause could be failure to drink living (life giving) water from Jesus and the Spirit! There is a popular commercial on television that ends with the macho man exhorting the listener to

"**Stay thirsty, my friends!**" This would be a good exhortation for all of God's children, to be thirsty remembering that "Blessed is he who hungers and thirsts for righteousness, for he will be satisfied." (Mt 5:6-note)

The historian Josephus referred to the Feast of Booths as the holiest and greatest of all the Jewish feasts.

THE SEVEN GREAT FEASTS OF ISRAEL							
1st Month = Nisan Festival of Passover (Pesach)			3rd Month = Sivan Feast of Pentecost	I N T E R L U D E	7th Month = Tishri Festival of Booths (Tabernacles) (Sukkot)		
Passover Pesach	Unleavened Bread	First Fruits	Feast of Weeks		Feast of Trumpets	Day of Atonement	Feast of Booths
Lamb's blood on Door Ex 12:6-7	Purging Leaven (Sin)	Wave Offering (Promise of Harvest to come)	Wave Offering of two loaves of leavened bread (promise of harvest to come)		Trumpet Blown - A Holy Convocation	Atonement shall be made to cleanse you Lev 16:30	Celebrates harvest, memorial of God's care in wilderness
1st Month, 14th Day Lev 23:5	1st Month, 15th Day Lev 23:6-8 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)	Day after Sabbath Lev 23:9-14	50 Days after first fruits Lev 23:14-21		7th Month, 1st Day Lev 23:23-25 (A Sabbath)	7th Month, 10th Day Lev 23:26-32 (A Sabbath)	7th Mo, 15th Day 7 Days; Convocation on 8th Day Lev 23:33-44 (1st & 8th are Sabbath)
Christ our Passover has been sacrificed	Clean out the old leaven...just as you are in fact unleavened	Christ has been raised...the first fruits	Promise of the Spirit, Mystery of Church - Jews and Gentiles in one body		Regathering of Israel before final day of atonement Jer 32:37-41	Israel repents and looks to Christ in one day Zech 3:9-10, 12:10, 13:1, 14:9	All families come to Jerusalem for Feast of Booths Zech 14:16-19
1Cor 5:7	1Cor 5:7-8	1Cor 15:20-23	Acts 2:1-47 1Cor 2:13 Eph 2:11-12		Ezekiel 36:24	Ezekiel 36:25- 27 Heb 9-10 Ro 11:25-29	Ezek 36:28

The Jewish writings in the [Mishnah](#) help us understand something of the prevalent joyful mood and celebratory atmosphere of the Jews in Jerusalem at the time of this great festival...

"The pipes [were played sometimes on] five [days], and [sometimes on] six days. This means, the pipes [music] played on during the water-drawing, which does not supersede either the Sabbath or the festival. They [the sages] said, "He who has not witnessed the rejoicings at the water-drawing, has, throughout the whole of his life, witnessed no [real] rejoicing." ([Mishnah Sukkah 5.1](#))

So clearly the Feast of Booths was a time of great joy for the Jews in Jerusalem.

How was the pouring out of the **water**? A golden pitcher, that held three lugs was filled with water from the [brook] Siloah. When they came [with it] to the water-gate, they blew a blast, a long note, and again a blast. The priest then ascended the stair [of the altar], and turned to the left; two silver basins stood there. R. Jehudah saith, "they were of gypsum [stucco], but had a dark appearance from the **wine**." Each was perforated with a small hole, like a nostril [at the bottom]. The one [for the wine] somewhat wider, the other [for the water] narrower, that both might get empty at once. The one, to the west, [was used] for the **water**; the

other, to the east, for the wine: but if the water was poured into the wine basin, or the wine into the water basin, it was legal. R. Jehudah saith, "They poured out one lug on each of the eight days. To him who poured out the water the people called, 'Raise thy hand;' for once it happened that one [priest charged with this duty] poured the water over his feet, and all the people pelted him to death with their citrons." ([Mishnah Sukkah 5.1](#))

Lev 23:36 'For seven days you shall present an offering by fire to the LORD. On the eighth day you shall have a holy convocation and present an offering by fire to the LORD; it is an assembly. You shall do no laborious work.

Andrew Lincoln - In the first century CE (the Feast of Booths) celebrated the completion of the harvest and was associated with God's guidance of Israel when the people lived in tents during the wilderness experience at the time of the exodus, but it had also become linked with the salvation God would provide at the eschaton (cf. Zech. 14:16-19)...The chief element in the celebration would have been the making of booths, in which the men slept and ate during the first seven days. On these days there was a procession to the Pool of Siloam to gather water and four large menorahs were set up in the court of the women, providing light to enable the celebrants to dance there through the night. Both the water/rain and the light imagery are taken up in the depiction of eschatological salvation in Zech. 14:6-8, 17. Both kinds of imagery would also have been linked with the provision offered by Torah. Here in John the former will be applied to Jesus in chapter 7 and the latter in chapter 8. The manna or bread, also associated with Torah, has just been depicted in chapter 6 as embodied in Jesus and the thematic sequence of the Christological application of bread, water and light imagery makes sense of the present arrangement of chapters, despite the geographical disruption caused by placing the material of chapter 6 between the Jerusalem controversies in chapters 5 and 7. (The Gospel according to Saint John, Black's New Testament Commentary)

The Hebrew word **שֻׁכָּאִים** is rendered in the King James Version as "booth" or "booths."

Booths (05521)(**sukkah** from **sakak** = to weave together) meant a shelter, a hut, a booth or a thicket.**Sukkah** described temporary shelters for animals (Ge 33:17), soldiers (2Sa 11:11), prophets (Jonah 4:5). In Lev 23:42-43 it refers to the booths constructed for the harvest feast, the Feast of Booths (Hebrew transliterated = *hag* [feast] *hassukkot*), which was held in the Fall (15th of Tishri - late Sept to Oct - see **table** for the Seven Great Feasts of Israel)

The **Feast of Booths** is often referred to as "the feast/festival" (without using the word "Booths" or "Tabernacles") (1Ki 8:2, 65, 12:32, 2Chr 5:3, 7:8, Neh 8:14, 18, Ezek 45:25.) The dedication of Solomon's temple took place during the time of this festival and so it points to the importance of this feast (1 Kgs 8:2, 65-66). The location of the feast is now "at the place the LORD will choose," and this probably indicates the centralizing of Israelite worship in the Jerusalem temple (Deut 16:15).

TWOT - Most commonly, (**sukkah**) is used in connection with the Feast of Tabernacles. Once a year the Israelite left his home to tabernacle in a "booth," made from tree branches (Lev 23:34ff.). The feast marked not only the joy and thankfulness of a grateful people for God's provision at the end of the agricultural season (Lev 23:39-41), but was to be a perpetual reminder (Deut 16:13ff.) to the people of God's care for his own whom he had rescued from Egypt during those long years in the wilderness (Lev 23:42-43). The feast was closed by a day of rest, featured by a holy convocation, marking not only the climax of the religious year but symbolizing the rest of the believer in his God (Lev 23:39). Prophetically, the feast finds final fulfillment in that grand day when God will raise up the fallen booth of David (Amos 9:11) and give shelter to his repentant, redeemed, and re-gathered people (Isa 4:6). (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament)

TWOT on the derivation of **sukkah** - The basic meaning of the root (of **sukkah**) is that of blocking, or stopping up something....This important root is productive in both a physical and figurative sense, particularly with the idea of "covering." In the former sense, it was frequently used in the building activities relative to the sacred places of worship. The cherubim's wings were to cover the mercy seat in the tabernacle (Ex 37:9) and the temple (I Chr 28:18). A veil screened off the ark and the mercy seat which were located within the holy of holies (Ex 40:3, 21). The participial form yields the denominative **sōkēk**, a covering erected to protect besiegers from the defenders' missiles (Nah 2:5 [H 6]). In a figurative sense, it pictures God's protection for the one who comes to him for refuge (Ps 5:11; cf. Ps 91:4; 140:7)....

The Septuagint often translates **sukkah** with the noun **skene** which described temporary, easily moved lodging places (tents, booths) for nomads. It is fascinating that this same word (**skene**) describes our "eternal dwellings (**skene**)." (Lk 16:9). **Skene** was also used to describe the "portable sanctuary," the Tabernacle (Ex 27:21, 29:4, Lev 1:1, Heb 8:5)

Sukkah - 29v - Ge 33:17; Lev 23:34, 42-43; Deut 16:13, 16; 31:10; 2 Sam 11:11; 22:12; 1Kgs 20:12, 16; 2Chr 8:13; Ezra 3:4; Neh 8:14-17; Job 27:18; 36:29; 38:40; Ps 18:11; 31:20; Isa 1:8; 4:6; Amos 9:11; Jonah 4:5; Zech 14:16, 18-19 and translated in the NAS as - booth(1), Booths(9), booths(8), canopies(1), canopy(1), hut(1), lair(1), pavilion(1), shelter(4), temporary shelters(3).

The following Scriptures use **sukkah** in the context of the Feast of Booths or Tabernacles - Lev 23:34, 42-43, Kt 16:13, 16, 31:10, Ezra 3:4, Neh 8:14-17 and in the **Millennial (see descriptions of this glorious time)** reign of Messiah - Zech 14:16, 18-19.

The first use in Genesis 33:17 is interesting as the related proper noun Succoth is used twice - "Jacob journeyed to Succoth (derived from **sakak**), and built for himself a house and made **booths** (sukkah derived from sakak) for his livestock; therefore the place is named Succoth."

In Psalm 31:20 we see God's promised protection for the righteous - "You hide them in the secret place of Your presence from the conspiracies of man. You keep them secretly in a **shelter** (sukkah; Lxx = skene) from the strife of tongues."

Isaiah uses sukkah to describe the time of Messiah's reign on earth (Isa 4:1-5 **see discussion of "in that day"**) when He promises that "There will be a **shelter** (tabernacle - **sukkah**) to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain." (Isaiah 4:6-**see note**) In **Amos**, Jehovah uses **sukkah** to describe the time in the Millennium when "I will raise up the fallen booth (sukkah) of David, and wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old." (Amos 9:11 - note the abrupt change of emphasis from Amos 9:10 from doom to hope! Prophecy of destruction gives way to prophecy of restoration for Israel [Amos is not speaking of the Church but the nation of Israel!] - cp Acts 15:15-17) **John MacArthur** writing on Amos 9:11-15 notes that "Millennial blessings await the final faithful remnant, when Messiah personally reigns over all nations in Jerusalem upon the throne of David, and the Jews are never again pulled up from their divinely inherited land." (Study Bible)

Abridged Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew-English Lexicon on **sukkah** - thicket, booth (prop. of interwoven boughs) — 1. thicket, lurking-place of lions (cf. [2. (1) [בֵּית]. booth, crude or temporary shelter, for cattle (distinct fr. בֵּית), but also for warriors in the field; for watchers in vineyards (sim.) (sim. of frailty), for man's shelter from sun; poet. of fallen house (dynasty) of David; of clouds as (temporary) enclosure of אֱלֹהִים in storm. 3. specif. of booths, made of boughs, in which people lived at harvest-feast, hence called מִשְׁכָּנוֹתֵינוּ.

Holladay on **sukkah** - 1. thicket, as lion's den Job 38:40;—2. hut made of branches & mats: a) in vineyard Isa 1:8, shelter fm. sun Isa 4:6; for cattle Gen 33:17, travelers Lev 23:43, military camp 2Sa 11:11; metaphorically for those fearing God Ps 31:20; David's empire = Am 9:11; b) ag hassukkôt, feast of huts (trad. transl.: of booths, or of tabernacles) Lv 23:34