

always one point of rest. At the heart of every one of them is a Divine purpose, and Jehovah rests. Find that point, and keep it; by faith you enter into rest. "And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And He was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow." *There* is the point of rest. They creep close to Him, they waken Him. He has risen, He has rebuked the winds, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."

J. R. GILLIES.

THE WATERS OF LIFE.

(JOHN VII. 37-39.)

THE closing festival of the Jews' sacred year was its greatest and most joyous one. It was the national harvest home of an agricultural people, after both the corn and the vintage had been safely gathered. To observe such a season of thanksgiving with cheerfulness was a religious duty. "Because Jehovah thy God shall bless thee in all thine increase, and in all the works of thine hands," so ran the ancient statute, "therefore thou shalt surely rejoice."¹ So Jerusalem put on its gayest looks to welcome the pilgrims who flocked from far and near. Every man on his flat house-top, or in its shady court, set up a booth, built of boughs from the pine tree, with olive and myrtle intertwined. Similar sylvan tents for the country folk filled every spare space on the streets or round the walls; and there the population dwelt and made merry for seven long idle holidays. Hospitality and social gatherings were endless. They held festive assemblies, and feasted and sent each other "portions," and made great mirth, as their

¹ See Exod. xxiii. 16 and Deut. xvi. 13 and Lev. xxiii. 33 ff.

fathers had done before them.¹ Nor was the jocund spirit of the season confined to social or family parties. Even in God's house His people came to prayer with citrons in their hands and palm branches wreathed with myrtle. Every day peculiar sacrifices were offered on the altar. The temple rang with vocal and instrumental music. At each sunset while the feast lasted, they lit huge gilt candelabra in its courts, which shed over all the city a soft yellow light. At each sunrise, "while the morning's sacrifice was being prepared, a priest, accompanied by a joyous procession with music, went down to the Pool of Siloam, whence he drew water into a golden pitcher. . . . At the same time that the procession started for Siloam, another went to a place in the Kedron valley close by, called Motza, whence they brought willow branches which, amidst the blasts of the priests' trumpets, they stuck on either side of the altar of burnt-offering, bending them over towards it, so as to form a kind of leafy canopy. Then the ordinary sacrifice proceeded, the priest who had gone to Siloam so timing it that he returned just as his brethren carried up the pieces of the sacrifice to lay them on the altar. As he entered by the Water Gate, which received its name from this ceremony, he was received by a threefold blast from the priests' trumpets. The priest then went up the rise of the altar and turned to the left, where there were two silver basins with narrow holes—the eastern a little wider for the wine and the western somewhat narrower for the water. Into these the wine of the drink-offering was poured, and at the same time the water from Siloam, the people shouting to the priest, 'Raise thy hand,' to show that he really poured the water into the basin which led to the base of the altar."²

¹ Neh. viii.

² Edersheim, *The Temple, its Ministry and Services as they were at the Time of Jesus Christ*, p. 241.

I have extracted this account from Dr. Edersheim's useful little volume on the ritual of the temple in our Lord's day, because it enables us very vividly to realize the circumstances under which Jesus stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink." Whatever that ceremony meant, it appeared to spring out of some unsatisfied religious need. Coming after the round of the ecclesiastical year was complete, it seemed to say that, in spite of the annual atonement and of the joy of tabernacles, there was still at the heart of Israel a thirst which ritual could not slake. Yet it told also of provision for the soul's requirements. After all there was water. It came out of the very heart of the temple rock, from underneath God's altar, whence it flowed in a perennial stream "hard by the oracle of God" to make glad His holy city. To the Hebrew that sacred spring had long served for a symbol or a prophecy of the spiritual river of life which should one day issue from the heart of Israel's ritual to satisfy the longing soul. Even the rabbinical divines explained it as a promise of that long looked for day when Jehovah would at last fulfil the desire of His people and shed forth through His Anointed the abundance of His Holy Spirit. Four of the ancient prophets had concurred in figuring the blessings of Messiah's day under similar imagery. First, Joel had said, "a fountain should come forth out of the house of Jehovah to water the vale" of the lower Jordan. Next, Isaiah had foretold in glowing language that in that day Israel should "draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation"; and to his words it is possible that the ceremony (which possessed no other scriptural sanction) may have owed its origin. Later on, Ezekiel had seen in vision how the waters issued from under the temple threshold, and flowing eastward, grew to a river which went down into the same desert valley and healed the Salt Sea, till its barren shores from Ain-Jidy to Ain-Eglaim yielded trees

of fadeless leaf for healing and of perennial fruit for food. Later still, Zechariah had enlarged the prophecy into living waters going out from Jerusalem, half of them toward the Mediterranean as well as half toward the eastern or Dead Sea.¹

It is possible that these remarkable utterances still await a more literal accomplishment at the period of Christ's return. But the Jews understood them to refer to the gracious days of their Messiah; and to these days with their spiritual blessings they were really making allusion when they shouted and waved palm branches as the waters of the golden jug flowed away from the side of the altar. Little they thought of it, I daresay, many of those who stood and shouted with the crowd that October morning; yet the ceremony was none the less a pathetic utterance given in symbol to the deepest longings and most sustaining hopes of the Hebrew people in its best times. Even in that crowd it might be presumed that there were a few who sympathised with the spiritual meaning of the ceremony. To them, ere they should depart on the morrow to hear no more from His own lips the offer of eternal life—to them, if perchance they will even now come unto Him and drink, does Jesus in His patient, yearning love address one more appeal. For, standing there among the dense crowd of lay worshippers as one of the people, He knows Himself to be the Fulfiller, to whom these ancient predictions pointed. He had come forth from above to realize the desire of all nations; to fill with life and comfort the thirsty souls of the whole earth; to satisfy those who cried in their need for divine life, and make the barrenness of our human world to become like a garden watered from an unfailing river of God. Strong in this consciousness, He lifts aloud

¹ See Joel iii. 18, Isa. xii. 3, Ezek. xlvi. 1-12, and Zech. xiv. 8. I have here assumed the unity of the book of Zechariah, but think it probable the later chapters are by a much earlier prophet.

His bold self-witness, sending His voice high above the murmurs of the throng, and startling the celebrants at the altar with the strange words, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink!"

The words are old words, yet ever new. They are an echo of Isaiah's call: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters!" They make the same offer which Jesus Himself had made to a lone woman by Jacob's Well, near the outset of His career. The closing chapter of Revelation takes up the offer to repeat it for the last time, and send it ringing down the generations of human change even to our own ears: "Let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely!"

It is an invitation larger and more generous than perhaps preachers always care to remember. To invite the thirsty among men is a very wide call indeed; for who is there that thirsteth not? It is not by any means in religious services alone (like the profitless ritual of later Judaism) that Jesus beholds the vain labour of souls who thirst. In the market, in the office, at court, at the bar, by the student's lamp and in the lady's boudoir; in men's severe toil to win, or in their feverish haste to spend; everywhere He meets those who are ignorant, to be sure, of their true wants, and still more forgetful of the true supply for them, yet testifying by their weary effort to hew out for themselves a cistern that they are athirst! Among the cultured, who have leisure and can make their own comfort a study, it will, I believe, be confessed that every pleasure in life leaves behind it a certain after-taste of dissatisfaction. Possibly that dissatisfaction may only occur at occasional moments of quiet reflection. Possibly it may only deepen as the years wear on into any distinct sense of disappointment with life. Still, it is there; and to it under every form does this voice of the Son of God make its appeal. Vague though it be and unconfessed, not consciously a

religious need, still He meets it with loving offer, who, sad and patient and pitiful, stands for ever by the side of life's broad road, accosting every wayfarer as he hurries or loiters by, "If any of you are athirst, come unto Me, and drink!" With what sublime self-confidence does He thus testify to His own ability to quench the deep and restless desires of the human heart! As the golden vase dipped into Siloam came up full, yet Siloam brimmed up no whit the less, so shalt thou, who art indeed no golden vase, but only an earthen pitcher, be filled full out of this exhaustless Saviour, of whose fulness we have all received.

But there is more behind. He had told the woman at the Samaritan well how the water He gave became as a fount that springeth up within to life eternal. For the life of God in man has a self-renewing and perennial virtue. In personal experience it prolongs itself to one's private refreshment; springs anew after apparent cessation or decrease, being fed as it is from a celestial fountain which no drought can dry up. Here our Lord carries the same thought one step further. He tells the holiday-makers that His Spirit of new life should be, not merely like a spring that wells up in blessing for the individual who receives it, but like a fountain-head of overrunning waters, which flow forth in streams to fertilize and gladden other men as well. In this feature of the new gospel of the Spirit, Jesus saw a fulfilment of sacred writ—possibly of those very passages I have cited above, about the river that flowed from the temple to heal the Salt Lake and fertilize its shores. At all events, it is no single text which He quotes in so many words; but He sums up the purport of a whole cluster of Old Testament predictions when He says, "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his inmost being shall flow rivers of living water."

We do not need to be reminded how these words of His came to pass; how the few disciples whom He left behind

Him poured a tide of spiritual life to the frontiers of Palestine, and thence to the ends of the civilized earth; how, in more recent times, a river of religious influence has issued from the heart of Christendom that is rapidly bearing spiritual healing and moral fruitfulness to every region of our globe. But when He spoke, this fulfilment of His words had not yet begun. The old religious life of Hebrew society possessed no such expansive character. A feeble streamlet did indeed issue from beneath her own altar on the sacred hill to water Judæa, adequate to sustain a measure of spiritual life in the nation, or at its best to make glad that little guarded city of God; but, in spite of later proselytism by the scattered Hebrews, no one could say that its waters went forth in a river-like fulness of blessing to make alive the barren lands of heathendom, or to sweeten the dead salt sea of the Roman empire. This outflowing of young life to every land was to be the characteristic glory of Christ's new-covenant society; and as yet, while He was speaking, it had not begun. He stood there the solitary bearer of the new impulse. The men who were gathered round Him had drunk of His spirit only for their personal satisfaction and nourishment in spiritual life: they had not yet begun to be to any great extent fertilizers of society. For that they needed to receive fresh power from above. St. John is enlightened by the unction that was upon him to expound to us this "dark saying"; and he adds: "This spake He of the Spirit, which they that believed on Him were to receive: for the Spirit was not yet; because Jesus was not yet glorified." That peculiarly abundant measure of the Holy Ghost's bestowal, which was to mark the opening era and make the disciples centres of a fresh and saving influence among mankind, had not yet been granted; nor could it be, so long as the Saviour's work on man's behalf was not yet accomplished in His decease, and crowned by His resurrection to immortal

glory. But Pentecost came; and instantly (as we know) the little company was lifted into the might of enthusiastic missionary witness-bearing, and began to run over on every side with spiritual gladness and power. Then they who believed in the Messiah were turned into channels of His own living influence through which the blessing spread to others. Out of the bosom of that infant society there issued a stream which swelled into a great river, and is to-day overflowing the earth with its healing waters.

In the subsequent history of the Church is to be read the best commentary on these words. The lesson which it yields is this, that there has been inserted into human society by the gospel an imperishable life, which may indeed be choked, perverted, obstructed, enfeebled, but which perpetually springs up afresh to over-run and bless the nations. In how many instances has it brought to wild and waste human lives the order and fertility of a garden! In how many ways has it percolated through the social life of modern civilization, often unrecognised, to spread by degrees a healthier moral culture in regions before abandoned to unprofitableness or wasted by passion! Who shall foretell to us when all earth's moral deserts will be reclaimed, or all its Sodom seas made sweet? We at least have cause to give good heed that we welcome into our own lives the sacred healing influence from on high, the living waters of God's blessed Holy Spirit. Let each man see that through unbelief, or sloth, or cowardice, or preoccupation by the world, or preference for sinful indulgence, or sheer neglect, he offer no hindrance to His powerful saving work. Let each man drink deep of Christ's Spirit, that he too may, not only be kept full of goodness and joy in God, but also have something to spare, some rill of holy influence, for which another thirsty brother may find cause to give Heaven thanks. As for the Church of God, the gathered company of the faithful, ought it not to be giving

forth religious and moral healing on a still larger scale, not in rills but in a river; not like the hill-side spring, whose waters trickle faintly through the moss, betrayed only by its livelier green, but rather like some big lake far up among the mountains, which collects the streams from many a spring, then over-runs in a broad lapsing sheet of water to pour its blessings on the plains below, a river from its birth?

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THE FUTURE PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

II. THE UNIVERSAL PURPOSE OF SALVATION.

IN a former paper I have discussed the term most frequently used by St. Paul to describe the future punishment of sin, viz. *destruction*; and have endeavoured to show that this word denotes utter and hopeless ruin. In one passage this destruction is spoken of as *eternal*. And we saw that this last word denotes either a period contemporaneous with life, and thus involving finality, or a long period of time stretching backwards or forwards beyond the speaker's mental horizon. We found also a passage in which the Apostle speaks casually, but very solemnly, of destruction as being *the end* of some about whom he writes in tears.

This vein of teaching must now be supplemented and guarded by other passages which speak very clearly of God's purpose of salvation as universal. These will be found in the second, third, and fourth groups of the Pauline epistles.

In the great chapter on the resurrection (1 Cor. xv. 22) we read that "as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall