

Refresh series – part 7

Today's text: John 7:37-39

Introduction

- *On the last day, the great day of the feast*

This is a reference to the Feast of the Tabernacles that God instituted for the Jews to celebrate, in Leviticus 23. The worshipers were to bring branches or palm trees into the temple in a procession, with great joy and dancing. These branches were to be bent over the altar and form a canopy (tabernacle – hence the term 'feast of the tabernacles'). While doing this they were to recite the prayer in

Psalm 118:25: *"Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity"*

Scholars believe that it was a prayer for God to send His rain in abundance to insure fruitful seasons for the coming year.

- *On the last day, the great day of the feast*

The "last day" was supposed to be the greatest and most important day of all. According to scholars this was the most joyful day in all of the feasts of the Jews.

The priests would go to the pool of Siloam and would draw water with a golden vessel. This water would be brought into the temple while the musicians played loudly their trumpets and the congregation sung joyfully the words of **Psalm 118:25** and

Isaiah 12:3: *"Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation."*

As this was happening, they would also recite

Psalm 114:7-8: *Tremble, O earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob, ⁸Who turned the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a fountain of waters.*

This water was then poured out next to the altar before the Lord.

The last day was called the "day of the pouring out of water"! it was the day of outpouring. Joel prophesied that the 'last days' will be days of the outpouring of God's Spirit!

Acts 2:16-17 ¹⁶*But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷'And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, that I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams.*

Isaiah 44:3 - *For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring;*

It was against this background that Jesus spoke the words of John 7:37-38

On the great day of the feast there was a great announcement!

- *Jesus stood and cried out!*

This was not usual with Jesus:

Matthew 12:18-19 *“Behold! My Servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved in whom My soul is well pleased I will put My Spirit upon Him, and He will declare justice to the Gentiles. ¹⁹ He will not quarrel nor cry out, nor will anyone hear His voice in the streets.*

Jesus got loud! He had an announcement that was to be heard over the sound of the trumpets and whatever else was going on there.

- *If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.*

On the most important day of the feast, Jesus makes the most important announcement: everything they were doing was a representation of everything Jesus came to do and of the outpouring that was going to come. It was all about Jesus.

- He is our tabernacle
- He is the answer to the prayer of Psalm 118: 25 (*Save now, I pray, O Lord; O Lord, I pray, send now prosperity*). He is the Jesus who saves now and sends prosperity – rain and abundant fruitfulness.
- He is the fulfilment of Isaiah 12:3 (*“Therefore with joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”*). He comes to offer fresh waters and impart the joy of our salvation.
- He was the Rock that they recited in Psl. 114 that became pools of water and a fountain of waters.

He said, “*come to Me*”. They were invited to come to Jesus and receive experientially what the feast represented symbolically.

‘*Come to Me*’ – no longer to religion, to types and shadows, but to the very Source of Living Waters and refreshment: Jesus!

They no longer needed the waters of Siloam nor of any other fountain because as Jesus said to the Samaritan woman in **John 4:14**: *but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”*

This ‘refreshment’ that we have been talking about over the past 6 weeks is found in Jesus. He is the source of it and He made it available to anyone who fills these 4 pre-requisites. Anyone who

- **Accepts the invitation to come to Him**
- **Believes** (*38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.* *39 But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive).*
- **Thirsts**– this is such an important prerequisite.

Here's how one scholar defined what it means to 'thirst' in this context: *"This means the eager, famishing, all-consuming craving and passion of the soul for the complete union with God and the fullness of the Spirit"*

Revelation 21:6 - *6 And He said to me, "It is done I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. 22:17 - And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever **desires**, let him take the water of life freely*

Psalms 42:1,2 - *As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God. 2 My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?*

Psalms 63:1 - *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.*

- **Drinks**

Any gift needs to be received. We are encouraged to freely drink the unlimited power and fullness of the Holy Spirit. We are encouraged to step into the constant flow of this river that comes from God.

"...come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water"

Rivers of living water - not stagnant swamps, not contained streams but rivers always in motion, plentiful and constant.

"To drink" is an invitation to an encounter, to an experience, rather than just intellectually knowing about it. By all means have good theology but don't come short of an encounter.

Concluding words

But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Jesus pointed to a time when this would happen. This is the time. This is the day of the outpouring of living water from heaven into our lives. This is what started at Pentecost and continues today.