

LENTEN WATER MEDITATIONS



By the Youth of the Diocese of Cape Town

Image Hannah Gilbert

The Sacredness of Water.

The Spirit hovered over the waters

Genesis 1:1-10

Water - the epitome of life – is one of the first tangible elements God made when creating the Earth. Water is the sustenance of all life. It brings growth and unity. All life needs water to grow just like when God unified the seas to bring forth land, it represents the unifying power of water. During Baptism when one is committing oneself to one's spiritual journey with God one is christened with holy water. We as the church community are unified throughout our entire religious journey during festivities, such as Easter and Christmas, through the sprinkling of blessed water. Water in its purest form is used in the most holy and sacred milestones in one's religious journey with God. It is the beginning and end of one's life; from the blessings at birth to the blessings when one passes on.

Chloe Kruger



Dew from the Mountain as the source of life

Psalm 133 speaks about unity among God's people. However, what does this psalm tell us about unity? The Psalmist opens up the Psalm by proclaiming how blessed and pleasant it is to live in unity. This tells us that living in unity with one another and with God is to live a holy life; unity sets us apart to serve God differently but together as one. Verse three compares this unity to the Dew of Hermon which flows down the mountain, Mount Hermon is one of the highest mountains in Israel, it receives plenty of rain and the mountain has many rivers that provide water to the communities at the foot of the mountain. The Psalmist is telling us that Unity gives us life, a life we should share with others, a life where we allow God to flow through us and to nourish others. In this time of drought, we are called to live in unity and to pray together for the blessing of rain, so our land may be nourished as the Holy Spirit nourishes us.

Jesse Pastor

The river of life

Rev 22:1-5

In this passage John gives an account of the heavenly state, which previously has been described as a city, the New Jerusalem. He describes it as paradise with the river of life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb.

It is worthy to note the quality of this river as it flows, it is pure and clear as crystal unlike our earthly rivers which are muddy and dirty. This river nourishes the trees which give fruit to those in need of it and its leaves heal the nations. We need to preserve and keep water clean as it refreshes, preserves and gives life. Water is a sacred entity, which even the heavenly dwelling needs in order to be healed, nourished and refreshed. Let us respect the sacredness of water to us as it is in heaven.

Siphe Nyaba

Jesus the Living Water

John 4:1-15

On a recent family trip to the Eastern Cape, we stopped at Beaufort West. The discovery of a well in Beaufort West by the Gift of the Givers was big news. The Samaritan woman at the well also received big news that day. She discovered the importance of the source of water and the life-giving gift of Jesus.

As we journey through Lent we are continually asked, 'What is the source of our water? What sustains us and keeps us alive?' And in our penitential giving, where we have no buckets and the wells are still deep, do we know that it is Jesus who says, 'Give Me a drink'?. Jesus, the gift of God, invites us during Lent to meet Him at the well over and over again. To discover like Beaufort West and the Samaritan woman, the font as a source of our faith, the gift of living water.

Kieran Meredith Groepe

Water and Spiritual Growth

Isaiah 44:1-5

God tells us to listen as we are his chosen people, he loves us and wants to bless us. When we listen, we allow God to work through us. God will pour water on the thirsty land. We need to get to that point where we rely fully on God - to admit that we are thirsty - and not on our own strength. Somethings in our lives must die for us to be fully filled by Gods spirit. Pray about what needs to be removed for God to pour spiritual water into your life. Once God moves, we will be blessed more than we can imagine.

I believe this year is the year for immense growth for our generation, we just need to avail ourselves and trust in God.

Lyle Meiring

The Baptism of Jesus

Matthew 3: 13-17

As I reflected on the Gospel reading with the theme, I remembered all the Bible stories about water one heard as a child, like Noah and the Ark, Moses and the Red Sea and so many others.

Jesus makes it so clear how sacred water is, we need to be reborn of water and the Spirit. Here we see Jesus being blessed by water and the Spirit – in his baptism we the see the Holy Trinity in full display ,as Jesus set the way for us to live.

So as we are going through a drought it becomes so much clearer why Jesus refers to himself as the Living Water. Just as the Earth needs water to produce food and life we as followers of Jesus need him to bring salvation and eternal life.

Avron Flowers

Drink from the wells of salvation

Isaiah 12:1-3

In this passage Isaiah is praising God because although God was angry with him, the Lord is still his strength and his song – providing and comforting him. Allowing Isaiah to joyfully drink from the fountain or well of salvation. How often do we do things that anger or upset God? Yet God still allows us to drink freely and joyfully from his wells of salvation. Although the water supply can dwindle in Cape Town – God’s wells of salvation will not run out. His life giving water is freely available to anyone who wants it Think about all the times God has comforted and provided for you even when you have been disobedient to him. Write it down and thank God for all these times.

Youth of St Luke’s, Diepriver

Scarcity

The Drought over the Land

1 Kings 18:1-6

It is said there was no rain "for the space of three years and six months" (James 5:17). Though Ahab might have at first ridiculed Elijah's announcement, yet when neither of these rains fell in their season, he was incensed against the prophet as the cause of the national judgment, and compelled him, with God's direction, to consult his safety in flight. This was six months after the king was told there would be neither dew nor rain, and from this period the three years in this passage are computed.

The king had remained obdurate and impenitent. Another opportunity was to be given him of repentance, and Elijah was sent in order to declare to him the cause of the national judgment, and to promise him, on condition of his removing it, the immediate blessing of rain. The question for us – from what do we need to repent?

Kagisho Phetlho

Drought because of disobedience

Deuteronomy 11:13-17

You shall Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. God had a covenant with the people of Israel. If they kept God's commandments then God would send rain. It was a privilege for the Israelites to have God's Laws they were blessed when they obeyed them. Brothers and Sisters when we refuse to obey the Lord life becomes and remains miserable. We need to treasure the precious gift of water and stop wasting it. In order to avoid Day Zero we must all work hard to share the message. But we do not need to be in a spirit of fear, for we believe that God will come to our aid. "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

Noxolo Siyothula

The Lord is on our side

Psalm 124: 4

“The waters would have carried us away”. With the ongoing drought we in the Western Cape are down to our last liters of water, but yet we have the minimum we need to survive, to drink, wash and prepare food. We can live.

As a young Christian male who has recently matriculated I face many challenges, being unemployed is one of the many trials. There are no jobs and to study is very expensive. But there is always hope in the Lord. I have a part-time job as a porter. I don't work that much but I am grateful for what God has provided.

I will survive with what God has given me.

I know that the Lord is on my side.

Gershwin Forbes

A time of famine.

Acts 11: 27-30

“Our drought is nothing compared to the great famine over all the world ”

Many people across the world are faced with many challenges greater than ours. Personally, I have also been in a place where I felt deserted, not just for months but years. I had to be dependent on myself for years not knowing whether I was coming or going. There was no sense of self-worth whatsoever. At times like these we are reminded of Jesus and his Lenten journey through the desert for forty days and forty nights. So in this time of drought think of Jesus’ time in the desert and how he experienced hunger and famine. What a sacrifice he made for us – and what is he calling us to do?

Veronique Ruiters

I was thirsty and you gave me a drink

Matthew 25:31-46

When you are doing good, then good things come your way, like a cold glass of water on a hot day. On the other hand, doing bad makes life difficult, bad things happen. It's like going a day without water. Doing bad makes the situation worse. The good will save water they will find ways to save water. The bad will disobey and waste water, making the situation worse. I have learnt when someone is hungry, thirsty, bare, sick or alone you must lend a helping hand. I have on many occasions helped someone and when I have done good for my brothers and sisters the Lord has done good for me... I was thirsty and he gave me water. Lord gave us a water and water is as living source and using it wisely, the Lord will provide.

Nadine Sebo

I brought you into a fertile land, but you made my inheritance detestable

Jeremiah 2:4-7

God created everything in this world out of pure, genuine love so that we as humans could live a comfortable life and praise him here on earth. But we as humans have lost the connection with God and made Him angry. We have ruined the fruitful land he has made for us. Today we are faced with many environmental challenges: droughts, deforestation and pollution. We indeed have messed up the land. As we pray in this Lenten season we are faced with drought. Water is the Basic need of life and God made enough for thousands of generations but we have decided to be selfish and use it without care.

This Lenten season let us reconnect with our father God. Let us restore the environment. Save water, recycle and educate the people in our surrounding- tell them that God loves them

Thandile Gqoloza

God can give and take away rain

Deuteronomy 11: 13-14

God is the ultimate provider and we are in a covenant relationship with Him. God has the power to give and take away. God alone can provide in any season. The passage requires us to be obedient to God because there are obvious blessings for those who obey him. In this case the blessing is rain. We see that as a result of rain the livelihood of people is sustained. For example there will be food and jobs. Our love for God is reflected in how we obey what He commands. Water is a resource we need to look after and preserve, especially in Cape Town. This passage challenges us to love God through actions of obedience and how we care for this natural resource. Listen and love God and he will take charge. Our lives need to reflect God. When we are obedient to Him, He will fulfil his covenant blessing toward us.

Youth of St Luke's, Diepriver

Fertile land becomes salty

Psalm 107: 33-34:

When you look at pictures or watch movies set in the desert, you just see dry, sandy land with no trees or vegetation. Nothing can grow and survive in the desert except the hardiest of plants and animals. In this passage it speaks about how God can change rivers into deserts and fertile land into salty wastelands. It shows the contrasting power of God – He can give and take away. The verse goes on to say that He does this because of the “wickedness of those who live there”. Are we the wicked people? Have we turned from God and allowed our luscious land to become salty? Reflect on the ways you have been greedy or wasteful in your life. Repent of this and ask God to turn the deserts in your life into luscious land again.

Youth of St Luke's, Diepriver

Sustainability

Elisha parts the water

2 Kings 2:9-14

We all know that we can't do without water. Water gives life, water symbolizes Christ as we as Christians cannot truly live without him. Water we use for many things like to quench our thirst and to clean, similarly Christ quenches our thirst and washes us clean from all our wrong doings.

Elisha saw Elijah as his role model and mentor like for us as Christians, Christ is that role model and mentor and we need to strive to become like him. We are baptized by water to become part of the family of Christ. Like Elisha we need to learn from our spiritual leaders, but also desire a double portion of the Spirit. To do this we need to be cleansed by spiritual water and filled with the Spirit.

Sheila-Ann Bennett

God's brings life where it appears there is death

Psalm 90

This is the prayer of Moses, one of God's disciples. He reveals that God existed before there were all other things. He created heaven and earth, created humankind - who through the temptation of the snake - was destined to die. But when we die, God is able to reveal himself, since after a person has fallen spiritually God is able to return people to him. This is like a plant that grows, which is green and fine, but at times it becomes dry seems dead, but when rain falls it is restored to its former beauty and becomes green once again. Sometimes when evil comes to us, we forget that God still has time to deliver us; God's loving-kindness lasts forever, for he does never leaves us, he is always there even in the time of evil. In our times of trouble God prepares us to see His salvation.

Siyanda Dyayiva

It is more blessed to give than to receive

Acts 20:35

Christianity is based on serving more than anything because God gave His only begotten son as a sacrifice for our sins. Serving means; to do or act on behalf of someone or something else that is serving.

At times we need to be selfless and stop asking for favors all the time and be the ones to provide the service, we should serve others just like the way served us and we should serve to glorify God more than anything. At this time of water shortage we all need to save, because in this way we are serving our neighbour. God gave us authority over everything on earth and we should serve God's nature, we should nurture it and care for our water sources into the future.

Jackson Tyodi

God provides rain in season

Psalm 147:8 -11

The psalmist steps back and looks at nature as a reflection of God's perfect work. Reflecting on the on nature's magnificence he realizes that it is not just beautiful to look at, but because it reflects the beauty of God being in full control.

This means the grass is green because it is nourished by the rain that comes from the clouds. The clouds cover because God has commanded them to do so, and so the rain that nourishes creation is a gift from God. The Psalmist teaches us about who we are, our identity, where it comes from, and the fact that it we are beautiful when we reflect God. When we become who we truly are, as God has designed us to be, we reflect God's beautiful creation. This reading about the beauty of creation challenges us to realise who we are, what nourishes us and where it comes from. We can only be the best of who we are when we take ownership of what God has created us to be , when we are nourished by what comes from God and when we realises the path that God created for us to walk on.

Ncumisa Magadla

Can the idols of the nation bring rain?

Jeremiah 14:22

What the drought teaches us is to look to God when we are in trouble. The government or city can deliver water but they cannot make rain. Whatever troubles or adversities you are facing remember that God, and God alone is in control and has the power to exert authority over that situation. Where other gods fall short our God is strong and powerful. We are so quick to run to him when we have exhausted all other options which we feel are available and often try to deal with these issues ourselves. We need to trust him more and go to him first, not only in troubling times but also in times of joy and prosperity, because in him we find the answers and solutions to all our troubles.

Matthew Louw

Be shepherds of the church of God

Acts 20:25-37

Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders (Acts 20:25-37) is a rich vein which has certainly made a huge impression on me with regards to the obligations of a Christian. The call to repentance towards God and faith towards Jesus Christ is evident in the farewell remarks however what stroked me is the call to stewardship which Paul reminds us to take heed of.

Paul vehemently urges us to "Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood" v28. Thus as shepherds we are urged to encourage one another into ensuring that we "serve, guard and protect" (Gen. 2:15) the entire creation of God. One of such ways is to ensure that as God's representatives on earth, we save water since it is not only a resource in crisis in the Western Cape but also a very sacred resource to us as Christians.

Tsobotsi Rhine Phillip Koloti

Sanitation and health

The cleansing power of the river

2 Kings 5: 9 – 14

Naaman comes to Elisha to ask for his help because of his leprosy which is a horrible disease. Elisha asks him to bathe in the river Jordan so that he may be cleansed. Naaman is too proud and refuses to listen to Elisha. His pride and disobedience almost leads to his death.

God calls us to be obedient and to be good stewards of his creation. Water is important and the lack thereof can lead to many sicknesses. If we run out of water in Cape Town many people will get sick. I pray that like Naaman we have a change of heart and that we become obedient to God as we preserve water and be the good stewards he calls us to be. We are called to be keepers of the earth and to look after it.

Chloé Gordon

Wash me and I shall be clean

Psalm 51

David asked God to clean him, to wash him so that he can be pure and whole again. He asks God to create within him a new heart, with new understanding, with new living - a heart that is in right standing with him. We also need to be restored and to be washed, to be made right again so that we may be clean and acceptable to God. God's forgiveness will never run out.

The drought in the Western Cape allows for each person to use 87l of water per day. The shortage of water to clean ourselves increases daily and has reached a critical level because there is no rain. We thank God that David realizes there is no shortage to God's forgiveness. So as we ask God to wash us may we start behaving differently in the way we treat his creation and save water.

Phoebe Jones

I have baptized you with water

Mark 1: 1- 8

John prepares the way for Jesus. We are God's disciples also and God calls us prepare the way for others. We use water for baptism ceremonies. Water is an important symbol of Christ's salvation, through baptism we are united to Christ in his death and resurrection. For us as Christians, water is sacred and a symbol of life. Water plays an important part in our daily lives and we shouldn't waste it. For God also says that he is the living water. Water is also one of our basic needed to survive. In our daily lives it keeps us cleansed from the inside of our bodies. People use water as a source to look after God's creation.

Lyle Wessels

I will sprinkle clean water upon you

Ezekiel 36:24-30

Growing up in a wendy house we never had the luxury of opening a tap to wash your face or clean your teeth. Having to bath in a bucket and having to fill 20l buckets for water, I used to be very sad being with my friends talking about their homes I was always so frustrated at our living arrangements and in comparison would feel unloved and unworthy. So when I look back, I thank God for having a plan on our lives. For preparing us for our blessings as well as the current situation that we are facing.

So therefore I believe that God has showed us how to save water. How to appreciate what we have now. Let us be grateful for water, the gift of God and believe in the promises of God, for he stands on his word. Let us trust the word of God.

Chleo Terry Fataar

Are you wasting water?

Mark 7:1-8:

Given the water restrictions we have we need to ask ourselves? Do we still use water in a wasteful manner? Here we see Christ's dispute with the scribes and Pharisees about eating with unwashed hands.

The Pharisees asked why the disciples did not wash their hands according to the traditions of the elders (Mark 7:5). Jesus told them that they had rejected the commandment of God in order to keep their own tradition (Mark 7:6-9). Do you remember the old saying: "Cleanliness is next to godliness" Jesus' response to the Pharisee was not an instruction to stop washing hands but a warning to them not to miss the point in regard to righteousness. Sometimes traditions promote self-righteousness and obscure the real faith. Think about things in your life that have become meaningless rituals and find the link to God in what you are doing.

Youth of St Luke's Diepriver

Sea and River Creatures

God calls the fishermen to follow him

Mark 1:16 - 20

Jesus calls the fishermen to follow him. God had provided them with a living from the sea that He created. He challenges them to leave what they know and to get out of their comfort zone. For these disciples to follow Jesus, they have to show willingness to allow their identities to be known in relation to Jesus. There are many changes taking place now to the climate and to our oceans, these will affect jobs. The fear of drought is taking us out of our comfort zones. The willingness of the disciples teaches us to follow Jesus in our lives. We are being called to ground our identities in Christ. This challenges us to resist the temptation to make our work the defining element of our sense of who we are. Whatever the future holds, our identity is that we are followers of Christ.

Vusa Ncanywa

Life flourishes in the rivers

Ezekiel 47: 6-12

God takes the prophet Ezekiel to the riverbank and instructs him to look at the stream flowing from the restored temple. He is told that wherever the stream flows it will bring life. As the stream flows it gives life to all kinds of animals and fish, it makes the water of the Dead Sea fresh. We are called to be streams bringing living water into our communities, to bring life where there is death. What an image of hope as we see the dams running dry. God's creation is groaning (Rom 8:22) and water brings life and a continuous flow of healthiness and freshness. Let us therefore keep on encouraging each other to appreciate the wonderful resource of the water of life and to bring hope into our communities.

Uyanda Lujabe

From drought to plenty

Jeremiah 2:4-7

The story of Israel is a story of drought and plenty. They were led through the drought in the desert. When people cry out to God is when there is a failure in the crops and the cattle die, from drought or excessive rains. Personal drought can be our times of spiritual drought when we lose faith or hope, and feel that we have sold our soul and we cry to God. Times of drought are followed by times of plenty – and this is when the people of Israel forgot God and defiled the land.

Concerning plenty – things are going my way , I passed my exams and am enjoying a casual job. I thank God for pulling me through difficult situations but let me not forget that God was with me when I was passing through a barren land. Prevention is better than cure, we cannot prevent times of drought, but we can certainly make provisions against it.

Jade Adams

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By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until
you return to the ground, since from it you were
taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return



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