

THE HOLY SPIRIT “Water”

Water is a deep subject in the Word of God. Just considering some water-words will give us an idea of its scope: water, sea, stream, river, mist, snow, hail, ice, deep, well, spring, laver, baptism, flow, pour, drink, wave, overflow, flood . . . you get the picture! In this message we are going to focus on water, primarily in the form of rain. I refer you to three other studies we have done that deal with water: “Water from the Rock,” “Water for My Children,” and “Fountains of Living Water.” LMCI also has a tape entitled “The Doctrine of Baptism” by Dale Sides. These, I believe would be of benefit to you.

What we want to do today is establish the symbol of water for the Holy Spirit in Scripture. We will then look at water in the natural and see what it teaches us about the Holy Spirit and how He relates to us.

Establishing the Symbol-

John 4:13-14

13 Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again,
14 but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a **spring of water welling** up to eternal life." NIV

John 7:37-39

37 On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink.
38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, **streams of living water will flow** from within him."
39 **By this he meant the Spirit**, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified. NIV

In this progressive revelation, it is clear that the “spring of water” is the promised presence of the Holy Spirit with man. This action would make the worshipping “in spirit and in truth” that Jesus told the Samaritan woman about a possibility.

The feast mentioned in John 7 is the Feast of Tabernacles. A priest would go to the Pool of Salome and draw water out in a golden pitcher. This he would bring into the Temple through the Water Gate (thus named because of the ceremony) and pour it out at the foot of the altar amidst the singing of the Hallel (Ps. 113-118). It was during this very ceremony that Jesus proclaimed the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in a loud verse. This ceremony is alluded to in Isaiah.

Isa 12:1-3

1 In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O LORD. Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me.
2 Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation."
3 **With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.** NIV

“[The ceremony of the pouring out of water on the altar during the Feast of Tabernacles had] . . . its main and real application . . . to the future outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as predicted – probably in allusion to this very rite – by Isaiah the prophet. Thus the Talmud says distinctly: ‘Why is the name of it called, the drawing out of water? Because of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, according to what is said: “With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.”’¹

Titus 3:5-7

5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the **washing** of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit,
6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior,
7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life. NIV

The term “washing” in the Greek is baptismal, the laver. This tells us the significance of the brazen laver in the Tabernacle and the sea in the Temple. They represent the Holy Spirit as well as the Word of God (Eph. 5:26). This is why the term “baptism of the Holy Spirit” is used. John baptized with water. Jesus baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

Is this figure simply a New Testament concept? No.

Joel 2:23, 28

23 Be glad, O people of Zion, rejoice in the LORD your God, for he has given you **the autumn rains in righteousness**. He sends you abundant showers, **both autumn and spring rains**, as before.
28'And afterward, **I will pour out my Spirit** on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. NIV

Isa 44:2-3

2 This is what the LORD says-- he who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid, O Jacob, my servant, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen.
3 **For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring,** and my blessing on your descendants. NIV

Isa 32:15

till **the Spirit is poured upon us from on high**, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest. NIV

The Spirit being poured out from on high and watering the land is illustrated by God with the rain from heaven that waters the earth. Finally, one last verse to establish the symbol.

1 Cor 12:13

For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. NIV

¹ Alfred Edersheim, *The Temple: Its Ministries and Services*, Updated Edition, Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, Mass., 1994, p. 220-222

Notice that we are baptized (Holy Spirit upon) and that we drink (Holy Spirit in). It is the Holy Spirit that brings unity to the body of Christ. In our own bodies, it is water that helps organize the systems in our cells!

So we see clearly that water is a dramatic symbol of the Holy Spirit in Scripture. It is not an exclusive symbol (water can mean different things symbolically) but it is a definite symbol. Following the premise of “first the natural then the spiritual,” let us take a look at water.

What is Water?

- It has a body (O) and wings (H₂).
 - It is a polarized molecule (electrically charged).
 - It is a very stable substance (not volatile).
 - Pure H₂O is neutral (neither base nor acidic) with a pH of 7. Rain is naturally acidic (5.6 pH, 25x more acidic than H₂O). Fog and cloud are 10x more acidic than rain!
10. It's colorless.
 9. It's tasteless.
 8. It's odorless.
 7. It feels wet.
 6. It makes a distinctive sound (roaring ocean, bubbling stream, dripping faucet).]

Prov 27:15-16

15 A quarrelsome wife is like a constant dripping on a rainy day;

16 restraining her is like restraining the wind or grasping oil with the hand. NIV

*Now bear with me and don't laugh. In the following, I am not saying that the Holy Spirit is like a quarrelsome wife. At times, a quarrelsome wife tries to be the Holy Spirit for her husband, but that is another sermon for another day! She is compared to a constant dripping and then Solomon says that restraining her is like restraining the **wind** or grasping **oil** with the hand. Let us not miss something the Lord is trying to tell us. What are wind and oil symbols of in Scripture? The Holy Spirit!*

Have you ever had a prophetic word begin to resound in you and it won't go away? Like a dripping faucet that bugs you until you deal with it, that word from the Lord keeps dropping, dropping, dropping. It is a small sound that soon rules your world and you either do your best to tune it out. When that happens, we have a choice. We can shut off the water or turn on the spigot full blast by opening our mouths.

Judg 13:24-25

24 The woman gave birth to a boy and named him Samson. He grew and the LORD blessed him,

25 and the Spirit of the LORD began **to stir**¹ him while he was in Mahaneh Dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol. NIV

Strong's definition-

OT:6470 - **pa`am¹** (paw-am'); a primitive root; **to tap, i.e. beat regularly; hence (generally) to impel or agitate**: KJV - move, trouble.

Job 32:18-20

18 For I am full of words, and the spirit within me compels me;

19 inside I am like bottled-up wine, like new wineskins ready to burst.

20 I must speak and find relief; I must open my lips and reply. NIV

5. It exists in three forms: solid, liquid, and gas.
 - It is the only substance on earth that appears naturally in all three physical states of matter!
4. It can absorb a large amount of heat.
 - H₂O has the highest heat capacity of any liquid or solid except ammonia. This gives it a very high latent heat of evaporation, which is why a watched pot never boils!
 - H₂O is the best liquid heat conductor except for mercury.
3. It dissolves nearly everything.
 - H₂O's polarized molecule allows it to hook up to many other types of molecules making it a "universal solvent."
 - More substances dissolve in H₂O than any other liquid.
2. It sticks together into beads or drops.
 - H₂O's polarity gives it a high surface tension. It is adhesive and elastic and tend to gather in drops rather than spread out over a surface as a thin film.
 - Water's high surface tension allows for the formation of water droplets and waves, allows plants to move water (and dissolve nutrients) from their roots to their leaves, and the movement of blood through tiny vessels in the bodies of some animals.
 - Water molecules arrange themselves in small groups of joined particles. The fact that the arrangements are small allows liquid water to move and flow (Matt. 18:20).
1. It is part of every living organism on the planet!
 - All cells, from aquatic to terrestrial organisms, are more than 70% water (Acts 17:28).
 - More than 70% of the Earth's surface is covered in water.

Water, by its pervasive presence over all of the planet and its component in all of life, is a great symbol of the life-giving, omnipresent Spirit of God. The following overhead gives a breakdown of the reservoirs of water on planet Earth.

The greatest percentage of water on Earth is stored in the oceans and seas. This speaks of the infinite nature of the Holy Spirit compared to what is poured out. The next largest reservoir is held in the ice caps and glaciers. Ice caps and glaciers, the result of snow, would be the great reserve of the blessing of His Spirit to be poured out in season.

Ps 147:15-19

15 He sends his command to the earth; his word runs swiftly.

16 He spreads the snow like wool and scatters the frost like ashes.

17 He hurls down his hail like pebbles. Who can withstand his icy blast?

18 He sends his word and melts them; he stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.

19 He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel. NIV

“To understand a Bible text takes an act of the Holy Spirit equal to the act that inspired the text in the first place.”² Thus, any revelation of the word of God is an act of the Spirit of God (2 Peter 1:20-21).

Instead of a deluge of rain that the earth cannot receive, God has snow fall on the heights and then melts it in spring and delivers the water through His irrigation systems of streams, rivers, and lakes.

Job 38:22-30

22 "Have you entered the storehouses of the snow or seen the storehouses of the hail,
23 which I reserve for times of trouble, for days of war and battle?
24 What is the way to the place where the lightning is dispersed, or the place where the east winds are scattered over the earth?
25 Who cuts a channel for the torrents of rain, and a path for the thunderstorm,
26 to water a land where no man lives, a desert with no one in it,
27 to satisfy a desolate wasteland and make it sprout with grass?
28 Does the rain have a father? Who fathers the drops of dew?
29 From whose womb comes the ice? Who gives birth to the frost from the heavens
30 when the waters become hard as stone, when the surface of the deep is frozen? NIV

Just as an aside, I believe that each state of water (gas, liquid, solid) relates to the convicting work of the Holy Spirit with regard to sin, righteousness, and judgment. But even within the phases, this triad of thought exists. In frost and ice, we see a symbolism of separateness in Scripture. Sin separates us from God. Snow represents righteousness in the word of God (Isa. 1:18) and hail judgment (Ex. 19:13-34).

So the oceans would be the Holy Spirit, the ice caps and glaciers a deep reserve of His past outpourings. A river would represent a movement of God and our in-filling would be within the reservoir found in the biosphere! Now, if we compare the percentage of the Earth's water in oceans (97%) and the amount of water held in living organisms (0.00004%), we can get some sort of perspective of the difference between the Holy Spirit and His manifest presence within us!

[Put up the Hydrologic Cycle]

As with the wind, it is heat from the sun that drives this engine. The hotter air gets, the more moisture it can hold. As it rises and cools, the air compresses, causing condensation and precipitation. This cycle replaces the water in the atmosphere once every 8 days! (8 is the Biblical number of resurrection!)

Note how liquid flow is always down. Water seeks the lowest level and then fills it. It goes from the highest (heaven) to the lowest (oceans).

Matt 5:3-6

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

² A. W. Tozer, *The Counselor*, Christian Publication Inc., Camp Hill, PA, 1993, p. 24

- 4 Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
5 Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.
6 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled. NIV

Ps 1:1-3

- 1 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.
2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night.
3 **He is like a tree** planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. NIV

- Leaves of deciduous trees commonly intercept 20-30% of the rain that falls on them.
- Stem flow directs water to the roots. (Growth!)
- Canopy drip directs water along the edge of the plant canopy. (Outreach!)

Ps 65:9-10 NIV

- 9 **You care for the land and water it**; you enrich it abundantly. The streams of God are filled with water to provide the people with grain, for so you have ordained it.
10 You drench its furrows and level its ridges; you soften it with showers and bless its crops.

Infiltration is the movement of water into the soil layer. The rate of infiltration normally declines rapidly during the early part of a rainstorm even and usually reaches a constant value after several hours of rainfall.

Have you ever experienced being drenched in an outpouring of a move of the Holy Spirit? Its intensity is overwhelming at times and it feels like you are rushing down a river to God only knows where. But after a while, things don't seem nearly as dramatic. As a matter of fact, by comparison with the feeling of the original outpouring, it feels almost dry. What has happened? Has God left us? No, we have just arrived at a constant rate of infiltration!

Some Final Questions-

From where does the water pour?

Rev 22:1

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, **flowing from the throne of God** and of the Lamb NIV

What does the water of life do?

Ezek 47:6-11

- 6 He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river.
7 When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river.
8 He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Sea. When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh.
9 Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.

- 10 Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds-like the fish of the Great Sea.
11 But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. NIV

When the river of God hits our life, it turns bitter waters sweet, brings life and an abundant catch of fish. Fruit is produced and healing occurs and salt remains!

How do we access its flow?

➤ Repentance

Acts 2:38

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. NIV

Prov 1:23

Turn at my rebuke; Surely I will pour out my spirit on you; I will make my words known to you. NKJV

Rev 7:13-14

13 Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes-who are they, and where did they come from?"

14 I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." NIV

➤ Trust in the Lord-

Jer 17:7-8

7 "But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him.

8 He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit." NIV

How do we measure the intensity and volume of His flow in our lives?

➤ Peace, quietness, and confidence-

Isa 32:15-17

15 till the Spirit is poured upon us from on high, and the desert becomes a fertile field, and the fertile field seems like a forest.

16 Justice will dwell in the desert and righteousness live in the fertile field.

17 The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever. NIV

To whom is it poured out?

➤ The poor and the thirsty-

Isa 41:17-18

17 "The poor and needy search for water, but there is none; their tongues are parched with thirst. But I the LORD will answer them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them.

18 I will make rivers flow on barren heights, and springs within the valleys. I will turn the desert into pools of water, and the parched ground into springs. NIV

Ps 46:4

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. NIV

Let us all dive into the water of the Spirit of God!!