

Ezekiel 47

Part 1

Speaker	Fred A. Hughes
Duration	00:45:30
Online version	https://www.audioteaching.org/en/sermons/fah001/ezekiel-47

Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:00] The forty-seventh chapter of the Prophet Ezekiel.

Afterward he brought me again unto the door of the house, and behold, waters issued out from under the threshold of the house eastward. For the forefront of the house stood toward the east, and the waters came down from under from the right side of the house at the south side of the altar.

Then brought he me out of the way of the gate northward, and led me about the way without under the utter gate by the way that looketh eastward, and behold, there ran out waters [00:01:02] on the right side.

When the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured a thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters.

The waters were to the ankles. Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through the waters. The waters were to the knees.

Again he measured a thousand, and brought me through. The waters were to the loins.

Afterward he measured a thousand, and it was a river that I could not pass over, for the waters were risen, waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over.

The more I think of the precious gospel, of which some of us have been agreeing together [00:02:09] that we're not ashamed of, the more I am happily brought to the conclusion, one of its outstanding facets is this, that God wants you, whoever you may be, to be perfectly happy.

If you forget everything else that I say to you tonight, I pray that the theme that those words contain may reverberate in your conscience and heart until they bring you penitently to God.

God wants you to be happy.

The devil would tell you otherwise, but his character is written down here in this book. [00:03:05] He's a liar from the beginning.

God wants you to be happy, my friend, whoever you may be. And what is more, he has that which is able to make you happy.

That's the simple theme of my message to you tonight, that God, the great and glorious God, the God against whom you and I have sinned, a God who will not give up one single iota of his righteousness and holiness, he wants you to be happy and he is able to make you happy.

He has such wonderful resources at hand and at heart, sufficient to fully satisfy the [00:04:10] need and longing and aspiration of every heart in this room, whoever you may be.

Let that fact go right home in the power of God's Spirit to your conscience and heart tonight, my beloved friend, the God whom I know, the God whom I serve in my spirit in the glad tidings.

He wants you to be happy and he has the will with all to make you happy for time and eternity.

It is your sins that make you unhappy.

Whatever caption you may write over your unhappiness, the root of it is your sins.

[00:05:01] Fools make a mock of sin, but the next verse goes on to tell us that the heart knows its own bitterness and whilst men write off sin as something novel and something that's topical, something that's funny, something to be amused at, the fact is that sin has brought in all the unhappiness that exists in the world and sin has brought every bit of unhappiness and uncertainty and despair that fills your heart.

I make no apology for saying that. I allow of no argument in relation to it. It is a fact.

The Gospel deals with facts. The Gospel is the most skillful physician in the universe. It diagnoses the case completely and fully and never makes a mistake. But thank God, after diagnosing the case, it has a complete and absolute remedy to meet the case. [00:06:06] Where is it to be found? In Christ.

In Christ.

Where is God his resources?

Of course they're in his own blessed heart, for he's the father of compassions. Every compassionate thought found its source in the heart of God. But how have these resources been made available to poor sinners like you and me? All through the death of Jesus. Do you know, beloved friends, that Jesus loved you enough to die for you? Did you know that?

You say, yes, I did. Well, if you did, have you ever had the courtesy to thank him for it? Jesus died for you.

Ungodly though you may be, Christ died for the ungodly. Sinner though you may be, wise we were yet sinners, God commendeth his love towards us. [00:07:05] Christ died for us.

I want to speak to you from this typical Old Testament pictorial scripture of the fullness of the river of grace that is coming to you from God's heart and is flowing over barren place where Jesus died.

No other channel could be cut in the universe through which the love of God would reach your heart and mine, say, the channel that was cut through the awful sufferings of Jesus on Calvary's cross.

Oh, my friend, had Jesus not suffered, this gospel meeting would never have been held. A gospel meeting to me is a most precious thing. It is a direct legacy of the cross of Christ. It has come to me because Jesus died.

And you're here tonight, my friend, because Jesus died for you. [00:08:05] And in dying for you, he has cut a ravine, a wonderful, blessed passage, a channel through which the love of God can reach your heart and mine.

The grace of God, which carries with it salvation for all men, hath appeared.

There was a man lying by a pool, and he couldn't get into the pool.

And he said in this pitiable state, Sir, I have no man, no man. My friend, you couldn't say that. There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. And that blessed man has, by his sufferings, carved a channel through which the love of God can reach to your heart and mine tonight. [00:09:04] The grace of God is the source of it.

It carries with it salvation.

And that word carries with it is, I understand, descriptive of the way in which a river flows on its mighty expanse of bosom, carrying with it refreshment to wherever it reaches. And the love of God, grace in activity, grace in movement, God has moved out from that vast reservoir of love which has eternally filled his heart and in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, through his precious death and rising again, has carved a channel through which the immensity and the blessedness and the preciousness and the purity and the strength of his love can reach you tonight in the gospel.

Paul said that he received a ministry from the Lord Jesus.

[00:10:05] And that ministry was that he should testify the gospel of the grace of God. That he should preach to men this wonderful glad tidings that God loved them. And you know, beloved friends, if God enjoins upon us, his people, not to love in word only but to love in deed also, God himself has set the example. Oh, blessed be his name, he has not loved alone in word, he has loved in deed.

And I call you to witness Calvary's cross, the blessed, glorious, outstanding example of the fact that God has loved in deed.

God commendeth his love towards us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. [00:11:03] God not only loves but he commends his love.

He tells us that there's nothing better in the universe than his love. Nothing able in its strength and purity and pessimism to meet the sinner's need but the love of God. Are you satisfied?

Is your heart content?

Have you got all you hope for, all you wish for, all you long for? I can tell you of a supply that will not only satisfy the deep longings of your heart but it will give you an overflow, a blessed overflow, that will not cease to overflow either in time or eternity. That's why I refer to this river.

It says the river of God is always full.

[00:12:05] No shortage of water, no rationing, no scarcity, no impurity.

The waters of God are always full. The river of God is pure.

Perhaps you've tried to satisfy yourself on the lines of the hymn that we sang together. You've tried the broken cisterns.

There's another river spoken of in this book. It's the river of the world.

It's the river by which man seeks to satisfy himself apart from God. And it says there are many rivers running out of it, many little rivers running out of it. Oh yes.

What you may seek to satisfy yourself with is different from what I might seek to satisfy myself with. [00:13:01] But they all run out from this mainstream which is man's river. Do you know what God says about it? He says, I'm against thee and against thy river. Why? Because the dragon's there. The dragon's there. My friend, whatever source you may turn to in this world, let me tell you the devil's there. Can I prove it from scripture? I can. The whole world lies in the wicked one. The whole world.

That word means exactly what is used to describe the way in which a mother cradles her babe in her lap. The whole world lies in the wicked one, exactly like a babe lies in the lap of its mother. And you cannot draw from any source in this world without drawing from that which is dominated by the devil, who is the hater of God and the destroyer of your soul. Let us face these plain facts.

[00:14:04] There is a river which makes that. It's God's river.

I have the witness of it in this book. I have the witness of it in my heart, thank God. I see the witness of it in the faces and lives and affections of scores in this room. And there's enough water left in that river to satisfy your heart tonight.

Did you notice that this river came from the house? This river came from the house.

It came from where God lives.

That's where it came from.

If I were asked to substantiate that from the New Testament, I could turn you to many scriptures, but I would turn you primarily to the first chapter of John's Gospel. There's a blessed man eternally living in the bosom of the Father. [00:15:01] Not a man there, a blessed person, Christ, the Son of God, the one who ever dwelt in the affections of the Father. May I say, without being irreverent, one was at home with God.

The river comes from where God is at home. You don't find a river flowing in scripture until God rests. The moment God finds a place in which he can rest, the river begins to flow. And God is resting in Christ, is resting in the satisfaction and appreciation that he has of this blessed, glorious person. And from the place where God is resting in his affections in Christ, from where Christ is at home in the affections of God, the river flows. The word became flesh.

And he brought with him, as he came into manhood, he brought with him the river of God's grace. [00:16:02] Of his fullness have we all received grace upon grace, grace upon grace. I've often said, some of the brethren have heard me say it many times, but I say it again, that that word signifies the way in which the tide comes in on yonder shore. Before the effect of one wave has died away, another is coming and taking its place. That is what God has in mind for you, that there should never be a moment when an impression of his grace and love is not touching and reaching your soul. Grace upon grace.

It came from where God is at home.

It came from where God lives. Where does God live? In eternal love.

It was from the abode of eternal love that the goodness of God has reached out to you, in this wonderful river, that necessitated, before it could reach you and me, the death of Jesus. [00:17:05] Notice that it's flowing towards me.

Notice that every movement in these verses that we read is towards the east. What does that mean? Oh, it means this, that God has in mind a wonderful day in which every affection will be satisfied with the knowledge of his love. He's reaching on to the day of Christ, and every movement of God in the gospel has in mind carrying affections with it to that wonderful day when sin, death, sorrow, crying will not exist anymore, and when every heart will be satisfied with the immediate presence of the blessed God himself. That's the wonderful promise that God holds out in the gospel, to carry you along upon this mighty river of grace [00:18:04] until you find yourself in the very immediate presence of the God from whose heart the river flowed towards the east. Precious, precious thought.

God wants to carry you in your affection towards that day when Jesus will be supreme. Oh, we long for that day.

You know, one of the effects of the gospel in our hearts has been to spoil the world for us and to open our eyes to the fact that the love of God is so great that there must be a new heavens and a new earth to contain it. And the love of God is carrying us along on its mighty bosom, and it's never going to put us down until it puts us in the presence of itself with exceeding joy and glory in the very place where God is at home. [00:19:04] But notice, oh my friend, notice. My beloved friend, I appeal to you, and as I appeal to you the tears come into my voice. It's not emotion, it's not sentiment, it's deep, deep feeling that I would express to you at this point. This river came by way of the altar.

This river, my beloved friend, came by way of the altar. It came through the death of Jesus.

If my Saviour had not died, the love of God would have been an unknown quantity to me. If my Saviour had not died for me, my heart would have been for time and eternity barren and unsatisfied. If my Saviour had not died for me, my sins would have eternally separated me from God, the only source of good. [00:20:01] Had my Saviour not died for me, I never would have been happy. I never would have known the fullness of joy. I would never have known a satisfying portion. But oh, I know it all because Jesus has died for me. The love of God has come. The love of God is available to you tonight because Jesus has died for you. I was asked at the door to preach an old-fashioned gospel. I hope I'm satisfying the brother that asked me that. I want to give a right impression of my God. My God is a God of love.

My God loves you.

My God wants you to be happy. My God is not overlooking your sins, but always dealt with your sins in the death of Jesus. The blood of Christ is such that God can be propitiate towards the whole world. [00:21:06] I can tell you upon the basis of this book that Jesus died for you, for you, whoever you may be.

God so loved you that he gave Jesus to die for you. And if you will but put your faith in him, you will know that he is the substitute for your sins. He has died for your sins if you put your faith in him. I cannot say that Jesus died for the sins of everybody in this room, but I can say that he died for you. He loved you enough to die for you. I cannot say that he bore the sins of everybody in this room, but there's no reason at all why you should not turn to him tonight and find in him that blessed Savior who went to Calvary's cross in order that the love of God might reach you via the altar, via the altar.

[00:22:06] What are the sufferings of Jesus to you? What is Calvary to you?

I have sometimes said that the word Calvary is so full of feeling to divine persons that the Holy Spirit of God has only written it once in the whole of Scripture. We speak the word Calvary glibly, but my friend Calvary was so much to the divine heart that the Holy Spirit writes it but once in the pages of Scripture. For all it is written, it's there in all its majesty, it's there in all its profound dignity, it stands there in all its solitary blessedness, the only hope for the sinner, the glorious spot in which all the claims of the Holy God have been upheld, [00:23:06] the very spot which has unloosed the mighty torrent of the love of God which can reach down to your heart tonight. It came via the altar.

You remember Aaron, the priest?

One day his sons transgressed.

They came under the stroke of God and died and were carried out in their vests. And that night Aaron forgot the sin offering.

And Moses chided him.

And that old man with his broken heart said to Moses, What things have befallen me this day?

His bereft, broken heart was his excuse for forgetting the sin offering.

[00:24:08] Come with me to those last hours of Jesus.

Horried from one tribunal to another, spit upon, scourged, derided, forsaken, betrayed, condemned unjustly, crucified.

Could he not have said, What things have befallen me this day? But did he forget the sin offering? Blessed be his name, he did not. May I say he went into the holy place and ate the sin offering with his God. He offered himself without thought to God, the holy, blessed sin offering. Why? Oh, in order that the river of God's grace may come to you tonight via the altar, the altar.

[00:25:04] What will you do with the testimony to the sufferings of Jesus? Will you pass by the cross?

There were those who passed by the cross, wagging their heads. There were those who sat down at the foot of the cross and gambled what each should take. Mark it. They gambled what each should take.

And while they were doing that, the blessed Son of Man was giving His all, giving His all.

There were those who stood by the cross of Jesus. Their footsteps from time to eternity were arrested by the spectacle of the cross. All would to God that your faith tonight were arrested by the testimony of the sufferings of Jesus. Because there are glories to follow, glories to follow.

He led him along, [00:26:04] and the waters went up to the ankles.

I thought of this scripture because we're going through the epistle to the Romans, where we find wonderful progression in relation to an appreciation of the grace of God. The waters went up to the ankles.

This grace where you may stand.

Have you got your feet into the ocean of God's love? Are you standing yet in the way of sinners?

Are you standing in that unlawful, self-willed path which leads you away from God, in which you have the company of sinners of the deepest die? Your feet may be on the footpath on the way to hell, not in the gutter, but it's a downward path, lest your feet have been brought through the sovereignty of the mercy of God [00:27:02] to find their standing in the favor, in the grace that God has come out to you in, in Christ. Oh, it's a blessed thing, a blessed thing to have one's feet taken out of the way that leads to death, a way that seems right in our own eyes, but the end thereof is death. It's a blessed thing for our feet to be taken out sovereignly and put into a spot in which we stand as appreciators of the grace of God.

I was warned that I mustn't tell you stories, but I'm going to tell you one. I was traveling in the train from London.

Three business gentlemen were sitting there, and one of them happened to say to the other that he didn't believe in miracles. And the other said, now what do I, all this nonsense about turning water into wine. And the third says, I believe a miracle when I see one.

[00:28:06] And I looked across at him and I said, did I understand you to say, sir, that you'd believe in a miracle if you saw one? He said, yes, I would, but not until. Very well, I said, have a good look at me, for I'm a miracle.

What do you mean? Look, I was on the way to hell. My feet were taking me to hell as fast as they could go. And God looked down and he said, save yourself from going down to the pit. I have found a ransom.

And he turned me right about and my feet are getting off to heaven now as fast as they can get. That's a miracle.

Oh, it's a blessed thing. It's a miracle of grace, I agree. But it's a blessed thing to have your feet taken

out of the way that leads to death and put into a spot in which you can appreciate the love that has come at such cost [00:29:02] via the altar of Calvary.

Oh, it's a blessed thing to tell you that we have someone who loves us and someone who's loved us so much that he's loved us into loving him. You know, it's not easy to speak about the person you love. It's not hard to speak about a person you love. We may make a poor mess from a fluent point of view or an eloquent point of view, but I tell you this, we love to speak from our hearts about a blessed person who we love. Yes, we love him. I have found a ransom. Where did he find it? Listen, the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto but to minister and to give his life a ransom for many.

Oh, it breaks my heart. It breaks my heart, beloved friends, when I realize that before I could be put in the path of life, Jesus gave his life for me. He did.

Blessed be his name. [00:30:01] He gave his life for me in order that I might live.

He measured a thousand and the waters were up to the knees. Are you getting into it now? The waters were up to the knees. What does that mean? It just means this, that we're not content to just have an appreciation of the love that has come to us through the person of Christ, but we delight in bowing our knees to him and owning him as Lord. We delight to do it.

David was in the cave of Adullam. I'll mark you this, the cave of Adullam was a place of reproach, but we're told later on that all the glory is being taken to Adullam. Oh, yes.

It isn't always going to be reproach. It isn't always going to be the apparent losing side. Oh, no, we're on the winning side right now. Yes, we're associated with the blessed man who's going to fill the scene with glory. [00:31:01] And when he fills the scene with glory, he'll put me in it. He won't leave me out. And David's glory wouldn't be completed without me. Up to the knees, up to the knees. Beloved young Christian, have you got your knees in this water? Have you been a secret believer? Have you never confessed Jesus as Lord? Come out of your hiding tonight. Is it worth owning as Lord?

Are you ashamed to own him before the people with whom you've worked? What is it in Jesus to be ashamed of?

Why, God loved him in the eternity past. He loved him while he was here. He loves him now, and he'll love him forever. Have you confessed Jesus as Lord? If you haven't, you don't know what full salvation is. That brings no contradiction. I cannot, what you may think of that statement, it's the absolute truth of God's Word.

[00:32:04] And I never mind how definite I am in speaking so long as I've got Scripture to support me. I brook no criticism, I care for no criticism, I ask for no platitudes or approvals.

But I state the solemn fact that unless you have bowed the knee to Jesus as Lord, you don't know what full salvation is.

Up to the ankles, up to the knees. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, believing in your heart, confessing with your mouth Jesus as Lord, thou shalt be saved. Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord, don't limit that to the poor sinner, it's true of course, but whosoever is whosoever, and whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord, thou shalt be

saved.

[00:33:01] And if you want to come into the joy, the blessed joy of the fullness of the river of God, get into it up to your knees, confess tonight Jesus as Lord. If there's anyone in this room tonight that has never confessed Jesus as Lord, we'll stay with you in the anteroom as long as you like, we'd love to hear you confess Jesus as Lord.

You're servants for Jesus' sake.

He measures a thousand, the time's going, it's such a blessed subject, isn't it?

He measures a thousand, and the water's up to the loins, that's the seat and strength of affections, you know. It isn't only now that I'm standing appreciative of his grace, and that I've bowed the knee to him as Lord, or that he's become the one absorbing object of my heart's affections. [00:34:04] Risen with Christ, the Colossians says, lives hidden with him, why? Because we've set our affections upon things above. We've got our affections set upon something that's eternal. Another story.

A little girl had a pet rabbit and it died.

And she had a little butchery goat and it died. And she said to her mother, Oh mother, can't you give me something that won't die? Beloved friends, don't set your affections upon things that die. I'll show you something that will never die. Listen.

I really live and became dead and I'm alive forevermore. Set your affections upon things above. What are they? The moon? The star? No, where Christ sits at God's right hand. Set your affections on things above. Get right in until your affections are absorbed [00:35:04] with the preciousness of the person of Christ, the one who died for you. For whether it was up to the ankles or the knees or the loins, it all came from the altar, from the altar.

One more simple word and I'll close. Measured another thousand, mark this, going on towards the east.

Always you progress in your soul in an appreciation of the grace of God. I'll tell you what happens the day that Christ looms nearer to you. It does. It does.

That poor man our brother was talking to us about him last night that fell down, you know, robbed and left half-dead.

His wounds wound up, put up in the beast, taken to the inn. Two parents to care for him.

You say he's got everything he wants now. Oh, he hasn't. He hasn't.

[00:36:03] Oh, no. Everything he needs, perhaps.

But not everything he wants.

You go to him and say to him, you've got everything you want now, haven't you? No, he says, no.

Why, what more do you want? Oh, he says, when he went out of the door I heard him say, when I come again, and I won't be really satisfied until he comes back. That's it, dear friends. The more you get into this wonderful river, the nearer, in a moral sense, the return of Christ becomes to you. Every movement's towards the East. It's towards the East. Why, Peter says that the very Christians themselves, by what they do, hasten the day of God. They hasten the day of God. A river to swim in.

The waters are risen!

Paul says, testifies the gospel of the grace of God, yes. [00:37:02] This grace wherein we stand up to the angels. Preach the kingdom of God, yes, the rights of Christ. There they are, up to the knees. Declare the whole counsel of God, he says. The whole counsel of God.

To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. One of the glorious apparent contradictions of Scripture, which I delight in. You know, Scripture's so wonderful, isn't it? There's language that can't be, there are words that can't be found to express what it means. Less than the least of all saints, you know. Well, you can't have less than the least, can you? Oh, you can, yes.

Can you know something that can't be known? Oh, yes, you can.

You can.

The wonderful ocean of God's love. The whole of it you can't take in, no, but you can know it, you can enjoy it. Like the fish said to its friend, you know, I'll never be able to encompass all this mighty ocean. [00:38:03] No, he says, but just enjoy what you've got. To know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. It's water to swim in, dear friends. It means this, that if you're swimming, you've got your feet right off the earth altogether. Seated in the heavenly places in Christ. There already, in spirit there already, yes, in the faith and affections of our souls, so affected by and so appreciative of the wonderful love which yet comes from the altar, that we're carried right away from the earth.

Just like Simeon was, when he saw something of the fullness of the countenance of God in that bay, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of thy people, Israel, he said, let me depart.

He wanted his feet right off the earth. [00:39:02] Such is the effect of an appreciation of the eternal love of God which comes to us in Christ, via the altar.

Are you in it?

Are you in it?

Show me something better and I'll go in for it.

Oh, there's nothing better.

It's the very heart of God himself.

It's God's own nature, it's love.

God's exceeding love, God's mighty love, God's precious love, God's holy love, which has come to

me and is available to you because Jesus died. Will you get into it tonight?

All those aching feet of yours, those sin-soiled, defiled feet of yours, get them into this mighty reservoir of love.

And young man, young woman, [00:40:02] you trusted the Lord a few weeks ago, a few months ago, a year or so ago. Are you still just paddling at the brink? Or have you gone in a bit further? I ask you lovingly, some of us are getting towards the end of our days, but all Jesus is becoming very precious to us.

And though I may not have said much to you tonight, in an orderly, eloquent way, I do want to give you this impression that the one who loves us is worth knowing, is worth loving. He can do far more for you than anyone else can. He can satisfy your heart for time and eternity.

Will you bow the knee to him?

Will you let him take charge of your affections? All the pride of life, the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh, what are they worth [00:41:02] compared with the incomparable beauty of Christ? And then, to allow God to pour into your soul, dear Christian friend, something of the incalculable blessedness of the truth of the mystery, that which was in his heart from before Thoreau's foundation.

Those glorious thoughts that all centre in Christ and which are all going to be headed up in Christ, all going to be displayed in Christ, and will eventuate in a world, not a world through which the river of God's grace is flowing, but a world which is filled to the brim with the knowledge of the love of God. Will you come into it tonight? We plead with you for Christ's sake.

Will you come into it?

Will you have a personal interview with Jesus tonight?

[00:42:06] He's waiting, he's available, he's ready, and he's got everything that's necessary to satisfy your heart for time and eternity. May the Lord bless you tonight.

You sing with him, just as I am, God want me, number 85, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, thy love I owe, Has broken every barrier down, Now to be thine, yea, thine alone, O Lamb of God, I come.

Just as I am, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thy blood was shed for me, [00:43:12] And that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come.

I come.

Just as I am, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come.

[00:44:04] Just as I am, But that thy blood was shed for me, O Lamb of God, I come.

I come.

Just as I am, But that thy blood was shed for me, And that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come.

Yea, thou that didst this day, [00:45:06] I come.

O Lamb of God, I come.

I come.

I come.