

## SPRING UP, O WELL!

**Num 21:16** *And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the LORD spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.*

**Num 21:17** *Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:*

We normally approach anything to do with the children of Israel in the desert with Moses with a very critical attitude. Much of this perception is justified – they appeared to be quite ungrateful waiting at every turn to question God and Moses and revert to worshipping and longing for the gods and oppression of Egypt. However, in this study today, the children of Israel have to commend their behaviour and there is a powerful lesson for us to learn.

Before this incident in Beer where the Lord gave water to the children of Israel, they had murmured against the Lord and Moses due to which fiery serpents attacked and killed many people. However, when the people repented and pleaded with Moses to pray, God heard their prayers and told Moses to make a bronze serpent. “And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived” (Numbers 21:9). No long after this event, we come to the miracle of the water at Beer. Repentance in the name of Jesus will always lead a believer to the waters which point to baptism in Jesus name and receiving the Holy Spirit. Let us look closer at what happened at Beer.

**Num 21:16** *And from thence they went to Beer: that is the well whereof the LORD spake unto Moses, Gather the people together, and I will give them water.*

Notice it was the Lord who said he would give them water. Receiving the Holy Spirit is a collective affair. The Lord commanded the disciples to assemble together in the upper room in Jerusalem before he poured out the Holy Spirit. It is an important principle in the Bible to “gather the people together”. Notice once again it was the Lord who promised to give them water. It appears the children of Israel learned their lesson from what was recorded in the previous chapter. There they murmured and made wild accusations against God and Moses as was their custom because they found no water. It was also at this place, Meribah, that their sin caused Moses to strike the rock twice, and he provoked the anger of God so that he could not enter the Promised Land.

**Num 20:11** *And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also.*  
**Num 20:13** *This is the water of Meribah; because the children of Israel strove with the LORD, and he was sanctified in them.*

Now at Beer, however, the children of Israel did not complain. They appear to have learned their lesson. It was God himself who took the initiative this time and promised to give them water. Let us trust the Lord Jesus in the wilderness of this world! Does he not know how to give us water for our thirsty souls in the desert of this world? Let us rest in peace as we journey through the desert of this world. “And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not” (Isaiah 58:11). So, the children of Israel did very well indeed to compose themselves and learn a lesson from their previous, childish behaviour. They were now showing more spiritual maturity. Their maturity was clearly evident in the fact that they even sang a song demonstrating their faith in God who would give them water *before* he did so.

**Num 21:17** *Then Israel sang this song, Spring up, O well; sing ye unto it:*

Giving glory and praise to God before he does a miracle is a sure sign of spiritual maturity. While we rejoice with the likes of Miriam, Hannah and Mary, the truth is that they burst into worship and songs of praise *after* God performed miracles. Can we sing songs of praise to the Lord Jesus before he gives us the answer to our prayers? The children of Israel were near the Land of Canaan. Aaron had already passed away in the previous chapter after the incident at Meribah. Moses himself would soon leave them. The children of Israel had been wandering in the desert for nearly 40 years now. They were finally showing signs of maturity. We must learn from them. The Lord was displeased that his disciples had forgotten his power to multiply loaves of bread. “Which when Jesus perceived, he said unto them, O ye of little faith, why reason ye among yourselves, because ye have brought no bread? Do ye not yet understand, neither remember the five loaves of the five thousand, and how many baskets ye took up? (Matthew 16:8, 9).

Let us compose songs to Jesus prophetically about the miracle he is about to do. Spring up, O well! Let us say to Jesus, “let your Holy Spirit spring up in my soul!” They had seen enough by this time to know that God would certainly give them water in the desert.

**Heb 5:12** *For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat.*

Next, we read: “The princes digged the well, the nobles of the people digged it, by the direction of the lawgiver, with their staves. And from the wilderness they went to Mattanah” (Num 21:18). It is significant that the princes or elders of Israel digged the well with their staves. Until now, God used the staff of Moses alone to perform most of the great miracles recorded at the time, but now, God was transferring some of the power in Moses’ staff to that of the other princes or elders. Note that they dug under the “direction of the lawgiver”. Saints of God, we still believe in good leadership! Amen! We need to be under the direction of an anointed leader! Let no one entertain the thought for a second that we have done away with leadership. Leadership is of God, but we must follow Paul only as far as he follows Christ. “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ” (I Cor 11:1).

These are the same 70 elders upon whom God poured out his Spirit to carry the burden with Moses. “And I will come down and talk with thee there: and I will take of the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone” (Numbers 11:17). Once a person has received the Holy Spirit of Jesus, signs and miracles will follow soon after.

**Mark 16:17** *And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;*

**Mark 16:18** *They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.*

The elders were digging with their staves. Before that, they were singing praise songs about the water springing up. This is precisely how to receive the Holy Spirit of Jesus – believe you will receive the Holy Spirit, worship him and keep digging! What does it mean to keep digging? When one is seeking the Holy Spirit, this should be a proactive approach – study the Bible, fellowship with those who love the Lord and keep worshipping and seeking Jesus. A prime example of this was the Berean Christians. “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11). Note also that the disciples of John the Baptist, whom Paul met at Ephesus, may not have known about the Holy Spirit but they were missionaries determined to take whatever revelation they received to the ends of the earth. Jesus will always find those who are laboring and propagating the truth. We are filled with the Holy Spirit ought also to dig with our staves of authority until the well springs up in others’ souls.

**John 7:38** *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*