

Bible and the Headlines: Living River

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Back in May, the academic news organization 'The Conversation' reviewed Cambridge professor Robert MacFarlane's book, "Is a River Alive." The review answered MacFarlane's question in the affirmative for physical and spiritual rivers. Some recent headlines show the life in flowing water is still news that attracts people's interest.

The Telegraph on January 9th reviewed the fourth installment of a video series produced by Catherine, Princess of Wales. The article, "Princess of Wales: The Rivers Within Us Cleanse and Purify," describes the Princess's intention behind the latest segment. A viewer of the episode will hear the Princess say, "For the rivers within us flow with ease, fears washed away, cleanse and purify. Come to peace with our tears and discover what it means to be alive." The declaration is the culmination of the Princess's two-year battle with cancer.

On January 12th, the architecture industry website Design Middle East announced, "R.Evolution Unveils Eywa Way of Water." The article described the ethos behind the luxury real estate developer's latest project along the Dubai Water Canal. Consisting of 65 private residences, each domicile contains, "Purified air, structured living water, abundant natural light, and carefully considered spatial flow . . . to support health and vitality, emotional well-being, and restorative living." The CEO of R.Evolution described his creation, "It is a living ecosystem where architecture, energy, ritual, and nature work together to elevate life itself." The community is meant to be a spiritual oasis in Dubai's desert geography.

Israel's desert geography was the setting for the Bible's revelation of spiritual rivers. The prophet Isaiah told the people of Israel that God promised, "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants" (Isa 44:3). This hope is repeated in many psalms and proverbs. The culmination of God's pledge was revealed in Jesus. He told a woman drawing water from her village well, "Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them" (Joh 7:38). This was good news, not only for the woman, but for everyone thirsty for spiritual truth.

In answer to the Cambridge don's question, "Is a River Alive?", the Church can answer with confidence, "Yes- the one that flows from Our Savior."