

The Water of Life



SABBATH—APRIL 17

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Genesis 2:10; Isaiah 40:31; Matthew 9:2–7; John 4:1–26; John 9:1–11; Romans 6:1–6.

MEMORY VERSE: “ ‘But anyone who drinks the water I give him will never be thirsty. In fact, the water I give him will become a spring of water in him. It will flow up into eternal [forever; without end] life’ ” (John 4:14, NIV).

IT IS SURPRISING HOW OUR SENSES CAN FOOL US. The earth is spinning on its axis¹ at about a thousand miles per hour. It is traveling around the sun at about 18 miles per second. The earth is moving, but we feel as if we are not moving at all. Things like tables, chairs, rocks, and people may appear solid to our senses, but they are mostly empty space. At any time, billions of tiny specks of energy from the sun are swimming through our bodies, but we do not feel or sense any of them. Our human bodies may look solid, but they are made mostly of water. Water? Yes, we are truly aquatic² beings (men, women, and children), in the sense that our bodies are made up of about 60 percent water. Believe it or not, our brains are about 85 percent water. Even our hard bones are about 10 to 15 percent water.

Full of wonder and mystery, water is important for all physical life. Without it, we could not live. This week we will study how water is important for the spirit as well as the body.

To view and/or download a Hope Channel show on this week's lesson, visit www.lifesbeat.org.

1. axis—an imaginary line that passes through the earth. The earth turns around this line.

2. aquatic—living or found in or near water; having to do with water.

SUNDAY—APRIL 18**THE LIVING WATER (John 4:1–26)**

What are the different ways water is used in the story in John 4:1–26? What do the different kinds of water mean? What message is there from this story for us today?

Jesus met a woman in Samaria who had come to draw (receive) water at Jacob's well. He asked for a drink. In the ongoing conversation, Jesus told the woman He could give her water that would take away her thirst forever. Jesus spoke of Himself as the "Living Water." This idea suggests Jesus' ability to satisfy the need for peace, joy, freedom from guilt, forgiveness, and a sense of oneness with God. Christians find such an answer in Jesus Christ.

It is wonderful that Jesus has offered all of us an opportunity (chance) to come and unite (join together as



Jesus is the Living Water.

one) with Him in service. His offer is still good today. This is because He never changes. Many have found their restlessness, unsure feelings, and hopelessness go away when they receive Jesus' mercy, love, and acceptance.

God has promised us plenty of spiritual water, as long as we seek Him. In Revelation 22:17, Jesus invites us all to take the Water of Life freely. We can experience plenty of the Holy Spirit in our lives as long as we are close to Jesus Christ, the Fountain (Spring) of Life. In His love, Jesus invites everyone to drink freely of the Water of Life (John 4:13, 14). His invitation to receive this Living Water forever is given to all of us. God gave the children of Israel water from the rock. In the same way Jesus gives this Water of Life (1 Corinthians 10:1–4) to us today.

It does not matter who we are. It does not matter what our past has been. It does not matter what our mistakes are. It does not even matter what our present situation is. The offer of this Living Water is for us. We are told to drink freely of it. It is offered to us through the grace³ of Christ.

No question, Jesus offers all of us this Living Water. What has your own experience with this Water been? How have you known for yourself the help and promises found in it? Are you taking of it freely? Or are you holding yourself back? If you are holding back, ask yourself why.

3. grace—God's gift of forgiveness and mercy (kindness) that He freely gives us to take away our sins.

You might think you get gains from holding back. But how could these gains possibly compare⁴ to the promises offered to us in Jesus?

MONDAY—APRIL 19

THE WATERS OF BAPTISM⁵ (Romans 6:1–6)

Read Acts 8:35–39. Here Philip preached the gospel⁶ message to the eunuch.⁷ Philip told the eunuch the good news of Jesus. The eunuch accepted Jesus Christ as the Son of God. When they saw water, he asked Philip, “What stops me from being baptized?” He then was baptized by Philip, and he went out filled with joy.

There is no miracle⁸ in the water itself. Water is a symbol⁹ of cleansing (making clean and pure). It is the gift of the Spirit that changes the life. Baptism is a public announcement that a person has accepted Jesus. Read John 3:5–8. Jesus said to Nicodemus, “ ‘No one can enter God’s kingdom without being born through water and the Holy Spirit’ ” (John 3:5, NIV).

According to Romans 6:1–6, what takes place when someone has been baptized underwater?

Baptism underwater shows true conversion¹⁰ and cleansing of one’s life. The New Testament speaks of baptism underwater many times. This shows that baptism is very important in our Christian experience. “ ‘All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized¹¹ in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’ ” (Acts 2:38, NIV).

When we are saved, we are spiritually baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27). We also are received into His body, the church (1 Corinthians 12:13). In the Bible, baptism underwater symbolizes¹² inner cleansing (Ephesians 5:25, 26) and spiritual rebirth (John 3:5). Both of them are important themes (ideas; topics) of salvation.¹³

Many people think baptism is not important. But for many in the world, the act requires great courage. In a few countries, baptism can lead to sepa-

4. compare—to show how two or more things are the same.

5. baptism—when a person is put completely underwater and brought back up out of it. This means that Jesus has forgiven this person’s sins and has given him or her new life.

6. gospel—the good news that Jesus forgives us for our sins; the good news about salvation.

7. eunuch—a servant whose testes (male sex organs) have been removed so that he cannot have children or feel sexual desire when working around women.

8. miracle—an extraordinary (amazing; great) event believed to be a sign of the power of God. Jesus’ raising Lazarus from the dead is an example of a miracle.

9. symbol—an object, mark, sign, or person that stands for, or means the same thing as, another object, idea, or thing.

10. conversion—the process in which a person accepts Jesus Christ and decides to change his or her life accordingly.

11. baptized—to be put completely under water and brought back up out of it. This shows that Jesus has forgiven this person’s sins and has given him or her new life.

12. symbolizes—to make an object, mark, sign, or person stand for or represent another object, idea, or some other thing.

13. salvation—God’s plan for saving sinners from eternal (without end) death; the gift of eternal life; being saved.

ration from a spouse, family, and community¹⁴ to prison or even to death.

Among Jesus' last words on earth were these: " 'Anyone who believes and is baptized will be saved. But anyone who does not believe will be punished' " (Mark 16:16, NIV). Think about that for a moment. Jesus' very last call is for people to believe in Him. This also includes a call to be baptized. If Jesus says it, we cannot ignore the importance of baptism.

How real are Paul's words in Romans 6:1–6 in your experience? How has your "newness of life" (verse 4, NKJV) in Christ changed you? What have you been saved from? In what areas do you still need to change? How can you better cooperate with the Lord? He is the one who offers to wash away your sins.

TUESDAY—APRIL 20

THE USES OF WATER (Genesis 2:10)

Genesis 2:10 shows that there was water for God's creatures (animals and people) in the Garden of Eden, even before sin came. What

does this fact suggest?

As living things, we all need air, water, and food to have life (Genesis 1:29). The Garden of Eden had a beautiful garden and also a river that divided into four other rivers, Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates. God gave water to protect the lives of His created beings.

As God's created beings, we need water in order to survive (live). In fact, every body cell, tissue,¹⁵ and organ¹⁶ needs water so that it may work. Water helps to control body temperature, carries food and oxygen to the cells, removes waste, prevents constipation,¹⁷ moistens tissues, cushions joints,¹⁸ and keeps blood flowing throughout the body. We need to drink more water than our thirst requires. Many liquids, such as water, milk, and fruit and vegetable juices, keep our bodies filled with water. But alcohol and caffeinated¹⁹ beverages may increase fluid (water) loss, which may be harmful.

Pure water is much better than many other drinks. Start your day with one or two glasses of water and continue drinking water between meals to make sure that your body is filled with water.

14. community—a group of people living, working, or worshiping together.

15. tissue—the material that forms the parts of a plant or animal.

16. organ—a part of the body (such as the heart or liver) that has a special function (job).

17. constipation—difficulty in having regular bowel movements.

18. joints—places in the body where the bones fit together and connect to each other.

19. caffeinated—containing caffeine (a substance that is found especially in coffee and tea that makes you feel more awake).



Pure water is better than many other drinks.

Water has other healthful duties too. Hand washing may reduce infection²⁰ from person to person. Many infectious²¹ diseases can be prevented (stopped) by hand washing, especially before eating. Daily bathing removes dirt, which can lead to disease too.

What is the point in Leviticus 11:40; Leviticus 13:6, 34, 53, 54; and Leviticus 15:3–13?

Much discussion has been going on about the purpose behind these cleansing services in the Old Testament. Many argue that these are purely religious services that have nothing to do with health. In some cases that point seems clearer than in others (such as when the priests had to wash their hands and feet before going into the tabernacle [read Exodus 30:20, 21]). But, with what we

know today about germs²² and cleanliness, the Lord could have required these rules for health purposes, even if the Israelites themselves had no idea of germ theory.²³

Whatever the facts are, today we know that using water to keep ourselves clean gives us wonderful advantages²⁴ for good health.

WEDNESDAY—APRIL 21

THE POWER OF WATER (Isaiah 40:31)

Think deeply about Isaiah 40:31. What promises can you take from this verse for yourself? How can you use it in your life?

A historic (first of its kind) experiment was being done by Dr. Pitts at Harvard University. He had athletes walking on a treadmill at three and a half miles per hour in a hot environment. They were encouraged to consume (drink) as much water as they lost in their sweat. At the end of the experiment, the athletes felt as if they could continue walking—seven hours later!—G. C. Pitts, R. E. Johnson, F. C. Conzolazio, “Work in the Heat as Affected by Intake of Water, Salt, and Glucose,” *American Journal of Physiology* 142:253, 1944. The same athletes, without water during the experiment on another day, were tired within three and a half hours.

20. infection—a disease caused by germs (very small living things that cause disease) that enter the body.

21. infectious—capable of being easily spread to other people.

22. germs—very small living things that cause disease.

23. theory—an idea or set of ideas that is intended (meant) to explain facts or events.

24. advantages—things, events, or conditions (the way things are; a state of being) that can help a person gain what he or she wants.

The message is clear. Water can give us power and energy, especially when we are doing hard work. But not enough water may result in a person feeling dehydrated.²⁵ This leads to being tired much more quickly than if we were drinking enough water. Also, not enough water can prevent (stop) our bodies from working right. The body may stubbornly continue to work, but not enough water will surely lead to poor health.

It is possible that plenty of water may limit some symptoms such as headaches. This will lessen the need for headache medicine, which can cause bad side effects if used too often. As most athletes know, during long and hard exercise, water requirements increase greatly.

But it is possible to drink too much water. Drinking too much water leads to being “drunk” with water. The right amount of water depends upon many things, such as temperature, body size, and how kidneys work. But it should be enough to have pale or clear urine in normal situations. In most cases people should make an effort to drink at least six to eight (at least 250 mL per glass) glasses of water per day. They should drink more when doing hard work in heat.

How much water are you drinking each day? Make a thoughtful choice to keep track of how much water you are drinking. If you are not getting enough, what is holding

you back from doing something so simple and that holds so many advantages (profits) for you?



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THURSDAY—APRIL 22

WATER AS THERAPY²⁶ (John 9:11)

Read John 9:1–11 for the story of Jesus’ healing the man who had been blind from birth. What makes this healing miracle different from some of the others Jesus did? For example, read Matthew 8:8–13; Matthew 9:2–7; and Luke 8:46, 47? What possible meaning, if any, could be found in this difference?

It is important that water be used for both the inside and the outside of the body to be clean. Many people have a hard time getting pure, clean water. Impure (dirty) water requires either chemical treatment or boiling to make it safe for drinking and home use.

25. dehydrated—to lose too much water.

26. therapy—the treatment of illness of the mind or body.

Water is good for use both outside and inside the body. It may be used in treatments known as hydrotherapy.²⁷ The careful use of hot and cold wet towels for hydrotherapy may bring relief to many conditions. Care should be used in cases of poor circulation,²⁸ persons with diabetes,²⁹ or illnesses of the nervous system.³⁰ It could be profitable for you to get proper training in the use of hydrotherapy.

“But many people have never learned by experience the advantages of the proper use of water. And they are afraid of it. Water treatments are not fully understood as they should be. To use them skillfully requires work that many are unwilling to do. But none should feel excused for not knowing much about this subject. There are many ways in which water can be used to lessen pain and stop disease. All people should become knowledgeable in its use in simple home treatments. Mothers should know how to care for their families in both health and sickness.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Ministry*³¹ of *Healing*, page 237.

How careful are you with your health habits? How could you be taking better care of yourself now? Why wait until your bad habits make you sick? How much better it would be to start following good



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health principles (rules) now and prevent (stop) disease instead of going through the trouble of trying to be cured.

FRIDAY—APRIL 23

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Read Ellen G. White, “Beverages [Drinks],” pages 419, 420, in *Counsels [Advice] on Diet and Foods*; “Frequent [Often] Bathing,” page 104, in *Counsels on Health*.

“Those who treat the sick should move forward in their important work while depending upon God for His blessing. He has in mercy encouraged us to use pure air, cleanliness [being clean], healthful diet, proper periods of work and rest, and the use of water.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, page 303.

27. hydrotherapy—the use of water in the treatment of disease or injury.

28. circulation—the movement of blood through the body.

29. diabetes—a serious disease in which the body cannot properly control the amount of sugar in the blood because it does not have enough insulin (a substance that the body makes and uses to turn sugar into energy).

30. nervous system—the system of nerves in your body that sends messages for controlling movement and feeling between the brain and other parts of the body.

31. ministry—work done for God in preaching and caring for the spiritual needs of people.

“Moses struck the rock. Out of it flowed the water for the thirsty people to drink. That rock was a symbol of Jesus’ death which would cause living streams of salvation to flow to all who are thirsty for it. Christ’s words were the water of life. There in the presence of the crowd of people Jesus set Himself apart to be struck on the cross so that the water of life might flow to the world. In smiting [striking] Christ, Satan thought to destroy the Prince of life. But from the smitten [struck] rock there flowed living water. As Jesus spoke to the people, their hearts thrilled with a strange wonder. And many were ready to announce, with the woman of Samaria, ‘Give me this water. Then I will never be thirsty.’ John 4:15.”—Adapted from Ellen G. White, *The Desire of Ages*, page 454.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- 1 In some parts of the world, people can walk into a grocery store and find about forty different kinds of bottled water. In other parts of the world, people struggle to find enough clean water to drink. What can we do to help those who do not have enough water for life’s basic needs? What is the water situation where you live? How can we improve the management of water in our communities?
- 2 If you can reach a health professional or someone who knows about the topic of water, ask him or her to come to class and spend some time giving more details about the helpful uses of water. Ask him or her, too, about the daily things we can do to get as many healthful uses as possible from water.
- 3 Jesus tells us to come and drink freely of the Water of Life (Revelation 22:17). What does that mean? How do we do that? What requirements are necessary for us to drink of this water?