

# Ezekiel 47:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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.

## Analysis

The climax—'waters to swim in, a river that could not be passed over'—represents complete immersion where self-sufficiency fails and total dependence on God's sustaining power becomes necessary. The Hebrew נָחַל (nachal, 'river') suggests torrential, powerful flow—no longer gentle stream but mighty flood. The phrase 'could not be passed over' (לֹא-יִעַבֵּר, lo-ye'aver) indicates human ability exhausted; swimming requires surrendering control, trusting buoyancy. This pictures fullness of the Spirit (Ephesians 5:18), complete sanctification, utter dependence on God. Reformed theology emphasizes that ultimate Christian experience isn't shallow wading but drowning in God's grace—'dying to self' (Galatians 2:20) to 'live in the Spirit' (Galatians 5:25). The river's uncrossable depth paradoxically represents both overwhelming power and perfect security—God's grace is infinite yet sustaining.

## Historical Context

Rivers held dual significance in Scripture: blessing and judgment. The Jordan River marked boundary into promised land (Joshua 3:13-17). David crossed Kidron fleeing Absalom (2 Samuel 15:23). Naaman's healing required Jordan immersion (2 Kings 5:10-14). Jesus' baptism in Jordan inaugurated public ministry (Matthew 3:13-17). Revelation's river of life flows from God's throne through New Jerusalem (Revelation 22:1-2), representing eternal life abundant. Ancient irrigation made desert bloom (Isaiah 35:1-7, 41:18-19), foreshadowing Spirit's transforming power.

The uncrossable river also recalls flood judgment (Genesis 7:17-24) and Red Sea deliverance (Exodus 14:21-29)—same water brings judgment or salvation depending on relationship with God. Swimming-depth water represents complete immersion in God's purposes—total commitment without reservation.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 1:17** — The righteous shall live by faith

**James 2:17** — Faith and works

**Colossians 1:16** — All things created through Christ

**Genesis 1:1** — Creation of heavens and earth

## Study Questions

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1. Have you experienced 'swimming depth' Christianity where self-reliance fails and total dependence on God becomes necessary?
2. What fears prevent you from surrendering control and plunging into the deep waters of complete consecration?
3. How does the river's uncrossable depth simultaneously represent God's overwhelming power and His perfect sustaining grace?

## Interlinear Text

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וְיִמְדָּח	אֶל	בְּמָלֵךְ	לֹא	אָשָׁר	לֹא	אָמַת
Afterward he measured	a thousand	a river	H834	H3808	that I could	H3201
H4058	H505	H5158				
יַעֲבֵר	בַּיִת	תָּאֵל	מִתְּמִימָה	מִתְּמִימָה	שְׁחוּט	בְּמָלֵךְ
not pass over	H3588	were risen	for the waters	for the waters	to swim in	a river
H5674		H1342	H4325	H4325	H7813	H5158
לֹא	אָשָׁר	רַבְנָה:	יַעֲבֵר:			
H834	H3808	not pass over	H5674			

## Additional Cross-References

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**Isaiah 11:9** (Parallel theme): They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

**Habakkuk 2:14** (Parallel theme): For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.