# WATER IN THE BODY, LIVING WATER IN THE SOUL

An Ontological and Contemplative Reflection on Being, the Four Rivers of Eden, and Christ as the Source of Life

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## 1. Water as a Gift of Life

The adult human body is, on average, about 50–60% water. Water supports biological processes such as circulation and temperature regulation. This fact can also open a space for philosophical and spiritual reflection.

Water is not God, and the percentage of water in the body is not a measure of faith. Yet water can serve as a contemplative symbol, reminding us that life is received, sustained, and worthy of gratitude. In Thomas Aquinas's philosophy, the existence of creatures depends on God as the source of all being. Water can therefore become a starting point for contemplating human limitation and the gift of life.

## 2. The Four Rivers of Eden: A Journey of the Soul

Genesis 2:10–14 describes a river flowing from Eden that divides into four branches: Pishon, Gihon, Tigris, and Euphrates. In the contemplative method RUSA MERINDUKAN AIR ("The Deer Longing for Water"), these rivers symbolize four movements of the soul: receiving, relating, walking, and surrendering.

Receiving means recognizing life as a gift; relating means opening oneself to God and neighbor; walking means responding to God's call in daily life; surrendering means entrusting one's journey to divine providence. This is a contemplative development, not a literal interpretation of the geography of Eden.

Heidegger's idea of being-in-the-world helps us understand that human beings live through their bodies, relationships, experiences, and actions.

## 3. The Body as an Experience of Being

Gabriel Marcel deepens this reflection through his thought on the mystery of being and human participation in it. The body's water content can be measured scientifically, but human life cannot be fully explained by numbers. The person experiences joy, suffering, hope, longing, and questions about meaning.

"The human person does not merely observe the mystery of being; the person is involved in it."

Note: This is a contemplative formulation inspired by Marcel's thought, not a direct quotation from him.

Karl Rahner's theology of humanity's openness to God and grace takes the reflection further. In faith, this openness invites us to contemplate life as a gift and our relationship with God as a calling.

## 4. From Bodily Water to Living Water

The psalmist uses the image of water to express the soul's longing for God.

"As a deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God."

— Psalm 42:1, adapted from the biblical image

This image brings bodily need into conversation with the soul's longing. It does not mean that biological need proves the existence of God.

"Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink."

— John 7:37–38, adapted from the biblical passage

Jesus invites people to come to him. In Christian faith, Christ is the center of reflection on Living Water, and the work of the Holy Spirit directs us toward the life given by God.

## 5. RUSA MERINDUKAN AIR: Four Movements of the Soul

1. RECEIVE — recognize life as a gift.
2. RELATE — build relationships with God and neighbor.
3. WALK — embody faith in daily life.
4. SURRENDER — entrust the whole journey to God.

These movements are not a mathematical formula for measuring spiritual depth. They are an invitation to live attentively, gratefully, and with openness to God.

ONE SOURCE → FOUR RIVERS → FOUR MOVEMENTS OF THE SOUL → RETURN TO THE SOURCE.

## 6. Returning to the Source

Aquinas invites us to contemplate existence as received. Heidegger helps us understand human involvement in the world. Marcel deepens our awareness of the mystery of being, while Rahner opens a path for reflecting on humanity's openness to God. These reflections support philosophy; they do not replace the Word of God.

Water in the body sustains biological life. The four rivers of Eden inspire a contemplative journey. The word of Christ directs the soul's longing toward Living Water.

From the SOURCE, through the journey of life, back to the SOURCE.

Not because we can possess the Source, but because we learn to receive life as a gift and respond to Christ's invitation to come and drink.

## Footnotes and References

1. Scripture: Genesis 2:10–14; Psalm 42; John 7:37–39. English biblical phrases are adaptations of the passages, not verbatim quotations from a specified translation.

2. Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologiae: conceptual reference for God as the source of being.

3. Martin Heidegger, Being and Time (1927): the concept of being-in-the-world.

4. Gabriel Marcel, The Mystery of Being: the mystery of being and personal participation.

5. Karl Rahner, Foundations of Christian Faith: humanity's openness to God and grace.

Academic note: Formulations associated with the philosophers are paraphrases or interpretive reflections, not direct quotations. For academic publication, verify the edition, publisher, and page references.