

**Title**

**“LIFE AND HEALING BY THE WATER”**

## Scripture Reading: Ezekiel 47: 1- 9

*Then he brought me back to the door of the temple; and there was water, flowing from under the threshold of the temple toward the east, for the front of the temple faced east; the water was flowing from under the right side of the temple, south of the altar. He brought me out by way of the north gate, and led me around on the outside to the outer gateway that faces east; and there was water, running out on the right side.*

*And when the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water came up to my ankles. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water came up to my knees. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water came up to my waist. Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed. He said to me, "Son of man, have you seen this?" Then he brought me and returned me to the bank of the river.*

*When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other. Then he said to me: "This water flows toward the eastern region, goes down into the valley, and enters the sea. When it reaches the sea, its waters are healed. And it shall be that every living thing that moves, wherever the rivers go, will live. There will be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters go there; for they will be healed, and everything will live wherever the river goes.*



# INTRODUCTION:

The temple in Jerusalem had been devastated because of their idolatrous sins and social injustice. God's people were taken into exile and scattered, while the rest were living in their own ruined land. There was no hope and no future. In his earlier vision, he saw abominations in the temple and the glory of the LORD departing from the temple (Ch.8-11). For generations the prophets wrestled with all that happened. Why has the nation been so destroyed? Their answer: we deserved it. We were under a curse.

But in his final vision (Ch. 40-48), Ezekiel sees a vision of a new temple. He witnesses the glory of the Lord returning to fill his temple (43:1-12). Ezekiel's vision zooms out even further to describe the new city and land (Ch. 47-48). The new temple is in the very center of this new city. Correlating with the book of Revelation, Ezekiel 47-48 addresses the consummation of all human history in a symbolic way.

**1. The Vision.**

**2. The Flowing Water/River.**

**3. The Source of the Water**

**4. The Living Water And The New Temple**

**Ezekiel 47:1-9** describes a marvelous river flowing from the temple to bring life and healing to the land. This vision reveals God's heart for a broken world. God wants us to know his heart and to give us a river of life that flows out to heal our brokenness.

# I. THE VISION

The prophet Ezekiel is at the temple, and sees a little trickle of water flowing out from under the altar. The water flows out of the temple down the south stairs.

It grows wider and deeper until finally it becomes a stream so great that it can't be crossed. Moreover, this little stream from the temple is flowing southeast out of Jerusalem toward the Dead Sea.



Ezekiel is envisioning a time when the Lord will bring about absolute healing in the nation of Israel. He sees a time when the river of God's grace and blessing will flow from His throne and will refresh the Promised Land.

## **II. THE FLOWING WATER/RIVER**

In all of its recorded history, Jerusalem never had such a river. There were streams and springs, but never a rich, mighty river, and never one flowing from this part of the city. In the semi-arid geography of Israel a river like this was both a blessing and a miracle. It brought life, growth, vitality, refreshment, hope, and security.

# 1. The Significance of the Water

“Thousands have lived without love, but not without water” –  
H. Auden

“Water is life’s matter and matrix, mother and medium. There is no life without water.” – Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, M.D.  
Discoverer of Vitamin C.

In the Bible, water stands for life, blessing, fruitfulness and healing. Ezekiel’s vision of the river suggests the Garden of Eden. It was a place of complete bliss, delight, and peace.

## 2. The Supremacy of the Water/River

In this vision, what was initially a small trickle out of the sanctuary, like the water flowing out of a bottle, miraculously turns into the powerful river. This evidently shows the **supernatural origin** of this river.

Ezekiel is astonished to see so many trees growing along both sides of the river. The angelic guide shows Ezekiel what the river does to its surroundings. As it flows east, the barren desert becomes a vibrant, flourishing landscape in paradise.



What did this mean to Ezekiel and the people living in the hopeless exile? It gave them God's wonderful promise about future restoration.

What do we learn from this river? It gives us a vision about the new creation. God will renew, revive, and recreate everything through his life-giving presence.

Two (2) things about the supremacy of the water.

## **I. The Water Transforms.**

It transforms everything that it touches.

As the water from the temple flows into the Dead Sea, the toxic water is transformed; it is filled with swarms of living creatures, because the water brings healing. **Verse 9 says,** *"so where the river flows everything will live."*

When the Spirit flows, the barren becomes fruitful, the empty becomes filled, the dry becomes watered, the wounded are healed, and the dead becomes alive.

As this water can reach even the depth of the Dead Sea, the lowest depression on earth, it can also reach down to the deepest places of our despair and bitterness.

## II. The Water Brings Life and Joy.

We see here a beautiful image of paradise, designed by God. (Gen 2:8 – 10) *"The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there He put the man He had formed. And out of the ground the Lord God made every tree grow that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Now a river went out of Eden to water the garden, and from there it parted and became four riverheads."*



And it looks forward to the new creation in the future

**(Rev 22: 1)** *"And He showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."* The trees here are the trees of life.

**Application:** There will be a perfect redemption. In this world, we see so much pain and sorrow. But lives will be transformed, broken relationships will be mended, and wounds will be healed. There will be healing of relationships, healing of the body, mind and spirit, by the water that flows. It will bring life and joy.

What makes these things possible? How can these things happen?

### III. THE SOURCE OF THE WATER.

The water in Ezekiel's vision was flowing out from the temple. The temple was central to his vision. Significantly, the river does not come from a king's palace or a government building. It doesn't come from a marketplace, a place of business, or an athletic arena. It comes from God's house – **The Temple**.

Why does the temple matter so much?

In the Old Testament, the temple (tabernacle) represented God's gracious dwelling among his people. Originally, human beings were created to enjoy God, who is the source of life and joy.

People without God are slaves to sin, injustice, addictions, brokenness, sicknesses and diseases. But God chose to save slaves and dwell in their midst by entering into a covenant with them. At the heart of this covenant is the **temple**.

What is unique about the temple in the Bible?



It is not something that we do for God; instead it is something that God does for us.

Because Israel broke the covenant with their God, they were driven out from the Promised Land and the temple was destroyed. But in Ezekiel, God gave the vision of the new temple. Through this vision, God is promising, "I will accept you and once again dwell in your midst. I will completely reverse the misery of your sin."

It is "the water from the **sanctuary** that flows to them." It is the presence of God that brings healing, life and joy!

This is the water that flows from the temple. Everything in the story points to the power of the life it holds because it comes from God, from grace alone.

The water brought life on the desert where nothing grows. It revived completely the dead where nothing lives, like the Dead Sea, when this tiny trickle of water has grown into a stream and then a river and enters the sea. The sea of stagnant waters will become fresh. Such is the power of this water.

There are many among us today whose lives are like deserts where nothing grows. And even what was planted in you started to wither and die. Or maybe your life is as dead as the Dead Sea. Maybe you have tried with all efforts to have life but nothing happened. You were broken and you longed for healing but healing never came. Why? Because of our faulty source. Our source comes from this world and in everything it can offer but this world is a dying world, how can it bring life?

E.g. An Old Testament King

***2 Kings 1:2*** " And Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber that was in Samaria, and was sick: and he sent messengers, and said unto them, Go, inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron whether I shall recover of this disease. But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, Arise, go up to meet the messengers of the king of Samaria, and say unto them, Is it because there is not a God in Israel, that ye go to inquire of Baalzebub the god of Ekron?" He went to the god of Ekron.

Baalzebub means lord of flies.



**Ekron means** – barrenness or torn away.

Ahaziah sent his servants to inquire of Baal-zebub at Ekron, when for ages God had visited His people with manifestations of the most superior kindness and unequalled love. From the times of the patriarchs He had shown how His “delights were with the sons of men.” He had been a very present help to all who sought Him in sincerity.

When the king of Israel sent to inquire of a pagan oracle, he proclaimed to the heathen that he had more confidence in their Idols than in the God of his people, the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Where is your confidence?

**Application:** We need the Water that can heal and fill our thirsty life. We need transformation, life and joy and the only way is through the water that flows from the Temple – The Presence of God.

It is the presence of God in the Temple that brings life and healing to the dry land and contaminated water, and so it is the presence of God in the Church that will bring life and healing.

How can this water reach our parched lives?

## IV. THE LIVING WATER AND THE NEW TEMPLE

**Ezekiel 47** talks about the healing water that flows from the Temple. But the Gospel of John points us to the Living Water that flows from the New Temple. This vision of the temple has been fulfilled by Jesus Christ. He is called Immanuel, God with us. The eternal Son of God became flesh and made his dwelling among sinners (**John 1:14**).

In **John 4:14** with the woman at the well we read of this living water: *"The water I will give will become in them a spring of water – or literally a well of water – gushing up to eternal life"*

**John 2: 19, 21** *says, "Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days.... But the temple he had spoken of was his body."*

*And in **John 7:37**, Jesus stands up on the last and greatest day of the feast and calls out: "Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them."*



In the temple Jesus called out and invited everyone to come and drink in order to live. It was a powerful and bold invitation. He offered the rivers of living water, but not long after that He was arrested and on the Cross, He who offered Living Water endured severe thirst that He cried, "I THIRST." He who offers living water became thirsty. Why? Because He poured and emptied Himself. He was denied of a drop of drinking water so that God will not deny us of the water that continually flows. He was parched on the Cross so that those who are thirsty can come to the flowing water, drink and receive life and healing.

By shedding his precious blood on the Cross and rising from the dead, Christ himself has become the perfect temple for us. He is the New Temple, the source of Living Water and He gave His life so that those who come and those whose lives are broken and empty may receive life and healing.

In the new heaven and new earth, there is no physical temple, because God's very presence is the temple (Rev 21: 22). From the throne of God and the Lamb, the river of life flows (Rev 22:1). But for the moment we are all longing for paradise, life, joy, fulfillment and healing. Our thirsty souls yearn for life-giving water. We can find this water in Jesus, the root of the rivers of eternal life.

## CONCLUSION:

Ezekiel's vision started coming to life when God came down to our world. This river started like a trickle at the cross of Jesus where he was crucified, pierced, and shed his precious blood. Soon after, with the coming of the Holy Spirit sent by the risen Christ, the blood of Jesus became a powerful river. This river flowing from Jesus is the Holy Spirit who is the very presence of Christ. This river is the power of God. This river is the mercy of God. His mercy flows like a river, which is powerful enough to bring life and healing.

