

Inflow, Upflow, Outflow

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[0 : 00] Now the passage that we read today in the prophet Isaiah, this well-known chapter 35, speaks about the refreshing and bringing again to life of an area, desert is described here, that was barren, dry, empty, the wilderness, the solitary place shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose.

Some translations now say the crocus, but the whole message is the same, that this dry, barren area is transformed by the bringing of it to life, by that which the Lord himself alone is able to infuse into it, to input, to directly bring into the situation.

It doesn't happen by nature, and it doesn't happen by magic. It happens by the Lord's direct input. And we know that this isn't just a vision of irrigation in a physical desert, because if you look at what is described in these verses from 3 to 6 onwards and so on, that clearly much of what is described here is that which takes place in the gospel situations, what our Lord himself and also the apostles bring to life.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not, strengthen the weak hands, confirm the feeble knees, as quoted of course again in Hebrews 12. You would think that these two things were mutually exclusive.

If he's coming with vengeance, if he's coming with, oh, we're going to judge and, oh, visit terrible wrath and so on. But that wrath is against sin. It is not against sinners per se.

[1 : 46] It's not against people, against individuals, unless they so cling to their sin, unless they so desire never to be divested of it, that they insist on going down with it.

The Lord desires to separate out between sinners and their sin. But he comes with a vengeance and judgment against sin itself.

He will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense, because sin must be paid for. Every sin that we have ever committed must be paid for. And, you know, with all those things which the world counts as, you know, comparatively indifferent sins.

I've mentioned this often in the past, but you hear, whether on television or on the street or people, you know, just idly almost as punctuation in a sentence using the name of the Lord blasphemously. And they'll use his name just almost as an expression of amazement or surprise or shock or whatever. And yet every single one of those instances, there is a breach of that third commandment there.

[2 : 56] That is going to be required of people. That blasphemy, that taking of the Lord's name in vain. Yet the world doesn't even think of that as a sin. That sin is, like all other sins, all the oppression of the poor, all the, yes, the racism and the evil and the violence and the cruelty that is in the world.

But also the violation of all that is holy and pure and good. God is going to come and visit that with the vengeance that it requires.

But his desire is to separate out between sinners and their sin. This is why when he talks about vengeance and when he talks about recompense, it says, he will come and save you.

He desires to save sinners. He will come for the purpose of saving. That's why Christ has come into the world. That is what the name Jesus means.

It's the Greek form of the Hebrew name Joshua, which means Jehovah is salvation. And in the Greek form, in the New Testament form, it means Savior. So the reason Jesus has come is to be the Savior.

[4 : 03] He will come and save you, verse 4. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened. We know that Jesus did this many times in his ministry. The ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

He did this too. The lame man shall leap us in heart. He healed those who were sick of the palsy. They got up, they carried their beds. And Peter and John at the gate, the beautiful gate of the temple.

The man who had been lame from his childhood all his life. He up walking and leaping and praising God. And we read of the apostles doing this. We read of our Lord doing it.

Then the lame man shall leap us in heart. The tongue of the dumb shall sing. For in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert. And the parched ground shall become a pool. And the thirsty land springs of water. In the habitation of dragons, we think of dragons in terms of a sort of mythical winged creature. Because that's the way in which it's narrowly been applied.

[4 : 59] The way that this term used to refer to, what it would mean was usually reptiles. So like lizards and things like that would be counted as dragons. Oh no, a dragon is big.

Only in the popular imagination. Only in the mind is it a huge big creature with a sort of pointy tail and wings that breeds fire. That's just what mythology has now conveyed down the years.

This term that is translated as dragon, it means reptiles. They might be big or small. The word that we now think of as the word dinosaur, which we think describes a certain kind of large reptile.

Though the old fashioned word for such a creature would have been dragon. It's a large reptile or a smaller reptile or whatever. So where there's these reptiles, lizards, or Javier in the desert, as they would study about in the desert, there there shall be reeds and springs of water, there shall be grass of reeds and rushes, and a highway shall be there, and a way in it shall be called the way of holiness.

When the Lord does these things, when he rolls back the previous absence of his presence, and that's what sin does of course.

[6 : 11] It brings us into a dry, parched land where the water of life, the spirit of Christ, is absent. And when there is that, there is when we are separated from God, all the dis-ease that comes with that, that all becomes a part and parcel of ordinary life.

When Jesus healed people, when he opened the eyes of the blind, when he unstopped the ears of the deaf, he was rolling back the symptoms of separation from God.

Because he was rolling back the reality of separation from God. Because he himself had come. The kingdom of God has come upon you.

This is what he said. Repent and believe, for the kingdom of God is at hand. And the kingdom of God was personified in himself, in his presence. And because God had come, these things now were beginning to be taken away.

That's what he had come to do. But that's not just an end in itself. It's not just, isn't it great the blind can see? Isn't it great the lame can leap and dance and the deaf can hear?

[7 : 16] Oh, that's wonderful. All these diseases have been taken away. Of course, these are just symptoms of our separation from God. There wasn't any blindness or deafness or lameness or death in Eden.

Before man's sin, there wasn't any illness. There wasn't any dis-ease. And whilst these things do not come upon us as punishment for sins, plural, that we commit.

So we see that in John chapter 9. You know where the disciples said, who did sin? This man or his parents, that he was born blind. And Jesus said, neither this man nor his parents. But rather that the glory of God might be shown upon him.

Now he didn't mean that the man himself wasn't a sinner. He didn't mean that the parents weren't sinners. It means that it's nothing they did that caused this man to be born blind. But it is the fact of separation from God.

Sin, in that sense, brings all these things with it. And what the Lord is describing here is a situation of rolling back, not only the symptoms of separation, but the fact of separation from God.

[8 : 20] When the Lord comes, he brings with him the fullness of his spirit, which is symbolized in scripture so often with water. Because water is that without which nothing can live in this world.

And likewise, without God, without his presence, everything dies. There is only death without the Lord. So just as water is essential to life in this world, the spirit of Christ is likewise essential to life. A desert symbolizes our existence without God. The presence and the coming, miraculously, of abundance of water that causes everyone to spring into life is a description of the Lord coming into the world and coming into the lives of men and women and the difference that he makes.

But as we say, that's not just an end in itself. Because we read verse 8. And highways shall be there and away. And it shall be called the way of holiness.

The unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those, those who are on the journey, those who are making their journey. The highway is to be traveled on. Nobody makes a road just so they can say, oh, that's great, it's a lovely straight bit of water.

[9 : 36] Because I was wondering what was going to do with all that tarmac and stones. Thank goodness now we've got this thing to use it all up because that's it done and we just walk away. No, you have a road in order to enable people to travel from one place to another.

And the highway is taking them from their existence without the Lord to the place where they will be with the Lord forever. And just as on a journey you are always getting closer, every step that you take on that journey brings you further along the road.

So as we continue through this journey in life, if we are with the Lord, we are getting closer and closer to him. A highway shall be there.

A road which will make it plain for them to make this journey from where they were to where ultimately they desire to be. But all the time they're on it, at least they are traveling.

The way of holiness. The unclean shall not pass away. Nobody just crosses across this road. This is a road for going, for journeying. The wayfaring men, no fools, shall not err therein.

[10 : 44] You don't dabble in this and then fall out again. No lion shall be there. Not any ravenous beast shall block thereon. It shall not be found there. But the redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return.

And come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They'll return. They'll return to the God who made them. The God from whom they were separated by original sin.

By the first sin of our kids. The purpose of this road, the purpose of this highway, is to bring us back to the Lord. That journey on which each of us, if we are in Christ, is travelling.

And of which, if we are not yet in Christ, we haven't really begun. We may be getting closer to the road. We may be wandering about in the desert. Oh, thank goodness, there's a road. We can get on to it.

And we're getting closer. But we're not on the road yet until we are in Christ. But it is the Lord who desires and who enables souls to be brought to that highway.

[11 : 45] To be brought to that place. And to be separated from their own sin. So that sinners can be saved and sin itself can be judged. You see, this screams in the desert that we have.

Verse 6. A lame man shall leap us in heart. We were lame. We were helpless. We couldn't walk.

The tongue of the dumb shall sing. What was there in our mouth before? But filthiness.

But emptiness. But vanity. Until we begin to praise the Lord. Until we begin to pray to the Lord. Our tongue wasn't being used for the thing for which it was designed.

For in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert. Who brings the water to the desert? The Lord does it. There's no mention of rain coming down.

There's no mention of irradiation channels and pipes bringing it from elsewhere. The Lord causes it to spring up. The Lord brings life. Where previously there was only death.

[12 : 44] That's what this chapter is about. It is using a physical description. Just as Jesus so often did. A physical picture. In order to illustrate a spiritual reality.

The reality is the desert of our lives without Christ. And the promise is the abundance of blessing. The fullness.

The flushness of the water that shall be supplied. And the spirit that shall be supplied. Because there'll be instead of desert. There'll be reeds and rushes and a positive marsh.

Because it's so moist and damp. And such a fullness of water. And where there was dragons and reptiles and wizards scurrying about before. Now there's a highway.

Now there's a way to travel upon. You see this that the Lord gives. He puts the desire first of all. In the hearts of those who are wandering in the desert.

[13 : 41] We read in 1 Corinthians. In chapter 12. At verse 13. For by one spirit. We all baptised into one body. Whether we be Jews or Gentiles.

Whether we be born or free. And we've all been made to drink. Into one spirit. We drink in that spirit of Christ. And it is like water to our thirsty souls.

And this water of life that he supplies. We might say that there is. After our fashion we could say. That there is an inflow. There is an upflow.

There is a fullness. And then there is an outflow. So an inflow. An upflow. A fullness. And then an outflow.

An overflowing. And the inflow first of all. Is when we draw in. From the Lord. That which we are thirsting for. By one spirit.

[14:41] We're all baptised into one body. Whether we be Jews or Gentiles. Whether we be born or free. We've all been made to drink. Into one spirit. Now. Yes. You might drink if you aren't particularly thirsty.

But the greatest and most beautiful drink. That you'll ever get. Is when you're really parched. When you're really thirsting. And then. Cold clean water. Is just the best of all.

Yes. You can drink other things. And flavoured stuff. And so on. And hot drinks. Or whatever. But cold clean water. When you're just parched. Is the greatest and best of all. We've all been made to drink.

Into one spirit. This is what the Lord gives us. His inflow. He causes us to thirst. For him. And to desire him. Now. We read of Israelites in the desert.

That they did all drink. The same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual rock. That followed them. And that rock was Christ. We don't think of Christ.

[15:39] As active in the Old Testament. But the scriptures tell us. That he was. They didn't know him. As Jesus of Nazareth. But Christ was the rock. The one that provided.

Not only physical water. But spiritual refreshment. For them all in the desert. So we have this. Inflow. Of God's spirit. Because he puts the desire.

In our hearts. To drink. To receive. That which he. Is ready to give us. We have that inflow. We have also. What we might call.

The upflow. Now. If we think of a fountain. Trouble is. We think in terms of fountains. As an ornamental thing. You ain't got a fountain. In the garden. Of a stately home. And you've got this set of.

Stone structure. A big rounding. And then a sort of. A sort of structure. Where it's all pouring out the top. And it flows down. Into this great big bowl. And then it doesn't really. Go anywhere else. And the reason for that.

[16:33] Is because it drains. Into a drain. And then that same water. Will be pumped back up again. Shoot out the top. And just keep going. Round and round. Because that fountain. Is purely ornamental. And so much of what we think of.

As a fountain. Whether we see it in a city. Or city centre. Or whether we see it. In the garden. Of a spate me home. These are ornamental fountains. They're just for show. But a genuine fountain. A real fountain. A spring. It bubbles up. It springs out. Just by the pressure of water. Coming up. Whether it's in a hillside. Whether it's coming out.

From under a rock. Or whether it may be. In the desert. That the water bubbles up. From underneath. And a spring. Of which there is an upflow. Takes the water up.

To where it is most needed. And where it will be of most good. And the Lord provides that. In nature. But he also provides it. In the spirit.

[17:29] That upflow. Causes us. To desire to worship. We don't just drink in. But rather the upflow. Causes us. To be raised up to the Lord.

To desire. To worship him. In John 4. At verse 14. Jesus speaks to the woman. At the well of Samaria. He says. You know. Whoever drinks of the water. In this well. You know.

You're drawing here. He'll be thirsty again. Because that's physical water. But whosoever drinketh of the water. That I shall give him. Shall never thirst. But the water that I shall give him.

Shall be in him. A well of water. Is springing up. Into everlasting life. Now. If you lived beside. A well spring of water.

In the desert. You might say. That because you live beside it. Well. He'll never be thirsty again. And. They didn't mean by that. Oh well. If he takes one drink. That's it.

[18:23] He can live beside it. But you'll never need to drink. Any water physically again. What they mean is. He will never be in the sense. Of hungering and thirsty. He can always just go back to it. Whatever he likes. It's right there.

He just scoops it up. He just drinks it up. He'll never be thirsty. Because it's always right there. He can go to it. Whenever he likes it. And in the spiritual sense. Jesus is saying.

Whoever drinks of the water. That I shall give him. Will never thirst. It doesn't mean he'll never want more of it. But rather. It will be in him. A well of water. Springing up. Into everlasting life.

So that no matter how thirsty. He gets for more. And this is part of the grace of God. That he calls us. He causes us. To want to hunger. And thirst. For more.

That the supply. Is always there. If you live beside. The wellspring of water. In the desert. You're not going to want to move anywhere else. You don't say.

[19 : 15] I'm getting a bit fed up. Living beside this. Ready supply. Why don't I just go and dwell. In these rocks. 50 miles away. Where there's no water. And the sun will just beat down. In my head. The whole day.

I think I'll go in there. For a while. I think I'll go. Yeah. Live beside those scrubby little bushes. 20 miles away. In that direction. Where there's no water. You don't desire. These other things. If you've got the well of water. Beside you. And once you have. The well of water. Springing up. Into everlasting life. Within you. You don't desire then.

The false gods of this world. You don't desire. Idolatry. And fake gods. That other religions. Worship. You don't desire. To be.

A god yourself. So that everything is about. Me. Myself. I. Which is what the world does. You become. Unsatisfied. With these things. The rocks.

[20 : 09] 50 miles away. That might have looked good. If you were out in the bare sand. Because they afford. A little bit of shelter. Or a little bit of protection. They don't look good. Next to the well of water. And the bushes.

That might provide. A wee bit of shade. Or a wee bit of help. If there's anything. They're growing there. Maybe there's some. Moisture in the twigs. That can break off. They look good. Compared to the. The dry part sands.

But they're nothing. Compared to the well of water. Springing up here. And whatever you might have. Found in the world. That may have pleased you. And may have thought. This is great. This is what life is about living.

When you compare it. To the well spring of water. Springing up within you. That Christ gives. It says nothing. He that hath the water. That I shall give him.

It shall give him. A well of water. Springing up into everlasting life. He shall never thirst. He'll never want anything else again. Compared to the Lord. Compared to Christ.

[21 : 05] Yes of course. You need the physical things. Of this world. To get by. You need food. And drink. And shelter. Yes. But as Jesus says. In the Sermon on the Mount. The Lord. Doeth you. Who have need of these things.

After all these things. The Gentiles seek. You know. Yes. God will provide these things. Don't make them. You will be all. And end all. Seek ye first. The kingdom of God. Whoever drinks.

Of the water. Of this work. Will thirst again. But whoever drinketh. Of the water. That I shall give him. Shall never thirst. But the water. That I shall give him. Shall be in him.

A well of water. Springing up. Into everlasting light. The woman says. Eric. Give me this water. That I thirst not. Neither come hither to draw. She still doesn't get it. She thinks.

At this stage. That Jesus is talking. About physical water. And sometimes. People may be drawn. To the Lord. Or to the things of the Lord. Because of the benefit.

[21 : 58] That they think. It will be. In the physical world. They want to make. The things of the Lord. Subservient. To their desires. In this world. Well they can do that. They can try that.

But it will never satisfy. It will never. Give them. The well of water. Springing up. To everlasting life. It will never. Fulfill their souls. If all they want.

From the Lord. Is more of the world. That's what they'll get. But rather. Remembering. That this water. Of life. Symbolizes. The spirit. Of Christ. The spirit. That springs up.

Within. That refreshes. That gives life. Jesus said. God is a spirit. And they that worship him. Must worship him. In spirit. And in truth.

This. Upflow. That we have. It points us. Upwards. To the Lord. It satisfies us. Here. But it makes us. Desire. More.

[22 : 53] The more we have. Of the Lord. The more we want. Of the Lord. The more we desire. To heaven. Ever within us. Filling us. Satisfying us.

Drawing us up. Positively. To him. In glory. Now. Where we have. This. Upflow. You know. An ornamental fountain.

Has an upflow. But that's. Artificially created. By pumps. And pressures. And so on. Where there's a. A natural spring. In the desert. Or under rock. It's the pressure. Of the water.

It's the water. It's the pressure. That's pushing it up. It's naturally occurring. Where the Lord.

Creates. This desire. Where there is. This upflow. It's occurring. By his work.

His grace. His spirit. And if there is. This upflow. There will be. In the fullness of time. The fullness. The brimming up. Of that. Where you can't get more.

[23 : 46] In. Now. To an extent. This is what Stephen. Describes. When just at the end. Of his life. Just before. He's about to die. When he. Being full of the Holy Ghost.

Looked up. Steadfastly. Into heaven. This is act. Seven. Verse fifty. Five. And saw the glory. Of God. And Jesus. Standing on the right hand. Of God. He said. Behold.

I see the heavens open. And the son of man. Standing. On the right hand. Of God. And then they cried. With a loud voice. And stopped their ears. And ran upon him. With one accord. And cast him out of the city.

And stoned him. Why did Stephen. Get this fullness then. Well I would suggest to you. Because. His life. Was almost over. He was already. A man.

Full of the Holy Ghost. When we read. Of his appointment. With the other. Early deacons there. In chapter six. Of the Acts. We read. That they said. To the people. Brethren. Look ye out among you.

[24 : 40] Seven men. Of an honest report. Full of the Holy Ghost. Full of the Spirit. And wisdom. Whom we may appoint. Over this business. And the same. Pleased the whole multitude.

And they chose Stephen. A man. Full of faith. And of the Holy Ghost. He's already filled. With his spirit. As are the others. He's already. Filled with this water of life.

Verse eight. Of chapter six. Stephen. Full of faith. And power. In wonders. And miracles. Amongst the. People. Verse ten. They were not able. To resist the wisdom. And the spirit.

By which he spake. He was already. Full of the spirit. But he didn't have long. To live. And just before. He left this world. He saw heaven open. And he saw this.

Vision. This glory. Of Jesus. Standing at the right hand. Of the father. Now I would suggest to you. The reason he got it. Right then. Is because his life. Was almost complete.

[25 : 33] And we often. If we are. Traveling this. Highway. Of holiness. Through the desert. We may want. Oh if only. A glimpse of glory. A glimpse of him. If I could just see the Lord.

That would be so wonderful. Well you will see him. But you'll see him. At the end. When you're ripened. When you're full. When you're. Your cup.

When you're. When you're. When you're. Come on over. In such a way. In such a way. That the fool. This has filled you. In such a way. And you'll see him. This is what. First John. Tells us.

Chapter three. Beloved. Now. Are we the sons of God.

And it does not yet appear. What we shall be. But we know that. When he shall appear. We shall be like him. For we shall see him. As he is.

When he shall appear. When the Lord comes back. When it's all finished. When it's all complete. Stephen's life. Was nearly over. He had less than an hour. To live. Probably. When he saw this bishop. And no doubt.

[26 : 28] When we are so near. The end of our lives here. We'll be given. That vision. That great grace. If we're trusting in Christ. And so we read. You know. We shall be like him.

We shall see him. As he is. Every man. That hath this hope. For himself. Purify himself. Even as he. Is pure. So we seek. In order.

To be prepared. For this fullness. We seek. To be pure. We seek. To have this way. Of holiness. That's what it's called. In Isaiah 35. A highway shall be there.

And a way in it. Shall be called. The way of holiness. Way of purity. That holiness. The Hebrews tells us. Without which. No one shall see the Lord. Now of course. We don't have that.

In and of ourselves. It is that. Which the Lord gives. We don't have faith. Of ourselves. It is the gift of God. It is that. Which he himself. Gives. Likewise. Is purity.

[27 : 23] So then. When we have this fullness. What happens. If you've got something. That's filling up. And filling up. And filling up. Well eventually. When it reaches the brim. And it keeps filling. It will flow over. You know.

As you know. David says. In Psalm 23. My cup runneth over. What happens. When a fountain. Or when a spring. Let's see. Up on a hillside. It bubbles up. And there's so much water. Coming up. Coming up.

And bubbling up. Where does it go? It doesn't flow uphill. Water can't flow uphill. So it begins to just sort of trickle down. It follows gravity. It will always find the lowest piece of ground.

And it will flow always downwards. And if that means down the hill. That's fine. And if it finds the wee bit of low down earth. Or embeddedness in between the peak. Or the stones. It will find the lowest possible point.

It will always strive to go down. Down. Down. Water will flow downhill. It will flow down the valley. It will flow down eventually to the sea. It's quite an amazing thought.

[28 : 18] When you think of something like. You know. The Nile. Or the Mississippi. Or something. You think of where there are sources. And then you think. It's an amazing thought. From that source. Whether it's Lake Victoria.

You know. For the Nile. Or way up in Lake Itasca. For the Mississippi. All the way down to the Gulf of Mexico. There is a route that that river. It's always downhill. It's always.

The gradient must always be downhill. Because the water will always flow down. From a high point. It will always flow downhill. Now. If that is the case. Then what the Lord gives us.

When we are brimming up with his spirit. It means there must be an outflow. And that outflow will always be. From the level the Lord gives. Down to the rest of the world.

And we are designed. And intended to overflow. To outflow. With this grace. When he gives of his spirit. There is meant to be an outflow. Jesus said.

[29 : 13] John 7. Verse 37. In that last day. The great day of the feast. Jesus stood and cried. Saying. If any man thirst. Let him come unto me and drink. He that believeth on me.

As the scriptures have said. Out of his belly shall flow. Rivers of living water. But this spake he of the spirit. Which they that believe on him. Should receive. For the Holy Ghost was not yet given. Because that Jesus was not yet glorified. This outflow. Where does it go? What are we to do with it? This outflow. It must go to others. It must be transmitted to others.

It must be conveyed to others. How can we possibly. Let others know about Jesus. Unless it is first brimming up with us. And flowing out of us. We can only give to others.

We can only give the cup of cold water to others. If we have that cold water first ourselves. You can't say. Oh here I am in the desert. With just nothing but burnt sand.

[30 : 10] Round about. So I fill up this cup with burnt sand. I can give it to somebody. Say. Here. Have a cup of cold water. They'll say. Look. It's not cold water. It's just sand. I don't want that. You can't give them a cup of cold water.

Unless you've got the cold water first. So in order for us to be able to flow out with this. In order for us to be able to. As Peter says. Give everyone a reason for the hope that is in you. With all meekness and godly fear. If there's going to be an outflow. There must be a filling up for us. So we need to be filled with God's spirit.

But when we are. We cannot help but live it out. We cannot help but speak it out. Jesus said in Matthew 12 verse 34. When he's talking about his enemies.

He says. O generation of vipers. How can ye being evil. Speak good things. You know. He can't bring a cup of cold water from the sand of the desert. Out of the abundance of the heart.

[31 : 06] The mouth speaketh. What is in your heart? Is it Christ is in your heart? Or is it the things of the world? Is it an obsession with football? Or golf? Or money?

Or work? Or computers? Or whatever it may be. Is it an obsession with politics? Or Brexit? Or the world? Or whatever it might be. That's what's in your heart. You speak about it.

We instinctively speak about. What is in our hearts. What interests us. What fills us. The conversation will come round to that eventually. Because that's what we want to speak about. Because that's what's in our hearts. We pour out what is within. And when we are filled up with something. It spills out. Out of the abundance of the heart.

The mouth speaketh. Jesus said. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart. Bringeth forth good things. An evil man out of the evil treasure. Bringeth forth evil things.

[31 : 59] Of course there's an outflow. Of course there's an overflow. When the water bubbles up at the top of the hillside. It's only going to flow down. It's got to flow somewhere. It's got to convey something.

That water which can't stay there. It will be taken to all other manner of places. Wherever it can be taken. And the Lord knows we can't go some places. Can't go up the hill if we're watered.

We can't go to the side if we've got to go down. And the Lord knows what we can and can't do. He doesn't require of us what we are unable to do. But if we're filled with this spirit.

And filled with this love. We cannot help but let it flow out. We cannot help but speak. Acts 4 verse 20. Remember when Peter and John. And in front of the Sanhedrin.

And they were told to stop speaking. In the name of Jesus. They said. We cannot help but speak the things. Which we have seen and heard. You see this is part of the difference.

[32 : 55] Between just sort of outward religion. And our relationship with the Lord. Plenty of people have been brought up. To go to church. Have been brought up. To do the books.

Or brought up to maybe read the Bible. Or know the catechism. But that is so much outward things. They're good things. Don't get me wrong. They are good things. But they can't change the heart. Only the Lord can change the heart. And you can have as much of these good outward things. As you like. And they won't change the heart. They are good. We should have them. But they won't change the heart.

You won't be flowing out. And speaking out about these things. And overflowing with these things. There won't be an outflow. Of these things that are just outward. If there's going to be an outflow. There has to be that which is within. The divine water of life. Has to be that which we've drunk in. That which we've filled up. Or that which is outflowing. We need that inflow.

[33 : 51] That upward fully upflow. That fully and that outflow. And when we have this. We cannot help but speak. The things which we have seen and heard. If we have seen the Lord's change.

That he makes in our lives. If we have heard the good news of Christ. Not just reading the Bible as words. But rather hear the Lord speak to our soul. Through his word.

Through his spirit. We can't help but speak of that. We can't help know about that. We can't help tell others about it. When we're asked. We can't help be a witness of that.

Because it flows out of us. There is an inflow. There is an upflow of worship. There is a filling. Whereby we have something of the glory of the Lord revealed to us.

And then there is an outflow. And out of the abundance of the heart. The mouth speaketh. And as the apostle said. We cannot help but speak. The things which we have seen and heard.

[34 : 49] That is part of the purpose of our journey. And we are on a journey. You don't climb onto a road from the desert. And say. Oh that's nice. A nice flat spot. I'll just make a wee camp here.

I'll just settle here. And I'll sit down here. And that's me. The end of my journey. No. There's a road. There's a highway. And it shall be for those who intend to make the journey.

The ransom of the Lord shall return. And come to Zion. With songs and everlasting joy upon their head. The highway is there. Where the streams appear in the desert.

Where there is only dry parched land. Now there are pools. Now there's water. Now there's weeds and rushes. Now there's that which the Lord has brought in. From outside.

Like the little pot plants. No moisture is going to occur naturally. In an indoor environment. In those pots. There will be some moisture in the soil. But when that soil is sucked out and used up.

[35 : 46] Eventually the plant will die. You've got to add in more water. Into those pots. You've got to add in more water. If they're going to live. We are separated. From that in which we were created.

We are no longer in Eden. We are no longer in our sinless state. Of union with the Lord. We are separated. We are in little pots. We are confined. Within this body of death.

And unless the Lord pours the water of his spirit. Into our lives. Unless we are thirsting for that. And drinking in that. Then we will perish. Sooner.

Probably rather than later. We will perish. But the Lord does not leave us in that condition. He has come. That he might save us. That's what we read.

Your God will come with vengeance. Be strong. Fear not. Behold. Your God will come with vengeance. Even God with a recompense. He will come and save you.

[36 : 42] His vengeance is upon sin. But his love and mercy. Is for sinners. The parched ground shall become a pool. And the thirsty land springs of water.

In the habitation of dragons. For each way shall be grass with wreaths and rushes. And a highway shall be there. The lame shall leap as an heart. The tongue of the dumb shall sing.

For in the wilderness shall waters break out. Out flowing from the filling. And streams in the desert. Friend, I don't know the condition of your individual lives.

I don't know what is in your heart. Or what you may be going through just now. But I would be surprised. If either just now or at some point in your life. There has not been a desert period. Nobody, no matter the amount of sympathy they may have for your situation. Nobody can bring water into that desert. Nobody can change the conditions of your desert. Only the Lord can do that. [37 : 42] Only the Lord can bring the fountains of water. Only the Lord can bring streams in the desert. Where they are breaking out. Because it is that which must be added in from outside.

He has to pour out his spirit upon you. He has to cause you to thirst. And to drink in his spirit and his truth. But the good news is he is ready to do so.

He is willing to do so. His vengeance is upon sin. But his desire of salvation is towards sinners. That is why he has come. He has come to save.

And he has come to bring streams in the desert. And water of life to those who are dry and thirsty and perishing. And if that is not you.

Then one day it will be. If you know however the refreshing and the blessing of God's spirit. Then you are on the highway. Keep going. Keep going.

[38 : 38] Because the ransom of the Lord shall return and come to Zion. And when people see you walking on that way. And they recognize that that way is different from their trudging through the sand in the desert.

Having a death bleed. Being sucked down to the sand. I wish we were on a highway like that. Then you can tell. This is how you get on the highway. This is the difference the Lord made in my life.

This is how he quenched my thirst.

This is the water of life he has given to me. Come on. Let me give you a hand up onto this highway. Walk with me. The ransomed of the Lord shall return. They will come back to the Lord.

They will come to Zion. With songs and everlasting joy upon their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness. And sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Have you not had your fill? Of sorrow and sighing? Have you not had your fill? Of being dry and thirsty and empty? The Lord has come that you might have life.

[39 : 37] And have it more abundantly. He has come to bring streams in the desert. Let us pray. Amen. Amen.

Amen.