



February 21, 2016

Nehemiah 3:15

Ever Changing, Never Changing Part 11

*“Examining Our Gates: the Holy Spirit”*

Pastor Gary Hamrick

There is a thirst in the heart of every human being that can only be quenched by a relationship with Jesus. Unfortunately, before people understand this, they go in search of many things trying to satisfy the longing of their souls, only to turn up empty. In the fourth in a series about the Gates of Jerusalem, Pastor Gary looks at the Fountain Gate and reminds us that only Jesus can satisfy the deepest longings of the heart.

### Hezekiah's Tunnel And The Pool Of Siloam

1. **Nehemiah 3:15** - *“The Fountain Gate was repaired by Shallun son of Col-Hozeh, ruler of the district of Mizpah. He rebuilt it, roofing it over and putting its doors and bolts and bars in place. He also repaired the wall of the Pool of Siloam, by the King's Garden, as far as the steps going down from the City of David.”*
2. Most major cities, both ancient and modern, are built near a body of water, but Jerusalem is a notable exception.
3. The people of Jerusalem survived because of two underground springs.
  - a. There was an unnamed spring in the northern part of the city, which fed into the Pool of Bethesda. (**John 5:1-15**)
  - b. The main water source for the entire city was the Gihon Spring, which was located outside the city wall.
    - i. Pastor Gary said, it was no big deal if you had to draw water from the spring, except when the city was being besieged!

4. King Hezekiah, in 700BC, realized how vulnerable the city was to the attack from a foreign power, so he developed a plan to bring fresh water into the city from the Gihon Spring.
  - a. Hezekiah commissioned men to dig a tunnel about 250 years before the days of Nehemiah.
  - b. What is known as Hezekiah's Tunnel, which is 1,750 feet long, was dug 60 feet below the surface through solid bedrock, and the tunnel extends all the way from the Gihon Spring to the Pool of Siloam!
  - c. Hezekiah's Tunnel was a mystery to biblical scholars and archeologists until it was discovered in 1838.
  - d. The tunnel was dug in a zigzag pattern, and it was determined that workers had started at each end of the tunnel and worked their way to a meeting point, which is an engineering marvel to say the least!
  - e. The tunnel averages about 2 feet wide and about 6 feet tall, and there is running water that can be knee deep at certain times of the year, which courses through the tunnel to this very day.
5. The Pool of Siloam was located near the Fountain Gate, and it too was also a mystery until it was discovered in 2004.
  - a. The Pool of Siloam was discovered when the Israeli government authorized the construction of a new sewer system!
  - b. The Pool of Siloam is about 225 feet long, but its width is not known, because of the soil and vegetation on the side opposite the city steps that lead down into the water.
6. The purpose of the Fountain Gate was for people to have access to the Pool of Siloam from outside the city.

#### Jesus At The Pool of Siloam

7. In [John 9:1-11](#), the Bible records a miracle Jesus performed at the Pool of Siloam when he healed a man who was born blind.
8. [John 7:37-38](#) - *"On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, 'If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him.'"*
  - a. The Feast being referred to is the Feast of Tabernacles, which was one of the three major Feasts celebrated by the Jews.
    - i. This Feast, in Hebrew, is called Succoth.

- b. Part of the celebration was to honor the Lord for the bounty of their harvest, as well as to pray for rain.
  - c. This Feast was celebrated for eight days, which means the eighth day was the *"last and greatest day of the Feast."*
  - d. For seven consecutive days a priest would take a golden pitcher down to the Pool of Siloam, so he could take it back to the Temple to pour it out as a thank offering.
  - e. On the eighth day the priest, after pouring out the water from the pitcher, would read two Scriptures: [Isaiah 12:6](#) and [Isaiah 44:3](#).
    - i. [Isaiah 12:3-6](#) - *"With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. In that day you will say: 'Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing to the Lord, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world. Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.'"*
    - ii. [Isaiah 44:3](#) - *"For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants."*
9. When Jesus stood up on the last day of the Feast and said, *"If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink,"* he was saying this about himself!
10. Jesus made this statement to the people so they would understand that all of the symbolism about water was really about satisfying the greater thirst that is in the heart of every human being; the thirst of the soul.
11. Jesus was saying that he was going to provide something that would satisfy and quench the deepest longing of their souls, and if they would only come to him and believe in him, living water would spring up in them and satisfy them beyond their wildest imagination.
12. Pastor Gary said, "... deep down inside the human heart, every single one of us is thirsty, [and] every single one of us is dry, and every single one of us, before we've [come to know] Christ, have tried to quench [our] thirst by [doing] a lot of different things to [try] to satisfy our souls. And, the more [we] try to do that, the more [we] will find out just how empty we are, because nothing and no one will satisfy the deepest long of the human heart like Jesus Christ."
13. [John 7:39](#) - *"By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified."*

14. We must continue to seek Jesus and believe in him, so that we might experience the soul-quenching satisfaction of his Spirit.

### Jesus And The Woman At The Well

15. The account of Jesus and the Samaritan woman is found in [John 4:1-26](#).
16. It wasn't unusual for women to come to draw water from the well, because that was the cultural norm in that day, but what is noteworthy is that this woman came at noon, which would have been in the heat of the day, rather than during the cool of the evening.
17. Pastor Gary said, "This woman intentionally came when no other women would have been there, because she [saw] herself and others [saw] her as a social outcast."
18. She must have been very confused about who Jesus was, as well as what the living water he promised was all about.
19. [John 4:13-14](#) - *"... Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life."*
20. When Jesus brought up the fact that she had been married and divorced five times, and she was currently living with a man who wasn't her husband, the conversation changed dramatically and was no longer about literal water!
21. Pastor Gary said it's likely that this woman was not simply connected to six guys who were "losers," but that there was something "thirsty" in her that no man could ever satisfy.
22. She must have thought she could bring satisfaction to her life by going from one relationship to the next, which probably resulted in her being emptier as each relationship came and went.

### What Well Are You Drinking From?

23. Pastor Gary said there are many "wells," and if we are drinking from any well other than from the well of living water, we will never have our thirst quenched.

24. People drink from many different wells today, including:
- a. The well of multiple relationships
  - b. The well of materialism
  - c. The well of pornography
  - d. The well of alcohol or drugs
  - e. The well of trying to ensure that everyone likes you
25. Sometimes we drink from the wrong well because we are lonely or we are experiencing grief or we've been hurt, but no matter how long or how hard we try to find satisfaction, we will never find it outside of the living water that comes from a relationship with Jesus Christ!
26. Pastor Gary said, "[Jesus] is the one that can satisfy the deepest longing of the human soul. He is the one who can meet all of our needs. He is the one who can quench the deepest part of who we are. We have to turn to him and recognize that we have been drinking from the wrong well, and [we need to recognize our need for] the refreshing, living water that only comes by God's Spirit through knowing Christ."
27. [Jeremiah 17:13](#) - *"O Lord, the hope of Israel, all who forsake you will be put to shame. Those who turn away from you will be written in the dust because they have forsaken the Lord, the spring of living water."*

#### Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Nehemiah 3:15](#), and talk about Hezekiah's Tunnel and the Pool of Siloam in order to provide the foundation for this study. (See #4 and #5 above)
3. Read and discuss [John 7:37-39](#).
4. After hearing Pastor Gary's message, do you read and understand [Isaiah 12:3-6](#) and [Isaiah 44:3](#), in new way?
5. Share your experience about thirsting for God's living water?
6. How has the Holy Spirit ministered to you and satisfied your thirst?

7. Provide an overview of [John 4:1-26](#), and focus your discussion on [John 4:13-14](#).
8. What are some of the reasons that you or people you know are drawn away from the well of living water?
9. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

\* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).