

- I. Prologue: The Identity of the Son of God (1:1-18)
- II. Jesus Proven to be the Christ & the Son of God in His Public Ministry (1:19-12:50)
  - A. The Son of God Revealed (1:19-4:54)
  - B. The Son of God Rejected (5:1-12:36)
    - 1. Opposition in Jerusalem (5:1-47)
    - 2. Opposition in Galilee (6:1-71)
    - 3. Settled Opposition in Jerusalem (7:1-10:39)
    - 4. Belief across the Jordan (10:40-42)
    - 5. Hardened Opposition in Jerusalem (11:1-12:36)
    - 6. The hour has come (12:20-36)
  - C. Conclusion (12:37-50)
- III. Jesus Proven to be the Christ & the Son of God in His Passion and Resurrection (13:1-20:31)
- IV. Epilogue: The Future Mission of the Son of God (21)

## If Anyone Thirsts

*Gospel of John, Part XXVI*

John 7:37-8:1

Stuart W. Bryan

### I. Water from the Rock (Ex 17:1-7; 1 Cor 10:4)

When Israel tempted the Lord, saying to Moses, "Give us water, that we may drink! Is the Lord among us or not?" God revealed His radical faithfulness:

*"And the LORD said to Moses, "Go on before the people, and take with you some of the elders of Israel. Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river, and go. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb; and you shall strike the rock, and water will come out of it, that the people may drink." And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." (Ex 17:5f)*

This is a text that rewards careful reading and includes a twofold message. First, by supplying Israel with water in the wilderness, God revealed that He is the one who must satisfy our thirst (cf. Ps 42:1-2; 63:1; 84:1-2). Second, by standing upon the rock, God revealed that nothing, not even personal suffering, would thwart His promise to provide for His own.

When Paul read this story, he concluded as follows:

*"Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea, all ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was \_\_\_\_\_." (1 Cor 10:1-4)*

### II. Jesus' Audacious Invitation

So consider our text today. Jesus cries out on the last day, the great day of the feast, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink." This is Jesus' invitation, an invitation in which Jesus clearly claims deity.

Jesus summons you to turn away from your idols and to turn in faith to Him. Leave your broken cisterns and return to the fountain of living water: "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jer 2:13). Jesus invites us through the prophet Isaiah (55:1-3a):

*"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, Come to the waters; And you who have no money, Come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk Without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, And your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, And let your soul delight itself in abundance. Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live..."*

The Church, by the power of the Spirit, reissues that invitation throughout the ages:

*"And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev 22:17)*

### III. Jesus' Glorious Promise

*"He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart [Literally - belly] will flow rivers of living water." But this, John explains, He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.*

#### A. The *Pneumatikoi* Answer

The *pneumatikoi* taught that the Holy Spirit was the first creature of the Son. It was against them that the lines about the Holy Spirit were added to the Nicene Creed in the year 381: *And we believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.* The Holy Spirit, in other words, is eternal \_\_\_\_\_.

#### B. The *Ordo Salutis* Answer (Ps 51:11; Lk 1:35, 41, 67, 80; 2:25ff)

*Ordo Salutis* is Latin for "Order of Salvation." This position argues that the saving activity of the Spirit has changed. In the OT, the Holy Spirit merely came on God's people temporarily, but now He indwells us permanently. But this answer is also defective. Sinners in the OT were no less in need of the transforming grace of God to give them spiritual life and understanding than we are. While our knowledge of the Spirit's work dramatically expands in the NT, the work itself has not changed. He has always been the one to give spiritual life to God's people and to equip them for acts of service.

#### C. The *Historia Salutis* Solution (cf. Is 12:1-6; 44:1-5; Ezek 47)

*He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his belly will flow rivers of living water.* Jesus is promising that the one who believes in Him will not only have his thirst quenched but will become a means of taking God's saving work to others.

This is what the Scriptures had promised, and it is to these promises that Jesus' alludes. Throughout the OT, God promised that He would one day act to rescue Israel and the nations from the wilderness of sin. God would pour out His Spirit on the nations like water on dry ground. God announced through Isaiah: *For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring...*" (44:1-5).

*"And in that day you will say: "O LORD, I will praise You; Though You were angry with me, Your anger is turned away, and You comfort me. Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; For YAH, the LORD, is my strength and song; He also has become my salvation." "Therefore with joy you will draw water From the wells of salvation. And in that day you will say: "Praise the LORD, call upon His name; Declare His deeds among the peoples, Make mention that His name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, For He has done excellent things; This is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, O inhabitant of Zion, For great is the Holy One of Israel in your midst!" (Is 12:1-6)*

### IV. Conclusion