

Sermon Notes for 4th July 2010

Diggers, Paddlers and Blenders

Introduction

Before we start I'd like to show you something God asked me to build some time ago.

Story and image of the water feature.

So, water and the river is a bit of an ongoing 'thing' with me.

Let me start with a continuation of where we were last week, when Pat spoke.

Pat used Gen 26, which a while ago I knew I would be using – but from a slightly different angle. Not a contradiction, rather an extension of the same truth.

Gen 26

Then Isaac departed from there and pitched his tent in the Valley of Gerar, and dwelt there. And Isaac dug again the wells of water which they had dug in the days of Abraham his father, for the Philistines had stopped them up after the death of Abraham. He called them by the names which his father had called them.

Also Isaac's servants dug in the valley, and found a well of running water there. But the herdsmen of Gerar quarrelled with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." So he called the name of the well Esek, because they quarrelled with him. Then they dug another well, and they quarrelled over that one also. So he called its name Sitnah. And he moved from there and dug another well, and they did not quarrel over it. So he called its name Rehoboth, because he said, "For now the LORD has made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land."

Paraphrase. In this passage we see that having been obedient to the word the Lord had given him i.e. to stay and NOT go to Egypt, Isaac was blessed and had 100 fold return in the same year. We could dwell right here for a good while to understand this.

In like manner as his father, Isaac was forced to move away as he had become too wealthy and powerful.

He then continued to follow in his father's footsteps and unstopped the wells of his father and re-named them according to his father's naming. Names are significant and should be heeded. As we heard last week when a father names something it is a reflection of its purpose and character – Adam named everything in such a manner.

Now this is where we move on generationally and where my message starts.

Digging Your Own Well

Without being unfaithful to the source, Isaac dug his own wells. Why?

1 He had been blessed according to the promises of God to both his father and himself – he had effectively moved into Isaiah 54 and had the place of his tent enlarged.

When you have more sheep – you need more land, but you want the same water and the same food – so the source is the same, just in a different place.

You can't water a doubling of your flock from the same well, it's too complicated and leaves no time for grazing – but you can water your flock from two identical wells in the same area. All that it needs is good animal husbandry and careful division of sheep.

At first he encountered opposition and although he was successful in digging new wells they were the sites of conflict and he wisely moved on – if he hadn't all that would have happened was that the Philistines would have been a continual negative influence and may even have poisoned the wells to stop Isaac from using them.

2 We have been proclaiming in this house that we are to enlarge the place of our tents; we have been declaring the archers to get ready.

In both proclamations expansion lies at the heart. The point of the archers is to clear the ground of the enemy to allow an expansion.

You cannot expand without purpose.

Following Abraham and Isaac we are to multiply sheep. Sheep need land and water. Archers clear the land – but – it will be the sons of the house that will find grazing pasture, clear any debts and dig the wells. The water they will eventually find will be the same as the water we have here in this house. Same taste, same source, same blessing because it's a continuation of the same water.

3 He dug his own wells – tapping into the same source as his father – but they were his own wells and he named them according to the word of the Lord to him. The sons of the house will have the privilege of naming their wells – but they will honour the father - both heavenly and in this house in so doing. They cannot help it – they are sons.

A part of what I am addressing is the nature of the river. So what is the river?

Well, let's see what the river isn't. It's not Salvation and it's not the Oil of the Spirit – neither Blood or Oil can mix directly with water, this is true in the natural as well as the supernatural.

To reveal this lets go to John 4. The woman at the well.

So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there.

Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.

But whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life."

First of all whose well was it? Verse 6 gives it away – its Jacob's well. So we have a story Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

So to answer the question regarding the water see verse 10 and particularly v14.

Quite simply Jesus is the Living water and Jesus IS the river.

Remember this. It's the most important point to note today.

So let's now consider the source of the river....

In the beginning there was Eden and from Eden came 4 rivers:

Pishon; Gihon; Euphrates and Tigris.

Gen 2

Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads. The name of the first is Pishon; it is the one which skirts the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. And the gold of that land is good. Bdellium and the onyx stone are there. The name of the second river is Gihon; it is the one which goes around the whole land of Cush. The name of the third river is Hiddekel; it is the one which goes toward the east of Assyria. The fourth river is the Euphrates.

Gen3, 24

So He drove out the man; and He placed cherubim at the east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to guard the way to the tree of life.

Each river had its own route and path to the sea.

Each river had in fact its own meaning and purpose.

Pishon meaning Strong Springing, Spreading about and being the only one that stated that gold and Bdellium was in it.

Gihon that encircled the land of Havilah and meant...to Burst Forth.

Euphrates that meant. Good, Well, Noble or in Persian Fertilise, fruitful.

And Tigris which meant.. Sharp, swift, lightness – derived from Tiger and could even mean arrow.

All different in nature and character but all from the same source.

Where are they now.....certainly the Euphrates and Tigris still exist, but not in the same route as they were....why?

Well for that I suggest you blame the little issue of the flood.

Eden is still there, see Gen 3, 24 but the rivers would be a bit of a giveaway, so when the Lord flooded the land and changed the world's course He changed the mighty rivers, in the same way that at the fall, the destiny of man and the role of the Godhead changed.

But what this reveals is that the river was from the same source – different characteristics and different ways of expressing itself.

What we have to consider also is that each river ran its own course until it reached its destination.

So we can see that the river is different in character and that a part of this is the river bed it runs in. Don't forget it's the same water – water doesn't change it's the same – but the way it manifests can be very different.

Also in the Old Testament we see that there had to be a constant unbroken chain that directly led back to one of the key anchors of Righteousness e.g. Moses, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob even Elijah and without this connection the ground or area or country would fail and conflict would reign.

I'll come back to this later.

So what is the river and what is its purpose?

Paddlers

Classically we have to turn to Ezekiel 47.

But what comes in Eze 46? I would ask you to listen here and stay with the plot.

Ezekiel 46

The prince shall then be in their midst. When they go in, he shall go in; and when they go out, he shall go out. At the festivals and the appointed feast days the grain offering shall be an ephah for a bull, an ephah for a ram, as much as he wants to give for the lambs, and a hin of oil with every ephah.

Lambs, grain and a hin of oil – we see that there is a relationship between the offerings.

Oil is the fruit AND the Seed.

Grain is the Seed and the Lamb is the body containing the fruit of what came before, the promise of the seed to come and the blood which is life.

But consider none would exist without water. All the ingredients mentioned have to have water to exist. Characteristics of water is simply that without it life cannot exist. Also the only reason that the oil and water can mix is because of the flour produced from the grain as this is acting as an interface and through the seed (flour) the Spirit and Son are able to come together as bread – the staff of life.

Eze 47.

What is this...it is the proclamation of the journey from the Temple to the sea.

The journey of a spiritual person from spiritual birth to fulfilment.

The whole of Eze 47 is but a shadow of that which is to come. The whole of this passage represents the journey into the river – the journey of each one of us as we come to know the Lord and His ways. It is often portrayed as a sort of wonderful place to go to be refreshed and to have a great time of refreshing. Classic Paddlers – thus far and no more as I don't like to get wet.

Oh really?

It's the story of how we journey into knowing Him, but just to be refreshed, just to have a great time and we think we're brave when we believe we've plunged in over our depth and have to swim? Well yes but it's time to get a little bit of reality into this.

As we saw the first thing to understand is that the river is not stationary – the river is moving and its moving because the river bed is slanted and its slanted towards a destination. It's not idly waiting for you – bottom line whether you're in the river or not – it will still be moving on and moving moreover along the bed it has been set to run in. And yes rivers change shape, path and route and what that shows is that the Lord our God is forever changing and moving. Why?

Because the river bed is the will of our Father in heaven – Jesus the living water flowed ONLY where His Father led Him – Abraham was obedient he didn't try and go in different ways – didn't if you like make tributaries of his own.

You choose whether to get in or not. You choose how much or little you want to be a part of what is already happening.

But the river is so much more.

Relate the story of Grace 2007. In 2007 I was placed overseas through work into a situation whereby I could do nothing by my own strength, I truly had reached the end of what I could do by myself and I had no choice but to let go of and effectively 'drown'. When I did this to my wonder I found I didn't die as I would have in the natural, but instead I found that I had entered a new grace. I sensed I was like a little fish tired and weak, facing upstream and just strong enough to stay where I was at the side of the river amongst the reeds – allowing the water to flow through me. I found that I was in effect no longer drawing air from the world but from Him – He became my breath.

For me at that time the river moved over me – it was the flow I needed I did not have the strength or the ability to face downstream and swim. All I could do was face upstream and stay still. The river became a river of Grace. But it is so much more – It IS Jesus it is His love, His Righteousness, His joy His freshness His very life. But not His blood – the river is only for those who have received salvation.

But where does the river end? At the sea. And what's at the sea – salt!

Who's the salt of the world? We are. What makes the salt sea salt in the context of Eze 47 – which states it ends at the Dead Sea? We do – too much of us and not enough fresh water. Too much flesh. Too much salt and the water can become barren. Hence why it says that the marshes and the swamps stay salty.

The river is pure; it's our humanity that turns it salty.

We see the pattern Genesis, Ezekiel: the rivers all have purpose and destination, water, trees, fruit and leaves.

And then of course we have Revelation 22.

Rev 22

And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.

Blenders.

So what's the difference here?

The river is from where? Not the Temple but the throne. How?

John 19 v31-33

But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs. But one of the soldiers pierced His side with a spear, and immediately blood and water came out. And he who has seen has testified, and his testimony is true; and he knows that he is telling the truth, so that you may believe

When Jesus completed His mission and dismissed His spirit v33, the soldiers pierced His side and in v34 and what happened – Blood and WATER flowed from His side.

This immediately achieved 2 things:

The Blood healed the land and repaid the debt of Adam and Cain's blood – taking away the stain of Sin from creation.

The water completed the removal of any claim Satan could have over the land and ended his self proclaimed Princedom. In so doing the water stopped flowing from the temple – where sacrifices were made and there was no throne, to a NEW flow from the throne for anyone who accepts the blood has access to the living water.

2 a) The river proceeds from the throne of GOD AND THE LAMB.

b) The river is crystal clear – there is no part of MAN in the water. Meaning – don't just be IN the river – become the river – Be a Blender!

c) We have the river bed - in the middle of the street with the tree of Life at its centre.

As well as the river and the fruit and the leaves.

3 A little something as they say free of charge. Verse 5 says what – there will be no night there. In this house we have proclaimed the coming of a new dawn. Here's the promise.

Once the dawn is here and you see it and know it for yourself it will never ever go down. You can take that to the bank and earn interest on it. This is a promise for when?

4 Is it for when we're all raptured and taken home as many think about this part of Revelation?

NO – because if we look we see in V2 that the leaves are for the healing of what? The nations. There would be NO purpose if the final whistle had blown.

No the reality is that this is where we are to be NOW. As a people destined to run the race we can elect to stay in the Ezek 47 river with its promise of healing, or if we have the courage and desire – move to be the river itself – within Christ and He within us. We can be a part of this – and start healing nations - but how?

How to live the life of a Digger and a Blender.

Back where we started in Genesis 26 we saw that each generation dug its own well, but from the same source.

How as sons do we do that – how do we dig our own well and be confident that we are seeking the same source?

The same way as in the ancient days – by having a hunger and a thirst for righteousness. By so wanting to taste and see that the Lord is good – by so wanting to see, hear and touch Him that we will dig through the hardness of our hearts and flesh until we find the water of life.

And yes we may get it wrong at first – we may dig and dig and nothing happens – I'm afraid that what we do is try again – they didn't always get it right first time in Genesis.

And then one day you find that first moistness that first sign that water is there and then you dig and dig.

You dig with Righteousness for truth. You dig with Truth for Righteousness.

And when you remove the soil, you're removing that which is not of Him, so be sure to cast this as far away from you as you can. Do not let the spoil fall back in and block your digging, which itself will take all your strength.

We must acknowledge facts about ourselves but live in the reality of Truth.

The Holy Spirit will guide us into all truth and that's the start – because in this house there is a river flowing.

The Holy Spirit is only limited by the Truth that you know, NOT by what facts you have or have not got.

No truth then He cannot move.

We have to respond to the Truth and to knowing the Truth and we must be open to being taught and accepting the Truth. Then the truth will set us free and the WORD will flow more freely as this is effectively at the point where the well has reached the water table and the river will flow through us.

Facts will bind, Truth will set loose.

Let me encourage you further.

The river that flows is not confined to on the surface, but also the waters that flow under the ground and appear (as above) when a well is dug. Also the rain that falls is fresh and from the same river.

As are mists as it was in the beginning – they're all water and all run into rivers which have a destination.

The water in this house I first saw at the end of the fast we had last year and on the final day I knew that the promised river had begun – I can still see it and I admit to being more at home here than almost anywhere else – not because of the building but because of whose presence is in the building.

Conclusion

So where does that leave us.

80% of the world's fresh water is locked in the Antarctic.

If global warming is going to release that – bring it on, as I know that there will be a spiritual deluge and an outpouring of the Living water that nothing will be able to stop it.

We are a part of the generation that can accelerate the arrival of the deluge.

You choose how deep you want to go and then choose how much of yourself you are prepared to give in order to become the river.

Digger, Paddler or a Blender.