



"Jesus Raising Lazarus"

23. John 7-12

Jesus and the Feasts of the Jews 2: at Tabernacles; at Dedication. The Raising of Lazarus and Its Aftermath

Jesus at Tabernacles (*Sukkot*, 7:1–10:21)

Background

- *Sukkot*: "booths, tabernacles, or temporary shelters"
 - Commemorated the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the wilderness
 - God sustained them with bread (manna) and water
 - Commemorated the giving of the Torah (Law) at Sinai
 - Later also celebrated as an autumn harvest festival
- Second Temple Sukkot rituals of **pouring water** or **lighting lights** set the context for Christ's discourses on **His being the source of living waters and light**
 - Sukkot had become a festival in which **prayers were offered for winter rains**
 - Water from the spring of Gihon was drawn and poured on the altar
 - Great lamps were lit in the temple courts each night

Upper right: Procession taking water from Gihon spring to altar; *lower right:* great lamps in temple courts being lit



Jesus at Tabernacles 1

- Jesus goes to Jerusalem secretly (7:1–13, **narrative transition**)
- **Discourse on the Life-Giving Spirit** (7:14–52, with interruptions)
 - Jesus and the Law (7:14–24)
 - Response of the People 1 (7:25–31)
 - Response of Pharisees and “the Jews” (7:32–36, where will he go?)
 - Jesus, Water, and Spirit (7:37–39)
 - “He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, *out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*” (7:38)
 - **Messianic flow of healing and life-giving water** (Ex. 17:6; Num. 20:11; Ezekiel 47:1-12; Zechariah 14:8; JST John 7:39 and the Spirit promised to those who believe in Christ)
 - Response of the People 2 (7:40–44)



Top: Jean Tassel, Moses Drawing Water from a Rock; Bottom: water from a rock, spring at Panais



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Jesus at Tabernacles 2

- Debate about Jesus (7:45–53)
 - Nicodemus’ second appearance: lukewarm support of Jesus
- Story of the Adulteress (8:1–11, **dramatic episode; teaching story**)
 - *This pericope is ancient but generally held to be textually suspect; nevertheless, it fits the Sukkot context because of its connection with the Law*
 - “Moses in the law . . . Jesus stooped down and **with his finger wrote** on the ground . . .” (8:5–6)
 - **Jehovah wrote the Ten Commandments on the stone tables with his finger!** (see Exodus 31:18)
 - **Sukkot commemorated the giving of the law**
 - “he that is without sin . . .” (8:7)

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Jesus at Tabernacles 3

- **Discourse on the Light of the World** (8:12–59; Sukkot and **Light**)
 - Proclamation: Jesus is Light (8:12)
 - The Father Witnesses of the Son (8:13–20)
 - Jesus is from Above (8:21–30)
 - Jesus and Abraham (8:31–59)
- **Physical and Spiritual Blindness** (9:1–41; More on Jesus as **Light**)
 - **Sixth Sign: Healing of the Man Born Blind** (9:1–12)
 - Clay/dust, breath/water-spittle! (cf. Gen 2:7)
 - Pharisees Persecute the Blind Man (9:13–34)
 - Jesus and the Blind Man (9:35–38)
 - Jesus Condemns Spiritual Blindness (9:39–41)
- **Discourse on the Good Shepherd** (10:1–21)
 - “I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly.” (10:10)



Pool of Siloam, meaning “Sent”
Water from the Gihon Spring, from which the water offering for Sukkot was drawn, flowed into and was stored here (top: painting of the Herodian Pool; bottom: picture of the archaeologically confirmed pool)

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Seven Important “I Am” Sayings

(predicate, that is, Jesus = something else)

- 1 “I am the Bread of Life,” etc. (ch. 6)
- 2 “I am the Light of the World” (8:12)
- 3 “I am the Door” (10:7–9)
- 4 “I am the Good Shepherd” (10:11–14)
- 5 “I am the Resurrection and the Life” (11:25)
- 6 “I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life” (14:6)
- 7 “I am the Vine” (15:1–5)

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Jesus at Dedication (Chanukah, 10:22–42)

- **Background**
 - Chanukah is a festival established in the Intertestamental period to commemorate the Hasmonean defeat of the Syrian Greeks
 - Christ is “dedicated” for sacrifice just as the altar was rededicated by the Hasmoneans
 - The subsequent success of the Hasmoneans as priests and kings led to the “mistimed” messianic expectations of Jesus’ period
- **Jesus the Messiah and Son of God (10:22–30)**
 - “Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? **If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly.**” (10:24)
 - **“I and my Father are one.”** (10:30)
 - Jewish *Shema*: “Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, **the Lord is one.**”
- Jesus Rejected by “the Jews” (10:31–39)
- Conclusion of the Public Ministry, Jesus withdraws to Perea and “Many” Follow Him (10:42, **narrative summary report**)

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Raising of Lazarus and Its Aftermath (11:1–54)

- Death of Lazarus (11:1–16)
- Jesus the Resurrection and the Life (11:17–27)
 - “Many of the Jews came to Mary and Martha to comfort them” (11:19, one of the few neutral uses of the term)
 - **When Martha speaks in faith, Jesus responds with teaching and testimony**
- Jesus Mourns with Mary (11:28–37)
 - **When Mary weeps, Christ responds with compassion**
- **Seventh Sign: Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead** (11:38–44)
- Reaction: The Plot to Kill Jesus (11:45–54)
 - **The “prophecy” of Caiaphas** (11:49–52)



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The Book of Signs Closes . . .

Jesus Prepared for Passover (11:55–12:50)

- “Will he come for the feast?” (11:55–57, *narrative transition*)
- **Jesus Anointed at Bethany (12:1–8)**
 - Different in detail from another “Last Week” anointing in Matthew and Mark (here by Mary of Jesus’ feet before the Triumphal Entry; there by an unknown woman of his head midweek)
 - **Stated Purpose: Preparing Jesus for burial**
 - *Symbolic Purpose: Jesus anointed as king before his entry to Jerusalem?*
- Plot to Kill Lazarus (12:9–11)
- **Triumphal Entry (12:12–19)**
- **Jesus Predicts His Passion (12:20–36)**
 - Some Greeks Wish to see Jesus (12:20–22)
 - *The Father Promises to Glorify Jesus* (12:23–30, looking forward to “The Book of Glory”)
 - **Jesus Must Be “Lifted Up”** (12:31–36; cf. John 3:14 and 3 Nephi 27:13–15)
- Responses to Jesus (12:37–43)
- Summary of Jesus’ Teaching (12:44–50)