



JOHN 7:33-53 | JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES (PART 3)

- Verse 33 -
 - Presumably the **them** is the **chief priests** and the **officers** who were sent to **take him** (v. 32).
 - The words, **I go unto him...** are a reference to His coming ascension, which was prophesied in Ps. 110:1.
- Verse 34 -
 - Is this prophetic in some sense? Or simply earthly in outlook.
 - Would these leaders **seek me, and...not find me**?
 - If so, would that align with Deuteronomy 4:29, Proverbs 8:17, Jeremiah 29:13, Matthew 7:7, etc?
 - It is possible that this is a reference to the “unforgivable sin” of Matthew 12:32.
 - Compare John 13:36, spoken to Peter.
- Verses 35-36 -
 - The Judeans are speaking, wondering if Jesus will go to “the dispersion among the Greeks” (not gentiles).
 - This word is rarely translated **gentiles**, and is not the typical word for gentile.
 - Rather, it refers to the *Jews* of the diaspora. In effect, “Will he go overseas and speak to *hellenized Jews*?”
 - Compare passages like Isaiah 11:12. We see James doing this in James 1:1 and Peter in 1 Peter 1:1.
 - Because Jesus was claiming to be the Jewish Messiah, it is hard to imagine how any self-respecting Jew would wonder if He would go to the **Gentiles, and teach the Gentiles**.
 - Note that **the dispersed** is *the diaspora*, a term commonly used for *dispersed Jews*.
 - In the end, the leadership was perplexed about the statement and its ultimate meaning (v. 36).
- Verse 37 -
 - On **the last day** of the seven day feast, which was **that great day of the feast** because it was a **holy convocation** and a day of sacrifice (Lev. 23:36), Jesus gave an invitation to **come unto me, and drink**.
 - As in John 6, this is symbolic wording.
 - Why would Jesus state these words, and specifically on the last day of the feast?
 - Because at the last day of the feast the Jewish people had the once-a-year “water pouring festival.”
 - From *Chabad.org*, we learn:

“When the Holy Temple stood in Jerusalem, the “Pouring of the Water” (*nisuch hamayim*) was an important feature of the festival of Sukkot. Throughout the year, the daily offerings in the Temple were accompanied by the pouring of wine on the altar. On Sukkot, water was poured in addition to the wine.

The drawing of water for this purpose was preceded by all-night celebrations in the Temple courtyard, with music-playing Levites, torch-juggling sages and huge oil-burning lamps that illuminated the entire city. The singing and dancing went on until daybreak, when a procession would make its way to the Shiloach spring which flowed in a valley below the Temple. *A golden pitcher, holding three lugim, was filled from the Shiloach spring. When they arrived at the Water Gate, the shofar was sounded . . . [The priest] ascended the ramp [of the altar] and turned to his left . . . where there were two bowls of silver . . . with small holes [in their bottom], one wider and the other narrower so that both should empty at the same time—the western one was for the water and the eastern one for wine . . .* “For all the days of the water-drawing,” recalled Rabbi Joshua ben Chananiah, “our eyes saw no sleep,” for the nights of Sukkot were devoted to the singing, dancing and merrymaking in preparation to “draw water with joy.” And the Talmud declares: “One who did not see the joy of the water-drawing celebrations, has not seen joy in his life.” (https://www.chabad.org/library/article_cdo/aid/5042/jewish/The-Taste-of-Water.htm)

- Incidentally, the Talmud says quotes Rabbi Yehuda, that there was a year in which a Sadducee was in the place of the priest and poured the water on his feet.

“And the appointee says to the one pouring the water into the silver basin: **Raise your hand**, so that his actions would be visible, **as one time** a Sadducee priest intentionally **poured** the water **on his feet**, as the Sadducees did not accept the oral tradition requiring water libation, and in their rage **all the people pelted him with their etrogim.**” [*emphasis theirs*]
(<https://www.sefaria.org/Sukkah.48b.2?lang=bi&with=all&lang2=en>).

- Since ben Yehuda died in the second century, this incident *could* have been the same year Jesus was in Jerusalem, and during the uproar Jesus was giving a strong political *and* theological statement. This is, of course, pure speculation.

- Verses 38-39 –

- Jesus gave a promise to those who believed on Jesus as Messiah. It was a promise of receiving the Holy Spirit in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-31 and other passages.
 - This should not be equated either with the salvation of the soul by grace through faith nor of the beginning of the church. Rather, it is a promise of the prophets, reiterated by Jesus, about the fulfillment of prophecy just prior to the Day of the Lord.
 - Note that whatever is being prophesied is aligned with the Old Testament, for Jesus said, **as the scripture hath said** (v. 38). To what scripture did He make reference? Consider Isaiah 12:3, Ezekiel 47:1, Zechariah 14:8, etc. (The rabbis teach that Isaiah 12:3 are the words the priest would use in the water-pouring ceremony mentioned in verse 37).
- We now know that after the fulfillment of the prophecy regarding the giving of the Spirit (Acts 2:16) and before the Day of the Lord, God "pushed pause" and initiated the church age; an age which was heretofore unforeseen and unrevealed.