

Messages from the Gates of Jerusalem  
#20 - Fountain Gate - Part IV - An Abiding Branch > Gibborim

After our obedience at the Dung Gate, the filling of the Holy Spirit empowers us for the Spirit-Filled life. At the Fountain Gate we find the True and Living Water and the fruitfulness of our lives that comes from Jesus in us through the power of the Holy Spirit. "You are given the gift of the Holy Spirit from Christ. When you RECEIVE it, The Holy Spirit flows out in love, peace and joy, radiating *from* you. There is no other way to find these resources and live a joyful, fulfilled life." The Holy Spirit's power allows you to live above your circumstances. Entrance at this gate fosters a deeper, more powerful walk with God. Truth: The Holy Spirit will produce FRUIT in those who are yielded to Him.

A number of Biblical places of importance, associated with the Fountain Gate represent 7 blessings of being baptized in the Spirit and subsequent fillings of the Holy Spirit. Neh. 3:15-16 Shallun the son of Col-Hozeh, leader of the district of Mizpah, repaired the Fountain Gate; he built it, covered it, hung its doors with its bolts and bars, and repaired the wall of the Pool of Shelah by the King's Garden, as far as the stairs that go down from the City of David. <sup>16</sup> After him Nehemiah the son of Azbuk, leader of half the district of Beth Zur, made repairs as far as *the place* in front of the tombs of David, to the man-made pool, and as far as the House of the Mighty.

2. KING'S GARDEN -A place of fruitfulness for the king to partake of.

The one place in Jerusalem where it is possible for gardens to flourish all year is the lower part of the Kidron valley which is watered by the overflow from the Pool of Siloam (Rivers of Living Water).

Isa. 58:11The LORD will guide you continually, and satisfy your soul in drought, and strengthen your bones;

You shall be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.

John 15:1-8 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit He takes away; and every *branch* that bears fruit He prunes, that it may bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

<sup>4</sup> Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in Me. "*I am the vine, you are the branches.*

He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

If anyone does not abide in Me, he is cast out as a branch and is withered; and they gather them and throw *them* into the fire, and they are burned. (Isa.5:1-6; I Cor. 3:13-15) <sup>7</sup>If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Truth: If I live my life as an obedient branch, the fullness of Jesus Christ and the Rivers of Living Water will flow in me and through me.

This is the place of perfect rest and peace, joy and strength.

## Life As A Branch:

1. The branch grows out of the Vine.
2. It lives, grows and will bear fruit.
3. It has no responsibility except to receive sap and nourishment from the root and the stem.

Problem: When I begin "to do the work," I can cut myself off from the vine.

Truth: The work (trying to bear fruit) separates me from Him when I am not humble and yielded. I can get so busy I don't have time for the relationship.

## Characteristics of "The Branch Life"

### 1. Absolute Dependence

- a. The branch has nothing; it depends on the vine for everything.
- b. I am promised the Spirit-filled Life if I depend absolutely on God in ALL things.

Consider: The vine has to do the work. The branch enjoys the fruit of the vine.

Question: What does the Vine do?

- (1. The vine sends its roots out into the soil and hunts under the ground for nourishment and drinks in the moisture.
- (2. Add fertilizer to the soil. The roots turn the moisture and fertilizer into that special sap which makes the fruit that is borne.
- (3. The Branch just has to receive the sap from the Vine. The sap will turn into fruit.  
(Ex: A vine at Hampton Court, London > Bore a thousand bunches of grapes.)

Truth: Christ wants me to realize that when I have to teach, visit the sick, etc., that the responsibility of the work is on Christ. He fulfills the trust of my dependence by the power of the Holy Spirit to work in me and through me.

c. If I am something, then God is not everything. When I become nothing, God can become ALL. The fullness of Jesus Christ can be revealed fully in me.

Consider: Someone has said that the seraphim and cherubim are flames of fire because they know they are nothing, and they allow God to put His fullness, His glory and His brightness into them.

Concluding Thought: Absolute dependence on God is the SECRET of all power in our life.

### 2. Deep Restfulness

Truth: With all MY effort and hurry in the Lord's work, I will never prosper.

Thoughts of a Branch: Since I have been in the vine, all I have done is rest in the vine.

In the spring, the vine began to pour its sap into me and to give the bud and leaf. When summer came, I had no care. In the terrible heat, I trusted the vine to bring moisture to keep me fresh. In the time of harvest, when the owner came to pluck the grapes, I didn't fret. If there was anything in the grapes not good, the owner never blamed the branch. The blame was on the vine.

Secret: A true branch of Christ will rest in Him and let Him bear the responsibility.

Question: Won't I become lazy and slothful? NO! The closer your relationship with Christ, the more of the spirit of His zeal and love will be made manifest in you.

Result: He will impart His love in your heart with which you can love people.

"Christ can give you a "fountain of love" so that you cannot help loving the most wretched, most ungrateful, and those who weary you."

3. Much Fruitfulness> John 15:8 Herein is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit.

Truth: Unless I am filled with the sap of Jesus Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit, I cannot bear much fruit.

Consider: There is a great deal of preaching, teaching, visiting, and a great deal of earnest effort. But there is not much manifestation of the power of God in it.

Question: What is lacking? Close connection with Jesus Christ

Warning: DO NOT confuse work and fruit. There is a great deal of "work" for Christ that is not His fruit. Do not seek for work only.

Fruit-bearing is the very life, power, spirit and love within the heart of Jesus Christ.

Prayer: Lord Jesus, I want nothing less than the sap that flows through You and nothing less than the Spirit of Your divine life. Let Your Spirit flow through me in all my work for you.

Question: Who is the Sap? The Holy Spirit - The life of the branch is a life of much fruit.

4. Close Communion What is the branch to do? ABIDE Close, personal communion with Christ is an absolute necessity for daily life. Take time to be alone with Jesus. A great HINDRANCE to the Christian life is the lack of an abiding, growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Truth: I must be willing to sacrifice time for the relationship. I need to give Him time to work in me and keep up the connection between Him and me.

5. Absolute Surrender

Listen to the branch: Have you anything to do except bear grapes? No, nothing.

What is your relationship to the vine? I am utterly given up to the vine. at its disposal

Example: Jesus Christ gave up His life to do nothing but seek the Father's pleasure and depend on the Father absolutely and entirely.

Truth: I am to do nothing but seek the pleasure of Christ. He came to breathe His own Spirit into me. My highest blessing is to live entirely for Him.

Prayer: Lord, is there anything in me that is not according to Your will?

Question: Is this Spirit-filled Life really possible in a Christian?

John 10:10 I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

Col. 2:9-10 For in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, and in Him you are made full, who is the head of all principality and power.

Consider: Whoever has Christ's life in any measure may have it in its fullness.

The Scope of Christ's Work in 2 Proclamations:

1. John 1:29 Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

2. John 1:33 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.

As a Spirit-Filled believer through the power of the Holy Spirit, I can be a Mighty One - Gibborim - for the Lord Jesus Christ.

A cartoon in *Leadership* (Summer, 1988, p. 81) poked fun at the low level of commitment required in many modern churches. It pictured a church building with a sign in front which read, "The LITE CHURCH: 24% fewer commitments, home of the 7.5% tithe, 15 minute sermons, 45 minute worship services; we have only 8 commandments--your choice. We use just 3 spiritual laws and have an 800 year millennium. Everything you've wanted in a church ... and less!"

When David Livingstone, the missionary pioneer, was working in Africa, some friends wrote: "We would like to send other men to you. Have you found a good road into your area yet?" Livingstone wrote back: "If you have men who will only come if they know there is a good road, I don't want them. I want men who will come if there is no road at all." (In *Reader's Digest* [8/89], p. 143.)

Consider: When God has done a significant work, He has done it through a band of committed people - His remnant. God doesn't work through the lukewarm, but through those who are fervent in their love for Christ and His kingdom.

King David depended upon God, but he also relied on at least 30 special soldiers, "Mighty Men" that God raised up in the life of King David. They were mighty in valor, in faith, and the power of God. They were not afraid to risk and to sacrifice. They offered their lives on the altar of the king. Why? They loved the King.

II Samuel 23 records the last words of King David as he reflects over his life. Included in his reflection is an incident (from I Sam. 22) when he escaped from Saul's men and sought refuge in the cave at Adullam.

David is in this time from the anointing and being chosen to be King until he would assume the throne. During this time David is being disciplined and trained of God to be the man He desires him to be. Note: You are in training to reign with Jesus Christ in His Kingdom. He was soon joined by 400 men which would increase to 600.

I Samuel 22:1-2 There were three classes of men who came to David in his rejection as King.

1. There were those who came in Distress - pain, grief, need - They were persecuted by Saul.
2. There were those who were in Debt and about to be sold into slavery.
3. There were those who were discontented and unhappy with what life had to offer. Many were resentful, bitter and hostile because they had been wronged and mistreated by Saul David trained them and worked with them until they became the best army in the history of Israel.

Note: They did not begin with the characteristics of powerful, mighty men.

These Mighty Men illustrate what our proper relationship should be with the Lord as his followers and soldiers.

In those days Honor came in doing exploits for the King.

The three Mighty Men that formed David's inner circle were Adino, Eleazar, and Shammah.

1. Adino, chief of the captains in David's army, was famous for slaying 800 enemy soldiers "at one time." (II Sam. 23:8)

- a. Did not give up when he was outnumbered; Man of courage
- b. Courage and strength came from God.

2. Eleazar - A man with a sword (II Sam. 8:9-10)

a. Eleazar, tribe of Benjamin, fought side by side with David against the Philistines.

While the rest of the Israelite army was retreating, he and David alone stood their ground.

- b. Faithfully stand with the Father when others forsake Him. Last man standing
- c. V. 10 He arose and attacked the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand stuck to the sword.
- d. The Lord honored the faith and courage of Eleazar and David by giving them a great victory. It was two men against an entire battalion, yet they were triumphant.

3. Shammah - He stood when others fled

II Sam. 23: 11-12 The Philistines had gathered together into a troop where there was a piece of ground full of lentils. So the people fled from the Philistines.<sup>12</sup> But he stationed himself in the middle of the field, defended it, and killed the Philistines. So the LORD brought about a great victory.

- a. He risked his life to defend a "Pea Patch," field of lentils and barley.
- b. Everyone else fled but he stood his ground and fought. Not affected by what everybody else did. He was going to do what was right.
- c. Why did he fight? That patch of beans belonged to the King. This land belonged to the Lord and was given to Israel to use to His glory.
- d. The enemy of his King was coming to rob and to plunder. (John 10:10) Shammah didn't want the Philistines to control what belong to the Lord. His Kings honor was at stake.
- e. The people needed the food.
- f. Shammah was used of the Lord to bring victory. His loyalty to God caused him to risk his life in defense of a barely field. Defend everything that rightfully belongs to the Father.

A Cup of Water for the King - II Sam. 23:13-17 Then three of the thirty chief men went down at harvest time (no rain -cisterns were empty) and came to David at the cave of Adullam. And the troop of Philistines encamped in the Valley of Rephaim.<sup>14</sup> David *was* then in the stronghold, and the garrison of the Philistines *was* then *in* Bethlehem.<sup>15</sup> And David said with longing, "Oh,that someone would give me a drink of the water from the well of Bethlehem, which *is* by the gate!"<sup>16</sup> So the three mighty men broke through the camp of the Philistines, drew water from the well of Bethlehem that *was* by the gate, and took it and brought *it* to David. Nevertheless he would not drink it, but poured it out to the LORD.

<sup>17</sup> And he said, "Far be it from me, O LORD, that I should do this! Is *this not* the blood of the men who went in *jeopardy of* their lives?" Therefore he would not drink it.

These things were done by the three mighty men.

Questions: Were they commanded by David to get the cup of water? NO

Were they compelled by duty to get the cup of water? NO

They loved their King more than their own lives. God has always had his few.

What was it that made them so mighty?

1. CLOSE to the King

They were close enough to hear David's whispered words: David had a craving and said, "Oh that someone would give me water to drink from the well of Bethlehem which is by the gate!"

Spiritual App: If I want to be a mighty one in the kingdom of God, I need to be close enough to my King to know His desires and hear His words. The most effective soldiers of Christ are the ones who form the closest personal relationships with their Lord.

Paul said in Phil. 3:8 that he gave up everything in life and considered it rubbish "in view of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord."

Spiritual App: I must "count all things to be loss" as I make knowing God my first priority.

God wants you to develop a close, intimate relationship with Him.

2. COMMITTED: They were committed enough to take David's wish as their command:

Not just lip service. They were so committed and enthusiastic in their service to David that they jumped to their feet and marched off to battle.

3. COURAGEOUS: Obey at any cost: The Philistines had established a "permanent military installation" within the walled city of Bethlehem. But in spite of the danger or consequences, they traveled twelve miles, broke through enemy lines, and came back with the water.

David's men were prepared to risk life and limb to please their king.

I Chron. 28:20 "Be strong and courageous...do not fear nor be dismayed, for the Lord, my God, is with you. He will not fail you nor forsake you..."

God is looking for those who are willing to be used for His glory- not for their own glory.

When we abide in Christ, we can be strong and courageous--just like David's mighty men.

These mighty men were a picture of the Spirit-filled believer.

The Times in which these men lived was:

A Time of Great Conflict. - The enemy was out to destroy

A Time of Great Courage. - The enemies' greatest weapon was fear.

A Time of Great Victory. - God defeated the enemy through these men.

Close enough to hear the whispered words of their King,

Committed enough to take his word as their command,

Courageous enough to obey at any cost!

Andrew Murray "Abide in Christ: so will you bear much fruit. Not a vine is planted but the owner thinks of the fruit, and the fruit only. Other trees may be planted for ornament, for the shade, for the wood-the vine only for the fruit. Of each vine the husbandman is continually asking how it can bring forth more fruit, much fruit. Believer! Abide in Christ in times of affliction, and you shall bring forth more fruit. The deeper experience of Christ's tenderness and the Father's love will urge you to live to His glory."

When David looked into the cup, he didn't see water; he saw the blood of the three men who had risked their lives to satisfy his desire. To drink that water would demean all his men and cheapen the brave deed of the three heroes. Instead, David turned the cave into a temple and poured the water out as a drink offering to the Lord. It was an act of dedication that symbolized a person's life poured out in the service of the Lord. The three men had given themselves as a sacrifice to the Lord to serve David.

