

The Man carrying the Jar of Water

(Some thoughts with Dr. Joel M. Crichlow)

Imagine that you are given an assignment to find a particular destination. You have never been there before, you do not know the way and you do not have a GPS. This could be relatively easy if you get some good directions. It would probably be even easier if there were a reliable and knowledgeable person that you could follow. Given that you did find someone to follow it is then very likely that while following, your thoughts will dwell on the one you are following, especially if there is something striking, interesting or unusual about that individual.

In the Gospel of Luke 22: 7-13 it is recorded that Jesus and his disciples needed a room to eat the Passover supper. It was that time of the year. Peter and John were given the assignment by Jesus to locate the place and make the preparations. Of course, they did not know where to go. Therefore Jesus gave them the following directions:

“As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house that he enters, and say to the owner of the house, ‘The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?’ He will show you a large room upstairs, all furnished. Make preparations there.” Luke 22:10-12 (NIV).

There is no record that Peter and John questioned Jesus about the directions that He gave them. It was the custom that carrying a jar of water was usually done by women. Therefore if there was a man doing this it would be unusual. Hence that man should be relatively easy to find. In obedience Peter and John went into the city and found everything as Jesus had said.

Now imagine you were Peter or John following the man with the jar of water. It is quite natural to assume that your thoughts would run on the scene in front of you – **a Man carrying a Jar of Water**.

You may think about the man. Who is he? Why is he carrying this jar of water? Where is he going? You may think about the jar. How much water does it contain? How old is it? How heavy is it?

Your thoughts may also run on the water. You may think of how precious water is and the many ways in which that water can be used:

- The water is for drinking – it refreshes, it satisfies, it quenches our thirst.
- The water can be used for washing – it cleanses.
- The water can save a life.

Then as you think of these things perhaps you may wonder: why did Jesus choose this scene as the one on which you should focus. Could it be that He wants us to make a connection between the *man carrying a jar of water* and *Himself*?

In John 4 Jesus was passing through Samaria and around midday he was sitting on a well. A woman came to the well to get some water. Jesus asked the woman for a drink of water, and this started a conversation which included the following exchanges:

Jesus answered her, "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."

"Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his livestock?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life." John 4: 10-14 (NIV).

We see here that Jesus had living water to give. Water that quenches a thirst forever: an inexhaustible supply for an everlasting life. What a bold an interesting claim! Jesus came bearing the gift of living water.

Then in John 7: 37-39 (NIV) we read the following:

"On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."

Jesus had to be glorified in order that the living water, the Holy Spirit, could be given. A key step towards that glorification was Jesus' crucifixion, which included a pouring out of blood and water (John 19: 34); the blood and water for our cleansing, our renewal, and our everlasting life.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1: 9 (KJV).

We can receive that cleansing.

We can be at peace, satisfied (never spiritually thirsty) even in exhausting situations.

We can have a continual refreshing ("*rivers of living water*").

We can have everlasting life.

That's why we can say **"Thank you, Jesus, for pouring out of yourself so that we can drink of the Holy Spirit!"**