

## Water of Life

Turn to **Ezekiel 47** and let's read the first two verses. Ezekiel saw in a vision a river flowing from the door of the temple, past the altar and down to the sea.

Concerning this vision Yates wrote: *"The water of life is a favourite figure in the Old Testament. Desert areas need water that life may be possible. This stream which Ezekiel sees flowing from the temple makes its way toward the arid regions of Arabah. In an ever deepening stream it goes on its way to bring life and health and abundant fruit wherever it goes. It is the one remedy that is needed for mankind. Jesus Himself took that figure as a basis for His sermon to the woman at the well" (John 4:7-15).*

The "water / river of life" (the ever deepening stream of God's glory) is a striking figure of divine blessing, widespread yet incomplete, flowing out of the life-giving ministry of the Holy Spirit. Here, God dwells in the temple, and an ever increasing stream of His blessing goes forth to other places. But now, God dwells in our bodies (*1 Corinthians 6:19*), therefore, a stream of blessing should be flowing to others from you and I. When we are filled with the Holy Spirit, and His life *in us* touches other lives, something wonderful happens for God. What a challenge it is to meet the conditions that will produce such a great blessing!

The sacred river does bring life where ever it flows. But the glory (blessings) must break out in the church first. It is only when the glory of the Lord flows from **"underneath the threshold of the church door,"** and then out into the streets, that this prophecy can be fulfilled (*verse 1*). We at Cornerstone Church have been experiencing a phenomenal measure of God's glory. Profound, and yet distinct, blessings have been flowing in great measure. Hence, from underneath the threshold of our church doors, the **"water of life"** must flow freely into the streets of Esher, the local district and even into this nation. And note, according to this prophecy, the transformation of our land (the United Kingdom) will be solely due to God's presence.

God intends to supply the final answer to modern society's most perplexing problems through the outflow of the **"river of life"** – the Holy Spirit's ministry. As we read on you will see that even the dense salt waters of the Dead Sea shall be sweetened so that fish can live in it (*verses 8-10*). Therefore, even the "deadest" areas of our society can be transformed by the healing powers of the water of life.

Something deeply spiritual is happening. More and more of us are unwilling to settle for "that's enough!" We know there must be more! A warrior spirit has risen within us - a genuine urge to conquer more territory for God. We know that God has **"broken out"** here at Cornerstone. But we also know that God is after the great harvest of souls. Therefore, the gates of hell shall not prevail against His glorious church. God has got His eye on whole cities – whole regions to be swept into His Kingdom.

Now, more than ever, we should use our "legal right" under God to claim this district for the King by staking out our territory. In the past too many churches have been content to keep their faith contained within the four walls of their church buildings. But, the *river of life* has begun to flow freely from under the threshold. God has **"broken out"** like a torrent! And He is asking us to extend our faith beyond the boundaries of our congregational comfort zone (where we take refuge). God is stirring believers to meet the conditions that will allow His Spirit to transform this nation.

By faith, you must boldly step out into the water and be prepared to get wet. Without full immersion, you cannot be useful to God. It's **"the river"** that contains divine life, and also, the healing power needed to restore dead places. Let's now read **verses 3 to 12**.

Isn't it interesting that the river of God's presence, flowing from His sanctuary, actually grew deeper the further the prophet walked? Ezekiel finally ended up in the water that was over his head, where he was unable to touch the bottom. At this point, he was in fact without control! The deeper you get into the river the less control you have – but the more control He has! Notice also that the shallowest point is nearest the sanctuary – your comfort zone, a place of refuge.

Four times the river is measured at increments of 1,000 cubits, and the river rises to ankle depth; then to the knees, to the waist, and finally to a depth too deep to cross. The prophet was brought through the “waters” three times at exactly the same distances, but the fourth time it became **“a river that could not be crossed.”** Only then (verse 6) is he asked, **“Son of man, have you seen this?”**

Until you are prepared to get wet (swim in the deep), the Holy Spirit will not show you anything. You must first hand over control and trust in Him. This may be daunting, especially when the river is strong and the waters are deep, but it has to be done! Flowing with God takes guts and determination. You are not going to experience the healing power of the river of God unless you are strong and courageous. If you really want witness the river reaching the Dead Sea you must be soaked in His glory. Yes, you must have submerged yourself fully in the deep torrent of the river of life. Nothing less will suffice!

Furthermore, you will be able to observe a multitude of fish (souls) being gathered for the Kingdom (v. 10). God's presence transforms the dead environment where no fish were able to live into an environment of **“new life in Christ Jesus.”** The dead salty waters are healed, becoming fresh water to countless souls.

**Verse 11, “But its swamps and marshes will not be healed; they will be given over to salt.”**

Swamps and marshes are those areas of land near the mouth of a river, or in this case, they may be the waters that only come up to your ankles or knees. Implying that those who do not venture out into the deep may become part of a “dead” environment a place where the Holy Spirit does not venture!

Finally, all kinds of “supernatural trees” (instruments of divine provision) line the banks of the *river of life*. Not only do their leaves not wither, and their fruit not fall, they produce fruit every month (bringing about abundant prosperity). And more important, they have the power to heal the body (verse 12).

But notice, their supernatural abilities are dependent on one thing, **“...because their water flows from the sanctuary.”** It all starts with us releasing the glory from God's house (*flowing from under its threshold*)!

The “water” must flow through the boundaries of this church, but also through the temple of the Holy Spirit. That's, you and I. We are temples that are not meant to contain the glory but rather to let it flow, from under the threshold of our lives, into the lives of others. Trying to constrain or restrict it will only serve to turn its “living water” into marsh lands or swamp.

Once you've decided to flow with the Holy Spirit, you must get out of your comfort zone and dive into the deep where the current is strong. You must loose control and let go of all that may cause you to sink. Too many of you are carrying so much baggage you could never swim in a strong torrent. But God wants to use you mightily for the extension of His Kingdom. All you need to do is venture out into the deep. Don't be afraid! If necessary Jesus will walk across the water to lift you up.

I would rather have been in the water, needing rescued, than on the banks of the river caught in the swamp. I want to flow with the deep things of God. In the quick-stream of the river of life!

This is where you will see and experience the supernatural power of the Almighty God This is where true prosperity will manifest in your life and pour out into the lives of those around you. This is where you will find healing for your body and rest for your soul.

So why not come in – the water is great!