2 Kings - Commentaries by Paul L Johnson

Shadow Hills Conference: 1982, Swimming - A Spiritual Life and Exercise

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I'm going to read the first portion and 2nd Kings chapter 6. Second Kings 6. And we'll read from verse one. And the sons of the prophets said unto Elijah, Behold now the place where we dwell with thee is too straight for us. Let us go, we pray thee unto Jordan, and take dance every man a beam, and let us make us a place. There we meet where we may dwell. And he answered, Go ye. And one said, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. And he answered, I will go. I will go. So he went with them, and when they came to Jordan, they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam, the axe head fell into the water, and he cried and said, Alas, master, for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, where fell it? And he showed him the place, and he cut down a stick and cast it in thither, and the iron that swim. I call attention to that last expression. The iron did swim. Now we'll read in the Acts chapter 27. And verse 39. And when it was day, they knew not the land, but they discovered a certain Creek with a shore into the which they reminded if it were possible to thrust in the ship. And when they had taken up the anchors, they committed themselves under the sea, and loosed the rudder bands and hoist up the mainsail to the wind, and made toward shore. And falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground. And the four parts stuck fast and remained unmovable, but the hinder part was broken to the violence of the waves. And the soldiers counsel was to kill the prisoners, lest any of them should swim out and escape. But the centurion willing to save Paul kept them from their purpose. And commanded that they which could swim should cast themselves first into the sea and get the land. And the rest, some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land. And one other portion in the 47th chapter. Ezekiel. Ezekiel 47. And verse one. Afterward he brought me again to 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 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 on the right side. And when the man that had the line in his hand went forth eastward, he measured 1000 cubits, and he brought me through the waters. The waters were to the ankles. Again he measured 1000 and brought me through the waters. The waters were to the knees. Again he measured 1000 and brought me through the waters were to the low ends after he measured 1000 and it was a river that I could not Passover for the waters were risen. Waters to swim in a river that could not be passed over. Perhaps you noticed in each one of these? Portions we read, we have an occasion where swimming is brought before us. The iron, the head that fell into the water. In second Kings 6. The scriptures speak of it this way, that the iron did swim. A rather unusual statement because. It isn't natural that an iron would float Swim. Contrary to nature, but nonetheless that's what we read there, and we have no doubt of what had happened, even in a literal sense. My thought, of course, was to take up the these occasions of where we have swimming brought before us, not to speak of it in any literal way. Even though it is quite a miracle that the iron would swim, it wasn't my thought to draw attention to a miracle and the fact that some in Acts 27 when the ship was wrecked, that some cast themselves into the sea and swam to the land. We're not going to dwell on any physical aspects there and likewise in connection with what we read.

Swimming in Ezekiel 47. We would like to take up these three passages and the thought of swimming. As being an indication of spiritual. Life and exercise. We know that even from the from the natural standpoint that swimming requires a certain amount of exercise. It involves energy and certainly would involve life. One could not do so if he did not have life and it certainly if he didn't expend a little energy and some exercise, he couldn't. So my desire is to bring before us everyone in the room, what it is to have life in Christ. To have that which is really life. Not just physical life. That which Scripture speaks of as really life, life in Christ. And then to be able to have the energy that would give us to go through a broken state of things in regard to the church set up here in testimony in this world, and then as to our own individual. Exercises that we might have energy to to go against. The currents that we find around about us now you remember in the. The book of books of both Leviticus and Deuteronomy, we have the unclean and the clean foods that the people of God could eat of in the Old Testament. And you remember in regard to the fish, the fishes of the sea, they could eat only those who had fins and scales. Perhaps that's not familiar to all, but to most of us, I'm sure that at some time or another we have heard these things spoken on or have read them for ourselves. In the Word of God, they could only eat those fish that had fins and scales. Well, I want to draw attention especially to the thought of the fins. We know, of course, that the scales would be that which would insulate the fish. Against the pollution that might be found roundabout the waters in which the fish are found, that would be a thought of the of the scales. But what about the fence will the fins? I believe would bring before us the fact that it would give the ability to the fish to go against the current. Without the fins, the fish would merely have to flow along with the current of things, whatever that current might be and wherever that current might take them. But the fins would enable the fish to go against the current, so that they might not just drift along and find themselves in the place where the currents would take them. Well, I would like to say especially in the beginning to. Those who are younger in the room with us this afternoon that I believe this is a very important consideration for you as well as as those who are older, that we not be those who just are carried along with the currents that are all around us in this world. We know that there is a tendency to do so. That what prevails in the world. Becomes, you might say, that which prevails among the people of God. That is only the case if we are in the currents of this world and you know where they all end up. We know that this world is passing away, and it's fashion. It's only that which is of God, he that doeth the will of God, that abides forever. Well, I trust that the young people in the room this afternoon will be very much aware of the fact that there are strong currents all about us, currents that will take us off into areas and places and a condition that is not only dishonouring to the Lord but damaging to your own soul.

To your own blessing, and even if it does not result in eternal lost, lost, because we know that the Lord Jesus says concerning his sheep, they shall never perish. And one would never suggest that any who might be truly the Lords, if you are a believer on the Lord Jesus, that you would ever perish. It may be that you might not suffer loss eternally in that sense. But there will be the suffering of loss at the present time. Loss as to the enjoyment. Of the Lord. Enjoyment of the Father's presence, enjoyment of the spiritual blessings, the peace and the joy. Oh, it's very sad as we pass through this world to see that even though we are living in a very affluent society. And with sometimes individuals speak of

conditions being very difficult today. But we know, of course, that it isn't really so. When we think of all of the material benefits that that people enjoy in this country, but with all of that, how much discontent, how much sorrow and unhappiness and unrest? And we find that even sometimes among young people, we think of young people who have been reared in times where. Need, has or want has been virtually unknown. It's been many years since there have been real want and need in this country and there are many who have been raised and never know what it is to really do without and to really suffer need. But sad to say, it hasn't made them more happy. It hasn't made them more content. It hasn't brought them more joy, but in many cases it's their lives are filled with sorrow. And why is it because it it really comes down to this that if one is not in right relationship with the Lord, if your soul is not in right relationship with God. Why? You can heap up all of the material benefits that one could gain in a day like this, and it will never bring joy and peace and satisfaction. It never will because you're caught up into the currents that are all about. Well, my thought was that we would consider these cases of swimming because it indicates, you might say, going against what is just current. And I'm not speaking now as we will see not only what is current in the world that makes no profession of Christianity, but even what is current in the professing Christian world. Turn back to 2nd Kings. 6. We might see this. We I believe we should take them up in this order. At least this should be the first one taken up. Or it's the one that there's not much point in speaking on the others if one is not in the good of the swimming that we have here. I assume that. We understand, of course, in taking up the. A circumstance such as we have recorded here. That we're to look beyond the letter of the word as to the actual historical circumstance and to see in it a spiritual meaning. For we know that these Old Testament occurrences, the Old Testament is, was not written for the people who were involved in these circumstances. In other words, this wasn't written for Elijah. This wasn't written for the children of Israel in that day. We read in the New Testament that they are written for our admonition. These things were written for you and me today that we might learn from them, so we want to. You might say, get our minds out from the from the literal circumstance here to see what is involved in a moral and spiritual way. Well, we have the circumstance of one who found the place too straight for him and he goes off to as we read. In verse four that they had gone off to cut down wood. In a way, this order reminds me of the prodigal. You remember the Prodigal found things a little bit too, perhaps straight for him in his father's house. So he asked for the portion of goods that belonged to him, and he went out too. Sometimes we find this is a characteristic in the minds of many of the young people that they feel that if they could go out, as it were, on their own, where they are without restraints or where where they're out without any.

Giving account to others that they would be far better off and happy. Do you know what happened in this case? This one who went out? And when he was occupied in the in the cutting down of wood. We read in verse 5. That as one was filling a beam, the axe head fell into the water. The axe head fell into the water. Well, we know that water is used in various ways in the Word of God, and sometimes water is a figure of death, and I think that's what we have here. The acts had falling into the water is a figure of death. Not primarily what we speak would would speak about as physical death. But it's the fault of death, like we have in the first Timothy. You remember there is a remark made like this, that she that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth. That speaks of one who is very much alive in the body and having physical life. But they're really living in the region of death because they're living in a region of doing their own will. Seeking their own pleasure. Seeking to satisfy only themselves, without regard to the will of God and the mind of God. And without any reference to God just going on in their own way. We read that one who sows to the flesh. You love the flesh, reap corruption. And we read that the wages of sin is death. Well, that's even now. Now I know that it has a reference, perhaps even to final judgment. But even now one who goes on in sin and when we speak of going on in sin, we're not going to limit that to what society would speak of is sin. If you were to ask the man on the street for a definition of sin, well, he might say, he might say, I think that doing this is a sin or I think that the person who does another thing is sin. And each one would perhaps have their have their little. List and catalog of what they would consider to be sin. But the Word of God tells us that lawlessness is sin. Sin is lawlessness and the epistle of John, sin is lawlessness. And one might be very moral and upright and going on in his own way according to his own will and living in sin. And it says the wages of sin is death. And I think that's what is the figure here of this axe head falling into the water. He says it fell into the water, it fell into the place of death. So it speaks of. One who does not have life. He might have physical life, but he has no life in his soul. Dead in trespasses and sins. Sometimes we wonder why it is or how it is that young people. And perhaps even others can sit under the sound of the word and be completely and totally impervious. You know what I mean? You might as well be speaking to a Stonewall. But you know, when you think about it, that's what would happen if you spoke to a dead person, one who is dead in trespasses and sins, hears nothing, hears nothing. And it's very sad. But the, the, the passage we have before us is that there is there is rescue, there is hope. And here we see that when this accent fell into the water, there was an exercise on the part of this young man. He cried out. He noticed that he cried out. We read in Scripture that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, well, now you know no one will call upon the name of the Lord unless he feels some distress. If God has worked in your heart so that you feel distressed and you feel the fact that being a dead in trespasses and sins and being without Christ. Is a dreadful condition. You could be like this one here who cried out. Notice what he said. Alas, master, for it was borrowed.

And what have you ever thought about that? It was borrowed. I suppose that even the ones that get older. We might say that you would think that as one gets older, he would be more or less inclined to think of of death. But in the mind of man, it's death always seems to be a long way off. A long way off. But we might say that every individual. Who is not the Lord's? If you're here this afternoon and you can't say you're a Christ, a lover of the Lord Jesus. You can't really say you are the Lords. You have, as it were, just a borrowed life. God said to Adam that in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. Well, he didn't die on that that particular day in which he sinned. But we do read that Adam died. And we read of men who lived many years, one who lived 969 years, but he died. You see, everyone born into this world in a sense has a borrowed life. I mean in the sense that one cannot retain his life and and the sin is that which causes one to forfeit his life. You know, I thought of it this way, that every person walking through this world without Christ is living a forfeited life. And if you're here this afternoon without the Savior? You're living a forfeited life, just a borrowed life. That we thank God that there is provision whereby we might have life. Really life, Life in Christ and life in Christ is eternal life. Life in the flesh is not it comes to an end. And it may be, as the Word of God says, we shall not all sleep. That means that all Christians are not going to enter into the go through the article of death, but we shall all be changed. Flesh and blood shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. So that if we do not have that life in Christ. Why we we have not that life that abides. We do not have that life that abides, and this life is in his son, John tells us. So that he that hath the Son hath life. Well, we read here that this man. He felt his distress and he recognized that he was only a borrowed life, a borrowed axe head, that is. It would speak of a borrowed life, forfeited life. But notice what the man of God said. Where fell it? And he showed him the place. Well, I wonder if if we've ever thought of the place, you might say, where our acts had fell, the place of death. And why is that important? Because of the action of the man of God. He took down a stick. He took wood. And he cast it into the place where the axe had fell. It cast it into that very place. And it's when. But I have no doubt but what we have here, a type of the Lord Jesus Christ in manhood. The one who became flesh and the one who dwelt among us, and the one who went to the cross of Calvary and his man laid down his life. He went into death. He went into that very place, you might say, in which we were. And I think that's why as the as people of God, we want to look back, as it were. We want to see the place where we were,

because that's the place the Lord Jesus Christ entered. And he entered that place. In order that he might bring life to you and to me, that we might have life. He says in John's Gospel, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone. We know that in him was life. We know that He was that eternal life manifested here in this world, that eternal life that was with the Father and manifested here. But except a corn of wheat fall into the ground, and died abideth alone, but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

And he in his going into the place of death, and coming forth in resurrection. He has brought to you and me that life, that life that is in himself, that eternal life, not the character of life that we find in man, in the flesh, here in this world. A life that is lived for self, a life that is lived without regard to the will of God, a life that is lived without the knowledge of God. You know, we read in John 17, this is eternal life. To know thee, the only true God. The only true God to know him, in contrast to all of the false concepts of God. To know him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. That brings before us the Lord Jesus as that humble, submissive one, the one who came to do the Father's will that would deliver us from lawlessness. We find that what characterizes the life of man in the flesh. And I'm speaking now of the life of those who are outside of Christ, those who are lost, those all about us who know not the Lord. That life is characterized by ignorance of God. Or they might have some. They might even have the Bible. They might say certain things about God. They might say God is a God of love and things of that nature, but they do not really know the only true God. They have not the knowledge of the true God. The God of their concept is not the way God is presented in the Word of God. And they're lawless. They're lawless. We find that lawlessness characterizes the life of man in the flesh. Eternal life is not of that nature at all. Eternal life, we see there is characterized by the knowledge of the true God and of Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. It would deliver us from all of the false concepts of God and from lawlessness itself. But this life is in his Son. He that hath, the Son hath. And it was only it's only been made available to you and me through his going into the place of death. You know, that's the way it's presented. I believe in First Corinthians 15, the gospel there you remember the apostle says how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures and was buried. You see, he comes into the very place in which we were found as those who are dead in trespasses and sins. Just like the stick here, the wood is cast into the place where the axe head fell. So the Lord Jesus came into that very place, but we read that he was raised again the third day according to the scriptures. Well, I believe that's sort of like we read here at the end of. Verse six The iron did swim. It came up. It came up to the top. And so you and I have a life that is outside of this scene in association with the Lord Jesus. That life is in Him. It's in him, risen and glorified. And here we see the iron did swim, as I mentioned earlier that it's unusual or. You might say, contrary to nature, to speak of iron swimming, the. And so I believe it would indicate that that life that you and I have in Christ is not the life that is native and natural to man in this world. This enables us to go against the currents. One who does not have this life is, you might say, at the mercy of the currents of this world. He has to flow with the currents. But the child of God does not have to flow with the currents if we are in the current of things of this world. It's by our own choosing. We do not have to be there. We do not have to be there. We have a life that is outside of that entirely. It's like the iron that swims it's it's a life that is, that would elevate one above the currents of this world. This is the life that we have read Romans 6. I could refer to some verses there, but Romans 6 speaks of that, that newness of life, a new kind of life, a life in which God is the object. It says there about the Lord Jesus that in that he died, He died unto sin once, but in that he liveth. He liveth unto God now. That's the newness of life. Do you live under God? You say, well, I don't think I would be very good as going out in some Christian work.

Well, I didn't say anything about that. Living unto God. In all of the circumstances of life. In whatever pursuits that the Lord has set out for you and your circumstances. As a young person that may be in school, as one a little older, it may be with rearing a family and in work or business, But are these things taken up in reference to God? That's living under God. But we have a life now. It's a newness of life. Newness of life is read in Romans 6. And so we see that here in this. Iron that did swim. Think of that, the iron swimming. Do you have that life? It's available. It's the gift of God. That's what we read. It's the gift of God. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. And it's available for those who will receive it and receive it from the hands of the Lord. But it's only in Him. I I've repeated that because it's important. This life is in His Son, and he that hath the Son hath the life. Now we'll turn over to the 27th of. Acts where we read of another. Occasion of swimming. But here it's in relation to a shipwreck. Perhaps. Many in the room are familiar with this chapter, this voyage of the Apostle Paul. And the shipwreck. And here we have a little picture of the assembly. Established in this world as the testimony of the Lord, the pillar and support of the Truth. At Hillary, it's the witness as the ground. It's the support pillar and ground of the truth as the King James says. The witness and support of the truth. And it was through the ministry of Paul that the assembly was so endowed. With the truth we know, of course, it was established on the day of Pentecost, but it was through the ministry of Paul that the assembly was endowed with the truth of God. In Acts 20 he said, I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. So the assembly was that a vessel of testimony set up in this world. In possession of the whole Council of God. What a wonderful thing. Thing we see established. But just as we have in the 27th chapter of Acts. The ship in which Paul was to make the journey to Rome. Fell into. Hard times and rough seas. And became a wreck and he became a wreck because the owners and the the captain of the ship, the owners did not listen to Paul rather, but to the captain of the ship. You remember Paul cautioned them as to taking the journey they were. In a place called the Fair Havens and Paul said they should not take the journey. But they didn't listen to Paul. They got away from the from the word of Paul, and they followed the word of man and the result was disaster. And that's exactly what has happened in the in the course of the history of the assembly, in testimony here in this world. It got away from the. Teaching of Paul the truth of God committed to it through the ministry of Paul. Taking up rather the thoughts of men and introducing man made ways and practices and teachings in place of what had been divinely given through the ministry of Paul. And we read how that this resulted in being in a period of darkness for many days, neither sun nor stars. Shine for many days. Darkness. Well, those who are familiar with the course of the testimony.

Through the years from its inception knows that that is exactly what happened. There were many years of darkness. And then finally, you might say Paul reappears. When they gave up all hope of being saved, why Paul reappears. And he speaks to them, and he speaks to them comfortably. And he tells them that all on board will be saved, and he gives the conditions for it. Well, no doubt I believe that I would bring before us the the recovery that God has affected for his people in these last days. In recovering and restoring the truth that had been lost for centuries. Through those dark years, the truth of the assembly, its true character. It's true testimony and its destiny and its function. It isn't that new truth was given, but the truth was brought to light. Paul was restored, so to speak, and then we see that despite the fact that Paul was restored and Paul speaks, he says there must be the loss of the ship. Those on board the souls would be saved, and it's remarkable that we read at the end of the chapter the very last words. And so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land. I like to think of this in regard to all of those who belong to the Lord. You know, the Lord Jesus could say in John 17 that He hadn't lost a thing that was given unto him, except the Son of perdition. But he wasn't one really given. He wasn't a sheep of Christ. He was an imposter from the very beginning, Judas. But of all that the Father had committed into his hands, not one is lost. And that's true today. It's true today when the Lord comes, you know, we read in the second Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul charges them by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together unto

him. And I might say in passing, you know, in Matthew 1820, it doesn't say where two or three are gathered together unto me. Says gathered together unto my name. I believe that. That is in view of his absence. Gathering together unto his name doesn't say Gathering together unto him. But unto His name, because he is absent now, he does give the promise of coming to his own. He does come to his own, but he's not here. He's absent. So it's gathering together unto his name. But in Second Thessalonians it's gathering together unto him, because the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout. It's the Lord Himself, and so all of his own are gathered unto him. And you know, it's remarkable. It says where two or three. And I don't think you can read that without seeing the fact that the Lord understood that it wouldn't be all gathering under his name, just could be only two or three. I don't say it has to be two or three, but it shows a sort of a, a remnant character. You might say not all, but the gathering together unto him includes every believer when the Lord descends from heaven with a shout in the voice of the Archangel. God, every believer. Is going to be gathered unto him. Gathering unto Christ includes every believer gathering together under His name. Alas, may not be, and we know it isn't. It might be only two or three, but not when it comes to gathering unto him. He's going to gather everyone of his own. Whether they swam to shore, whether they drifted ashore on broken pieces of the ship, they all escaped safe to the land. And I believe that we we can rejoice in that. Satan may have. Succeeded to a certain extent in dividing and scattering the people of God and perhaps deceiving many and thinking that they have to cling to the ship. But nonetheless, everyone is going to be brought safely to shore. Every sheep of Christ is going to be preserved. We sometimes sing in one of our hymns. We look to meet our brethren from every distance shore. And not only those with whom we can walk in a day of ruin and failure. You know there's a difference.

We we read in two Timothy about. With those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. That's quite a quite a contrast from first Timothy, a First Corinthians one, when he speaks about with all of that in every place, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. With all that in every place that when you come to second Timothy, it's more restricted, says with those that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. But in that day. When the Lord comes, everyone, wherever they are, we might not be able to walk with them at the present time, but we'll all be gathered under the Lord. But in the meantime. What I wanted to point out, especially here, was that the the ship I believe would represent. You might say what the the church or the assembly has become. In an outward way, and would in a sense correspond with the great House of Second Timothy 2. Now it's God is very careful not to call that great house in Two Timothy 2 The House of God because it's lost the character of the House of God. It no longer has the features of the House of God, although it is responsibly dealt with as such. And you might say here the the ship when it becomes a wreck. It it is in a sense of the responsible, the assembly and responsibility. But it really represents the great house and what it has become in the hands of men. And so as we read there in verse 43. That Paul commanded that they which could swim. Well, I I wonder if we can take this up. You have life in Christ. We know something about the axe head. Swimming is having life. Do you know something about being able to swim against the currents of Christendom? I believe that's what's involved, those that could swim. They weren't just carried with the tide, so to speak. They weren't just carried with the current. They could swim. They had the energy of faith to leave the broken pieces of the ship. You might say they had the faith to be cast on the Lord. And I believe it again in Second Timothy, you know it says they that call upon the Lord. Calling upon the Lord would be dependents, would it not? It speaks of a dependent people, those that call upon the Lord, and it seems to me that those who cast themselves into the sea and swam to shore. Where those who call upon the name of the Lord, they were cast upon the Lord. They didn't trust to any human institution, they didn't trust to any human innovations. They could leave the pieces of the ship entirely. They had the energy of faith to be cast upon the Lord and to trust the Lord. Do we have that energy of faith to trust the Lord, the head of the church to trust and the power of the Spirit of God? Or do we resort to human maneuvers? I think that would be involved in those in verse 44. The rest, some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship, There were those who still clinged. To portions of the ship. They didn't have that energy to cast themselves, as it were, into that tumultuous sea and independence upon the Lord, to go against the currents. They had to rely, they had to rely to on the parts of the ship. Well, I trust that there might be an exercise here of energy, and it does require energy, you know, sometimes if we take up a path. That our intellects. As having some understanding of the word. Gives us to know is right and correct, but we don't have the real spiritual energy for it. And the next thing you know, we we want to get hold of some of the pieces of the ship. We can't really go on in the energy of faith and counting on the Lord as the head of the Church in his spirit and perhaps we turn to the to the things that man has brought in in the great house, the aids and and human. Expediences. Those are the broken pieces of the ship. Would to God that we did have that energy to continue swimming on in you might say in faith. I think of Peter. You remember when the Lord came walking to his disciples on the sea and they were in the ship and Peter when they saw the the Lord Peter said Lord, if it be thou bid me to come unto thee. And Peter actually walked on the sea when he got out of that.

That ship, the ship there, I have no doubt, would be a little picture of Judaism. A human religion, that is, after Christianity was inaugurated, it had no divine authority at all. And he actually walked on the water. That would be contrary to nature. And as long as he had his eye on the Lord, he walked. But when he saw the seas boisterous and the waves, then he began to sink. Well, I think that's a little comparable to what we have here. If we're going to cast ourselves into the sea and swim to shore, we're going to have to have our eyes on the Lord and not all of the difficulties and problems that arise. The boisterous sea, I have no doubt. But what those who were swimming, these who cast themselves into the sea and swam to shore, they could hear perhaps the waves beating against the rocks. But they had to get their minds off that. They couldn't be thinking of all of the dangers. And you might say the difficulties, but they had to have their eyes on the Lord. But they didn't reach out and take hold of those pieces of the ship. They continued to swim. And this is what I would want to bring before us, that even though there may be difficulties, and if they see maybe boisterous and tempestuous with our eyes on the Lord, we want to swim to shore that energy of faith. That would maintain what is of the Lord. And refuse and reject the broken pieces of the ship, those human expediences. That man has brought in in the great house will now turn to Ezekiel 47. I'd just like to touch on that a little. We have. What might be for our help in individual exercise? I think the swimming would involve a collective exercise too. Being together. Well, here we have waters. And I said in the beginning or a few moments ago that water sometimes used in a different figure in Second Kings, I have no doubt, is a figure of death. And I suppose in the 27th of Acts the water there would have reference to the adverse circumstances. That those who swam to shore would have to go through, but here the water is more. A figure of refreshment and blessing. And perhaps would be a little figure of the word of God is that which brings refreshment. And to us that's really the way that God reaches us is through his words, through his word. Now I know it's the Spirit of God who makes the word good to us, but we don't want to get over into what I would speak of is fanaticism. We know that there's some who get carried away with with the Spirit in such a way that they have all sorts of visions and revelations by the Spirit, they say, but not according to the Word. God refreshes us through His Word. He speaks to us out of this precious book. It's the Spirit of God taking the Word and making it good to our souls. But you'll notice how that the water in verse one issued out of the house out of the presence of the Lord. It's what comes from the Lord. And we see that. It comes out eastward. Well, we know of course, that in Scripture the the various. Directions are have significance. In the east, of course, is the the place from which the sun rises. And it speaks of the, of the hope that the believer has. And it's, it's a favorable direction, you might say eastward. And not only that, but we read at the end of the verse that it comes out at the South side of the altar. Well, we know that the South side in Scripture is the pleasant side the north speaks of of. Trials and tribulations. The

westward would speak of that which wanes where the sun goes down, but the South side is the favorable side, the pleasant side. So it speaks of the what comes out from the House of God that is favorable to his people, refreshment from himself out from under the altar. It's not judgment coming out from the altar, but what flows to us. And we know that you might say this flows out to us in blessing.

Because the Lord Jesus was offered is aware upon that altar. And now there are great benefits that flows out to us and it comes to us in the word. If we're going to enjoy what God has for his people, if we're going to be. According to God's mind and be strengthened according to God, it's going to be through His word and in the power of the Spirit of God. And so we see where this water, we see the source of it. You know, we find that in Scripture that if you find the source of a thing, you can tell what its character is. And the source of this river is the House of God in the altar. On the east side, coming out from the right side, that would speak of strength would it not? The strength and power of God and and refreshing for his people. Reminds us of what the Lord Jesus says in John 7 when he spoke of the Spirit. Out of his belly shall throw flow rivers of living water, refreshment for the believer and the power of the Spirit through the Word. But he remember the man goes out and measures the waters. And we read at the end of verse three when he measured the waters there it was under the ankles. Well, that would cover the feet. And I take it here that it would be the word of God reaching us to govern our walk. Covers the feed here. Oh, we find much in the Word of God that that relates to our walk, even to children. Children, obey your parents and the Lord. And even to servants. Being subject to their masters, husbands, fathers, brothers, sisters, we find much of the word of God to regulate our walk and it really is for our refreshment. Sort of like the Lord washing the feet of his disciples. It wasn't a difficult thing. It was a very pleasant thing that the Lord did. It refreshed them, but it it had to do with their walk too. And then we read then that he measured the waters again in verse four, and it was to the knees. Well, others might have thoughts in regard to this, but I've taken this that in connection with that verse in Hebrews 12 That we're to, we're to strengthen the feeble knees. That is, I think this is the word of God that encourages us. Or how we need this to be in the Word of God for encouragement. Many of the Lord's people are are cast down. There's so many difficulties in trials and there's much confusion and we're conscious of our own weakness, our own failure. And how often we have to confess to the Lord our lack of energy. And all of this, I believe, tends to to discourage our hearts. But how encouraging it is to read in the Word of God of what He has made us to be. And his thoughts toward us. We read there that the Father himself loveth you. And when we read. What we are to God and to Christ. Of what great value the value he places upon us, and what he has. Brought us into at the present time. How it would encourage us while taking our eyes off ourselves and our failures and our weaknesses. How it would build us up in our most holy faith and encourage us as to what we are in the Lord. You know, the apostle Paul said he could boast of a man in Christ. He couldn't boast of what he was in himself. But when he thought of a man in Christ, and you and I are in Christ, as believers always said, I can boast in that. And it would encourage us. And we only learned this from the Word of God. You'll never learn what you are to God by your own experience. You learn what you are to God, into Christ in the Word, and to lay hold of it by faith. Well, now we read after that the waters in verse four were up to the loins. Well, the loins in Scripture speak of affection. The seed of affections. And here I believe it's the word of God enlarging our affections. Oh, the more. The more we learn of Christ, the more the Father is made known to us. As we increase in the knowledge of God, it would increase our affections. If it's true spiritual knowledge and understanding, it will increase our affections. We will. We will find our affections enlarged.

You know the Corinthians, their affections were narrowed. The apostle Paul had to say, you're not narrowed in our affections, but in your own. And why is that? It was because they were worldly. There is nothing that will narrow and wither the affections of the people of God more than association with the world. But the moral of one is in the word of God, in an association with the Lord's people, how their affections are enlarged. The water is under the loins. And then finally in verse five, the waters rose so high. That he could swim in them here, it's not the word that would. Affect our walk or correct our walk. It's not the word to encourage us or to enlarge our infections. You might say it's that in which we find our enjoyment. You know we read in Romans 5 about those the Saints who joy in God. Think of that to find your enjoyment in the things of God. You say, is this possible? Yes, it is. But it's possible only in the spirit. It's not possible in the flesh, but as we are in the Word of God and in a spirit of humility and self judgment. Why? We find that the Word of God will so enlarge us that we can, as it were, swim in it for enjoyment. Enjoy the things of God as set forth in the Word of God, and there's nothing greater to enjoy. We find that this is one thing that we can enjoy that never leaves. Anything unsavory in its wake, we find that every other source of joy in this world, the sting is always in the tail. It's afterwards, but here we find that which leaves, as it were, no after tape. After taste at all. He has no sorrow with this something we can joy in. Well, I trust that we might have the energy to to enjoy the things of God through the Word of God. This wonderful refreshment that flows out from the presence of the Lord. Do we have that life in Christ? We have an exercise and an interest to go on in the position of dependence upon the Lord as Head and the Spirit of God and apart from any human. Age. And then to have the Word of God is that refreshment and the joy and rejoicing of our heart.

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