

## GOSPEL OF JOHN 7C 7:37-53

### CHRIST PROVIDES THE LIVING WATER, THE HOLY SPIRIT (Bp. Gerasimos)

**37** And in the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus was standing and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirst, let him come to Me and drink.”<sup>38</sup>“The *one* who believes in Me, even as the Scripture said—rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly (*heart*).”

What scripture - *rivers of living water shall flow out of his belly?*

**Fr. Behr:** It may have been an Aramaic expression which combined two passages into one.

- Numbers 21:16 – Water which flowed from the rock that Moses was commanded to strike - **Zechariah 14:8 (Psalm 77:20)** *When that day comes, fresh water will flow from Jerusalem, half of it to the Dead Sea and the other half to the Mediterranean. It will flow all year long, in the dry season as well as the wet.*
- Jesus is the Rock (1 Cor. 10:4) from whose side flows the living waters.
- Verses 37-39 also look forward to the believer and the giving of the Spirit once Christ is risen from the dead and glorified.

“The thirsty person who seeks and satisfies his spiritual thirst in Christ now becomes himself through faith in Christ, the source of living water... This living water of Christ, which will provide rivers of living water of knowledge and life, will refresh not only the faithful who will approach Christ, but also other people around them. (Bp. Gerasimos).”

Saint Chrysostom: “By ‘belly’ He here means the heart... Even as the Scripture said—rivers shall flow out of his belly,’ alluding to the largeness and abundance of grace,...and elsewhere He called it ‘eternal life,’ but here, ‘living water.’...For the grace of the Spirit, when it has entered into the mind and has been established, springs up more than any fountain. It does not fail, nor become empty...To signify, therefore, at once its un failing supply and ineffable energy, He called it a ‘well’ and ‘rivers’—not one river but numberless.”

Blessed Theophylact: “Since many were believing from the signs, He shows that it is needful not to be believing thus from the signs, as from the Scriptures (for the correct faith is from the Scriptures) on which account He says, ‘The *one* who believes in Me, even as the Scripture said,’ that is (to believe), ‘Concerning every testimony in the Scripture of Me, that I am the Son of God, that I am the Creator, that I am the Lord of all, that I am the Savior of the world.’ For many think that they believe, but not as the Scripture says; and thus these follow after heresies, and all such are heretics.” [P.G. 123:611AB (col. 1341).]

**<sup>39</sup>But this He said concerning the Spirit, Whom those who believe in Him were about to receive; for *the* Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.**

Saint Chrysostom: “For the apostles cast not out demons by the Spirit, but by the authority received from Him, as He says Himself... Now when He sent them, it does not say, ‘He gave them the Holy Spirit,’ but that ‘He gave to them authority [Mt. 10:1],’ to ‘be cleansing lepers, raising *the* dead, casting out demons; freely ye received, freely give [Mt. 10:8].’...In the case of the prophets, all

confess that the gift was that of the Holy Spirit. But this grace was restricted and departed and was wanting from the earth....Since then the Holy Spirit was withheld, but was for the future to be shed forth abundantly—and since the beginning of this imparting was after the Cross, not only as to its abundance, but also as to the increased greatness of the gifts—for this cause He adds, ‘The Holy Spirit was not yet *given*.’...Now those of old indeed had the Spirit, but were not able to impart Him to others, while the apostles filled tens of thousands.” [Hom. 51, *P.G.* 59:300, 301 (col. 284).]

[Jn. 7:39b.] Saint Chrysostom: “He calls the Cross ‘glory.’...It was necessary that first the Sacrifice should be offered for us, that the enmity which was in our flesh should be done away, that we should become friends of God, and then receive the Gift.” [Hom. 51, *P.G.* 59:301 (col. 284).]

**<sup>40</sup>Many therefore of the crowd, having heard the utterance, were saying, “This is truly the Prophet.” <sup>41</sup>Others were saying, “This is the Christ.” But others were saying, “The Christ is not coming out of Galilee, is He? <sup>42</sup>“Has not the Scripture said that of the seed of David (*through Joseph his father, and Mary she was from the tribe of Judah*) and from the village of Bethlehem (*the birth place of Christ*), where David was, the Christ is coming?” <sup>43</sup>Therefore a division occurred in the crowd on account of Him. <sup>44</sup>And some of them were wishing to lay hold of Him, but no one laid hands on Him.**

- John lists the objections and does not refute them with a touch of irony knowing that the readers would know the truth about Christ (Bp. Gerasimos)

St. Cyril of Alexandria: “Merely knowing that our Lord was brought up at Nazareth, they fall away from the truth and lack sound reasoning.”

**<sup>45</sup>Then came the officers (*the police of the temple*) to the chief priests and Pharisees, and they said to them, “Why did you not bring Him?” <sup>46</sup>The officers answered, “Never did a man so speak as this Man.”**

“His words had such wisdom, such power and grace; they were divine! (Bp. Gerasimos).”

St. Athanasius: “They perceived that this was not a mere man like themselves, but that this was he who gave water to the saints and that it was he who was announced by the prophet Isaiah.

**<sup>47</sup>Then the Pharisees answered them, “You have not also been deceived, have you? <sup>48</sup>“Not one of the rulers believe in Him or of the Pharisees, does he? <sup>49</sup>“But this people who know not the law are accursed!”**

Augustine: “Those who did not know the law believed in the one who sent the law and were enlightened, and those men who were teaching the law despised him.”

Nicodemus did believe in him (Chrys.)

**<sup>50</sup>Nicodemus (*the one who came by night to Him, being one of them*) said to them, <sup>51</sup>“Our law does not judge the man, unless it should first hear *him*, and know from the man himself what he does, do?” <sup>52</sup>They answered and said to him, “You are not also of Galilee, are you?**

**Search and look, for a prophet has not been raised out of Galilee.”<sup>53</sup>And each went to his own house.**

- Jonah came from Gath Hopher a town in Galilee only three miles from Nazareth (2 Kings 1:25)
- The law commanded no one to be killed without first hearing them, they were eager to do this without first hearing him. (Chrys.)