

The Monday Morning Exegete Presents:

LENT

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Third Sunday of Lent, Year A

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MONDAY AM EXEGETE:
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Breaking News: Jesus doesn't care about our prejudices. Religious leaders stunned & confused.

Soon there will come a time when we wont need the mountain, or the temple but will worship our God of Spirit in spirit and truth.

INSIDE THIS WEEK'S ISSUE

THE COLLECT & LECTIONARY

Almighty God, you know that we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves: Keep us both outwardly in our bodies and inwardly in our souls, that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Lectionary on Page 4

WEEKLY WORD STUDY: "ΥΔΩΡ ΖΩΗ"

a little something to enrich your weekly lectionary study, whether or not it makes it into the Sunday sermon...

Word Study on Page 2

TO GET THE BALL ROLLING...

some initial thoughts, like the diving board before the olympic sized swimming pool...

To Get The Ball Rolling on bottom of Page 2

THE EXEGETE'S RETELLING OF THE GOSPEL

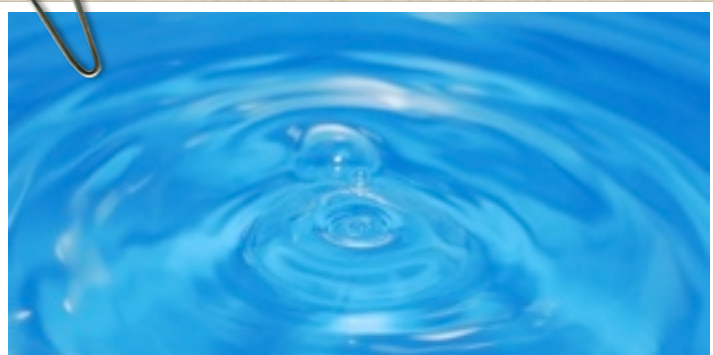
not quite a retranslation, not quite pure commentary...

Gospel Retelling on Page 3

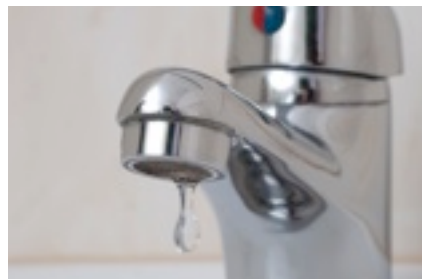
THE CREDITS

a legal necessity...

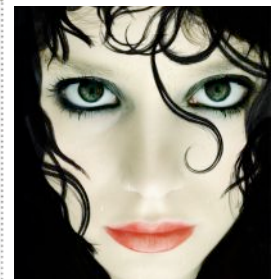
Credits on page 5



Living Water. Neither living, nor water, but really kind of both.



why do we look for things where we know they aren't?



he told me everything about myself

Jesus reconciling the
 Jews & Samaria?

No problem.

Catholics & Protestants?

No way.

Weekly Word Study: ὕδωρ Ζῶν

Strong's G2198: Ζῶν (zao)

Biblical Usage: To live, breathe, be among the living (not lifeless, dead). To enjoy real life: to have true life & worthy of the name, active, blessed, endless in the kingdom of God. To live, i.e. pass life, in the manner of living and acting: of mortals or character; living water, having vital power in itself and exerting the same upon the soul. Living water, having vital power in itself and exerting the same upon the soul. As metaphor: to be full of vigor: to be flesh, strong, efficient; as adjective: active, powerful, efficacious.

Modern Greek Usage: ζῶ is live, ζῶή is life.

Used in 148 passages of the New Testament. Translated as live 117 times, as be alive 9 times, as alive 6 times, quick 4 times, as lively 3 times, not translated once, and in miscellaneous other ways listed above in *Biblical Usage* eight times.

Etymology of Ζῶν - a primitive verb.

Strong's G5204: ὕδωρ (hydor)

Biblical Usage: Water: Of water in rivers, in fountains, in pools. Of the water in the deluge. Of water in any of earth's repositories. Of water as the primary element, out of and through which the world that was before the deluge arose and was compacted. Of the waters of the sea. Figuratively used of many peoples.

Modern Greek Usage: ὕδωρ, without the breathing mark, is water.

Used in 79 times in the New Testament. The phrase living water, or water of life is found seven times: John 4:10, 4:11, 7:38, Revelation 7:17, 21:6, 22:1, 22:17, plus once in the Old Testament: Jeremiah 2:13. The phrase Living God (Θεός-G316) is found fifteen times in the New Testament: Matthew 16:16, 26:63, John 6:69, Acts 14:15, Romans 9:26, 2 Corinthians 3:3, 6:16, 1 Timothy 3:15, 4:10, 6:17, Hebrews 3:12, 9:14, 10:31, 12:22, Revelation 7:2.

Etymology of ὕδωρ- genitive case, hudatos, from the base of ὑετός (G5205) - rain.



John 4:5-42

WHY THIS WORD?

It is likely that the water in my Nalgene bottle off to my left isn't the Living Water of our Living God that Jesus was talking about. Not even fracked water that can catch fire is really it, I don't think. And so, I wanted to delve deeper and see if meditation brought insight...

WORD STUDY SUMMARY:

That which is necessary for life: water and hope. We cannot live long without a bit of both and we cannot live well and flourish without an abundance of both. I don't know what it's like where you live, but I live in a rustbelt city where we and our neighbors have poisoned the great lakes we live on and a lack of industry (that admittedly had been poisoning our water, our air and our earth, but also had employed us) has spelled out a lack of hope in a really deep and profound way that seeps in and lingers in the dark corner of every heart. So the Living God offers Living Water? Yeah, sign me up.

To get the ball rolling...

THIRD SUNDAY OF LENT COLLECT

"...we have no power in ourselves to help ourselves..." Hello, humility! The power we have as humans is of choice and invitation. We have the free will to choose good over evil and we have the ability to invite the Holy Spirit to do wonderful and marvelous things in, with, for and through us...

EXODUS 17:1-7

In this time of twinkies, frozen pizzas, take out, Nalgene bottles full of filtered water from a glacier in another country...

...can we even begin to understand when Jesus uses food & water as metaphors for the necessities of life that *can't* be counted on?

“Is God here, or what?” Apparently, this is an age-old cry of fear and frustration. Our wildernesses may be metaphorical (or perhaps they are not), we may see very clearly that God led us here in the first place, or that may be less clear, but the cry is still much the same as it ever was: “Is the LORD among us or not?!”

PSALM 95

And the answer to that question? “Come, let us sing to the Lord; let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation!” ...Though the psalm does decidedly darken when it changes to God’s point of view in verse 8...

ROMANS 5:1-11

Suffering ⇨ Endurance ⇨ Character ⇨ Hope. I don’t love Paul’s psychology, but I applaud his pre-Freudian efforts and insights. But that God has approached us in Christ Jesus and continues to approach us while we are still clueless, stumbling sinners wallowing in our own suffering and causing others to suffer... *that* certainly is remarkable. That, if nothing else, is a hope that can never fail us.

JOHN 4:5-42

Jesus’ spiritual forebearers go to a well and find a wife. Jesus goes to a well and finds a woman who has been a wife five times and is working on the sixth... And the talk is all about food and drink, food and drink... In this age of mega-grocery stores, ice on the road and oranges in your hand, food pantries, soup kitchens, fertile ground laying fallow and forgotten in our yards, famers throwing away their crops... can we possibly imagine how Jesus and his disciples might have gone hungry and not known when their next meal was going to be, more often than not dependent on the hospitality of strangers? Not knowing when they might find water? Can we possibly imagine the profundity when Jesus compares what God offers to bread, meat and water? In this, the age of Nalgene bottles and frozen pizzas? ...probably not...

The Exegete’s Somewhat Liberal Retelling of the Gospel

Now, for Jesus, these historic prejudices we have amongst ourselves and with others were completely inane. So, he came to a Samaritan city called Sychar near the plot of ground that our common ancestor Jacob had given to his son Joseph. You know the one. Jacob’s Well was there and Jesus was tired so he sat down by the well. It was high noon. Now, a Samaritan woman (with a jug to draw water!) approached and Jesus asked her for a drink. (He was alone with her as his disciples had gone to the nearby town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman balked, pointing out the age old rivalry and hatred that Jesus’ people had for her own. They shouldn’t be associating and they sure as shooting shouldn’t be sharing drinking vessels. Major no-no.

Jesus answered a bit cryptically. “If you understood what was really important in this world, you wouldn’t have thought twice about giving me water. In fact, if you knew who I was, you’d be the one asking me for water, but the good stuff: living water.” Now, Jesus knew there wasn’t running water anywhere about, but that wasn’t what he was talking about.

The woman was still living in her practical world. “Mister, you don’t even have a bucket to draw water, and this well isn’t shallow. Who do you think you are? Bigger than Jacob?”

Jesus didn’t relent in his spiritual-metaphorical answering. “Everybody who drinks from this well is going to come back for more. This water quenches the thirst only for a bit. The water I give you? It will quench you forever. You’ll never go wanting again.”

“Sign me up,” she said. “I’m sick of coming to this well day after day.”

Jesus, being sneaky, said, “Go get your husband and come back.”

“Um, I have no husband,” she dissembled.

“Yes, I know. You don’t have one. You’ve had five and the one you have at present isn’t your husband.” He said this to prove that he knew her worst secret, but that it didn’t matter.

The woman was rightly astounded, and on several levels. “Sir, you are obviously a prophet, but we’re still from very different religious traditions. I’m not sure what to do, here.”

Jesus made it clear. “Ma’am, listen: your people worship what can’t be seen and my people worship what can, but a time is coming when that won’t matter at all. We’ll all understand that God is spirit and can only be worshiped in spirit and truth. No temples. Not mountains.

“I know the Messiah is coming,” she whispered.

“Yes, and you’re looking at him,” he countered. Then his disciples showed up. They weren’t on the same page as Jesus when it came to reconciling old cultural and national tensions and prejudices, so they were shocked that he was talking with a woman, and a Samaritan at that. Still, they knew enough to hold their collective tongues. Meanwhile, the woman left her water jar for Jesus and fled

back into town in order to tell people what was going on at the Well. With her exhortations, people came running. Back at the Well, the disciples urged Jesus to eat something, but he wasn't finished yet with the Woman and the town and the age old prejudices.

"I have food to eat that you don't know about," he said. They marveled and wondered if someone had brought him something to eat. He was patient with them, though. "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. When are you going to start looking around you and realizing that there is half-finished work *everywhere* just waiting for you to come along and finish up? You don't have to start from scratch to do God's work. 'One sows and another reaps,' that saying is so true."

And you know, many Samaritans from that town believed in him, just because he made an effort to reconcile, to teach to them, too. It wasn't just from the woman's testimony, either. He stayed there at their behest for two days and taught them and they came to understand that truly, Jesus was the Savior of the world. Let this be a lesson to you.

WHEN ELSE HAVE WE SEEN THESE?

In the Revised Common Lectionary, (Episcopal Edition), this is the only time we'll see this reading from Exodus and John. The Psalm is also heard on Christ the King, A. This portion of Romans is also heard on Proper 6A.

THE LECTIONARY

EXODUS 17:1-7

From the wilderness of Sin the whole congregation of the Israelites journeyed by stages, as the Lord commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. The people quarreled with Moses, and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses said to them, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you test the Lord?" But the people thirsted there for water; and the people complained against Moses and said, "Why did you bring us out of Egypt, to kill us and our children and livestock with thirst?" So Moses cried out to the Lord, "What shall I do with this people? They are almost ready to stone me." The Lord said to Moses, "Go on ahead of the people, and take some of the elders of Israel with you; take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will be standing there in front of you on the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it, so that the people may drink." Moses did so, in the sight of the elders of Israel. He called the place Massah and Meribah, because the Israelites quarreled and tested the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?"

PSALM 95

Come, let us sing to the LORD; let us shout for joy to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving and raise a loud shout to him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods. In his hand are the caverns of the earth, and the heights of the hills are his also. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands have molded the dry land. Come, let us bow down, and bend the knee, and kneel before the LORD our Maker. For he is our God, and we are the people of his pasture and the sheep of his hand. Oh, that today you would hearken to his voice!

Harden not your hearts, as your forebears did in the wilderness, at Meribah, and on that day at Massah, when they tempted me. They put me to the test, though they had seen my works. Forty years long I detested that generation and said, "This people are wayward in their hearts; they do not know my ways." So I swore in my wrath, "They shall not enter into my rest."

ROMANS 5:1-11

Since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand; and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God. And not only that, but we also boast in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.

For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. Indeed, rarely will anyone die for a righteous person-- though perhaps for a good person someone might actually dare to die. But God proves his love for us in that while we still were sinners Christ died for us. Much more surely then, now that we have been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, much more surely, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life. But more than that, we even boast in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

JOHN 4:5-42

Jesus came to a Samaritan city called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired out by his journey, was sitting by the well. It was about noon.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water, and Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." (His disciples had gone to the city to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" (Jews do not share things in common with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." The woman said to him, "Sir, you have no bucket, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water? Are you greater than our ancestor Jacob, who gave us the well, and with his sons and his flocks drank from it?" Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but those who drink of the water that I will give them will never be thirsty. The water that I will give will become in them a spring of water gushing up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may never be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water."

Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come back." The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; for you have had five husbands, and the one you have now is not your husband. What you have said is true!" The woman said to him, "Sir, I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When he comes, he will proclaim all things to us." Jesus said to her, "I am he, the one who is speaking to you."

Just then his disciples came. They were astonished that he was speaking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you want?" or, "Why are you speaking with her?" Then the woman left her water jar and went back to the city. She said to the people, "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done! He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" They left the city and were on their way to him.

Meanwhile the disciples were urging him, "Rabbi, eat something." But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you do not know about." So the disciples said to one another, "Surely no one has brought him something to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to complete his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more, then comes the harvest'? But I tell you, look around you, and see how the fields are ripe for harvesting. The reaper is already receiving wages and is gathering fruit for eternal life, so that sower and reaper may rejoice together. For here the saying holds true, 'One sows and another reaps.' I sent you to reap that for which you did not labor. Others have labored, and you have entered into their labor."

Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I have ever done." So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them; and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word. They said to the woman, "It is no longer because of what you said that we believe, for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the Savior of the world."

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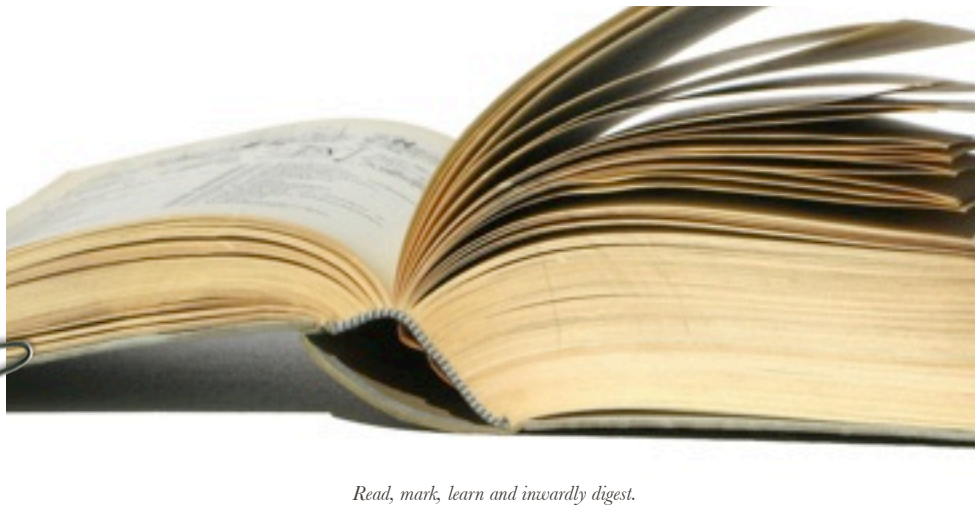
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