

Journey Through the Bible

Exodus

Message 7: Drinking and Flowing the Water of Life

Outline:

- I. **Eating and drinking—two crucial matters in the Bible**
 - A. **Genesis 2:9-10** Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food... the tree of life... And a river went forth from Eden...
 - B. **Revelation 22:1-2** And he showed me a river of water of life... proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb... And on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life...
 - C. **John 6:51** I am the living bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he shall live forever...
 - D. **John 7:37** Now on the last day... Jesus stood and cried out, saying, If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink....
 - E. The entire Bible ends with a promise and a call (Rev. 22):
 1. **Revelation 22:14** Blessed are those who wash their robes that they may have right to the tree of life
 2. **Revelation 22:17** And let him who is thirsty come; let him who wills take the water of life freely
- II. **Drinking and flowing—two aspects of one thing**
 - A. **John 4:14** But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall by no means thirst forever; but the water that I will give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into eternal life.
 - B. **John 7:37-38** If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes into Me, as the Scripture said, out of his innermost being shall flow rivers of living water.
- III. **Drinking the water of life**
 - A. The water flowing out of the cleft rock typifies the Spirit—John 7:39
 1. **John 7:39** But this He said concerning the Spirit, whom those who believed into Him were about to receive...
 - B. The water of life is the Triune God flowing out to be our life—Rev. 22:1
 - C. Conditions for us to drink the water of life:
 1. First, we need to be positioned to drink
 - a) **1 Corinthians 12:13** For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one Body... and were all given to drink one Spirit.
 2. We also need to be thirsty
 - a) **Revelation 21:6** I will give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely.
 3. Then we need to come to the Lord
 - a) **John 7:37** ...let him come to Me and drink.
 - (1) to ask of the Lord
 - a) **John 4:15** The woman said to Him, Sir, give me this water...
 - (2) to believe in the Lord
 - a) **John 7:38** ... He who believes into Me
 - (3) to call on the name of the Lord
 - a) **Isaiah 12:3-4** Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation. And in that day shall ye say, Praise the Lord, call upon His name...

- (4) And we need to speak to the Rock in our daily living
- (a) **1 Corinthians 10:4** ...they drank of a spiritual rock which followed them, and the rock was Christ.
 - (b) **Numbers 20:7-8** Then Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Take the rod, and gather the assembly... and speak to the rock before their eyes, so that it yields its water.

IV. Flowing the water of life

- A. Proverbs 11:25 The blessing soul will prosper, and he who waters will also be watered himself.
1. In preaching the gospel to unbelievers, we should emphasize the importance of drinking, but in ministering to believers, our emphasis should be on the importance of flowing.
 2. Drinking is nullified by the lack of flowing. Yes, our experience of the living water begins with drinking. But if there is no flowing, there is no way for us to continue drinking.
 3. If there is no outflow from within you, you cannot continue to take in the living water by drinking. Only the flowing can keep the inner current moving.
 4. Concerning the experience of the living water, the flowing of the water is more important than the drinking of it.
 5. If the flowing stops, our drinking will stop; and if our drinking stops, we shall lose our thirst. This is very serious.
 6. The way to flow the living water is by speaking — we need to preach the gospel to unbelievers, speak the truth to believers, and also speak in the meetings of the church, including the home meetings (Eph. 5:18-20; 1 Cor. 14:26).

READING EXCERPT

In the Bible the basic principle concerning man's relationship with God is that man needs to eat and drink of God. Because eating and drinking are so common in our daily life, they have not been given much consideration by the great teachers and scholars of the Bible. Nevertheless, in the Scriptures eating and drinking are basic and crucial.

EATING AND DRINKING IN GENESIS AND REVELATION

After the record of the creation of man, there is mention of the tree of life and of a river which "went out of Eden to water the garden" (Gen. 2:9-10). The tree of life was for man's eating, and the flowing river was for man's drinking. Hence, at the beginning of the Bible, eating and drinking are presented with respect to the relationship between God and man. At the end of the Bible we also read of eating and drinking. In Revelation 21 and 22 eating and drinking are emphasized strongly. According to Revelation 21:6, the Lord will "give to him who thirsts from the spring of the water of life freely." In 22:1 we see the "river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb," and in verse 2 we are told that "on this side and on that side of the river was the tree of life." The river of water of life flows out of the throne, and the tree of life grows in the river. In Revelation 22:14 there is a promise related to eating, and in 22:17, a call related to drinking. Verse 14 says that those who wash their robes have the right to the tree of life, and verse 17 says that whoever wills may take the water of life freely. In verse 14 we have the promise of eating the tree of life, and in verse 17 we have the call to drink of the water of life. Therefore, we may say that the Bible concludes with a word about eating and drinking.

THE WAY GOD WORKS HIMSELF INTO US

We should not consider the eating and drinking spoken of in the Bible as commonplace. On the contrary, these matters are crucial. It is by eating and drinking that we, God's chosen people,

take Him into us. We have pointed out repeatedly that God's intention is to work Himself into us to be our life and our everything. But we still need to be impressed with the fact that the way God works Himself into us is through our eating and drinking of Him.

POSITIONED TO DRINK

As believers, we have been positioned to drink. This is the first aspect of the science of drinking. First Corinthians 12:13 says, "For also in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and were all given to drink one Spirit." Through baptism we have been positioned to drink. As long as we have been baptized into the Lord, we have the position to drink of the living water. Before we were saved, we were far away from the living water. But now that we have been saved, we have been brought back to the water and positioned to drink of it. Thank the Lord that we all are positioned to drink.

THE NEED OF THIRST

Even though we have been positioned to drink, we shall not drink unless we are thirsty. To drink the water of life there is the need of thirst (Exo. 17:3a ; John 7:37 ; Rev. 21:6). Millions of today's Christians are not thirsty for the Lord. What a mercy it is to be thirsty! I can testify that day by day I am thirsty for living water. If I do not pray for a certain period of time, I become conscious of my thirst. It is a mercy that we are thirsty for the living water, especially when so many Christians have no thirst. Many of us can testify that during the day we are conscious of the thirst within us, this thirst causes us to pray and to contact the Lord. In a simple way, we may say, "Lord Jesus, I am thirsty for You, and I want to contact You." If we sense that our thirst is not adequate, we may need to pray, "Lord, increase the thirst within me." We all need such a thirst for the Lord.

COMING TO THE LORD

We also need to come to the Lord. In John 7:37 the Lord Jesus invites the thirsty ones to come to Him and drink. In like manner, the Spirit and the bride send forth the call to come and drink of the living water (Rev. 22:17). Even though we have been positioned to drink and are thirsty, we still need to come to the Lord again and again. We need to come to the Lord continually, even twenty-four hours a day. If we tell the Lord that we want to come to Him all day long, He surely will answer our prayer. Tell the Lord, "Lord, I don't want to stop coming to You. I want to come to You twenty-four hours a day, even when I am asleep." No matter what we are doing, we may come to the Lord by calling on Him. Whenever we call on the name of the Lord Jesus, we come to Him.

ASKING OF THE LORD

To drink the living water we need to ask the Lord for this water. In John 4:10 the Lord said to the Samaritan woman, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, Give Me a drink, you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

CALLING ON THE LORD

Although we have been positioned to drink and we may be thirsty and although we may come to the Lord and ask of Him, we do not actually drink until we call on the name of the Lord (Acts 2:21). In 1 Corinthians 12 we find the secret of drinking. Verse 13 says that we all have been made to drink of one Spirit, and verse 3 tells us that no one can say Lord Jesus except in the Holy Spirit. To drink the Spirit is to call "Lord Jesus." Whenever we call on the name of the Lord in this way, we spontaneously drink the living water.

In 1 Corinthians 12 we see that the water is the Spirit, for verse 13 speaks of drinking of the one Spirit. The way to drink of the Spirit is to call on the name of the Lord. If we are thirsty and call "Lord Jesus," we immediately drink of the Spirit. Our calling is our drinking. According to 1 Corinthians 12:3, when we call "Lord Jesus," we are in the Spirit. I can testify that whenever I call on the Lord from deep within my spirit, I have the conviction and the consciousness that I am in the Spirit touching the Lord.

DRINKING AND FLOWING

Without the flowing of the water of life, our drinking is in vain. In fact, if we do not flow, we shall not be able to continue drinking. Drinking is nullified by the lack of flowing. The genuine drinking of the water of life depends on the flowing. Let us use a water hose as an illustration. On the one hand, the hose takes in water from the faucet; on the other hand, it flows out water. Both the inflow and the outflow are necessary. The receiving and the flowing take place simultaneously. If we do not drink, we cannot flow; and if we do not flow, we cannot continue to drink.

It is a serious matter to have our drinking nullified by the lack of flowing. Of the many genuine believers in Christ who have drunk of the living water, not many experience the flowing of this water. Eventually, this causes their drinking to cease. If there is no outflow from within you, you cannot continue to take in the living water by drinking. Only the flowing can keep the inner current moving. It is not the drinking, the taking in, that keeps the current going; it is the outflow of water which does this. Many Christians either do not drink at all or find that their drinking avails nothing. The reason for this is that, even though they may drink, they do not flow. The lack of flowing causes the drinking to be of no avail. This is very serious. I am burdened to point out that concerning the experience of the living water the flowing of the water is even more important than the drinking of it. Yes, our experience of the living water begins with drinking. But if there is no flowing, there is no way for us to continue drinking. If the flowing does not follow our drinking, our drinking will stop. Our experience testifies that this is true.

FLOWING BY SPEAKING

Perhaps you are wondering what it means to flow the water of life in a practical way. The flowing can be compared to flushing out something with water. To flush out a pipe is to flood it with water for the purpose of cleansing; it is to wash it out by a sudden rush of water. As Christians, from our inner being there should be a flushing of the living water. In order to have this flushing out, this strong flowing, we need to call on the name of the Lord Jesus and pray. It is also helpful to sing to the Lord.

What is particularly helpful to bring about the inner flowing is speaking to the Lord, by the Lord, for the Lord, in the Lord, and with the Lord. The more we speak in this way, the more we shall flow. If there is no one to whom we may speak, we should speak to the things in our room. Speak to the desk, the door, the walls. Speak to anything and everything. If you have a pet in your house, speak to it. Speak to the dog, the cat, the birds, or the fish. Some may regard this practice as ridiculous, but I can testify of the difference it makes to speak. Christians should not be dumb, silent. On the contrary, we must be those bubbling and welling up with life. We all have something to which we can speak. We can speak to the windows, to the doors, and to bricks and stones. When we speak, something of the Lord Jesus flows out. By speaking we are like a water hose which has both the inflow and the outflow. The amount of inflow is in proportion to the amount of outflow. The quantity of water which flows out of us determines how much water can flow into us. In other words, how much we flow determines how much of the living water we can drink.

Questions:

1. What is the basic principle concerning man's relationship with God? What are some verses that support this?
2. What are the conditions for us to drink?
3. Practically, how can we come to the Lord and drink Him as the water of life?
4. As a believer, why is it so important that flow out to others? Practically, how do we do this?