

## Drink offering

We are coming to the part of our calendar year that coincides with the fall feasts of Israel. The Jewish calendar indicates that this Wednesday will be the feast of the trumpets. This is the beginning of feasts for the season the fall for the people of Israel which are observed by our friends in the messianic Jewish faith. During the feasts of Tabernacles, there is a ceremony that was begun that is not found Scripture. It is a ritual that is simply called the ceremony of the water drawing. The Israelites depended on God for rain. So they developed this ceremony in which they called upon their creator for rain.

The water drawing ceremony was a joyous occasion. A specific Levitical priest was assigned to this ceremony. He would descend to the pool of Siloam. He was accompanied by a group of faithful worshipers along with a band of liturgical flutists whose music added to the mood joy in this ceremony. When the priest arrived at the pool, he filled a special golden picture with water. With the crowd behind him, he returned through the Water Gate. As the priest arrived, trumpets were sounded. Priest entered the temple area and went straight to the southern side of the great altar. Two bowls were placed at the southwest corner of the altar. As the priests poured water into the bowls, the flutists joined with a choir of Israelites as they chanted the words of Psalm 118, "oh Lord, do save, we beseech you; oh Lord, we beseech you, do send prosperity!"

The ceremony of the water drawing held a significance that was much deeper than is agricultural implications. The rain represented the Holy Spirit, and the water drawing pointed to that day when, according to the prophet Joel, God would rain His Spirit upon the Israelites. The prayer of every worshiper was, "May God send His Spirit upon us now."

According to a source from Messianic Jews, rain represented the Holy Spirit, and water drawing pointed to that day when God would rain His Spirit upon the Israelites.

Joel 2:28 – *It will come about after this  
That I will pour out My Spirit on all <sup>[b]</sup>mankind;*

The prayer of every worshiper was, "May God send His Spirit upon us now. Isaiah 12:3 says "With joy shall you draw out of the wells of salvation." Joy, according rabbinical authorities, is the signal of the presence of God's Spirit.

Chapter 7 of the Gospel of John has as its occasion the feasts of tabernacles. The feast was drawing to a close. It was the last day. The city of Jerusalem was filled to capacity once again the priest went to the pool of Siloam accompanied by the worshipers and the flutists. The priest drew water and the golden pitchers. He returns to the altar. But on this last day he circled the altar seven times, and then poured out the water.

This is the occasion (event) for the passage I wish to spend time on this morning. The passage is John 7:37 – 39.

Let's look at it, read it, open ourselves up to the truths we have for today, and feast on the Word of God.

<sup>37</sup> Now 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.

<sup>38</sup> He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'"

<sup>39</sup> 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.

### **Compassion Exhibited**

Don't pass up the manner in which Jesus said these words. For when we do, we miss something of the depths of the compassion He has for these people. Remember that opposition is growing. In spite of the opposition, Jesus still has great compassion for the people who had gathered.

Jesus stood, assuming the position of a Rabbi who is about to make a great proclamation.

He cried out. This was no raise your voice a little bit. This was a cry for all to hear. He had a message for those who were in that audience that day. So, the message He had was of urgency. It was out of a heart of great compassion. So what if there were those who wanted Him dead. His compassion trumped the fear of any threats.

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.'"

### **Condition to be Acknowledged**

If you are thirsty...That is the acknowledging of the need.

This is not the physical thirst. This is the spiritual thirst. The word used is the same we find in the beatitudes in the early verses of Matthew 5. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness.

The hunger is not a hunger for a slice of bread, but for the whole loaf. The thirst is not one that is quenched with a small glass of water, but the whole gallon.

I found something that is 16 years old in reporting. It cites that some 60 scientists was funded millions of dollars to pursue and find the source of happiness for humanity.

Although the U.S. standard of living has increased since W.W. II, there is no increase in the number of people who regard themselves as happy. A *U.S. News & World Report* on the subject says, "Once income provides basic needs, it doesn't correlate to happiness. Nor does intelligence, prestige, or sunny weather. People grow used to new climates, higher salaries, and better cars."

Researchers have found that self-esteem, spirituality, family, and good marriages and friendships are key to a happy life. So are hope, meaning, and discovering and pursuing the right goals. The study went on to say happiness is connected with helping others and having a sense of gratitude.

They can pay me the millions of dollars. They are pursuing the wrong thing. I told the youth Sunday night the source of happiness. What is it? Circumstances. Circumstances, however, will change. I think the scientist are pursuing the wrong thing. I think they should be pursuing joy. There is a difference between joy and happiness. Happiness is based on circumstances. Joy is

based on relationship with Jesus Christ. God is the source of joy. Circumstances will change, but God will remain constant forever.

I sense a growing thirst in our nation for that which fulfills. That thirst not quenched is growing into a people who are angry, rude, and grumpy.

If anyone is thirsty for joy, let them go to the next thing Jesus says.

### **Commands to be Obeyed**

Let him come to me and drink.

Come to Jesus. It is the first step. It is the step of what we call repentance. We are turning from all that we thought will bring us joy. We are turning to the only source of joy.

But once we come, we have to take that next step—drink. Drink of Jesus, not physically of course. It is a spiritual intake of Jesus Christ.

We come and drink by believing and trusting in Jesus and Him alone. He is the source of life, spiritual life. Once we drink of Him, we never thirst again.

*Matthew 5:6 - "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.*

*John 4:14 - whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."*

*John 6:63- It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*

A well-known evangelist of years ago sought to have his spiritual thirst quenched. He tried everything from trying to be an Anglican priest to denying his body certain things in hopes of winning salvation for his soul. He was given a book that God used to make him realize his need for Christ. One night in a state of restlessness, he finally prayed, saying, "I thirst." God used that admission to bring Him to trust Christ and Christ alone for satisfaction. He was never the same again.

### **Consequences to be Enjoyed**

Consequences are the result of an action done. Consequences are most thought of as negative. They can also be positive. That is what I want to communicate to you. I choose the word consequences to keep with the alliterated outline. Anyway...what is the result? What did Jesus promise? "From his innermost being (from his heart) will flow rivers of living water." John tells us in the next verse that Jesus is referring to the Holy Spirit.

We are not remade in Christ to be ponds that become stagnate and not pour out life to others. We are made to be springs of water. The source never runs dry. All who are in the path of the springs that flow from us will receive nourishing for their soul, and have needs met to their wounded heart.

John 4. The woman at the well came to believe Jesus was Messiah. She drank of Jesus. She left her waterpots, went back to town to tell all that this man had done. Her witness was credible. The town came to meet Jesus. The town experienced revival through the springs of one person.

The evangelist I told you of earlier was George Whitefield. He became a mighty preacher of the Word of God. Hotspots of revival were happening in America in 1742. When Whitefield came to America, he went around preaching. God used him as the thread that tied these revivals together to bring the first Great Awakening in America.

Don't become stagnate. Grow in Christ. One thing that is kind of unusual about being a Christ follower. My thirst is satisfied. But I want more of Him. I want to know Him more.