



October 23, 2022

"Jesus is the Temple"

SS 9:30, Service at 10:30 with King's Kids.

News:

Wednesday Classes – Fall Festival Wednesday, October 26, 5:30-7:30

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JOHN 7:25-27 ~

Who are "some of the people of Jerusalem"?

Were they on Jesus' side?

What things are you sure you know?

JOHN 7:28-31 ~

What does it mean that "Jesus cried out in the Temple"?

It is a failure to _____ one's life to the God as He's revealed in Scripture that causes a _____ with Him.

We _____ God to fit us... in order to assuage the _____ we have about living our life as we see fit.

No reasonable scholar debates what the _____ originally said. We know what was written and we know how to translate it – that's not in question. The problem is the _____.

Understanding the _____ is easy, following it seems impossible and so we muddy the water. It starts with... Jesus is the focal point of _____ the Old and New Testaments.

Fill out the other side, detach this part of the page, and place it in the offering plate or the prayer/suggestion box in the lobby or with an Elder or Deacon of the church.

God Bless You!

While telling them that they didn't know God was shocking, telling them that the only way they could fix the problem was following Jesus was astonishing.

Well, they decided to seize Him.

Why were they unable to grab Jesus?

JOHN 7:32-36 ~

Who were the "officers" sent to seize Jesus?

What did they think Jesus was going to do?

How would that affect their opinion of Him?

What's ironic about it?

JOHN 7:37-39 ~

Day 8 of the Feast and the Water-drawing Ceremony. How does that change the impact of Jesus' words?

"He who believes in Me." Believes is πιστεύων (pēs-tū-ōn), the present active participle form of the verb in the nominative singular. What that means is that this believing in Jesus is...

- 1) Individual –
- 2) Active –
- 3) Continuous –
- 4) Objective –
- 5) Intense –
- 6) Intellectual –

To what Scripture does Jesus refer? How does that change His meaning?

JOHN 7:40-44 ~

The net result was the "Jews" tried all the more to _____ Jesus but were unable to do so.

JOHN 7:45-52 ~

When we feel threatened, _____ don't matter.

Write a brief note – detach and place in the offering, or the prayer box, or give it to a Deacon or Elder.

Name _____ Address _____
 Phone _____ Email _____



Lêtheia

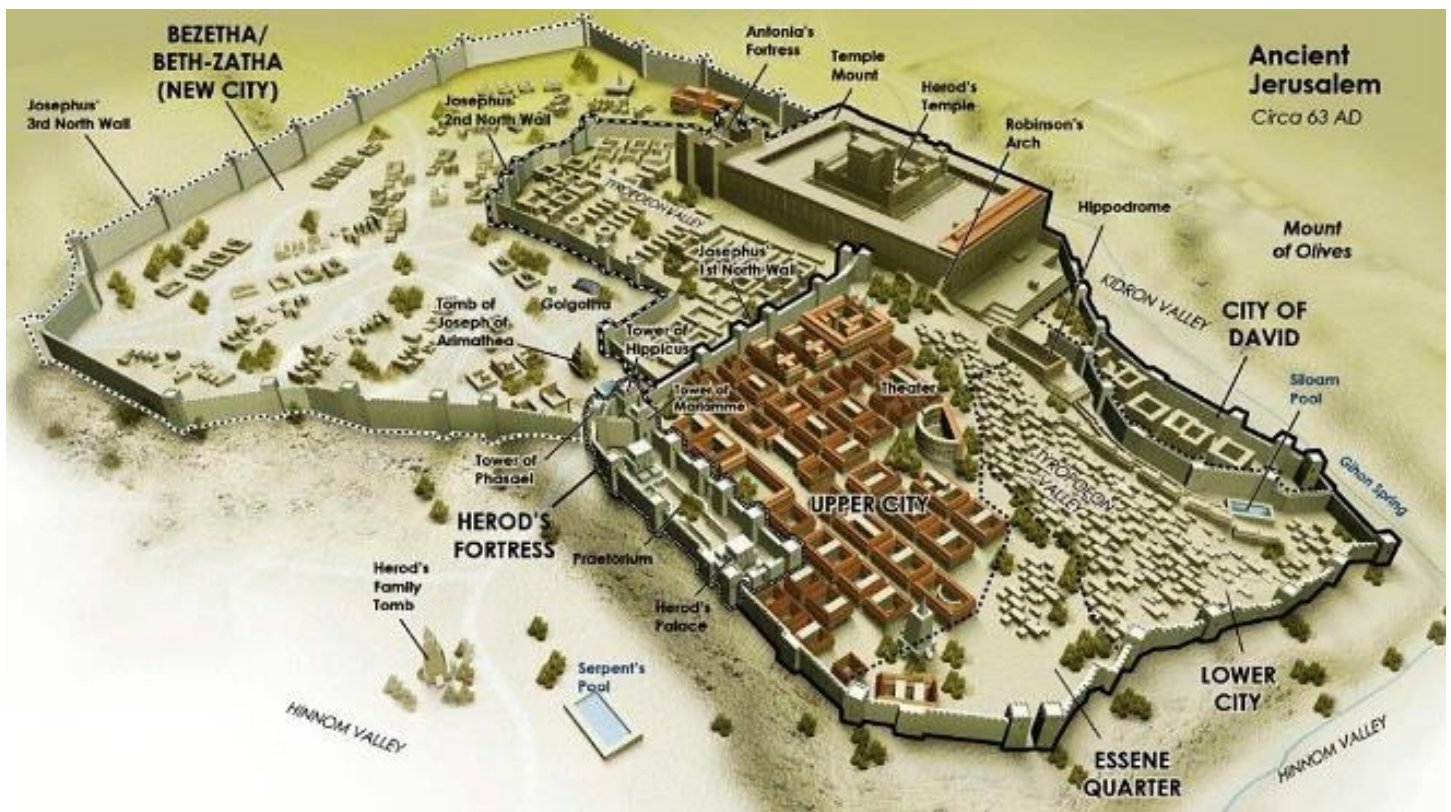
CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP



ΕΝΑΡΧΗ Η ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΟΛΟΓΟΣ ΗΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ
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ΤΟΝ ΘΕΟΝ ΠΑΝΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΕΓΕΝΕΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΧΩΡΙΣ

About midway through the Festival of Booths – the week-long religious thanksgiving for the harvest – Jesus began teaching in the Temple area. It's important to recognize that these exchanges between Jesus and various groups here in chapter 7, took place over a four-day period – it wasn't a single event, but an evolving drama over time.

Initially, Jesus was incognito without any fanfare and so the people didn't recognize Him right away. During this escalating argument He revealed enough details about Himself that “some of the people” figured it out and that takes us to...

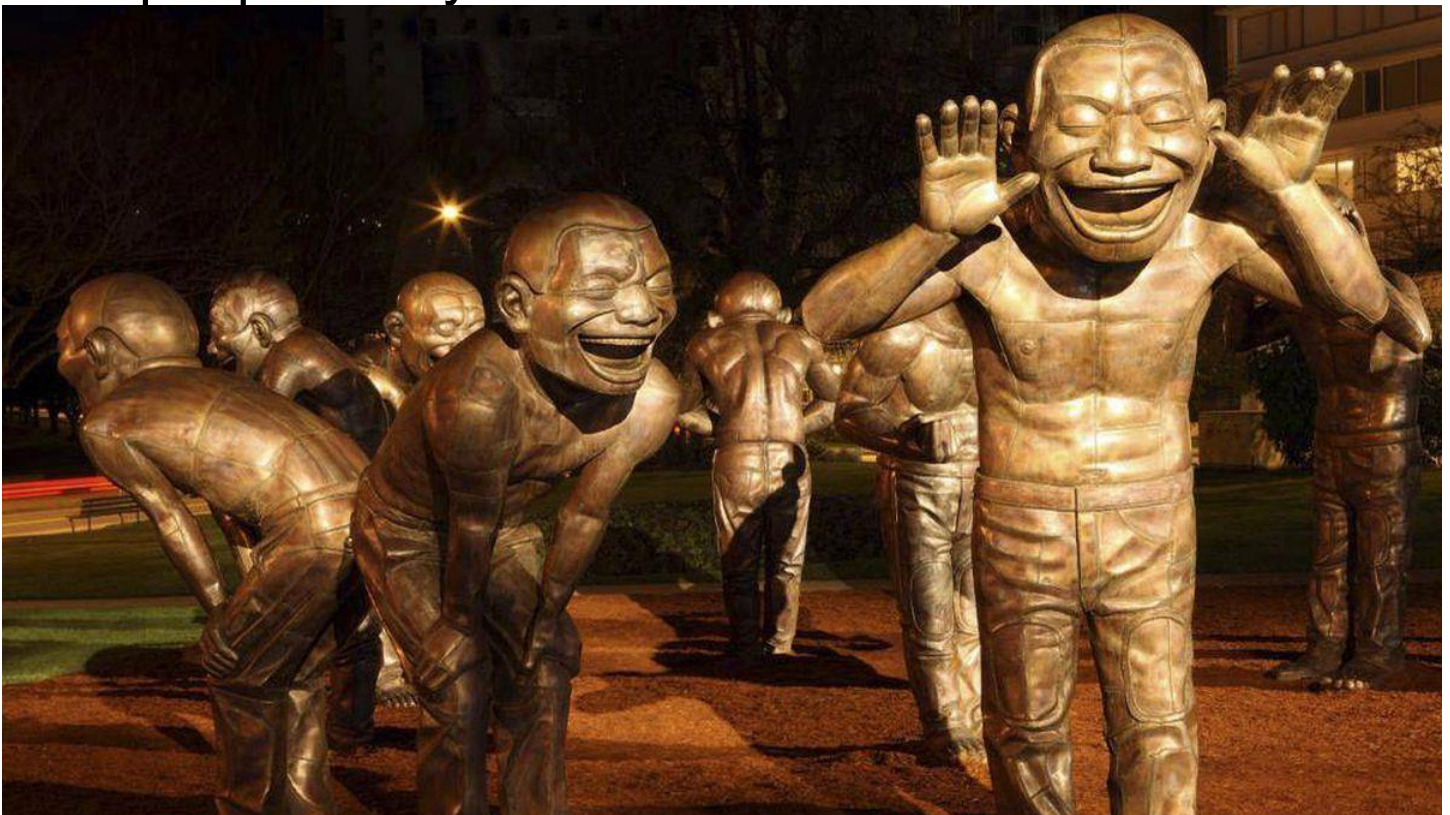


John 7:25-27, 25So some of the people of Jerusalem were saying, “Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill? 26“Look, He is speaking publicly, and they are saying nothing to Him. The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? 27“However, we know where this man is from; but whenever the Christ may come, no one knows where He is from.”

In verse 25 we are introduced to a subgroup within the crowd. These were locals. Unlike the other Jewish people visiting the city for the festival, these Jerusalem residents were far more familiar with the details of Jesus’ last visit and were far more aware of the plans and purposes of their religious leaders. They are the first to deduce that the man at odds with both the leaders and now, most of the crowd, was Jesus.

Their initial question may seem innocent, ““Is this not the man whom they are seeking to kill? Remember that Greek is the language of rhetoric and so, the language of the rhetorical question. This can only be taken sarcastically in Greek and so fits well with the rest of their comments.

The gist is these people have now recognized Jesus as the guy that their leaders have been so preoccupied with for months. The controversy stirred up by Jesus choosing to heal a man on the Sabbath the last time He was in town had only intensified, not subsided. The Jewish leaders had only gotten more outraged, frustrated, and openly hostile towards Jesus. They wanted Him dead. Evidently, they had made no attempt to keep their desire quiet. The people knew and these local people really knew.



So, what they were saying was “This is the guy!” It’s formatted as a question to mock the leaders standing there. “Can’t they figure it out? Is it possible that they’re

not sure of themselves? Do they not recognize the dude they've been fuming about for all these months?"

They press their mocking derision further in verse 26. Here He is and not one of our leaders listening to is saying or doing anything. Remember, all of this is taking place over a few days.

The locals are mocking their leaders ineffectual blustering. The final insult comes when they ask, The rulers do not really know that this is the Christ, do they? Again, a rhetorical question that is no question at all. The statement means, of course they don't believe that He's the Christ, but they are so pathetically indecisive and inept, they are acting like they aren't sure if He's the Christ or not.

To confirm what we already know from the grammar, the people go on in verse 27 to plainly say that they know that Jesus cannot be the Christ because they are certain about what they suppose they know.

This is another great example of people being so sure of their opinions that they assume that they are facts. Since "no one knows where the Christ is from," and

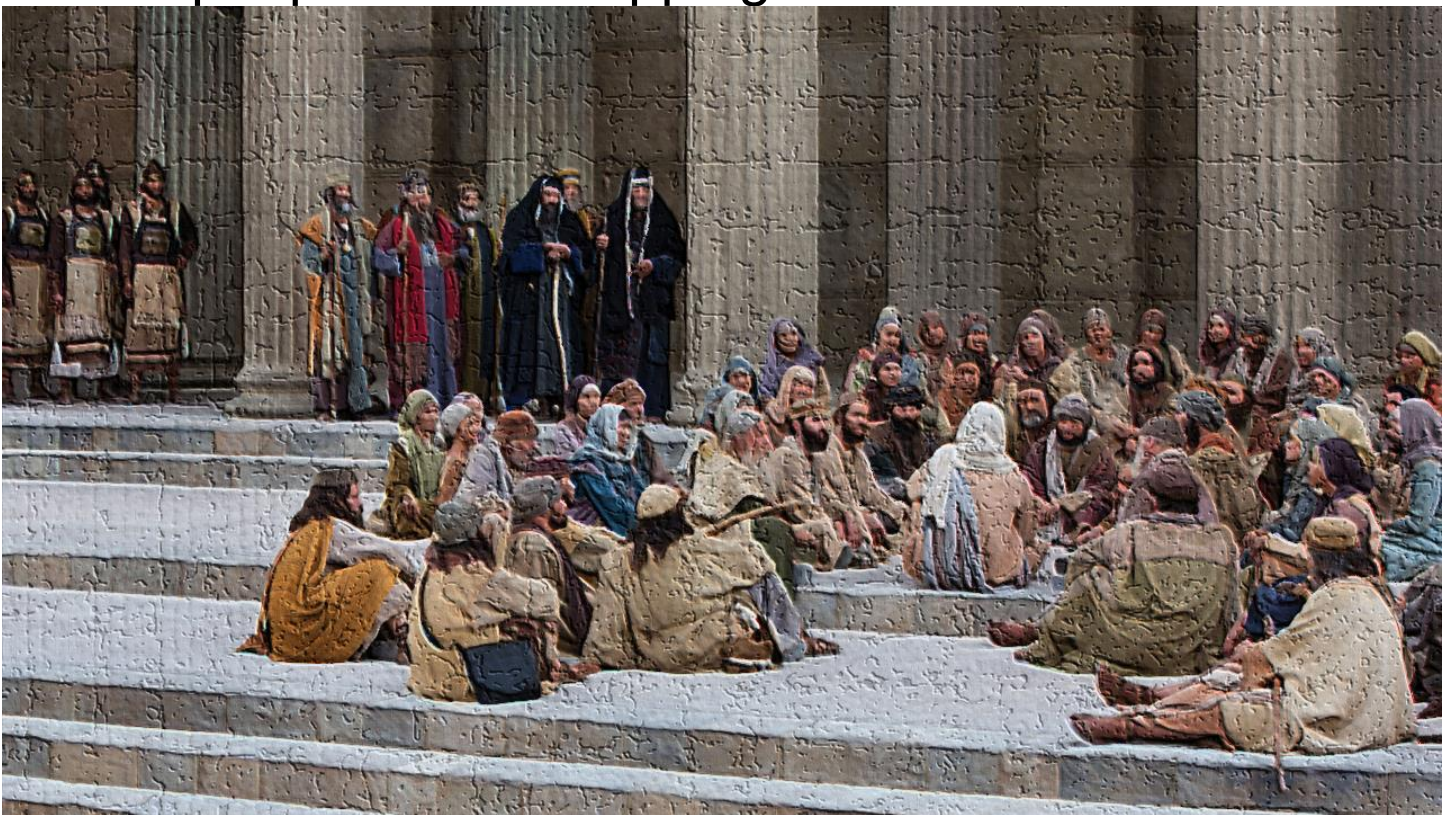
since “we do know where Jesus is from,” ipso facto, He cannot be the Christ. Such a foolish, foolish, travesty of monumental arrogance to think that we know absolutely. It gets us into so much trouble and yet our pride will so often prevent us from seeing the Truth, from learning what is more correct. They were doubly wrong. First, their assumption about the mystery of the Christ’s origin was false – both physically and metaphysically His starting point was Scripturally knowable. Secondly, they didn’t have a clue where Jesus was from either physically or metaphysically.

The locals in question, just knew that Jesus was from Galilee, and they were certain that the Christ would not be from such a second-rate province.

What those of us who have more information know is that while Jesus grew up in Nazareth and was now homebased in Capernaum, both towns in the province of Galilee, He was born in the town of Bethlehem “the village where King David was,” in Judea. Jesus was descended directly from David, both legally through His stepfather Joseph and biologically through His mother Mary. More importantly He had no ultimate origin as He

was the eternally existent Word of Almighty God made flesh proceeding from the Father in Heaven.

Their comments in verse 27 make it clear that they did not believe Jesus was the promised Messiah and that they thought their leaders were incompetent nincompoops for not stopping Him.



John 7:28-31, 28Then Jesus cried out in the temple, teaching and saying, “You both know Me and know where I am from; and I have not come of Myself, but He who sent Me is true, whom you do not know. 29“I know Him, because I am from Him, and He sent Me.” 30So they were seeking to seize Him; and no man laid

his hand on Him, because His hour had not yet come.
31 But many of the crowd believed in Him; and they were saying, “When the Christ comes, He will not perform more signs than those which this man has, will He?”

In verse 28 it says that “Jesus cried out in the Temple.” That’s a way of indicating that it was a solemn pronouncement equivalent to a prophetic utterance. The Jews hadn’t had a real prophet making a proclamation in the Temple for 400 years – until Jesus.

The people would have understood it that way. What Jesus said is “you’re right, you do know Me and where I’m from, but what you don’t know is the God you think that you’re serving.” Once again, it is a failure to conform one’s life to the God revealed in Scripture that causes a disconnect with Him.



The universal problem is we distort God to fit us in order to assuage the anxiety we have about living our life as we see fit. If we are atheists, we justify our disconnect with God by making Him non-existent. If we are agnostics, we justify our disconnect with God by making Him unknowable. If we are misotheists – God haters – we justify our disconnect with God by making Him unworthy. If we are believers in God, what we do, is rationalize our disconnect with Him, by conforming our idea of God to align with our idea of our self, more closely. We make God and the Bible reflect who we are, with what resonates with us, with what works for us. Now, that can be a God of wrath Who wants

everyone towing the legalistic line, or it can be a God of tolerance Who wants everyone to be happy and fulfilled. At either extreme or somewhere in the middle it's about making God conform to us, rather than allowing the Holy Spirit to conform us to God – to Who God truly is as plainly revealed in the Bible.



No intelligent person with an education in the subject area, debates what the Bible originally said. Not in the broad strokes, I mean there is endless debate about the minutia, but everyone agrees that all of the minutia combined doesn't change a single point of doctrine.

So, we know what was written and we know how to translate it – we know that the English Bible in your hand today says what the scrolls said 19 centuries ago – that's not in question. The problem is the interpretation. The problem has always been the interpretation. What I have said so often even I am sick of it is that every bad doctrine that I'm aware of comes from misinterpreting the Bible by taking it out of context.

Why do we do that? It is because we want the Bible to match us so that God will match us. Being unwilling to surrender our personal life to whatever God's Perfect Will might be, is scary. Really scary to genuinely mean I give you my life, my hopes, and my dreams, my future, and my control.

Because the people in the Temple 2,000 years ago were just people too, they, like us, did not really want God's perfect Will done in their personal life and as a result they, again like us, had distorted both God and His self-revelation. That's why they were unable to accept that Jesus, presumably from Galilee was indeed from Heaven by way of Bethlehem.



For the Jews then, as today, it was a matter of national and racial pride that they were the One True God's children and that they alone in the world knew Him and were entrusted with His holy Word and yet when His Holy Word was incarnated as a man standing in front of them, they not only didn't recognize Him as good, but they also believed He was evil. That's proof positive that the God they knew was a false god of their own desire.

In verse 29 Jesus once again made it clear that while they didn't actually know the God, they thought they knew, He did. Further, that He alone had a unique

relationship with God and so, if the people wanted to know God truly, what they had to do was embrace Him, as the One God sent. Salvation and right relationship with the One True God, is only possible through Jesus, God's Holy Word sent to this earth.

Jesus is the entire focal point of both the Old and New Testaments and so He was the only legitimate focal point for Judaism then, and He is the only legitimate focal point for Christianity ever since.

For those proud Jewish people telling them that they didn't know the One True God was shocking but telling them that the only way they could fix the problem was following Jesus was astonishing. For them, this was just about the most extreme thing anyone could have said. It really only left two options. One, that Jesus was telling the Truth, in which case everyone needed to fall prostrate upon the ground and worship, or two, Jesus was not telling the Truth, in which case He needed to be immediately destroyed.

Well, they decided to seize Him.

What's somewhat lost on us I think is that this is another supernatural intrusion into the natural world – the Jews tried to grab Jesus and miraculously were unable to lay a single hand on Him. How hard is it for a large group of angry people to take one man into custody? They couldn't. Exactly how that happened is anyone's guess, but the Bible makes it absolutely clear with the explanation about timing that it was a supernatural divine intervention.

Why? Because God is sovereign – His timing will not be disturbed by the miniscule machinations of mankind, or anything else, for that matter.

That leads us to verse 31 where we are told that many in the crowd believed in Jesus, specifically because of the miraculous signs... The most recent of which, was the fact that the mob couldn't lay a hand on Him, when that should have been incredibly easy to do.



John 7:32-36, 32The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to seize Him. 33Therefore Jesus said, “For a little while longer I am with you, then I go to Him who sent Me. 34“You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come.” 35The Jews then said to one another, “Where does this man intend to go that we will not find Him? He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He? 36“What is this statement that He said, ‘You will seek Me, and will not find Me; and where I am, you cannot come’?”

The Sanhedrin, or Jewish Ruling Council, got a report about the state of affairs concerning Jesus and were no doubt extremely frustrated. Let me remind you again, that this whole thing took place over a four-day period – so a lot of things going on that are not reported.

Here we have the two often warring groups of the Council, the priestly aristocrats almost exclusively Sadducees and the fundamentalist Rabbis who were Pharisees, working together for their common objective – exterminate Jesus!

They “sent officers to seize Him.” These “officers” were essentially the Temple police force. They were typically made up of younger, more energetic Pharisees. Generally, guys working their way up the ladder of leadership who were charged with keeping religious law and order throughout the land and especially within the Temple grounds.

As such, they were highly trained in the doctrine of the Rabbinic Judaism of the Pharisees. While head-busting door-kicking law enforcers, they were also educated

religious legalists. Well, off they go to officially arrest Jesus. Let's get this done!

The religious police show up where Jesus was teaching with the intent of taking Him into custody, but instead, they are dumbfounded into inaction by His words.

Jesus cryptically tells them about His impending return to Heaven and they, of course, don't understand. Presumably, they let Jesus go unarrested again because they assume He will no longer be a problem since He's going away.

Remember the "Jews" of verse 35 are once again the ones seeking to kill Jesus from verse 1, and do, in this case, include the Temple police. There is something very interesting about their assumption, where they say He is not intending to go to the Dispersion among the Greeks, and teach the Greeks, is He?



The Jews were brought to the Promised Land after 40 years taking laps around Mount Sinai roughly 34 centuries ago. Between that arrival and the arrival of Jesus teaching in the Temple, the Israelites had been exposed to a tremendous number of invasions, civil wars, forced deportations, and other calamities. As a result, there were pockets of Jewish people scattered throughout north Africa, western Asia, and southern Europe. It is called the diaspora from the Greek word translated here as “the Dispersion.”

What the “Jews” said in their assumption about the meaning of Jesus’ words was that He would not only

go to the displaced Jewish people but would specifically “teach the Greeks.” That cannot be taken any other way than meaning Gentiles – non-Jews.

This was shocking to them and probably why they didn’t arrest Jesus. Willingness to “teach the Greeks,” was proof-positive that Jesus was not the Christ. No real Messiah would dream of ministering to non-Jews and once the people realized that Jesus planned to do so, they would all reject Him – problem solved.

You see, in their understanding, the Christ, when He came, would probably limit His ministry to the more noble and pure Judean Jews in the area around Jerusalem. Even going into the Jewish dominated province of Galilee would be seen as suspect – as deviating from what was expected. Travelling into the pagan lands of the “Greeks,” where the dispersed Jews lived, was startling at best, but actually teaching and ministering to Gentiles was appalling.

They couldn’t conceive of the Christ leaving the territory of Israel, let alone interacting with the ungodly Gentile heathens.

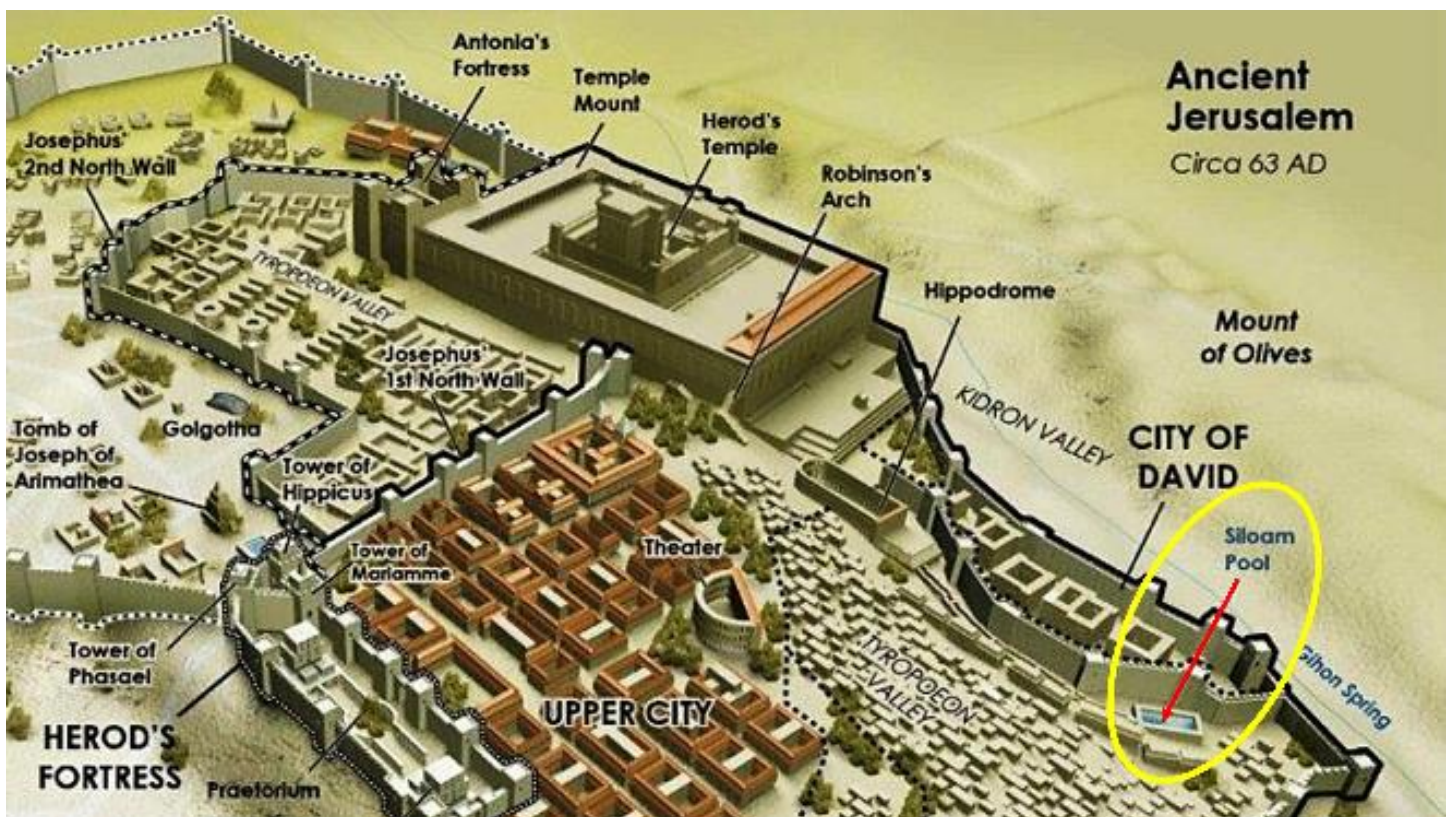
What's ironic, of course, is that the Messiah was always supposed to be a blessing to all nations. Their faulty assumption about what Jesus meant, was actually quite prophetic in the end.

THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVING WATER



John 7:37-39, 37Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' " 39But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

Day 8 of the Feast of the Jews, the final and most triumphant day of the Feast Jesus does something dramatic and we need to understand a bit of the background to get the full effect. On that last day there were a number of special ceremonial observances that were conducted by the priests with the participation of the vast crowds.



None was more sacred and joyous than the Water-drawing Ceremony. The priests went down from the Temple to the pool of Siloam early in the morning with lit torches accompanied by Levites playing trumpets, harps, flutes, and cymbals, along with huge throngs of

rejoicing people, singing, and dancing, and giving God praise.



Once at the Pool the priests filled a golden flask with water. Then the big jubilant procession would make their way into the Temple passing through the Water Gate where they were met with blasts from a shofar – that's the sacred ram's horn trumpet. In the midst of great fanfare, dancing, singing, and shouting, the priests would then pour the water over the altar together with wine from another bowl and the two liquids would intermingle flowing down the sides of the altar. An obvious allusion to the blood and water that would later flow from Jesus on the Cross. The Talmud

says that “one who had never witnessed the Rejoicing at the Place of the Water Drawing had never seen true joy in his life.”

The Scriptural basis was largely Isaiah 12:2&3, “Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and will not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation.” With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.”

The reason the ceremony was attached to this fall event was that in Israel, to this day, it basically does not rain from early spring until late fall. The Jews believed that it was this ceremony thanking God for water that actually ensured that He would once again send the rain.

So, the water ceremony was about thanking God for the physical water that sustained physical life, but also for the spiritual water – the water associated with the Salvation only God could provide and the promise of the Holy Spirit – Who sustained spiritual life.

Now put yourself in the picture and try to visualize the scene... Close your eyes for a minute and think about

this... For 8 days, over a million Jewish people have been living in makeshift huts and celebrating God's provision both physically and spiritually. We then get to the final day, and we see the great procession returning from the Pool of Siloam. We experience the near pandemonium of the multitude exuberantly reveling. We watch as the priests pour out the water and the wine upon the altar – see it wash down the sides and feel as well as hear the roar of approval from the throng of enthusiastic worshipers. The tumultuous celebration goes on and on until the din begins to slow and then finally subsides. Now, all those people emotionally spent are standing there quietly reflecting on the experience.

At that moment...



Jesus stands in their midst and shouts out in what can only be thought of as another prophetic proclamation, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink.” Can you imagine? In the present context of God providing the physically saving rain as well as the water of Spiritual Salvation, Jesus shouts, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” That’s the context.

It is, under the circumstances, completely obvious what Jesus was claiming for Himself and what He was offering to the people. There could be no missing the

point, but Jesus went on anyway so that there could be no excuse whatsoever.

“He who believes in Me.” That is stunning. It wasn’t He who believes in the Father who sent Me. The God I represent, or the Lord I serve – no! It was “He who believes in Me.”

Believes is a very special word that I’ve talked about a lot over the years. It is πιστεύων (pēs-tü-ōn), the present active participle form of the verb in the nominative singular. What that means is that this believing in Jesus is...

1) Individual – only you can do it for you and for no one else. It is...

2) Active – not merely a cerebral assent to a proposition. It’s not thinking the chair will hold your weight, it’s plopping yourself down in the chair. It is...

3) Continuous – not on and off, but your normal default. It’s who you are deep down. You are a believer and so you believe. It is...

4) Objective – in the sense that is directed towards a particular object, with is technically the subject. It is not a belief in a theory, a concept, or a set of rules, but rather a belief in Jesus Himself. It is...

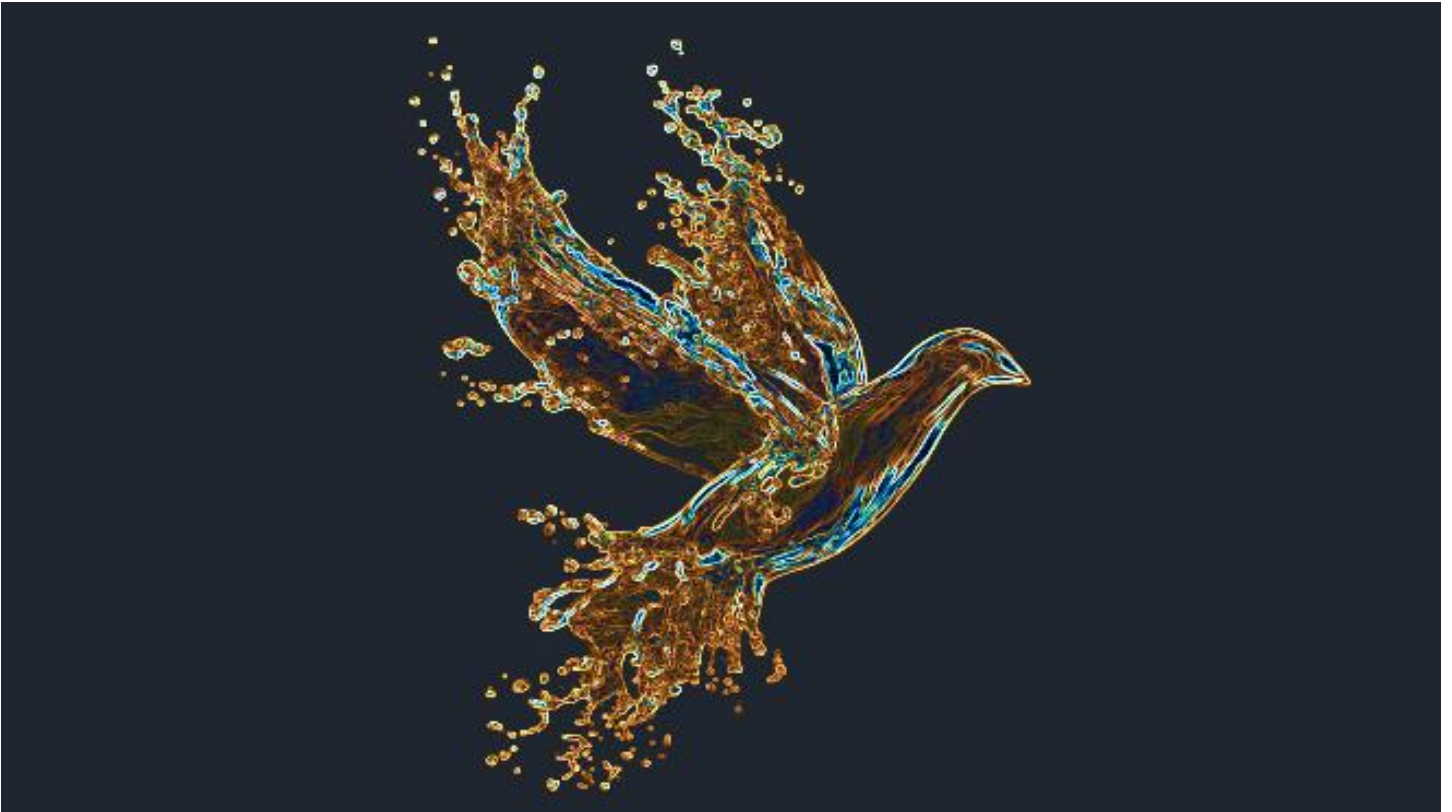
5) Intense – this is important stuff. There might be a test. Finally, it is...

6) Intellectual – not emotional, although emotion plays a part in getting a person to the decision point; the decision itself is a conscious choice to accept and continue to believe in Jesus.

My definition in this context: The most important⁵, individual¹, active² and continuing³ intellectual⁶ choice that a person can possibly make, decided by what he or she is utterly convinced of, directed toward the person of⁴ Jesus.

Jesus then notes that this belief in Him is in accordance with the Scripture. Remember, all who are taught by the Father through His self-revelation recorded as His written Word, will know Him, and come to Jesus the Living Word Who further reveals Him.

What verse is Jesus referring to? None specifically and so, all generally. The whole of the Old Testament for them that day pointed to Jesus.



The reference “From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.” Describes the Holy Spirit reality for such Believers after the outpouring of the Spirit on the first Day of Pentecost in the New Covenant era.

People debate whether it means that living water will flow from the individual and bless other people or whether it simply means that it will flow from the Holy Spirit within the Believer. Both are true. The first is the anointing of the Holy Spirit for ministry to others. The second is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit conforming a Believer to Christ. In both cases the source is belief in Jesus.

John 7:40-44, 40Some of the people therefore, when they heard these words, were saying, “This certainly is the Prophet.” 41Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” Still others were saying, “Surely the Christ is not going to come from Galilee, is He? 42“Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the descendants of David, and from Bethlehem, the village where David was?” 43So a division occurred in the crowd because of Him. 44Some of them wanted to seize Him, but no one laid hands on Him.

Jesus had done just what the great prophets of old had done – He proclaimed God’s Word in the hearing of the people with one exception. They all always started with “Thus saith the Lord God Almighty.” Jesus just said, this is what I have to say.

Due to His signs and wonders, due to His teaching, due to this amazing prophetic utterance, many thought that Jesus was, at the very least, a special emissary sent by God and perhaps the actual Messiah Himself.

Others were looking for reasons to disbelieve and readily found them, even if they were mistaken in their assumptions.

The net result was the “Jews,” and their Temple Police, tried all the more to seize Jesus, but were unable to do so.



John 7:45-52, 45The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?” 46The officers answered, “Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks.” 47The Pharisees then answered them, “You have not also been led astray, have you? 48“No one of the rulers or

Pharisees has believed in Him, has he? 49“But this crowd which does not know the Law is accursed.” 50Nicodemus (he who came to Him before, being one of them) said to them, 51“Our Law does not judge a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?” 52They answered him, “You are not also from Galilee, are you? Search, and see that no prophet arises out of Galilee.”

The Temple Police as trained Pharisees themselves had been taken aback by what Jesus had said. Their masters derided both them and the common people of the crowd. They mocked the police as falling under the enchantment of a false prophet.

In verse 50, Nicodemus who, earlier, had his own confrontational encounter with Jesus and was no doubt changed by it, reminded his fellow rulers that they had procedures in place that shouldn't be ignored. This is far short of advocating for Jesus, but it was certainly a step in the right direction for Nick.

Well, his angry and frustrated colleagues turned their wrath on him with a doubly wrong rationale.

First, they were wrong because there were prophets from Galilee, like Micah, Elijah, and Jonah. Second, they were wrong because as we noted, Jesus was actually from Bethlehem in Judea.

When we feel threatened, facts don't matter. More than a statement to close on, that's something you should carefully consider. When the facts don't matter to you or to someone else... Fear is in control. All evil is the result of that kind of fear.



But for our part, we want to be led by the Holy Spirit in conformity to Christ Jesus our Lord and if that

describes you, please prepare you heart for Holy Communion.