



## JOHN 7:25-44 (PART 2)

***On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not yet been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.***

***(verses 37-39)***

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This is an incredibly dramatic moment, purposefully orchestrated by Jesus himself. We’re not meant to miss it’s importance. Nor are we meant to forget it.

The specific Feast at which this happened was the Feast of Tabernacles, which occurred in the Fall of each year, commemorating the wilderness wanderings of God’s people as they journeyed from Egyptian slavery to “Promised Land”

freedom. It was known as “Tabernacles” for the very simple reason that part of that week-long celebration involved building a temporary hut (“tabernacle”) in which to live. Its tentative, non-permanent nature reminded God’s people of the impermanence of their wilderness experience and their ongoing reliance on the Lord’s provision.

This now was *“the last and greatest day of the Feast”* (verse 37). Those assembled in Jerusalem would have risen early from their “tabernacle”, making their way to the temple, anticipating the day’s celebration.

Once there, the mass of worshippers was divided into three groups. One group stayed to view the preparation of the morning sacrifice. Another group followed a priest outside the city gates to cut willow boughs to adorn the altar. But the third group got the most drama. Accompanied by full musical procession, they followed the High Priest down through the streets of Jerusalem to the Pool of Siloam. With golden pitcher in hand, he approached the pool, plunging it into the water with great flourish, bringing it up dripping from the surface, filled full with clear, cool liquid. That water was symbol of God’s provision in the wilderness. But more, it spoke of the promised Holy Spirit who would be poured out like streams on the thirsty ground. Sparkling and clear, it raised heartfelt anticipation.

Back up through the streets of the city the crowd followed the High Priest, entering the temple through the “Watergate”, so named for this very ceremony. To the blast of silver trumpets, he ascended the altar, meeting another priest carrying wine for the daily drink offering. Each went to opposite sides, each ready to pour their liquid into the funnel running down to the altar’s base. The wine was poured, but all eyes were on the High Priest, who raised the golden pitcher high. Voices cried out, urging him not to spill a drop. All eyes were riveted on that water.

Immediately, praise rang forth as Levites and congregation all burst into the Hallel (Psalms 113-118), shouting praise to God, the final line recited three times: *“Give thanks to the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord! Give thanks to the Lord!”*

Then, as the reverberating echoes of praise faded, there was silence. Likely that was the moment. Jesus, standing to his feet, with strong clear voice, cried out, *“If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him”* (verses 37-38).

It was entirely intentional. Every eye had focused on sparkling water, poured out. Receptive hearts yearned for the promised Holy Spirit. Here now, was the answer. Here was the fulfilment. Jesus himself promises to pour out the crystal clear provision of God's Holy Spirit. Like the provision in the wilderness. Like the refreshment of water to thirsty throats.

*"Come all you who are thirsty, come to the waters,"* says Isaiah (55:1). *"Come to me and drink,"* answers Jesus. So, give thanks for the gift given. Drink deeply. Revel in the streams of living water, welling-up within. The Spirit is here. Jesus is the gift-giver.

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*Lord Jesus, praise you that you invite me to drink fully of the Spirit. Father, thank you that you give the Spirit without limit. Holy Spirit, welcome. I receive, your refreshing work, again and again.*

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Pray:

Take time in the Lord's presence. Give thanks for the gift of the Spirit already given in Jesus. Invite him to fill you afresh with his upwelling presence. Receive. Drink deeply. Give thanks, again.