

The River is Rising



David Wilkerson (1931-2011) June 18, 2018

God Is Bringing His Church Fully Alive to Handle What Is Coming

The prophet Ezekiel received a vision of a tiny stream trickling out of the Temple in Jerusalem. This trickle of water began at the throne and flowed past the altar, through the Temple court, under the east gate of the city, and finally into the desert. As the water flowed, it intensified, growing deeper, wider, and swifter.

As Ezekiel watched the water flow, a man with a measuring rod appeared to him. The man motioned, "Follow me," and he led Ezekiel into the midst of the water. He told the prophet to wade downstream, and after 1,000 cubits (about one-third of a mile), the water rose to Ezekiel's ankles. "(The man) brought me through the waters; the water *came up to my ankles*" (*Ezekiel 47:3, NKJV*).

Ezekiel waded onward for another 1,000 cubits, where the water rose to his knees. After another 1,000 cubits the water reached his loins. Finally, after 1,000 more cubits, the water came up to Ezekiel's chin. At that point, the water formed a vast sea. The only way Ezekiel could have kept going was to swim.

The man with the rod then summoned Ezekiel up to the riverbank. As Ezekiel climbed out of the water, the man told him to look back at the flowing river. Ezekiel was amazed by what he saw.

Everywhere Ezekiel looked, vibrant life was springing up.

The prophet beheld an incredible scene on both sides of the river: healthy trees, fruitful branches, and green vegetation. Wherever the river had flowed, everything lived.

It was an awesome sight, causing Ezekiel to exclaim, "When I returned, there, along the bank of the river, were very many trees on one side and the other" (*47:7*). What Ezekiel saw before him was miraculous growth. He had to wonder, "What kind of water is this? It causes such incredible life to spring up so quickly."

The man with the rod then asked Ezekiel, "Son of man, have you seen this?" (*47:6*). In other words: "Ezekiel, do you understand what you see before you?" What Ezekiel was seeing was *life abundant*. Yet he couldn't have understood what he was seeing, because it was a vision of the future.

Ezekiel never does explain the vision but simply shares it with us. In the New Testament, Peter explains what Ezekiel saw, when he writes: "Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that *would come* to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us" (*1 Peter 1:10-12, my italics*).

According to Peter, the prophets of old searched to find the meaning of such visions but never understood their full revelation. The only thing Ezekiel could do with his vision of the river was to rejoice for those in future times, who

would inherit the miraculous blessings it signified.

As Ezekiel looked back at the lush growth caused by the river, he witnessed the glorious results of the gospel. The dry land that bloomed bright green in every direction was a picture of the Spirit's work through ages to come. God was giving Ezekiel a look into the future, telling him in essence, "Let me show you how it all ends. Here is what will happen with my church in the last days."

I'm convinced there has never been a time when God's people are drier, thirstier, and more starving for truth than now. Yet all of this is about to change. God is rousing a generation to prayer, where he's giving them a new revelation of the nearness of his coming. In the days ahead we'll see the gifts of the Spirit stirred up among God's people, including faith, evangelism and prophecy, just as Joel prophesied: "I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions" (*Joel 2:28*). Even now the river of his Spirit is beginning to move mightily through his church, a supernatural outpouring of life brought about by grace and mercy alone.

The church will have to be fully alive in order to handle what is coming.

After Ezekiel beheld the lush greenness that had sprung forth from the desert behind him, he was instructed to look forward, in the other direction. There he saw the mighty river emptying out of the desert and into a dead sea: "Then (the man) 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'" (*Ezekiel 47:8*). As the river of God spills into this dead sea, it's going to bring healing waters to the lifeless body of water.

What exactly is this "dead sea" Ezekiel envisioned? It's the sin-sick world we see all around us today as the final hour draws near. Hell has erupted, and everywhere there is gross darkness and rampant lawlessness. The news is full of reports of perversions, hatred of Christ, corporate corruption, pleasure madness, addictions of all kinds. And humankind is witnessing the worst plague of alcoholism in history.

Simply put, this is the "dead sea" of civilization. And according to Ezekiel's vision, into this sea of death God's river will flow, supernaturally bringing change. A flood of life – Christ-life – is going to increase everywhere the river flows.

You may say, "I don't see that happening now." I agree that it doesn't appear to be so. This is partly because Satan is making a desperate, last-ditch stand. He's in a panic, knowing his time is short, so he's bringing forth every weapon he can. Yet God has declared, "You will not have this generation, devil. My river cannot be stopped."

We simply cannot allow ourselves to judge by what we see only with the naked eye. When God says, "In the last days I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh," he will do it. And he has proven his Word true for centuries now. Who has ever been able to stop his life-giving river? It will never become a trickle again. It won't be diminished by a mad devil or slowed by the sharp increase of iniquity. It is only going to increase, building in pressure and force.

Here is how we can know Ezekiel's vision is meant for our day.

When Ezekiel says he saw "water in which one must swim" (*Ezekiel 47:5*), the word for "swim" suggests "swarm, exceedingly numerous." In short, these healing waters will teem with life, meaning multitudes of fish. Where there once was death, there will be swarms of living things.

"It shall be the fishermen will stand by (the banks)...they will be *places* for spreading their nets. Their fish will be exceedingly many" (*Ezekiel 47:10*). This vision calls for many fishermen to come and fish in the healing waters, bringing in multitudes with their catch. What do the swarms of fish signify? Jesus said he would make his disciples "fishers of men." It's clear these fish represent converts, people brought to life by the healing waters flowing into the dead sea.

There is a common expression among fishermen: "All limits are off," meaning, "Bring in as many fish as you can." That describes the spirit behind Ezekiel's vision: "Go for all you can. No one will be unreachable!"

Addicts, the unchurched, Islamics, people from all walks of life are going to come into the life-net that the Spirit

spreads before them. Indeed, those whom the world sees as “unreachable” will be wholly transformed by the gospel.

Just as happened with the disciples, this last-days catch will be so great the “nets” will begin to tear. The church will barely be able to handle all who run to Jesus in that hour. As John tells us in Revelation, the number who will stand before Christ’s throne on the final day will be multitudes no one can number.

The Bible says in the last hour Satan will send a flood against the church. The devil is intent on carrying away God’s elect, and he’s going to flood the church with afflictions. When that happens, believers will endure fires that are “seven times hotter.”

Yet God won’t allow this demonic flood to come against his people without raising up a standard against it (see *Isaiah 59:19*). He’s going to send the greatest, most powerful outpouring of his Spirit in history, and no force – spiritual or human – will be able to stop it.

Dear saint, has the devil come at you with an overwhelming flood? Are you drowning in troubles and pain, drifting in a sea of lifelessness? You may be convinced your well is dry. You may have bought the enemy’s lie that there is nothing life-giving flowing out of you.

No, never! As long as you trust Jesus as Lord and believe he gives the Holy Spirit to all who ask, you must know he is in you as an artesian well. In this kind of well, water is forced to the surface by underground pressure, producing a constant stream. That underground pressure is the Spirit, bringing forth life in you continually.

You may feel downcast by your circumstances. But no lie from hell, nor any human power, can stop the flow of this water springing up in you. “The water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (*John 4:14*).

Fear not: the river of God’s life-giving Spirit is flowing into that dead sea in you. It is a river more powerful than Satan’s flood. And Ezekiel has testified that wherever this river flows it brings lush, green life to everything it touches.

Here is what I see coming: *the greatest soul-saving harvest in church history.*

The crowd of 3,000 who heard Peter preach at Pentecost were all saved on that day. Yet the Holy Spirit’s flow was only a small trickle then. Think of what is coming as we see his river overflowing its banks in this last day.

Here is one amazing result: “The earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth” (*Revelation 12:16*). The river now flowing over all the earth is going to swallow up Satan’s flood.

I urge you, pray with me now: “Holy Ghost, flow through every desert region in your church. Flow through the wildernesses in each of our lives, and into the dead sea of iniquity in this world. Bring your healing waters to the millions of souls who are lost in dead waters, multitudes no human could imagine. And forgive our unbelief, for limiting your reach!” Amen!

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