

Living Water of the Heart

By Grant Castleberry

November 6, 2022

John 7:37-39

When I read this this WEEK I was immediately reminded of an OT TEXT – David compares GOD to water. Psalm 42:1 – [1] *As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for God. [2] My soul thirsts for God...*

- David says that the MAIN longing of HIS heart IS GOD.
- That as a DEER pants for WATER... so HIS SOUL pants for the living GOD.
- Of course he is describing a THIRST of the SOUL. A THIRST of the HEART.

We were CREATED for GOD.

- Romans 11:36 – [36] *For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever. Amen.*
- Our PROBLEM is that we do not seek our satisfaction in God. Jeremiah 2:13 – [13] *“for my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed out cisterns for themselves, broken cisterns that can hold no water.”*
 - We have turned away from seeking God; Hewed out BROKEN CISTERNS
 - *In a WORD we are THIRSTY.*
 - J. C. Ryle – Such thirst as this, unhappily, is known by few. All ought to feel it, and all would feel it if they were wise. Sinful, mortal, dying creatures as we all are, with souls that will one day be judged and spend eternity in heaven or hell, there lives not the man or woman on earth who ought not to “thirst” after salvation. And yet the many thirst after everything almost except salvation. Money, pleasure, honor, rank, self-indulgence—these are the things that they desire. There is no clear is no clear proof of the fall of man, and the utter corruption of human nature than the careless indifference of most people about their souls.
 - Man apart from God is MISERABLE. He is in the DARK. He is THIRSTY.

The CONEXT of the PASSAGE.

John 7:37 – [37] *On the last day of the feast, the great day...*
CONTEXT is everything in this passage.

The CONTEXT – The FEAST of BOOTHS/TABERNACLES.

- It was a FEAST that took place for 7 days beginning on the 14th day of the MONTH. And Going through the 21st Day of the MONTH. The Month of Tishri (September/October). Eventually an 8th Day was added... this taking place probably the 7th day.
- Edersheim said – Three things marked the FEAST.
- 1) *It was the Most Joyous Feast*
 - It was their Harvest FEAST.
 - Deuteronomy 16:13-15 – [13] *“You shall keep the Feast of Booths seven days, when you have gathered in the produce from your threshing floor and your winery press. [14] “You shall rejoice in your feast, you and your son and your daughter, your male servant and your female servant, the Levite, the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow who are without your towns. [15] “For seven days you shall keep the feast to the LORD your God at the place that the LORD will choose, because*

the LORD your God will bless you in all your produce and in all the work of your hands, so that you will be altogether joyful.”

- 2) *They Lived in Booths*
 - They would LIVE in SHELTERS made of wood – essentially LIMBS from TREES.
 - *This was all for them to remember how the LORD had provided for them in the wilderness for over 40 YEARS.*
 - Leviticus 23:42, 43 – [42] *“You shall dwell in booths for seven days. All native Israelites shall dwell in booths, [43] “that your generations may know that I made the people of Israel dwell in booths when I brought them out of the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.”*
- 3) *Many Different Offerings/Rituals*
 - Many animals were sacrificed at the FEAST of BOOTHS than any other FESTIVAL.
 - During Passover you would sacrifice 14 bulls.
 - During the Feast of Booths you would sacrifice 14 bulls the first day.
 - In all 70 bulls, 14 rams, 98 lambs = 182 sacrificed animals.
 - In addition to that there was a RITUAL which developed after the OT was finished.
 - Edersheim tells us - A Golden pitcher was taken to the POOL of SILOAM... by a PRIEST with a procession following him.
 - As he would return with the pitcher as he entered into the city through the water gate, priests would blow their trumpet three times... and then the priest would come into the TEMPLE and pour the WATER out on the ALTER as a DRINK OFFERING.
 - *The WATER pointed back to the Lord’s provision of water in the wilderness and pointed forward to the prophesied giving of the HOLY SPIRIT.*
 - Proverbs 1:23 – [23] *If you turn at my reproof, behold, I will pour out my Spirit to you.*
 - Isaiah 12:3 – [3] *With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.*
 - Isaiah 43:19 – [19] *Behold, I am about to do a new thing, now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.*
 - Isaiah 55:1 – [1] *Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters...*
 - Jeremiah 17:13 – [13] *...for they have forsaken the LORD, the fountain of living water.*
 - Psalm 36:9 – [9] *Yahweh is the fountain of life...*
 - The ceremony commemorated that they were there SEEKING the LORD’s PRESENCE in the POWER of the SPIRIT at the TEMPLE.

The Anointed One (Christ)

John 7:37 – [37b] *Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts let him come to me and drink.”*

- What is PROFOUND about this... this is a FULFILLMENT of PROPHECY.
 - Haggai was a prophet like Zechariah who began his ministry in about 520 B. C. – *the second year of King Darius of Persia.*
 - Haggai – goes to the Temple MOUNT... Haggai 2:1 – [1] *In the seventh month, on the twenty-first day of the month, the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai the prophet:*
 - See Haggai 2:7-9.
- *The LATTER GLORY will be GREATER... That is BECAUSE of this FULFILLMENT... 500 + YEARS to the DAY Jesus stood in the EXACT place where the PROPHECY had been made.*

ESSENTIALLY what JESUS is saying is THIS – I am the FULFILLMENT of what is TAKING PLACE.

- And in John 1:33 – [33] *‘He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain, this is he who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’*
- John the BAPTIST prophesied that Jesus would be the one to baptize with the HOLY SPIRIT.
- This OFFER Would be VERY COSTLY for JESUS!
 - ON THE CROSS – HE WAS GOING through a DESERT of SPIRITUAL THIRST. He cried out *“My God, My God, why have you forsaken me.”*
 - And in that moment – John RECORDS that JESUS said
 - – “I thirst.”
 - His THIRST was our THIRST.
 - Isaiah 53:5 – [5] *But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.*

The Invitation

CONSIDER the Invitation that Christ makes. Notice the recipients of his OFFER – *“If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink.”*

- JESUS’s CALL is to the SPIRITUALLY THIRSTY.
- Notice the INCLUSIVITY of this CALL. It’s for everyone who IS *thirsty*.
- Essentially JESUS says you MUST be WILLING to ADMIT your NEED.
- JESUS is OFFERING HIMSELF for people to come and DRINK.

What is the thirst Jesus is talking about?

- 1) The Need for Atonement – Jesus is able to remove the guilt (John 1:29) *“Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the Sins of the World.”*
- 2) The Search for Truth – Jesus offers the metaphysical answers that we need to know and understand. (John 14:6 – [6] *I am the way, the truth, and the life...*). He is the TRUTH. He gives us a BIBLICAL WORLDVIEW. To understand our PURPOSE. Francis Schaeffer – *The God Who is There* “In a fallen world, we must be willing to face the fact that however lovingly we present the gospel, if a man rejects it he will be miserable. It is dark out there.”
- 3) The Longing for Love – God made us as relational beings. There is an existential search to BELONG. To Know God. To be KNOWN by GOD. To be known by others. To be LOVED by others. And this can only be found in GOD. John 17:3 – [3] *This is eternal life that they may know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.*
- The WOMAN @ the WELL.
 - John 4:13, 14 – [13] *Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, [14] but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”*

The Gift

What does it mean to come to JESUS and DRINK?

That QUESTION is answered in verse John 7:38 – [38] *Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’*

- BELIEVING is synonymous with coming to HIM and DRINKING.
- This is NOT mere intellectual assent to who JESUS is.
- This is PLUNGING yourself into HIM. This IS being ALL IN.

Jesus said – there will be a RESULT for those who believe in HIM that day. Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water. *as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’*

- V. 39 – [39] *Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive.*
- The RESULT will be this... out of his heart... (*koilia*) often translated STOMACH.
 - The deep recesses of the person.
 - The NASB translates it “Innermost Being”
 - J. B. Phillips translates it – “Inmost heart.”
 - Paul says in Philippians 3:19 – *People’s God is their belly (koilia)*
 - It’s WHERE the DESIRES COME from.
- In that PLACE – the HOLY SPIRIT will come – and be an ever-flowing STREAM.
- Isaiah 58:11 – [11] *...and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.*
- John 1:16 – [16] *From His fullness we have all received grace upon grace.*

The RESULT is: 1) *It leads to a deep soul satisfaction.* 2) *This spiritual life flows out into the lives of OTHERS.*

The Coming Spirit

A HELPFUL CLARIFICATION. Found in Verse 39. [39] *Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

- The HOLY SPIRIT regenerated every believer in the Old Testament. Every BELIEVER needed a NEW HEART. Ezekiel 36.
- The HOLY SPIRIT was present in the WORSHIP @ the Temple
- *But it was only key leaders who were indwelt/anointed by the Holy Spirit.*
 - Deuteronomy 34:9 – [9] *And Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him.*
 - Ezekiel 2:2 – [2] *And as he spoke to me, the Spirit entered into me and set me on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.*
 - David prays in Psalm 51:11 – [11] *Do not cast me away from your presence and do not take your Holy Spirit from me.*

Jesus specifies in John 14 what HE MEANS. When Jesus ascends into HEAVEN He will send the HOLY SPIRIT to INDWELL every CHRISTIAN.

- John 14:16, 17 – [16] *“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, [17] “even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.”*
 - *The Holy Spirit dwelt with the DISCIPLES – in the PERSON of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.*
- The NT witness is that at Pentecost (Acts 2) – The HOLY SPIRIT came and from that POINT every Christian has the INDWELLING HOLY SPIRIT.
 - 1 Corinthians 3:16 – [16] *Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?*
 - Romans 8:15 – [15] *For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!”*

EVERY single PERSON who BELIEVES in CHRIST – is given this GIFT of the indwelling Holy Spirit.