

Advent Reading for Friday, December 8, 2017
“Living Water from the Wells of Salvation”
(Isaiah 12:3)

Today’s reading is uncomplicated and easy to understand: *“Behold, God is my salvation, I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord God is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation. Therefore you will joyously draw water from the springs of salvation”* (Isaiah 12:2-3).

One of the recurring themes of God’s Word is salvation, and Scripture is clear that salvation, from first to last, is always from the Lord! But here in Isaiah, and other places in both the Old and New Testaments, salvation is compared to a spring or well of water. Isaiah’s readers would have recalled how God satisfied the physical thirst of their ancestors during the years of wandering in the wilderness (Exodus 17:1-7). In spite of their quarrelling, God mercifully used Moses to bring forth water out of the rock at Horeb, satisfying their physical needs.

What we see in the New Testament, however, is how this provision is amplified to include spiritual water, and salvation for the thirsty soul. The classic example is of Jesus with the troubled and thirsty Samaritan woman. After startling her by asking for a drink of water from the historic Jacob’s well that was there, Jesus said, *“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”* (John 4:10). After further interaction, Jesus declared, *“Everyone who drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I give him shall never thirst; but the water I give him will become in him a well of water springing up unto eternal life”* (John 4:13-14).

A second unforgettable lesson occurred when Jesus was in Jerusalem for the final day of the Feast of Tabernacles. A tradition had grown up for several centuries before Jesus arrived that the High Priest would in procession carry a golden container of water from the Pool of Siloam. As he came to the Water Gate on the south side of the inner temple court, three trumpet blasts were sounded to mark the joy of the occasion. At this moment, the people would collectively quote Isaiah 12:3, our central verse for today: *“With joy you will draw water from the springs of salvation”*.

As the people watched, the priests would then march around the altar while the temple choir sang the *Hallel* (Psalms 113-118). Jesus used this festive occasion to make a bold and very public invitation for the people to accept Him as *the Living Water*: “*Jesus stood and cried out, ‘If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scriptures have said, ‘Out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water’*” (John 7:37-38). The Apostle John went on to explain that Jesus was speaking of the Holy Spirit, whom all those who believed in Jesus were to receive (John 7:39).

Again we see how Isaiah’s prophetic words were pointing to the greater spiritual reality of the living water Jesus provides for all who believe. Hopefully this includes you! Only Jesus can meet the deep inner thirsts we all experience, thirsts we too often seek to fill with our selfish and empty pursuits. Significantly, this *living water* theme is also part of heaven itself: “*And they will not thirst anymore...for the Lamb in the center of the throne will be their Shepherd, and will guide them to springs of the water of life*” (Revelation 7:16-17).

Giving thanks – Thank You for bringing living water to my soul!