

## THE WATER OF LIFE

by Given O. Blakely

“And He said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely” (Verse 6, Rev 21:1-8)

### HE SAID UNTO ME

“And He said unto me . . . ” (ASV). The worth of being addressed by the One sitting upon the throne cannot be overstated. It tells us something about the Holy One. Surely this passage confirms the statement of Isaiah. "For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones" (Isa 57:15).

The Great Sovereign of the universe is speaking. In a sense He is speaking indirectly. When John accounts for his reception of the Revelation, he writes, “The REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST, which GOD GAVE UNTO HIM, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it BY HIS ANGEL unto HIS SERVANT JOHN” (Rev 1:1).

Traced back to its ultimate Source, The Revelation is a word from God. In order to get it to us, God gave it to Jesus Christ. Then Jesus delivered it to an angel, who in turn delivered it to John. Now John delivers it to the churches, as the Holy Spirit directs Him to do (Rev 2:7,11,17,23,29; 3:6,13,22; 22:16).

John writes, “HE said unto me.” The reference is, as stated in verse five, “HE that sat upon the throne.” This “throne” is mentioned thirty-nine times in the Revelation. It is the seat of all authority – the throne from which edicts concerning the earth and those dwelling upon it are issued. It is categorically called “the throne of God” (Rev 7:15; 14:5; 22:1,3). The glorified Christ said of this throne, “I also overcame, and am set down with My Father in His throne” (Rev 3:21). In a visual depiction of the doctrine, John saw Jesus “caught up unto God, AND TO HIS THRONE” (Rev 12:5).

God, who sat upon the throne, gave this word to Jesus, who was seated with Him on the throne. The glorified Jesus delivered it to an angel, who, in turn, was dispatched to John on the Isle of Patmos.

Not so much as a syllable was altered in the transmission. The message was not mitigated, diminished, or altered. That is precisely why it is said at the close of The Revelation, “For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev 22:18-19).

As clear as those words are, men have treated this book as though it was a literary toy, to be tossed about in their intellectual games and philosophical assumptions. They have added their opinions to the book, and ignored clear statements made in this book. Some who are in the churches have ignored this book, saying they cannot understand it – even though the message of this book contains these words: “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand” (Rev 1:3).

The reason some cannot understand the book is that the things they have been taught conflict with it. The book simply does not fit into their theology – and that is a circumstance of such gravity that I fear to attempt to diagnose it.

God said the words of our text. They were delivered to Jesus, who did not alter them. He delivered them to an angel, who also did not alter them. The angel delivered them to John, who also did not alter them. To that point, everyone handling this word knew its Source, and did not dare tamper with it.

Not only was John's spirit revived by the words given to him, but all those who read and believe them are revived. These words are pregnant with spirit and life. We must not come to them with an academic magnifying glass, language expertise, and imagined theological precision. Whatever part those things play in the good fight of faith, there comes a time when they must be laid aside. Only faith can grasp the words of Him who sits upon the throne!

THEY ARE COME TO PASS: “IT IS DONE”

"It is done!" What a word is this! Only the Lord can speak in this manner, declaring things are "done" even before they have come to pass. Faith needs this kind of affirmation. It needs to hear the surety of the things upon which hope is founded. We "do not know what a day will bring forth" (Prov 27:1) – but we DO know the outcome of all things! We do not know if we will live or die by tomorrow (James 4:15) – but we DO know how everything will turn out! All of our foes will be vanquished, and all things will be made new! The Lord has declared it!

There is not the slightest chance this will not come to pass. The Lord of glory says, "IT IS DONE!" He has revealed what He has determined, and nothing can change that! Hear the word of the Lord. "For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure . . . Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it" (Isa 46:9-11, NKJV). In the history of the world, no false God has ever made such a boast!

It is as though the Lord hurls the word in the devil's face, challenging him to overturn it, or cause one jot or tittle of it to fail. At the very beginning, the Lord told the devil what He was going to do (Gen 3:15) – AND HE DID IT! He announced to Abraham that He was going to bless "all families of the earth" (Gen 12:3) – AND HE DID IT! He revealed He would cause a virgin to conceive and bring forth a Son, and that the government would be placed upon His shoulder (Isa 7:14; 9:6-7) – AND HE DID IT! He made known that He would give the Messiah “dominion,

and glory, and a kingdom” (Dan 7:14) – AND HE DID IT!

Now, in the vision given to John, the Lord has taken us to the end of time – the conclusion of all things. He has declared the cessation of all trouble (Rev 21:4; 22:3), the consignment of the devil and all of his hosts to the lake of fire (Rev 19:20; 20:10,15), and the glorious triumph of the saints (Rev 12:10-11).

He calls upon believers to peruse everything that has been contaminated by sin, then tells them: "I make all things new!" Then, to secure the matter to our heart, He affirms, "IT IS DONE!" Speaking from the same perspective the Lord says elsewhere, "the works were finished from the foundation of the world" (Heb 4:3).

Why does the Lord speak in this manner? It is because faith requires this kind of word. Faith cannot take hold of ambiguity or things uncertain. Possibilities cannot sustain faith. It needs a sure word from God. We do need to know what to do – what the Lord "requires" of us (Mic 6:8). It has been revealed (Rom 12:1-21; Col 3:1-2; 1 Tim 6:12; Heb 12:12, etc). However, we do not live by the commandments, as much as we love them, and as necessary as they are. Faith thrives on Divine affirmation. "Your sins ARE forgiven you for his name's sake . . . you ARE not in the flesh but in the Spirit . . . you ARE the temple of God . . . but ye ARE washed, but ye ARE sanctified, but ye ARE justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God . . . you ARE no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God," etc. (1 John 2:12; Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:11; Eph 2:19). Faith takes hold of those affirmations and sustains us. We “live by faith” (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11; Heb 10:38), not obedience. It is faith that guarantees obedience.

Now faith hears the word, "IT IS DONE," and rests confidently upon it. It reasons that it is just a little while, and we will ever be with the Lord. As it is written, “For yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry” (Heb 10:37). Now, there is something to think about!

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I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely." Now our attention is turned to the individual whose soul has been nurtured by grace. It is with great sadness that I must acknowledge the rarity of this type of person within the average church. Notwithstanding that condition, this is the ONLY kind of person that has any promise whatsoever of glory. Those who are not prepared to dwell forever with the Lord will not do so. Those who have not cultured an appetite for the water of life by drinking what has been given to those who live by faith, will never have access to it. For those who have NOT lived "unto" Christ (2 Cor 5:15), lived by faith (Heb 10:38), and walked in the Spirit (Gal 5:16), their thirst will never be assuaged – not in any sense. They will never be satisfied, gratified, or refreshed in any way. However, for those who have lived in fellowship with Christ (1 Cor 1:9), they will never thirst, never be dissatisfied,

never be famished, and never lack refreshment – never!

The word "athirst," or "thirsty," is not a casual word. The word means to suffer from thirst, long for earnestly, and have a strong desire for. Jesus used this very word when pronouncing a blessing upon His people. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt 5:6). It is certain that these are the ONLY ones who will realize eternal satisfaction. If, in this world, an appetite and thirst for the Lord is not awakened, there is no hope of being forever with Him. When one contemplates the condition of the contemporary church, this is a most disturbing thought.

David thrice expressed this type of strong thirst. "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God . . . My soul thirsts for You; My flesh longs for You In a dry and thirsty land Where there is no water . . . My soul longs for You like a thirsty land" (Psa 42:2; 63:1; 143:6). If David could express such strong longings BEFORE grace brought salvation and the Spirit was given to men, what type of longings should be expected today? The truth is that David so far excels the average churchman that is it mind-boggling – and less was all that was available to him, while “more” and “abundance” is available to us.

One of the strongest affirmations of this type of thirst is expressed by Paul. It is a standard in the New Covenant. "But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead" (Phil 3:7-11, NKJV). That properly depicts "him that is athirst."

This promise cannot be overstated. At once you should be able to see it is largely irrelevant in the nominal church. Furthermore, where it is found, it is rarely nourished and encouraged. The individual with a thirst like this is such a misfit in the average congregation that he is looked upon as strange and fanatical.

But the Lord Jesus sees such souls, and speaks to them with power. He knows their hearts, and how they long for His presence and blessing. These people confess, "For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness" (Psa 84:10). Whatever the world offers them is paltry next to the promises of God. They will forfeit all of the world for but a moment in the courts of the Lord. That is what it means to be "thirsty."

Jesus was attracted to such people when He walked amongst us. On one occasion, during a great feast, Jesus stood and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water" (John 7:37-38). Here is a unique aspect of the Kingdom. The thirsty person, after drinking, becomes a secondary resource. "OUT of his belly," or inmost being, will "flow rivers of living water." The drinking begins now, but will be brought to the level of thorough satisfaction in the

world to come. How thirsty are you?

## DIRECT KNOWLEDGE

Notice the glorious expression. "I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely." This is a promise of drinking from the Source, without receiving knowledge second hand. Now, in this world, the water comes to us through appointed means. The Scriptures, ministers, and edifying assemblies serve up the water. It is true, we draw from the well within, but what we have is nothing to be compared with the "FOUNTAIN of the water of life." There is more abundance for us. Presently, we are limited by our humanity, primarily because we are in a corruptible body.

“The fountain of the water of life freely” is an expression denoting thorough satisfaction – what is longed for is experienced in abundance. In this world, things for which a strong appetite exists may only be enjoyed in comparatively small measures. Often there is not an abundant supply of such things. Too, sometimes our appetites are not adequate to ingest large quantities of the thing that is desired.

But it is not so in the world to come! There, we will have the capacity to receive an abundance. The Lord will never say, "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now" (John 16:12). Nor, indeed, will the words ever again be heard, "Melchizedek, of whom we have much to say, and hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing" (Heb 5:10-11).

The word "freely" means gratuitously. That is, He gives it because He wants to give it, and there is no charge. Here is the ultimate fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa 55:1).

Suffice it to say, a religion that does not develop and sustain a voracious appetite for the things of God is a dangerous one. It will, unless overcome, keep a person out of heaven. Rest assured, there will be no one with the Lord who has not fervently desired to be with Him. Those with small appetites are tottering on the edge of a Christless eternity. They are not to be envied! The criticality of the situation is seen in the staggering multitudes of people with minuscule spiritual appetites in the modern church. In fact, there does not appear to be proportionately many “Christian” congregations that are serving up spiritual fare for people with healthy spiritual appetites.

You will observe that the promise assumes the existence of spiritual thirst – a strong desire for what the Lord has to give. That thirst begins in this world, but will not be fully satisfied until we are divested of our bodies and the carnal things associated with them, and the present heaven and earth pass away. Then we will be able to drink freely and enjoy complete satisfaction. Too, that condition will never end! A copious and unending supply for thirsty souls. What a blessed prospect for those who have developed a hearty appetite for eternal things!

## INHERITING ALL THINGS

"He that overcometh shall inherit these things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son"

(Rev 21:7). The promises here expressed are not exaggerations. If anything, they are understated because of the infirmity of our flesh. Yet, it is rare that one hears reference to these "exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet 1:4). It is as though the Lord piles blessing upon blessing in His commitments to His people. To this point in the Revelation 21, twelve glorious commitments have been made.

1. No more separation from God: The tabernacle of God with men. (Rev 21:3a)
2. The unhindered and obvious presence of the Lord: God dwelling with men. (Rev. 21:3b)
3. The revelation of our relationship to God: The saints will be His people. (Rev 21:3c)
4. No more Mediator required: God Himself with them, being their God. (Rev 21:3d)
5. The impact of all sorrow, trouble, and sin removed: God will wipe away all tears. (Rev 21:4a)
6. No more separation in any sense. The cessation of death. (Rev 21:4b)
7. Grief, heartache, and all forms of lamentation ended: The end of sorrow. (Rev 21:4c)
8. The call for help, deliverance, or rescue, will never again be heard: No more crying. (Rev 21:4d)
9. Agony, grief and affliction will never again be experienced: The termination of pain. (Rev 21:4d)
10. All things associated with and contaminated by sin will be removed from sight and memory: no more . . ." (Rev 21:4e)
11. The former things passed away. (Rev 21:4f)
12. All things contaminated by sin will be recreated: Everything made new. (Rev 21:5)

Limited understanding and secondary knowledge will never again experienced: There will be free access for the thirsty to the fountain of living water.

Yet, the end is not yet! There will be a personal reward that will confirm the blessedness of the good fight of faith. The child of God will not simply receive some things. There will be no representative, or first fruit inheritance, like we experience while living by faith. Now we enjoy the "firstfruits of the Spirit" (Rom 8:23). Then we will "inherit all things" (Rev 21:7).

This promise is exceedingly large! It includes the new earth (Psa 37:11), God Himself (Rom 8:17), and the Kingdom of God (Matt 25:34). Of old time, Hannah caught a glimpse of the magnitude of the saints' inheritance. In her prayer of thanksgiving for the birth of Samuel, she said the following. "He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the beggar from the ash heap, to set them among princes and make them inherit the throne of glory" (1 Sam 2:8). Isaiah spoke of those inheriting God's "mountains" (Isa 65:9). Paul reminded us "things to come" belong to the saints (1 Cor 3:22).

Also, "all things" include everything just mentioned. It will ALL be given to the INDIVIDUAL who overcomes by faith. Not one whit will be withheld from those who kept the faith and finished their course. Who, knowing this, is not willing to spend and be spent for the Lord? (2 Cor 12:15).

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