

MY HELPER #10 THE RIVER

God had Ezekiel do many things which seem bizarre, to dramatically illustrate the prophetic word.

For example:

Ezekiel was housebound, tied up and mute

Ezekiel used a clay tablet and an iron plate as illustrations in his preaching

Ezekiel had to lie on his left side for 390 days and on his right side for 40 days

Ezekiel had to cook his food using human dung as fuel

Ezekiel had to cook a pot of stew

Ezekiel had to shave his head and beard (which was a dishonorable thing in the culture)

Ezekiel could not mourn at the death of his wife (she symbolized the destruction of the Temple)

Ezekiel had been given a vision from God during the time of the captivity of Israel in Babylon. He had been a priest but during the time of Babylon's captivity became a prophet with a message of hope and restoration for Israel.

God gives Ezekiel a vision of waters flowing out from under the threshold of the door of the Holy Temple of God and these waters become a river.

Ezekiel 47:1 The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar. ² He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was flowing from the south side.

³ As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep. ⁴ He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist. ⁵ He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in—a river that no one could cross. ⁶ He asked me, “Son of man, do you see this?”

Then he led me back to the bank of the river. ⁷ When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river. ⁸ He said to me, “This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Sea. When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh. ⁹ Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so **where the river flows everything will live.** ¹⁰ Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds—like the fish of the Great Sea. ¹¹ But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt. ¹² Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing.” NIV

I. ITS SOURCE.

–v1 “.....water coming **out from under the threshold of the temple** toward the east (for the temple faced east).

- A. The river is **flowing out** from the temple.
- B. The river is actually coming out from the **“front door”** of **God’s house because it faces the east.** –
Jesus said, “I am the door” John 10:7

The Holy Spirit is not to be sheltered or stored in a building. But it is living water that brings change.

Let's be reminded that we are a temple of the Holy Spirit that is to be flowing of us into a world that is desperate.

II. ITS COURSE. –

“Came down by the altar”

- A. The altar stood for a **place of Sacrifice (dead flesh).**
- B. The altar stood for a **place of Prayer. (dependent upon God)**
- C. This river **came “Down”** in its direction of flowing. This river finds its way **to lowest and most needy places in the world.**

III. ITS FORCE.

– **“where the river flows everything will live”**

Wherever the river flows it....

- A. Brings “Life.”
- B. It has power to “Heal.” **V12 Leaves of the trees for healing**
- C. It brings forth “Fruit”. V12 Trees
- D. It will “Feed” you. V 9 Much fish
- E. It has the power to “refresh” you. V8 Waters are fresh
- F. The river has the power to “cleanse” you.

IV. THE TESTING OF THE WATERS.

Ezekiel saw the river and its benefit, but was encouraged to test the water or get in it. Jesus is encouraging us to get into the flow of the river.

A. Ezekiel stated the divine man that was ushering him through this vision of the river began **leading him deeper** into the

river.

B. Ankle depth-

1. Beginning of the Christian life.
2. Not ready to swim yet. A baby Christian.

C. Knee depth- learning to pray

D. Waist depth-

1. Strength – The mid section – waste deep.
2. Set in doctrine.
 - a. Assurance is settled.
 - b. Tithing has begun.
 - c. They understand justification.
 - d. They understand blood atonement.
 - e. They are interested in the 2nd Coming.

They are growing in the Lord. They are solid. No need to worry about them getting upset and leaving the church.

3. The loins are the reproduction area.

E. Swimming depth-

1. The water is supporting you
2. You are not under your own power. **The Holy Spirit**

is working for us. He is taking us into the deeper things of God. This is where God wants all of us to be. This the goal God has for all. **Water over our head – water to swim in.**

F. Water so wide it could not be crossed over.

This “River of the Spirit” is so deep and wide that man cannot cross over without “Total Dependence” on the “Divine Leadership” of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit is taking us into the “inexhaustible, unsearchable, impassable,” provision of God.

With **each step of obedience** Ezekiel found himself going deeper into dependence upon the Holy Spirit.

With each venture of forward progress more of Ezekiel was submerged in the river with less of Ezekiel being visible.

God will never throw us into things over our heads without first preparing us.

Let's get in the river!