

Living Water in the New Heavens and New Earth – John 4:13-15, select passages

The Gospel Age of Hope - #7

Introduction – We have determined that we are the new creation, the new humanity, having begun the first two millennia of the new heavens and the new earth. There is more to be learned from the pages of the New Testament about the state of this new creation. Let us begin with the words of Jesus. As we do so, look to see that His imagery is not new but rather based upon the words of His Old Testament. This again should cause us to pause and consider what has occurred since Christ (A.D.) and where the future is going.

Remember – Keep in mind what we studied last time: Peter encouraged his dispersed flock of believing Jews that God would in fact keep His promise to vindicate His Son and people in a coming judgment (1 Pet 3:1-13). This was in accordance with His promises (Isaiah 65:1-2, 13-16, 66:1-2, 22-23) and was preached by Paul as accomplished in the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles in his day (Rom 10:17-21).

Living Water (John 4:13-15) – These verses are in the middle of the famous passage where Jesus addresses the “woman at the well,” a woman and a Samaritan his disciples were embarrassed to find Jesus speaking with (v27). Of course we should not make the same “literalist” error that the woman makes when Jesus teaches her about living water, looking for a bucket (v11). We have learned enough about interpreting the scriptures to hear His words and understand Jesus is speaking about new life in Him; everlasting life.

At the Great Feast (John 7:37-39) – Jesus brings up these waters again on the last day (the eighth day) of the Feast of Tabernacles (Lev 23:34ff), where God had taught them to remember that He was with them when He led them through the wilderness in booths. He was the Rock which brought forth water for them in the wilderness (1 Cor 10:4). Jesus proclaims this to a ceremonially thirsty people: *“He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water”* (John 7:38). This water is the Holy Spirit of God (v39). Where did the Scripture promise living water?”

Ezekiel’s Tabernacle/Temple (Ezek 47:1-12) – This is the only passage in the Old Testament that speaks so specifically of living water, water that brings life and healing to the nations (such as to Samaritan women). Jesus (in John 7) is speaking on the last day on the Feast of Tabernacles, also called the Feast of the Ingathering, on the eighth day, the day of the new creation. The promised restoration of the New Israel is a promise of ingathering, or of waters flowing out from the threshold of the Christian Church, bringing everlasting life by means of the Holy Spirit to the world.

Living Water in the New Heaven and New Earth (Rev 21:1-3) – The parallels between Ezekiel’s prophesy, Jesus’ words to the woman and to those at the Feast, the promise of Peter of the end of the old heavens and earth make it clear that they are visions of the same thing. The New Jerusalem, the new Tabernacle, is the holy Christ church, the bride of Jesus (Rev 21:9-13).

The River of Life (Rev 22:1-5) – *“a pure river of life...proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb...the tree of life...yielding its fruit.....and its leaves were for the healing of the nations....”* This is a picture of a justified, perfect Church, with healing for the nations.

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken – This water of life is salvation, the fruit of the gospel, which isn’t coming at the end of the world but in the middle when Jesus came, and it is going to continue to get deeper and deeper. As the world was flooded in a curse in Noah’s day, so now it is being flooded with blessing and not with curse. We do not hold on to little thimblefuls of living water but rather spigot that is an inundation of the world. This is why the Spirit says, *“Come!”*; and the bride is supposed to say it as well – *“Come!”* (Rev 22:17). Through the work of the Holy Spirit as we live in these tabernacles, these booths, we are to spread out the gospel and unbelievers should be getting wet. *“And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.”*