

Messages From the Gates of Jerusalem
#19 - Fountain Gate - Part III - Living Water Cures Spiritual Blindness

Scripture tells us of 2 temples, the meeting place between God and man, which no longer exist. Solomon's Temple was destroyed and burned to the ground by the Babylonians. Herod's magnificent Temple was destroyed by the Romans. Jesus predicted: not one stone was left upon another. The Romans even plowed up the very ground on which it stood. There was one thing which neither the Babylonians nor the Romans could destroy or remove. God placed the Gihon Spring in the valley east of Jerusalem. Geographically, the Gihon Spring is at 31.77 degrees north latitude and 35.2 degrees east longitude. It is about 1/3 mile south of the Dome of the Rock which is on a higher hill.

Modern theologians surmise that the former Temples were located at the Dome of the Rock. Problem: The Temple could not be built above the Gihon Spring and at the location of the Dome of the Rock.

Eye Witness Accounts:

1. Aristeeas who viewed the Temple in about 285 B.C. stated quite categorically that the Temple was located over an inexhaustible spring that welled up within the interior part of the Temple.
 2. The Roman historian Tacitus, in 115 AD quoted eye witnesses that the Temple at Jerusalem had within its precincts a natural spring of water that issued from its interior.
 3. The historian, Josephus, who lived in Jerusalem during the lifetime of Jesus, said that the Gihon Spring was beneath the Temple and there were caves within its subsurface.
- It is believed the above 3 accounts are describing The Gihon Spring which is the only perennial source of water within 5 miles of Jerusalem.

Consider: The location over the Gihon Springs would place the Temples immediately to the north of (and abutting to) the City of David.

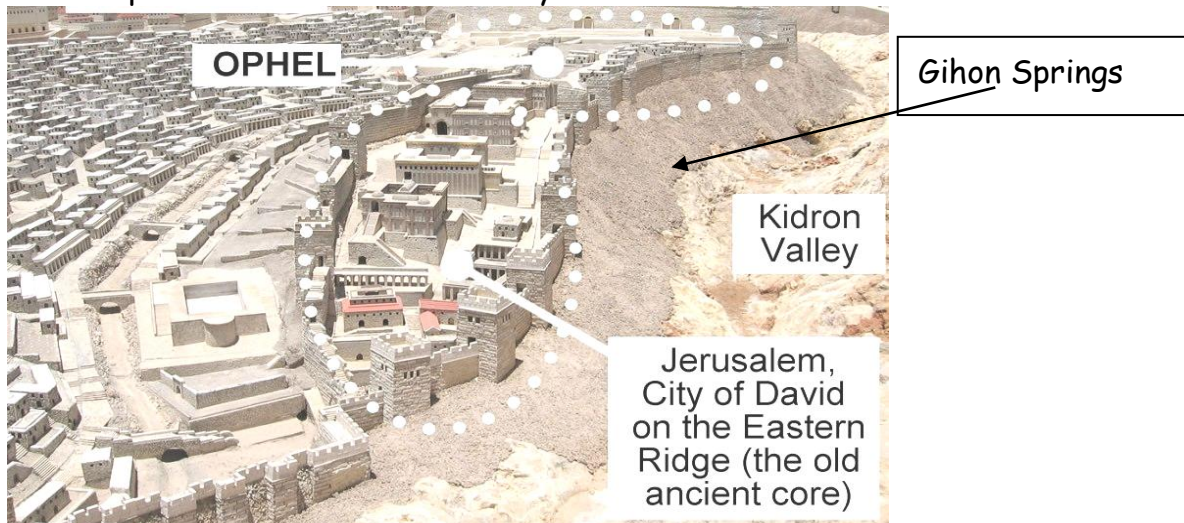
1. Scripture tells us that pure water was an indispensable requirement for the essential rituals of the Temple and its function.

Conclude: The Temple had a natural, pure spring with an unlimited supply of water coming from underneath the Temple.

2. II Sam. 6:17 states that David pitched a "tabernacle" (tent) for the Ark at Jerusalem. They brought the ark of the LORD and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it. David sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings before the LORD.
3. I Kings 1:38-39 states that Solomon was taken to this same "tabernacle" (tent) to be crowned. "So Zadok the priest, Nathan the prophet, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada, the Cherethites, and the Pelethites went down and had Solomon ride on King David's mule, and took him to Gihon. Then Zadok the priest took a horn of oil from the tabernacle and anointed Solomon."

4. For the next 27 years of David's reign (and first 11 years of Solomon - that is, for 38 years) the Ark remained in this particular tent at and over the Gihon Spring.

4. It is believed that Solomon built the Temple on the Ophel Mound over the subterranean Gihon Spring which had numerous subsurface caves. From this Mount, the Water of Life for the Temple services was immediately available.



5. This made the Temple so close to the City of David (where the citadel was located) that Aristreas said a person could look northward from the top of the City of David and could easily witness all priestly activities within the Temple precincts. The area of the Dome of the Rock is 1000 feet north of the original City of David and is much too far away for anyone to look down into the courts of the Temple as Aristreas dogmatically stated one could.

6. The Psalms show consistently that the Temples ("God's Houses") had to have spring waters emerging from their interiors. (Psalm 87:1-3 and 7). This spring water is mentioned in numerous ways as the "waters of salvation" that come from the Throne or House of God.

7. Spring waters were an essential part of Temple requirements and water springs are to accompany future Temples that are to be built.

Concluding Thought Since there was only ONE SPRING in the Jerusalem area, all the Temples of God had to be constructed over that single spring associated with the southeast ridge.

After our obedience at the Dung Gate, the filling of the Holy Spirit empowers us for the Spirit-Filled life. There are a number of Biblical places of importance associated with the Fountain Gate. They represent 7 blessings of being baptized in the Spirit and subsequent fillings of the Holy Spirit. Some of these places are only accessed by this gate.

I. The King's Pool - Pool of Siloam - Waters of Shiloah

Jesus spoke of "living water" twice in the Bible. What did He mean?

In John 4, Jesus sat at a well. A Samaritan woman came to draw water and Jesus asked her for a drink. He said to her in John 4:10, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water."

Notice that He does not say that He *is* the living water, but that He would *give* living water to her. When she received it, she would never thirst again.

We must go to John 7:37-39 to learn who is "the living water." On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him 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." ³⁹ 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.

Setting is The Feast of Tabernacles (Booths, Sukkot) which, in Jesus' day, was like a festive time of thanksgiving. They brought offerings of luscious freshly harvested dates, pomegranates, grapes, figs, and olives. The ceremony was to thank God for His bounty and to ask Him to provide rain for the crops in the coming year. Thousands upon thousands of people coming together to remember and celebrate God's deliverance and His provision, all living in temporary shelters or booths as part of the requirements of the feast. During the eight-day period, so many sacrifices were made that it required all twenty-four divisions of priests to be present to assist in the sacrificial duties.

- a. Looked back to Israel's journey through the wilderness.
- b. Looked forward to the promised kingdom of the Messiah.

It is symbolic of Christ's Second Coming when He will establish His earthly kingdom.

It was a festival of hope for the future when we will "tabernacle" with our Lord forever.

1. The feast of Tabernacles began on the fifteenth day of the seventh month (Lev 23:34). It begins 5 days after the Day of Atonement and when the fall harvest was completed. It is celebrated for 8 days. The #8 in Scripture speaks of a new beginning.
2. The Jews lived in booths made of branches to remind them of God's providential care of the nation for nearly 40 years. (Lev. 23:33-44)
3. The Temple was illumined by large candlesticks to remind them of the guiding pillar of fire.
4. Jesus took traditional elements of the celebration and applied them to His own life and mission. He uses water in this particular passage. The water ceremony represented a sacrificial pouring out of the water.
5. The joyful musical procession called *Simchat Beit HaShoevah* or The Rejoicing of the Water-Drawing began at the Pool of Siloam.
6. Each day during the ceremony, a designated priest, surrounded by jubilant worshippers, would draw water from the Pool of Siloam and carry it in a golden pitcher up the hill to the Temple altar. The Pitcher would hold 3 log (= .5 litres)
7. The whole procession heads back to the Temple through the Water Gate.
8. As the flutes continue to play, a choir of Israelites would chant:
Psalm 118:25-26 Save now, I pray, O LORD; O LORD, I pray, send now prosperity.
Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord.
The Jews were reminded of the miraculous provision of water from the rock.

9. A 3 fold blast of the priests' silver trumpets announced his arrival in the Temple area.
10. The high priest would then pour the Siloam water into one silver basin while wine was poured into another.
11. To the accompaniment of flutes, the priests would sing "Hallelujah."
(the *Hallel* from Ps. 113-118)
12. The celebration was based upon Isaiah 12:3, "With joy ye shall draw water out of the wells of salvation."
13. The 7th day of the Feast was called Hoshana Rabba, the Great Day.
The priests would march seven times around the altar.

John wants us to see that Jesus Himself is the fulfillment of the Feast of Tabernacles. In 1:14 he told us that (literally), "the Word became flesh and *tabernacled* among us." Paul tells us that Jesus is the rock that supplied Israel with water in the barren desert (I Cor. 10:4). He is also the bread of life, the fulfillment of the manna that sustained Israel in the wilderness (John 6). On the last day of this feast, Jesus claims to be the source of living water to all who will come to Him and drink.
In other words, He fulfills all that the feast symbolized.

Interesting Points Regarding the Feast

1. The high priest carried a *golden* pitcher: Gold speaks of *divinity*.
 2. The pitcher held *three logs* of water. *Three* is the number also deals with *divinity*.
 3. This procedure of carrying the pitcher of water was done for seven days.
Seven in the Hebrew is "Sheba" means complete.
 4. Three logs of water for seven days give *twenty one* logs of water.
 5. This water was poured into *silver* bowls.
 6. The number 21 represents carnality.
 7. Seven represents completion and silver speaks of redemption.
 8. Thus the overall picture: Our high priest (prophetic of Jesus) has completely redeemed (7 and silver) us from our carnal (21) nature.
 9. Note that the water was drawn from the pool of Siloam. (Well of Salvation)
 10. The word Siloam also occurs three times in Scripture.
- Consider: We have seen the concept of the divine as it relates to gold, the number three and in the occurrence of the word Siloam. Siloam simply means "sent."
How is its meaning significant? God sent His Son in this world who (through His death on the cross), sent His anointing or Christ in all men. This evidence is substantiated in Col 1:27 where Paul remarks " *To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery (i.e. what has been sent) among the Gentiles; which is Christ [the anointing] in you, the hope of glory*".

Jesus stood and shouted His great invitation to thirsty sinners in John 7:37-39:
"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' But 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.

Traditionally at the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles, water from the Pool of Siloam was poured out before the Altar and the words from Isaiah 12 were sung to remind the nation they had to place complete trust in Yahweh and the promise of salvation revealed by His name. He is the only source of salvation and life.

Isa. 12:1-6 And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted.

Behold, God *is* my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD Yahweh *is* my strength and *my* song; He also is become my salvation.

Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.

And in that day shall ye say, Praise the LORD, call upon His name, declare His doings among the people, make mention that His name is exalted.

Sing unto the LORD; for He hath done excellent things: this *is* known in all the earth.

Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great *is* the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.

The Messiah, who had been "sent" to Israel during the Roman occupation of their land, was the "holy one in the midst" of them and not acknowledged by them. He made an allusion to Isaiah 12, when on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles (*Sukkot*), He stood in the Temple and declared his Messiahship and referred to the Scriptures, which prophesied of Him.

The Pharisees, who accused Jesus of being a sinner for healing on the Sabbath, did not recognize that the "Holy One was in their midst", as Isaiah 12:6 had prophesied. They were blinded by the eye of the flesh, of pride in their position and lack of understanding of the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets, whose writings they should have understood and expounded to the people. Of all the people in Israel they should have recognized and acknowledged their Messiah. Isaiah had described those who should have been concerned with the spiritual welfare of the people in the following way.

Isa. 56:10-11 His watchmen *are* blind: they are all ignorant, they *are* all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter.

Jesus used the same figure in reference to the Pharisees in response to his disciples' comments about the Pharisees' attitude towards him.

Matt. 15:12-14 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Know thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

The man born blind Sees The New Testament presents a very interesting incident related to the pool of Siloam and the significance of John 9:7. It involves a blind man, who was a *sign* to the leaders in Israel. In John 8: 59, after a confrontation with the Jewish leaders Jesus left the Temple. It would appear that this blind man was in the vicinity of the Temple.

John 8:59 Then took they up stones to cast at him: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.

John 9:1-7 And as he passed by, he saw a man which was blind from birth. And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

John gives the meaning of the word Siloam as 'sent'. The name Siloam originally applied to Hezekiah's aqueduct which allowed the water of Gihon, outside Jerusalem's walls to flow into the city to sustain life in the city. Jesus was "sent" to the nation of Israel for their salvation but the Pharisees were blinded, unable to see and accept Jesus as their Messiah. The blind man, who probably spent time in close proximity to the Temple, and listened to the reading of the Word, did recognize the Messiah.

In this instance, this miraculous cure involved saliva from the mouth of the Lord mixed with the dust of the ground. Man was created from the dust of the ground. The Lord typically places the flesh/human nature on the blind man's eyes. He is then 'sent' to wash it off in the Pool of Siloam (by interpretation 'sent'). The scribes and Pharisees were looking at the Lord with flesh covered eyes. They were looking for the Messiah of their choice. They were not prepared to look at the Lord with the eyes of the spirit and of faith, which comes through the understanding of the written word.

Interesting Spiritual Gleanings:

- a. Jesus "sent a man blind from birth" to complete his healing.
- b. This pool speaks of our complete healing and being filled with the Holy Spirit who sends us into the world as God's workmanship. (Eph. 2:10)
- c. The Hebrew word, Siloam, means "sent out with purpose."
- d. Jesus was the Messiah SENT from heaven with a purpose.
- e. The fresh, clean water from the Pool of Siloam entered the city from the Gihon Spring.
- f. This was called "Chay mayim" > Living Water - In Isaiah 44:3 and John 7:39 > Living Water is the type of the Holy Spirit

The potter takes the clay and unless the clay is kept moist with water, it cannot be molded. If the clay dries out it is impossible to make anything out of that clay. The promise of salvation requires our minds and bodies, from the dust of the earth, to be molded like the vessel shaped by the potter using clay moistened with water. The water which molds us is the Word of God as we read and meditate on it. It is the sole source of knowledge.

Why is The DEAD SEA so salty and contains no fish or plant life? There are absolutely no outlets! A great volume of water pours into this depression from the Jordan, but nothing flows out. Inlets plus no outlets equals a dead sea.

This law of nature may be applied to many believers who are unfruitful and lack spiritual vitality. It's possible for some people to attend church, listen to religious broadcasts, study the Scriptures, and continually take in the Word as it is preached from the pulpit, and yet seem lifeless and unproductive in their Christian lives. Such individuals are like the Dead Sea. They have several "inlets" but no "outlets." Indwelt by the Holy Spirit, we possess the "water of life" and can be channels of blessing to those in need. If we allow the rivers of living water to flow in us, we will never become Dead-Sea Christians.

I must keep on drinking from Christ, if He is going to meet the needs of others through me. How do I drink of Christ's Live-giving Spirit? Through the Word of Christ His living water flows into us, to satisfy and renew us. From inside my heart it wells up and out to touch those around me. The Word flows through us not on the basis of how many Scriptures we know, but from my abiding in His Word.

Is there a deep inner lesson for me? Why am I not continually filled with the Spirit?

Am I a channel through which He pours in as mighty rivers to minister to others?

If I am not, the reason could be that I neglect to glorify Jesus Christ. I have not totally abandoned myself to Him. I am not content to live life as a branch of Christ.

My life's purpose is to honor and glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. Why don't I?

Ps. 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.

Matt. 5:6 Blessed *are* those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.