

A. Introduction

1. Water is one of the most precious substances on earth

- a. Some years ago there was a television travelogue concerning a group of explorers who were searching in Africa for a vanishing tribe. In the course of their travels they came across some natives who for centuries had made their home on the banks of this one particular river. This in itself did not cause wonder, until they were showed the polluted stream. It was filled with dirt and every contamination imaginable. The natives had developed a method of swishing over the top of the water to get the worst things away before scooping it up to drink.—{2}.
- b. One of the explorers took his canteen and poured out a large cup of crystal clear water and handed it to one of the aged women of the tribe, whose face was as wrinkled as a prune. She took the cup, pressed it to her lips, and didn't put it down until she had drained it. Then through an interpreter she said that she had never dreamed that there was anything in this world as sweet and wonderful as that.
- c. Water is vital for all known forms of life
  - (A) the human body normally consists of between 55% and 78% water, being at the higher levels in young children and babies
  - (B) a person can survive much longer without food than without water
  - (C) we get a good deal of our water as part of our food
  - (D) for normal activity a grown person needs about one litre of water daily
  - (E) on cold winter days I have seen squirrels licking the ice and birds eating snow in order to get the needed water

2. and in hot and dry lands

- a. this need for water is even more obvious
- b. so the Bible uses the pictures of thirst and water to describe a person's deepest needs and God's richest blessing
- c. this fact is evident in today's text in Isaiah
- d. which is given in the form of a promise of water

B. To Whom Is the Promise Given?

1. in the first place it is given to the people of a nation . . . . . 1-3
  - a. 1 But now listen, O Jacob, My servant, And Israel, whom I have chosen:
  - b. it is given to the servant nation, to the chosen nation
  - c. the nation descended from Jacob; to Israel
  - d. and this is repeated in the names given in verse 2, ... O Jacob My servant, and you Jeshurun whom I have chosen
  - e. now, Jacob, as a name, means literally, 'one following on the heel' which is also the meaning of the old English word, 'supplanter' and carries with it the thought of doing evil to someone behind their back, of deceiving
  - f. and that is the picture of Jacob, a deceiving hound
  - g. but later, God gave him another name, Israel, meaning prince of God and associated with that name a second one, Jeshurun, meaning upright, or one acting rightly
  - h. Jacob the sinful deceiver became Israel the upright prince
  - i. now the promise was not just to this individual, Jacob-Israel, or even the nation of that name of Isaiah's day, for verse 3 extends its scope far into the future, for it was to be '... on your offspring ... on your descendants'
  - j. but it does not stop there, because the promise to Abraham was that in his offspring all the world would be blessed
  
2. so, with the receipt of this promise by Jacob, by Israel . . . . . 5
  - a. the benefits of that promise were to extend beyond that nation to the world around; this we see in verse
  - b. 5 This one will say, 'I am the Lord's; And that one will call on the name of Jacob; And another will write on (better, with) his hand, 'Belonging to the Lord,' And will name Israel's name with honour.
  - c. instead of the nation being subject to revilement as in Isaiah 43: 28, it is one to whom the Gentiles come eagerly, honouring the name of Israel
  - d. to find the life-giving water promised of God
  - e. they will confess God as their sovereign: I am the Lord's
  - f. to call on the name of Jacob is to call upon Jacob's God

- g. they will do so not only with the lips, but they will write it down and put their name to it, subscribe to it
- h. as Jacob was but a sinful, wandering Aramaean (Syrian) who became an upright prince of God, so sinful Gentiles will likewise come to be justified children of God
- i. in this verse Isaiah announces the gospel for the world

3. let us continue and ask, ...

C. Who Is Making this Promise?

1. the value of a promise

- a. depends directly upon the character of the one making it
  - (A) upon their truthfulness and integrity
  - (B) upon their capacity to carry it out
  - (C) upon their motivation to fulfill the promise
- b. look at who is making this promise to Israel and to us

2. the Prelude to the Promise . . . . . 2

- a. *2a Thus says the Lord who made you And formed you from the womb, who will help you, ...*
- b. this is true whether of Israel the nation or us as individuals
- c. it is the Lord, your Maker, who gives this promise, and as such we should have no doubt about His capacity to carry it out
- d. it is the Lord, who brought about the birth of this nation and even our own birth, be it physical or spiritual; and as the one forming us Has an intimate interest in carrying out His promise for our good

3. the Postlude to the Promise . . . . . 6-7

- a. gives further assurance that it will take place
- b. as well as introducing the next section on the foolishness of idolatry which we will consider, Lord willing, next Sunday
- c. God has the motivation to carry out this promise because of His relationship to Israel and to us, verse *6a Thus says the Lord, the King of Israel and his Redeemer, ...*

- (A) He is King, a King who cares for His subjects
  - (B) He is Redeemer, delivering His people from bondage; from Egypt, from Babylon, but more so, from sin
- d. the verse goes on 6b ... the Lord of hosts: 'I am the first and I am the last, And there is no God besides Me.
- (A) He has all the power need to fulfill the promise
  - (B) He is eternal; He is unique
- e. and His truthfulness and faithfulness is proven, [7 Who is like Me? Let him proclaim and declare it; Yes, let him recount it to Me in order, From the time that I established the ancient nation. And let them declare to them the things that are coming And the events that are going to take place.](#)
- (A) the Lord is a God of prophecy
  - (B) there is a written record to demonstrate He is true
  - (C) no god or idol can make such a claim: only Yahweh

4. so this promise backed by the highest credentials; as the saying goes, 'it's money in the bank.'

D. What is the Promise?

1. Its Nature . . . . . 3
  - a. [3a For I will pour out water on the thirsty land](#) (land should be omitted as in the AV) [And streams on the dry ground; ...](#)
  - b. the promise is for water, life-sustaining water
  - c. [During the liberation of Palestine in WWI, Commonwealth forces closely pursued the Turks as they retreated from the desert. Moving northward past Beersheba the pursuers outdistanced their water-carrying camel train. When the water ran out, their mouths got dry, their heads ached, and they became dizzy and faint. Eyes became bloodshot, lips swelled and turned purple, and mirages became common. They knew that if they did not make the wells of Sheriah by nightfall, thousands of them would die – as hundreds already had done. Literally fighting for their lives, they managed to drive the enemy from Sheriah.](#)
  - d. [As water was distributed from the great stone cisterns, the more able-bodied soldiers stood at attention waiting for the wounded and those who would take guard duty to drink first. It was four hours before](#)

the last man had his drink. During that time the men stood no more than twenty feet from thousands of gallons of water, to drink of which had been their consuming passion for many agonizing days.—<sup>{3}</sup>.

- e. what God is promising will satisfy the consuming passion of every man, woman or child who will receive it
- f. but it is dependent upon Isaiah 43:25, 'I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins.'
- g. it is that promised when '37b Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; ...' (John 7:37-39), for Isaiah goes on in verse
- h. 3b I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring And My blessing on your descendants;
- i. it is the Holy Spirit of God that is being promised!

2. Its Impact . . . . . 2, 4, 8

- a. though a promise may be spiritual
  - (A) what can be more spiritual than this promise?
  - (B) yet the impact of the fulfilment of the promise can be described in physical, observable results, as in verse
  - (C) 4 And they will spring up among the grass Like poplars by streams of water.
    - (1) 'they' refers to the offspring and descendants, v 3
    - (2) the figure depicts spiritual results; recall what the first Psalm has to say about the blessed man: 'He will be like a tree firmly planted by streams of water, Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither; And in whatever he does, he prospers.' (Psalms 1:3); that is one impact
- b. another impact is the casting out of fear
  - (A) 2b ... Do not fear, O Jacob My servant; And you Jeshurun whom I have chosen.
  - (B) 8 Do not tremble and do not be afraid; Have I not long since announced it to you and declared it? And you are My witnesses. Is there any God besides Me, Or is there any other Rock? I know of none.
- c. the Holy Spirit is given that God's people may grow, may have bold assurance that they are the children of God, and be witnesses to the world of the One true God.

## E. Conclusion

1. Going back to those Commonwealth forces in WW I: It is said that one of the officers who was present reported, "I believe that we all learned our first real Bible lesson on the march from Beersheba to Sheriah Wells. If such were our thirst for God, for righteousness and for His will in our lives, a consuming, all-embracing, preoccupying desire, how rich in the fruit of the Spirit would we be?"—[3].
2. Yes, we need water to live; and food, shelter and clothing
  - a. but the greater need for mankind
  - b. is that they come to Christ Jesus as Saviour, that they find new life from the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit
  - c. to know 'the love of God (that) has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.' (Romans 5:5)
  - d. Paul exhorts us 'Do not quench Spirit' (1 Th 5:19), 'Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God' (Eph 4:30) and 'be filled with the Spirit' (Eph 5:18) so as to realize this promise of God.

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Various other English versions of the Holy Bible may be used in this sermon. Some (for example, the AV, ASV, and NAS) seek to be strictly translations, while others (and especially PHIL) contain paraphrasing which involves a certain amount of subjective interpretation. Nevertheless, there is little material difference in meaning among these. Some prove slightly clearer on some verses than others. Looking at more than one version sometimes sheds additional light on any particular verse. Explanatory additions to the Bible text are shown in {braces}. The versions are identified as:

ASV	American Standard Version of 1901
AV	Authorized (King James) Version
ERV	The Revised Version of 1885
NAS	New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation
NIV	New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society
NKJV	New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers
NLT	1996 New Living Translation © 1996 by Tyndale Charitable Trust
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
PHIL	New Testament Translation © 1972 by J. B. Phillips
RSV	Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U. S. A.
WEY	The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth

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2. *Pure, Living Water*, author unknown – Kerux illustrations #26613
3. *Spiritual Dehydration*, by E. M. Blaiklock – Kerux illustrations #31251