

WASHED BY THE WORD

Dr. Brian J. Bailey

Version 1.0

“Washed by the Word”

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Introduction

This book was birthed through a longing for the people of God to be able to triumph in the coming tribulations. We are warned by Christ in Matthew 24:12 that because sin shall abound in the last days, the love of many shall grow cold. The Apostle Paul, too, said that some will depart from the faith in the latter days giving heed to doctrines of demons (1 Tim. 4:1).

Regretfully, we have noticed that there is an onslaught against Christian leaders, especially in the area of morality, whether it be sexual or financial. We have therefore felt the need to write this book so that as God's people, we can be washed through obedience to the Commandments from all filthiness of the flesh and covetousness.

This book is sent out with a prayer that you, dear reader, might find that as you read page after page, the gentle purifying waters of the Word of God will be cleansing your mind and heart. May God bless you.

Chapter One

The Need to be Washed

We read in Romans 3:23: “*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.*” Ever since the Fall of man, we have all come short of the glory of God, and it is God’s desire to bring all His people back to the original state of glory that Adam received in the beginning.

The Greek word for glory is *doxa*. This signifies the radiance that issues forth from His Person or appearance, and is used to describe God’s splendour and power.

But for God to bring His people back to that which He originally ordained for them, He must move them on until they have attained to that place whereby they are the participants of the glory of God. This is, and will be, the message of the Last Days—God’s putting His glory upon His people.

The Way to God’s Glory

Psalm 77:13 reveals to us the way to God’s glory: “*Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary...*” Thus it is through the truths found in the Tabernacle of Moses that God reveals to us the way to His glory. The Tabernacle of Moses occupies 50 chapters in the Word of God. It is, therefore, of prime importance for each believer to

understand, and be rooted and grounded in the truths that this Tabernacle contains.

Briefly, the Tabernacle of Moses consists of three sections. First, there is the Outer Court, into which all God's children were able to enter by the one door, symbolizing Christ, who said, "*I am the door ...*" (John 10:9). Inside, they were able to offer up animal sacrifices for their sins and transgressions.

Then there is the Holy Place, which was reserved for priests, and in which were found three pieces of furniture. There was the Golden Candlestick with its seven lamps, epitomizing the Seven Spirits of the Lord (Isa. 11:2):

- 1) The Spirit of the Lord (for teaching and preaching),
- 2) The Spirit of Wisdom,
- 3) The Spirit of Understanding,
- 4) The Spirit of Counsel,
- 5) The Spirit of Might,
- 6) The Spirit of Knowledge,
- 7) The Spirit of the Fear of the Lord.

Another piece of furniture in the Holy Place was the Altar of Shewbread, which speaks of Christ as the Bread of Life. As we feed upon Christ the Bread of Life, we can

in turn become broken bread to feed others. There was also another altar, the Altar of Incense, which speaks of prayer and supplication.

The Veil separates the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies, and it is within the Veil in the Holy of Holies that God's glory resides. There in the Holy of Holies is the Ark of the Covenant—a wooden box covered in gold, and containing two tablets of stone upon which God had engraved the Ten Commandments. The Mercy Seat is the lid that covers the Ark of the Covenant and is the place over which the glory of God rests (Ex. 25:22).

The Veil speaks of the crucified life as expressed in Galatians 2:20: *“I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.”* When we have experienced the crucified life, we become candidates to enter into the Holy of Holies with Christ. The two tablets of stone speak of the ultimate revelation, of having the laws of God inscribed on the fleshly tables of our hearts, so that we do not simply do His will, but we *delight* to do His will (Ps. 40:8).

In Hebrews 10:19-20, the Apostle Paul said, *“Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say,*

his flesh...” Here, we see that the way into the Holy of Holies was opened when Jesus shed His blood for us at Calvary, and we are enjoined by the Lord to enter within the Veil where His glory resides.

The Role of Washing in the Way to Glory

There were many things that had to be done in the service of the Tabernacle. One of them was the ceremonial act of washing, which speaks of the spiritual washing to which we must submit in order to experience God’s glory.

There were many aspects of washing. For example, every sacrifice had to be washed, as is seen in Leviticus 1:8-9: *“And the priests, Aaron’s sons, shall lay the parts, the head, and the fat, in order upon the wood that is on the fire which is upon the altar: But his inwards and his legs shall he wash in water: and the priest shall burn all on the altar; to be a burnt sacrifice, an offering made by fire, of a sweet savour unto the LORD.”* Here the inwards of the bullock and its legs had to be washed with water.

The Lord was very particular concerning the offerings that were made unto Him. During the time of Malachi the prophet, He rebuked the people for bringing to the altar animals that were blind or were defiled with scurvy and such like. He asked the question, *“And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? and if ye offer the lame*

and sick, is it not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? ...”
(Mal. 1:8).

We can perhaps understand this more when we look upon our offerings as a gift. When we choose a gift for a friend or an acquaintance, we are very particular that the gift be without blemish, the reason being that the quality of the gift reflects the esteem we have for the person to whom we are offering the gift.

Then in Leviticus 8:6, we find that Aaron the high priest and his sons had to be washed with water. In Numbers 8:21, the Levites had to be purified, and their garments had to be washed.

Speaking of our garments, we are very careful to wear garments that have been meticulously washed so that again, we are expressing to the person in whose company we are going to appear, the esteem that we hold for them. For example, one would not appear before the Queen in ragged garments. It would be an affront to her and we would in fact be saying, “I have little esteem for Your Majesty.” No, we would seek to wear our best clothes, all washed and ironed, to reflect the honour that we feel when we are invited into her presence.

How much more so should it be when we go to church, dressed not in the clothes that we have been working

in, but those that are special. In my youthful days, working men and women always had a special suit or dress—their very best—and it was called the “going to church” dress or suit. That was because we esteemed going to church as going into the presence of Almighty God, and we wanted Him to know the honour in which we held Him, our esteem for Him, and our gratitude towards Him.

Before Aaron and his sons could enter into the tabernacle, they also had to wash their hands and feet: *“And he set the laver between the tent of the congregation and the altar, and put water there, to wash withal. And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: When they went into the tent of the congregation, and when they came near unto the altar, they washed; as the LORD commanded Moses”* (Ex. 40:30-32). The hands speak of their service, and the feet speak of their walk with God. Likewise, spiritual washing is an essentiality of the Christian life.

We have seen that the animal sacrifices had to be washed during the Age of the Law. In like manner, we as living sacrifices need to have our lives washed so that we may be presented before the King of kings as the Apostle Paul said in Romans 12:1, *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.”*

Washed from Deep Sin

There is a question that often arises in the hearts of many, not just in our generation but throughout the generations of the Church. That question is: “Can someone who has been deep in sin, whether before or after conversion, come into the Holy of Holies?” As we look into the Scriptures, we find that there were notable people—King David, Paul, and Peter who were so washed that they could come into the Holy of Holies.

A cup, for example, may have been immersed in filth and dirt, but the act of washing that cup can make it fit for a king’s table. Therefore, washing transforms a person from being a most vile person into becoming one who is acceptable to God. So whatever your past is, let it be made very clear in your heart that if you are washed, you can be transformed and become acceptable to come into the Holy of Holies—the King’s chambers.



Whatever your past is, you can be washed, transformed and accepted into the Holy of Holies.

The Importance of Acknowledgement

Let us look at some aspects of spiritual washing. When someone desires to be washed, it is so important to have the attitude of King David who said in Psalm 32:5, *“I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah.”* He also said in Psalm 51:3-4, *“For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.”*

Little boys are, generally speaking, averse to washing. They often have to be shown in the mirror the dirt on their little faces so that they can acknowledge the fact that they have to be washed. It is so important that we first acknowledge our need of washing.

In 2 Timothy 2:25, the Apostle Paul (writing to Timothy) said, *“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God will peradventure give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth.”* To be able to acknowledge one’s need of washing is actually a divine grace, because so many say, “I do not need it.” As Proverbs 30:12 says, *“There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet*

is not washed from their filthiness.” May God grant that we be not so, but that we acknowledge our need of washing.

Washing by the Word

There are two types of washing in the Word of God. First, there is the washing by the blood of Jesus Christ (Rev. 7:14), and second, there is a washing by the Word of God. In this book, we will be focusing on the washing by the Word.

In the Tabernacle of Moses, Aaron and his sons dipped their hands in the laver of water and then poured water over their feet before ministering to the Lord. Today we have taps and faucets from which water flows, but obviously, this is not the water of which the Word of God is speaking.

The Lord perfects His Church through the washing of water by the Word of God. We see this in Ephesians 5:25-27 where the Apostle Paul wrote, *“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”*

How does that water of the Word purify us? Christianity is very practical. We cannot just say to someone, “Wash yourself in the Word.” To most people, that does not mean anything. The answer is found in 1 Peter 1:22 where Peter says, “*Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently.*” In other words, **we are washed when we obey the truth of God’s Word.**

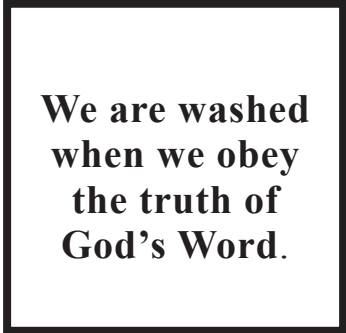
What Defiles Us

There is a need for us to be washed and purified by the Word of God, but what then are the things that defile us? The answer is found in Mark 7. Here, the Pharisees were very strong on ceremonial etiquette, and one of the aspects of that etiquette was to wash their hands. If, for example, Aaron had to wash his hands, then all had to wash their hands before eating.

When the Pharisees saw that some of Jesus’ disciples were eating bread with defiled (unwashed) hands, they challenged Jesus, saying that one had to constantly wash one’s hands. Jesus was not at all happy with them; and He said to them that they were following the tradition of men in the washing of pots and cups, and many other such similar things, but they rejected the commandments of God (Mk. 7:8-9).

Then Jesus called all of the people together and spoke on a very important aspect of being washed. He said, *“There is nothing from without [outside] a man, that entering into him can defile him: but the things which come out of him, those are they that defile the man”* (Mk. 7:15).

He then explains in verse 21-23: *“For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man.”* Therefore in order for cleansing to take place, these things have to be washed from us. To overcome defilement, we must obey the truth of the Word of God in that area.



**We are washed
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God's Word.**

Evil Thoughts

The first thing that Jesus speaks of is evil thoughts. How do we wash ourselves from evil thoughts? In Psalm 1, we are given the keys for cleansing ourselves from these evil thoughts. It is a very beautiful psalm, beginning with *“Blessed is the man that walketh not in*

the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.” This man does not listen to the ungodly, and is thus kept from evil thoughts in his mind.

Then the psalmist continues in verse 2, *“His delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law doth he meditate day and night.”* Another key to overcoming evil thoughts is to *meditate on* the Word of God and to *obey* what the Word of God says. So if we encounter an evil thought, this thought is counteracted by God’s Word, and when we obey that Word, we are purified. Meditation in the Word of God does cleanse us from those things.

Adulteries

The next thing that defiles us is adulteries. I am always very troubled when a person commits adultery, because it is not just a physical act; adultery means that one has broken the covenant made with one’s husband or one’s wife.

Some years ago, there was a movement involving Christian men called “The Promise Keepers” that began on the West coast of the USA. The thought behind that movement was: “I have made a promise to my wife to only be with her, and I have to keep that promise.” It had very large followings because so many men were not keeping the promise of faithfulness that they had made

to their wives. (Of course there were many involved in that group who had a godly desire to be counted faithful to the Lord and to their wives, and who wanted to receive grace from God to have a pure heart in the area of marriage.)

Adultery is overcome by keeping one's promise. I was once in a train station in Berne, Switzerland, where I noticed two particular men who had finished their work for the day, and were waiting for the train to come in. One said to the other, "Why don't we go off and be with some women tonight?" The other one said, "No, I want to honour my wife;" and that ended the conversation.

Fornication

Now, the next item in our list is fornication. In 1 Thessalonians 4:3, we read: "*For this is the will of God, even your sanctification that you should abstain from fornication.*"

My wife had an illustration that she used in Sunday School classes when teaching the little children. She would take some string, and she would say, "Now, who is the strongest boy amongst you?" Inevitably, one would come forward. Then she would say, "I want to see if you can break loose from this string." She would tie the string just once around the little fellow, and then she

would ask him, “Now, can you break loose?” The little fellow was, of course, full of determination to show that he was strong, and he would quickly break the string. Then she said, “I am going to do it twice around.” After the third or fourth time around, that little fellow could not break free from the string. The power of sin is also described in Proverbs 5:22: *“His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins.”*

The key to having victory over the temptation to commit fornication is to flee from situations that draw us into that sin. As an example, we have the case of Joseph and Potiphar’s wife described in Genesis 39:12: *“And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.”* Joseph chose to flee from that situation.

For those who are bound by this sin, they must seek deliverance either directly from the Lord or through the prayers of one of His ministers.

Murders

Concerning murders, the Lord refers in Matthew 5:21-22 to sixth commandment, which says, “Thou shalt not kill.” However, He then goes on to say, *“...Whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca,*

shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.”

In the state of New York, there was once a situation in which some people were upset one with one another, to the point that their anger burned continually. Apparently, the dispute concerned a piece of land; and neither side would drop the issue. The result was that the hearts of these people were filled with violent anger, which led to double murder and the death penalty. We have to be very careful not to let the sun go down upon our anger, and we must seek God’s help to be cleansed from anger.

Thefts

Then we have thefts or stealing. We read in Ephesians 4:28: *“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.”* The solution to overcoming theft is to do honest and good work so that one can be a cheerful giver.

Wickedness

The next thing that defiles us is wickedness. Wickedness is overcome by goodness. In Romans 12:21, the Apostle Paul said, *“Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”*

Goodness is one of the highest qualities of the Godhead—one of the highest characteristics of Christ. In Exodus 33:18-19, we read: “*And he [Moses] said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he [the Lord] said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy.*” Goodness will wash away wickedness from our lives.

Deceit

Then we come to deceit. We wash away deceit by obeying the Word of God and doing those things which are righteous.

Colossians 1:21 tells us that wicked works alienate our minds from God. Conversely, when we choose to please God, we become established in Him who is the Truth (Jn. 14:6), the very opposite of deceit. We are purified through obedience to Him (1 Pet. 1:22).

Lasciviousness

Lasciviousness, which means lustfulness, is an excessive desire of things that could even be lawful. The way to the victory over this, to become washed and purified from lust, is to develop temperance or self-control (2 Peter 1:5-7).

Evil Eye

Next we come to the evil eye. An evil eye may be defined as an eye that seeks to search out evil things and seeks to harm people.

A bountiful eye on the other hand seeks to do good to people. Having a bountiful eye will cleanse the evil eye. The book of Proverbs speaks of the bountiful eye: *“He that hath a bountiful eye shall be blessed; for he giveth of his bread to the poor”* (Prov. 22:9). One who has a bountiful eye can see needs and meet them.

Blasphemy

Blasphemy comes in many forms, including the taking of the names of evil spirits and idols and proclaiming them as gods. It is therefore really the breaking of the second commandment against making graven images or idolatry, as well as the third commandment against taking the name of the Lord our God in vain.

After salvation, God places in us a longing for sanctification and holiness. James 3:2 says, *“In many things we offend all; if any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man and able also to bridle the whole body.”* Therein lies the key to Christian perfection—it is in controlling our tongue.

I used to minister in a certain country many years ago where they had a habit of talking a great deal. I remember a pastor there who lifted his finger and said, *“In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips is wise”* (Prov. 10:19). In other words, he was saying that his people spoke too much, and too long.



**A wise man is one who
speaks few words.**

We have to watch these things, because the Lord said in Matthew 12:37, *“For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.”* It is very important to understand what Christian perfection is. *“Even a fool is counted wise when he holds his peace...”* (Prov.17:28 NKJV). A wise man is one who speaks few words. I commend that truth to you because my desire is that you would all enter into the Holy of Holies. James 3:6 (NKJV) says, *“The tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.”* The tongue can cause us a multitude of problems.

Pride

Another thing that defiles is pride, and we are cleansed from pride through humility. This should be expressed by acts of humbling ourselves.

Holy Scripture reveals to us in Matthew 11:29 and in Philippians 2:6-8 the aspect of the humility of Christ who humbled Himself to take on the form of a servant even though He was King of Kings.

Likewise the cry goes forth from the lips of God concerning His people when He says:

“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land” (2 Chr. 7:14).

“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble” (1 Pet. 5:5).

Foolishness

Then the last one that Jesus mentions is foolishness. That is overcome by wisdom. The godly wisdom

that overcomes foolishness has seven pillars found in James 3:17. It is pure, gentle, and peaceable, not giving an occasion to others to criticise one's conduct.

When the Queen of England and Prince Philip visited Ireland on one occasion, they came to a beer house, and there they were shown Irish beer. When it was offered to them, they smiled and nodded; but neither would take it. Royalty has to be very careful what they do and what they accept. How much more so this is true for the children of the King of kings and the Lord of lords!

Financial Integrity

At this point, I would like to address specifically the issue of financial integrity. There is a great danger that I have seen throughout the world when churches and congregations become so large that the pastor tends to assume that he must act as a business president—having a better car, a better home, and dressing as one in the upper class. The tendency is to take the money for all this from the church treasury.

At times, money is taken from the church to educate the pastor's children to give them a lifestyle that is well beyond that which much of the congregation enjoys. I have also noticed that one of the grave pitfalls for pastors is that their wives begin to demand a higher living status. Time and time again, I see pastors being

dominated by the demands of their wives. Not only is this true in the Christian community, but I have also seen it in the secular and political arena. Wives must learn modesty, otherwise they can destroy the ministry of their husbands by their outrageous demands.

We would do well to remember that Jesus was poor throughout His life and was dependent on small donations that people supplied Him with. His manner of life never changed, and thus should it be with us as pastors. Let us at all times live on very modest salaries and be an example to our flock to do likewise.

**Jesus was poor throughout His life;
His manner of life never changed.**

Financial integrity is essential for any leader, whether in the secular or Christian world. Let us be men and women of integrity, so that we shall not fall into worldly lusts and pleasures.

God's Word Reveals and Purifies

I would like to encourage each one of us to look at ourselves in God's spiritual mirror, the Word of God. The Apostle James said, "*For if any be a hearer of the*

word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was” (Jas. 1:23-24). Therefore, the Word of God is like a mirror; it will show us ourselves and where there needs to be washing.

Ephesians 5:26 speaks of the Lord’s washing His Church with water from the Word. This is how He is going to do it: He is going to point out certain things in our lives. Then when we are shown our needs, we must first acknowledge them and say, “Yes, Lord, I admit that this has to be washed from my life.”

The Lord said in Jeremiah 3:12-13, *“Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and*

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I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever. Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD.”

Many times, there is a battle in coming to the place of acknowledging sin, as was the case with King David, who wrote: *“When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah”* (Ps. 32:3-5). We have to acknowledge the needs and blemishes in our lives, and as we do so, then by the grace of God, we can be washed by obedience to the Word, and be purified.

When God reveals to us the positive quality that He wants to work on in our lives, we are to meditate upon and immerse our thoughts in scriptures on that particular quality. As we do so, we shall find that the Word of God moves from our mind to our heart and our affections, eventually impacting the way we act, and thus becoming part of who we are.

In the natural, we all want to be clean. Depending on what we have done, we take time to make sure that our hands and other parts of our bodies are washed at least once a day, and sometimes more often, because we like to be clean. How much more should we desire to be spiritually clean!

Let us remember that only clean vessels may enter into the Holy of Holies. May God grant that we will spend

time with Him cleansing and washing ourselves. A husband will often ask his wife before he goes out, “Do I look all right, dear?” In the same way, let us ask the Lord, “Am I ready to go out into the public? Is there any blemish that I should deal with?” As we allow God to wash us with the water of His Word, we will find that He works in us to make us fit for His presence.

Chapter Two

David and Joshua the High Priest

We have seen that it is God's desire for His people to be washed so that they can come into the Holy of Holies. In this chapter, we will study the life of King David, who was a prophet, a priest, and a king, and one who dwelt in the Holy of Holies. His life is of great relevance to us because it will be a role model in the Last Days as revealed in Zechariah 12:8: *"In that day shall the LORD defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and he that is feeble among them at that day shall be as David; and the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the LORD before them."*

The Life of David

At the age of 17, David was anointed by Samuel the prophet to become the king of all of Israel. By this anointing, he was able to slay Goliath the giant and become the captain of the armies of Israel under King Saul. But after that, he had to spend many years fleeing from the jealous wrath of Saul, who had lost the anointing and who recognized that David had received it.

Upon the death of Saul, David (when he was about 30 years old) was anointed for the second time to become king of Judah at Hebron for a period of seven and half

years. Then he was anointed the third time as king over all Israel. In fact, he was the only king to receive all three anointings.

Those three anointings correspond to the qualifications of those who are with the Lamb of God—the ones who are “...called, chosen and faithful” (Rev. 17:14) and who follow the Lamb wherever He goes (Rev. 14:4). The three anointings also speak of three levels of Christian maturity—beginning in the Outer Court (the little children), and then the Holy Place (the young men), and finally the Holy of Holies (the spiritual fathers).

After David was anointed for the third time, he went on to capture the city of Zion. Then we come to a very troubling situation in his life, one that we are seeing propagated here in the USA and elsewhere.

We begin in 2 Samuel 7:18 where King David was enjoying the privilege of sitting before the Ark of the Covenant in the Holy of Holies in the very presence of the Lord. David was thanking the Lord, for He had revealed to him the pattern of the temple and made many wonderful promises to him. Yet just a few years later, we find that David tarried in the king's house in a time when he should have been on the battlefield. During that time, he saw Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, bathing. He desired her and then committed adultery, fully knowing that she was the wife of one of his companions in arms

(2 Sam. 11). It is a very disturbing situation here because it seems that David came crashing down when he was almost at the height of his spiritual life.

It is very disturbing that David came crashing down when he was almost at the height of his spiritual life.

In order to understand why David succumbed to temptation, we must realize that while kings make laws and are called to enforce the law, they are also subject to those laws themselves. Deuteronomy 17:17, in particular, gives a very solemn warning to kings not to multiply wives. It was because David failed to obey this law that this disobedience opened up a door to temptation in his life.

In that particular battle, David's captain of the armies, Joab, finally captured the city. While man may view this as a victory, God evaluates situations very differently from the way man does. Proverbs 16:32 says, "*He that ruleth his spirit is greater than he that taketh a city.*" In other words, who we *are* is more important than what we *do*.

Being Kept by God

In recent times, there have been many reports of notable people throughout the world falling into the sin of adultery

or immorality. One reason why one falls into immorality is found in Ecclesiastes 7:26: *“And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart is snares and nets, and her hands as bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.”*

Here we have the picture of a woman who entraps men. Proverbs 7:26-27 describes her as one who *“... hath cast down many wounded: yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.”* These women are out there, looking out for those whom they might devour. Those who please God shall escape these women, but the sinner shall be taken; it is almost as though God uses these women to bring down the sinners.

Let us not forget that when this happened, King David was meeting with God in the Holy of Holies. This is my deep concern—we cannot be spiritually so high up that we cannot fall. One may wonder why God did not send His prophet to warn him, “Do not go up to the roof.” God protected King David in all his battles, but in that one area of moral purity He did not protect David because he had not obeyed God in that particular area.

That is why we have to be very careful. While we are protected by the power of God, if we are deliberately disobedient in a certain area, we are not going to be

protected by God in that area. The result is that we shall come crashing down spiritually.

Prior to crashing, there is always a warning from God. My wife was saying one day, “This person just fell into sin.” The Lord corrected her and said, “No one just falls into sin. I warn My people in various ways, perhaps from the quickened or spoken Word, or a dream or a warning from My prophets. Yet if despite these warnings My people choose to go past all the checks, then they fall into sin.”

**No one just falls into sin.
There is always a
warning from God.**

Who does the Lord warn? Psalm 50:23 says, “*Whosoever offereth praise, glorifieth Me and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I show the salvation of God.*” He warns those who order their conversation aright. So it is very important that we live a prudent life. It does not matter what the temptation is; we must ensure that our door to that path of temptation is closed.

In 2 Peter 1:5-8, there are certain steps that a good man should have worked out in his life: “*And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to*

virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Then He gives a promise in verse 10: *“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”* We see the emphasis that is put upon moral purity in the Word of God in Thessalonians: *“And this is the will of God; that you abstain from fornication”* (1 Th. 4:3). As a pastor, my desire is not as much restoration as it is prevention. My desire is that each one of you will be walking up those spiritual stairs and thus be kept by God from falling.

I have met pastors who have actually fallen into immorality, and continued in that sin for a time until it has been brought to light. I asked them, “What were you thinking?” Without exception, they all said, “I thought God would understand. I considered myself to be an exception to the rule.” However, the Scripture is clear that God is no respecter of persons (Acts 10:34).

The Life of Joshua the High Priest

We now turn to another troubling situation—this time in the life of Joshua the high priest. Joshua was the spiritual leader of Israel during the Restoration Era. In

Zechariah 3:1, the prophet Zechariah is given a vision about Joshua: *“Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel”* (Zech. 3:3).

Let us now pause to consider the situation. Joshua was the high priest and spiritual leader of Israel. He performed all the ceremonial requirements of the nation. He was at the top of the hierarchy, and yet his spiritual garments were filthy. He should have had clean garments but he did not. Proverbs 30:12 says, *“There is a generation that are pure in their own eyes, and yet is not washed from their filthiness.”* We must never presume that our spiritual garments are clean; we must ask the Lord to show us their condition.

Many years ago, when I was in Washington D.C. with a number of the brethren, the Lord brought to my attention one of the speakers of the House of Representatives who held one of the top positions in government. The Lord began to speak to me about him. He said, “I raised him up to be a righteous emblem and leader in this country.” Then the Lord opened my eyes and said, “But how can I use him? He has filthy garments.” I understood that these garments were the garments of adultery, and it was not long before that fact became public information.

There was a Swedish lady that I knew who told me, “I was in a convention in Sweden seated on the platform,

and the speaker was speaking so eloquently about the Second Coming. Then the Lord opened my eyes to see his spiritual garments, and they were spotted with the flesh.” She cried out to the Lord, “Oh, Lord! Show me mine!” I am sure that dear preacher who preached so eloquently on the Second Coming of the Lord thought he was in blazing glory, but sadly, it was not so in the sight of God.

In the natural, we have mirrors that show us whether our hair is right or our garments are right. The Apostle James speaks of the fact that the Word of God is like a

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mirror; it shows us who we are (Jas. 1:23). So we must ask the Lord, “Show me the condition of my eyes and of my spiritual garments” (see Rev. 3:18). We do not want to be fooled. At the end of our life, we will have to give an account of our lives to the Lord (2 Tim. 4:1), and we do not want Him to tell us that there were flaws that we did not deal with.

How important it is to realize that we can be at the top of the hierarchy and yet be filthy. God was very gracious to Joshua, as we read, “*And he [the Lord] answered and spake unto those that stood before him,*

saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by” (Zech. 3:4-5).

There was iniquity in the high priest, the leader, but the Lord caused him to have a change of spiritual garments. Then a promise was given to him in verse 7: “...*If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.*” What does that mean? I have experienced it in vision and in reality. Some continue walking with God on the same plateau instead of going higher with Him, while others stop walking with Him altogether. But if we will walk with God and continue to obey Him, we will always be moving higher and higher in Him.

I had a friend whose forte was the Restoration Books. In fact, he was a professor at a Bible College and taught those books in his classes. During a particular season, he was going through turmoil concerning his own life, and he cried out to the Lord, who brought his attention to Zechariah 3. He asked the Lord, “Lord, why did You wait so long before you dealt with those garments of

Joshua the high priest?” and the Lord replied, “It was because he did not ask me to.”

Thus, how God deals with us and cleanses us does depend partly on us. The more often we come before the Lord, asking Him to show us our spiritual condition and to wash us, the quicker the work is going to be done. I thought it was very interesting that he had to ask the Lord for that cleansing.

How quickly we are cleansed also depends on whether we please the Lord. Esther is a type of the Bride of Christ; and Hegai, the keeper of women, is a type of the Holy Spirit. In Esther 2:9 we read, “*And the maiden pleased him [Hegai], and she obtained kindness of him; and he speedily gave her her things for purification...*” Thus from this scripture, we glean the precious truth that as we learn to please the Holy Spirit, He will speedily give us all that we need that we may be purified for our Heavenly Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Danger of Hypocrisy

Recently, it has come to light that many well known men have fallen into sin. It is because their lives are not in accordance with what they profess to be. Some, professing to be family men, turn out to be anything but family men. God eventually causes women to come

along to ensnare such men so that at a given time, their hypocrisy is revealed.

Hypocrisy in the church is something that I am very concerned about. Personally, I would have no joy in living a hypocritical life. I could not stand before a congregation and preach a message on righteousness unless I was walking in righteousness before God and “living my message.” Rather, I desire to live a holy life. I want to be what I preach.

The Hope of Restoration

Some may ask, “What if I do fall? What hope is there for me?” Turning to the life of David after he fell into sin, we see the manner in which God dealt with him. It appears that David had great difficulty in acknowledging his sin, as he wrote in Psalm 32: *“Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah”* (Ps. 32:2-5). That is the first requirement—we have to confess our sin and acknowledge that we

are wrong. King David had to be laid on a bed of sickness in order for him to acknowledge his sin.

We need to allow God to shine His light in our lives. Perhaps our sin may not be immorality, but it could be the way we live in our families or the way we speak to our spouse and children. We cannot have double standards. God will not permit it, for there will come a time when He says, “That is enough!” and He allows us to be overtaken by sin.

A key to being preserved lies in Psalm 50:23: “*Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me: and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.*” The way we speak to our spouses, for example, is going to determine whether God protects us and preserves us from temptation. We cannot be double minded—acting one way at home and another way at church.

**Our speech will determine whether
God protects us and preserves us
from temptation.**

God is longsuffering. He may wink at iniquity for a season, which in some cases, could be as long as several years. I knew a particular preacher in South

Africa who was confronted by the brethren for living in immorality with another woman. He denied it vehemently, but when he prayed, he pleaded, “God forgive me!” Amazingly, God did. This continued for several years. Every time he asked God to forgive, He forgave. However, there came a time when this man challenged his brethren, saying, “If I am living in iniquity (which he was), then let God strike me down.” Two days later, he was dead.

You may have failed. But if you are willing to acknowledge your sin and accept the judgment that God chooses to mete out for that sin (even though it may have been forgiven), then God will bring you back into covenant with Him. In the Book of Leviticus, the Lord said to the children of Israel, *“If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land”* (Lev. 26:40-42).

As we consider the lives of King David and Joshua the high priest, we see God transforming them both into

glorious vessels of honour. When King David and Joshua acknowledged their sins, they were cleansed, and rose to higher heights. Joshua was permitted to go higher and higher in God. King David received wonderful promises for his children, as well as the pre-eminence of the promise that he would be king of Israel during the millennial reign of Christ.

If we would only acknowledge our sins and say, “Lord, forgive me and cleanse me, and give me grace to walk uprightly,” then God will do wonders in our lives. He will remove our sins, and bring about a complete cleansing and restoration, lifting us up higher and higher in Him and causing us to walk in holiness.

The promises that God has for us are described in 1 Corinthians 2:9, *“But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.”* We are on the threshold of the blessings of God. While we may have gone through many trials, there will come a time when God will turn our captivity, and it is my desire that we will all enter into His blessings. However, if we choose to hide our sins and lead a double life, then we can be sure that our sins will find us out, and God will chastise us and put us aside.

Perhaps there are areas in your life where you know you are leading a double life and you would be ashamed in

telling others how you really live. God will not bless a double life, and after a time, He will lift His hand of protection so that there will be trouble in your pathway. The Lord is saying to you, “I will change you if you will acknowledge you are wrong and if you will indeed cast away those things. I will pick you up and I will bless you.” Let us be those who say to God, “O Lord, I acknowledge my iniquity. Purge me, wash me!” He did it for David and for Joshua the high priest, and if we will ask Him, He will do it for us as well. The Lord specializes in washing and changing our spiritual garments so that we become vessels of honour, fit for the Master’s use.

Chapter Three

Washing in the Song of Songs— **Continuing Revelation in the Holy of Holies**

God's purpose is to bring His people into the Holy of Holies, and we have studied the lives of two who had attained unto the Holy of Holies—David and Joshua the high priest. Yet both of them needed to be washed. When one reaches a certain level of maturity in the Lord, the danger is that one becomes careless. That is especially true of leadership. Having attained to a certain level, leaders feel they can live without being circumspect, and the result is that many fall.

In this chapter, I would like to look at another aspect of the Holy of Holies that we see in the life of King David. David had brought the Ark of the Covenant to Mount Zion, setting it in the midst of a tent (2 Sam. 6:17). Then we are told in 2 Samuel 7:18: "*Then went king David in, and sat before the LORD...*" David received from the Lord the marvellous privilege of sitting before Him in the Holy of Holies and in so doing, he also received marvellous revelation.

Obviously, when one is teaching the Tabernacle of Moses or the Temple of Solomon, one portrays the Holy of Holies as the goal. However, even after attaining to the Holy of Holies, there is an onward revelation,

as we see from the life of David when he sat before the Lord.

Meekness

The Song of Solomon reveals the relationship between Christ (represented by the Bridegroom) and each believer that will make up His Bride (represented by the Shulamite). In the Song of Songs 5:1, the Bridegroom says, *“I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my honey; I have drunk my wine with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved.”*

Meekness is the most important aspect of the Christian character.

Here, the Lord is coming in to visit the one who is in the Holy of Holies, for the Holy of Holies speaks of the place where God communes with His people. Such was the case with Moses of old, who heard God speaking to him from above the Mercy Seat (Ex. 25:22).

In this visit, the prime fruit or spice that the Lord gathers is myrrh, which represents meekness. It seems to me that meekness is the most important aspect of the Christian character.

The Outward Call

In Song 5:2, the Bride is saying to Him, *“I am sleeping, but my heart waketh...”* Christ is saying to her, *“... Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.”* In other words, He wants to take her out into the night to minister to those in darkness. But she responds, *“I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?”* (Song 5:3). Here, we see a grave danger—when one is seeking to live a life of holiness, one can concentrate so exclusively on that truth that there is the risk of becoming oblivious to the needs of others. We must remember that we come into experiences with the Lord in order to meet the needs of others.

When the Lord desires us to minister, let us therefore not make the mistake of saying, “I am too holy to do that.” By refusing to go on with the Lord as He directs us, we can very easily lose what we have gained. Our spiritual condition is ever governed by our ongoing walk with the Lord.

A Season of Darkness

The Bride finally rises up in response to his call, and her hands drop with sweet-smelling myrrh, again speaking of meekness (Song 5:5). However, when she seeks her

Beloved, he is gone, and she cannot find Him. There are times when this happens to us. I have experienced times when I have been seeking the Lord and crying out to Him, but He has not answered the questions that I have put to Him.

Then Song 5:7 says, *“The watchmen that went about the city found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me.”* The removal of her veil by the watchmen speaks of the Bride’s losing her reputation. Sometimes the Lord brings us to the place where our reputation is taken away from us.

A Deeper Revelation of Christ

Then in Song 5:9, the other women ask the Bride, *“What is thy beloved more than another beloved, O thou fairest among women? what is thy beloved more than another beloved, that thou dost so charge us?”* They are wondering why she is seeking Christ above all others. In reply, the Bride begins to describe Christ. She has a revelation of Christ in a deeper way than she has even had before, and this is what happens in the Holy of Holies.

The Bride then gives quite a description of the Lord. She says, *“He is the chief among ten thousand”* (Song 5:10). In other words, there is no one who compares with Him.

The Apostle Paul too said, *“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ”* (Phil. 3:8).

When the Lord allowed me to experience heaven, my desire was not for a beautiful home and so forth, but it was to be with Christ. I was in heaven, on one occasion, and some angels wanted to show me my house there. I said to them, “I am not interested in seeing my house in heaven. I have got a hunger in my heart to see Jesus.” They just smiled, and I had to submit to the direction that these angels were showing me. I kept saying to them, “It is very kind of you to show me my house, but really there is only one thing I desire, and that is to see Jesus.” They continued to smile as we came to the end of this pathway. Then they pointed out my house. Incidentally, there are no windows in the heavenly mansions, but I was able to look straight in into a living room, and there sitting in one of the chairs, was the Lord. The angel smiled and clapped at the thought that I was surprised.

A number of years ago, we had a lady in the church who died after having a problem in childbirth. After the funeral, she appeared to her sister, a believer, in a dream of the night. In that dream, that lady said to her sister, “I have seen Jesus.” That is the whole desire of Heaven—to be near to Him.

We see here that in the Holy of Holies, the Bride has had a deeper revelation of Christ; and she can describe Him in a way that others know Him not.

She says, “My Beloved is white and ruddy,” speaking of the purity and vibrancy of Christ. She describes His head as being “of the most fine gold,” which speaks of deity. For us, a corresponding scripture would be from 1 Corinthians 2:16 where the Apostle Paul said, “...*But we have the mind of Christ.*” We want to be clothed with His mind.

Having Our Eyes Washed

Returning to our theme of being washed, we continue in Song of Songs 5:12: “*His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of waters, washed with milk, and fitly set.*” The eyes are so important, because they are the entrance to the body. The Lord said in Matthew 6:22-23, “*The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!*”

Here, the Bride describes her Beloved as having eyes that are washed with milk, which refers to the Word of God (1 Pet. 2:2). I cannot over emphasize to the young and old alike how important it is that our eyes be washed by reading the Word of God.

The problem is that sin so often starts when people see something that they should not see. That is why we are very particular about pornographic literature, because it enters the eye and defiles the whole of the body. Our eyes must be clean. Job, who was one of the most righteous men in scripture, said, *“I made a covenant with mine eyes; why then should I think upon a maid?”* (Job. 31:1).

We need to ask ourselves, “What are my eyes attracted to?” Are we, for example, unduly attracted to movies? I read once that a director’s goal is that people would desire to see the movie and that it would mould their thinking and their very lives. Good movies are very rare nowadays, and there is a danger in watching the wrong movies. Personally, I do not watch movies at all because I cannot risk losing the anointing of God.

We must be careful with what we read and what we look at, because these things will affect us. Seeing something develops a desire in our heart and can lead us to commit sin. For example, King David became overwhelmed when he looked upon the beauty of Bathsheba, and thereafter fell from grace. It is very telling that a large portion of money in business goes into advertising. The reason is that businesses want people to be attracted to their products, and they know that advertising creates that desire. That is fine if the product is good. But if it is not, it can bring people to the wrong path.

The key to victory is to wash our eyes, and we do so through reading the Word of God. We also read in this passage about the eyes being “fitly set.” Are our eyes so set that we want to read the Word of God?

Meekness

Song 5:13 says, “*His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers: his lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh.*” Again, we have this theme of myrrh. It occurs consistently when speaking of the Lord Jesus. I was in the garden tomb in Jerusalem where Christ was buried, and I asked the Lord, “What do You really want to be known for?” Across the place where His body had lain, I saw in white shining light, the word “MEEKNESS.”

In Zephaniah 2:1-3, the prophet urged, “*Seek meekness; seek righteousness. It may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord’s anger.*” Meekness, of course, is the interpretation of myrrh. I cannot over emphasize this.

It is easier to be righteous than it is to be meek. I think that is especially true for a man. If your character is straight and upright, you find out what is the right thing to do, and do it. However, meekness is not in the nature of man, particularly those of the male gender, as it involves curtailing his natural masculine nature, which normally dominates situations.

Meekness is not just choosing not to react when we are provoked by people or by a situation; it also deals with how we speak. In Song of Songs 5:16, the Bridegroom is described as follows: *“His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.”* We want to be a friend of Jesus who described friendship with him in the following manner: *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you”* (Jn. 15:13-14).

Characteristics of the Bride

In Song of Songs 6, the focus changes from the Bridegroom to the Bride. The Bride here is depicted as an army. The Holy of Holies experience will develop our warlike tendencies in the spiritual sense.

The Beloved says to the Bride, *“Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners”* (Song 6:4). Tirzah was the capital of the ten rebellious tribes, while Jerusalem was the capital of faithful Judah. It is as though the army of God will be made up of both the backsliders and the faithful ones. Then the Bride is described as being *“terrible [or awesome] as an army with banners.”* An army with banners simply means they have had victory after victory.

Washing Our Teeth

The Beloved then praises His Bride for certain virtues which we will look at. In Song 6:6, we have again the thought of washing: *“Thy teeth are as a flock of sheep which go up from the washing, whereof every one beareth twins, and there is not one barren among them.”* With the Bridegroom, the washing was of the eyes (Song 5:12), but with the Bride, the washing is of the teeth.

Teeth speak of what we feed on spiritually. What we choose to feed upon is very important, as it impacts our thoughts, and ultimately who we are. Proverbs 23:7 says, *“For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he...”*

We are to feed upon the Lord who is the Bread of Life. In John 6:51, Jesus said, *“I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”* Jesus is the Word of God made flesh (Jn. 1:1, 14). As we feed upon Him by meditating upon the Word of God (Jn. 1:1), His words of life transform us into His likeness.

The teeth are likened to a flock of sheep that go up from the washing. The thought here is that our spiritual teeth need to be washed from things that we may have fed upon that are not pleasing to the Lord. We also want to be washed from the stale food of yesterday, which

means not being content to remain on a plateau in our walk, as did the Laodicean Church in Revelation 3. Rather, we are to continue to press in to the Lord for fresh revelation, even as the Apostle Paul urges us in Hebrews 6:1-2, *“Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation...”*

Moving on to Song 6:10, the women who see the Bride say that she is looking *“...forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.”* In other words, she was full of light.

Then in Song 6:13, she is likened to a company of two armies. These two armies represent the natural and the spiritual. In a certain sense, we have to triumph and be victorious in the natural things, as well as in the spiritual things.

It is so important that we ask the Lord to wash our eyes and our spiritual garments. Let us not assume that they are clean, but rather, let us enquire of the Lord as to how He sees it. We do not want to be like the prominent speaker of the House in Washington, D.C., who was speaking to the nation about righteousness, while he himself was unrighteous in the eyes of the Lord.

Coming into the Holy of Holies is not the end in itself. Rather, it is a new chapter in our book of life where we

sit before the Lord, and He reveals Himself to us in a new way, washing us thoroughly and imparting His virtue to us. The more we have of Jesus, the better it will be. To be like Him, we must have our eyes washed, our minds filled with the mind of Christ, and our spiritual garments washed so that we are full of light. Let us not forget that the virtue that attracts Him more than anything else is meekness, and let us seek to major in that.

May we make it our goal to move on in the Lord into the Holy of Holies so that we continue to receive a fresh revelation of Jesus.

Chapter Four

Washing in the Song of Songs— The Results of Washing

The Holy of Holies is not the end of our journey. Rather it is, as King David showed us, the ability to sit before the Lord and to ask Him the things that are on our heart. It is the fulfilment of Psalm 27:4: *“One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to enquire in His temple.”*

In the natural, when we live with someone, we take on the characteristics of that person. Likewise, to the degree that we live with the Lord, we will also take on His characteristics, and certainly this is true of His Bride. As we sit before the Lord in the Holy of Holies and enquire of Him, He speaks and He washes us with His Word. As He washes us, we become more and more like Him so that His desire is increasingly toward us.

**To the degree that we live
with the Lord, we will also
take on His characteristics.**

In this chapter, we will select a few more truths from the Song of Songs that depict the qualities that He desires to develop in us through that washing.

The Feet

In Song of Songs 7, the Bridegroom continues with a description of His Bride, beginning with her feet: *“How beautiful are thy feet with shoes, O prince’s daughter!...”* (Song 7:1). The feet are very important in the Christian life, speaking of our spiritual walk. As we walk in the light as He is in the light, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all sin (1 Jn. 1:7).

Another aspect of our walk is where we choose to go in the natural. A friend of mine, who was a well-known pastor from Oregon, wanted to go to Reno and Las Vegas to visit some churches there. However, the Lord said, “I do not want to go there.” Our friend obeyed the word of the Lord. He did not go to either Reno or Las Vegas and thus preserved the purity of his mind that could otherwise have been defiled by the things he would have seen in those two cities. Thus we should enquire of the Lord, “Where do You want me to walk this day?”

Isaiah 52:7, says, *“How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good,*

that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” God is revealing to us afresh the good tidings that He reigns. Not only is He reigning, we also must declare that He is reigning.

The Thighs

Then the Song of Songs speaks of the thighs of the Bride that are like jewels: “...*the joints of thy thighs are like jewels, the work of the hands of a cunning workman*” (Song 7:1). The thighs are the place of strength; we lift with our thighs. Here we have a picture of someone walking with God, declaring the message of God, and doing it in strength. How important strength is, especially as you get older.

The Neck

Another characteristic of the Bride is her neck, which is described in Song of Songs 7:4 as “a tower of ivory.” The neck is again a symbol of strength, like a tower.

The Eyes

Song of Songs 7:4 continues: “...*thine eyes like the fishpools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bathrabbim...*” Bathrabbim means “the place of the multitude,” or the marketplace where everybody is shouting and scrambling. But outside of that place, King Solomon

had the pools of Heshbon dug, and he placed fish in them. As one contemplates those pools, such peace comes. We want to be able to contemplate the peace of God that passes all understanding in the midst of our “Bathrabbims”—our places where there are multitudes of people, with shouting and much activity!

It is so important where we choose to fix our eyes. Are we going to focus on all the tumult that is going on around us, or are we going to have our eyes fixed upon the Lord? Being a pastor for many years, I have had so many people come to me saying, “We are overwhelmed with our problems.”

I have experienced most of the problems that they could have, and in each situation, I have found that I have had to make a choice. If I choose to get my eyes on the tumult, it upsets my spirit, and it also upsets those around me. However, if I choose to fix my eyes on the pools of Heshbon, then my being emanates peace and victory, remembering that in the storm He said, “Peace, Be still” (Mk. 4:39). Let us be those who, in times of tumult (or in times when people may have hurt us), choose not to meditate on that, but rather, choose to **look to the Lord**. I have practised that throughout most of my life, and I assure you that it gives wonderful victory. As the prophet Isaiah said, “*Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee*” (Isa. 26:3).

The Nose

The nose of the Bride is likened to “*the tower of Lebanon which looketh toward Damascus*” (Song 7:4). The tower of Lebanon was a watchtower placed in a certain location that allowed a watchman to see a great distance. In particular, they could see if the enemy was coming. We need to have that spiritual discernment so that we are alerted long before the enemy comes, and we are able to be prepared. God gives discernment to those who fear Him (Mal. 3:16-18).

The Palm Tree

Another aspect of the Bride is described in the following manner: “*This thy stature is like to a palm tree...*” (Song 7:7). Those of us who have seen palm trees in Florida, California, or in Central America, know that a palm tree is very straight; and this is what we have got to be. We have to be very straight and upright in everything that we do, and that often means standing against the majority.

I have had to take a stand against people who have advocated lower standards. On other occasions, I have had to write letters saying, “No, you must not do those things.” I have found that even if it has been difficult to stand with God in the face of opposition from the majority, yet in the end, the Lord has always brought me

out triumphantly. Let us therefore be strengthened in the Lord so that when a decision is to be made, we will be standing on the side of what is right in God's sight, not being swayed by what the majority may think. That is the thought of the palm tree.

The Mouth

Song of Songs 7:9 reads, "*And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine of my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.*" One told me in France that the real nature of a person is revealed when they have drunk a little wine. Their true personality is manifested even to the extent of knowing if they are good or evil. However, this statement is not a recommendation to offer people wine. Wine here speaks of joy. When a person is truly joyful, one really begins to know that person.

The Progression

Then we come to Song of Songs 7:10 which is the final part of a series of three verses in the Song of Songs where the Bride is describing her relationship to the Bridegroom. She is showing us the progression to union and communion with Christ.

The first step is found in Song of Songs 2:16, where the Bride says, "*My beloved is mine and I am his.*" So

often after a wedding, the bride will take the bridegroom to all her friends and say, “He is mine.” Almost as an afterthought, she adds, “I am his.” It is as though the bridegroom belongs to the bride.

The next step is found in Song of Songs 6:3, where she says, “I am my beloved’s, and my beloved is mine.” The order is switched, and she now begins with: “I belong to him.”

Likewise, when we come to Christ at the beginning, there is the tendency to say, “Oh, He belongs to me, He is mine.” But as we progress in the Christian life, we realize that really, we belong to Him, as He has created us and redeemed us with His blood. We did not choose Him, but He chose us. It is the same in marriage; the bridegroom chooses the bride.

The third and final step is found in Song of Songs 7:10: *“I am my beloved’s, and his desire is toward me.”* I cannot over emphasize the importance of this verse and the truth it portrays. Many people, and especially women, have come to me saying, “My husband never says nice things to me.” Often, the reason is because his desire is not towards his wife. We are told in Luke 6:45 that out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks. If a husband’s desire is towards his wife, he will bubble over in his heart, and say to her, “I love you, and I appreciate what you are doing for me.” However,

that is only possible if the bride is a pleasant, desirable person.

Many years ago, I was in a particular country where we were being received by the chairman of the Assemblies of God in that area. His wife said to me one day, “My husband never says that he loves me.” I was rather young in those days, and so I said, “Why don’t you just ask him if he loves you? Do it now.” She agreed, and she went to ask her husband if he loved her. His response was: “I love your *soul*.” That is hardly what a wife wants to hear. She has other parts of her that need loving besides the soul, and his response was all very cold. If you had known the wife, you would have understood her husband’s reasoning. His attitude had come about because she was not a pleasant woman.

**Are we
desirable to
the Lord?**

I had a very good marriage of 35 years, but it was because of my wife. I loved her and desired to be with her because of who she was. Quite frankly, if I had been married to someone else, I doubt that I would have qualified in marriage.

The point I want to bring out is this—one has to be desirable. That is why we have to pay attention to these various attributes in the Bride’s life and have them

worked out in our own lives so that we are desirable to the Lord. Some people cause difficulty in their own lives because of the way they act. One key to knowing if you are desired by the Lord is whether other people desire to be in your presence. We need to ask ourselves, “Am I pleasant to be around?”

The Garden

We come now to a few closing verses of Song of Songs 7 dealing with where we end the Christian life: *“Let us get up early to the vineyards; let us see if the vine flourish, whether the tender grape appear, and the pomegranates bud forth: there will I give thee my loves”* (Song 7:12). I have noticed this in the Word of God—the first thing that Christ did after creating Adam and Eve was to plant a garden.

In England when one retires, it is common practice to retire virtually to working on and investing in one’s garden. I have been in some gardens where I have seen these words carved on the benches: “You are nearest to God in a garden.”

The thought of gardens is again taken up in Song of Songs 8:13 where the Bride says to the Beloved, *“Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.”* The Lord dwells in gardens; and our hearts should be as a beautiful garden.

My brother, who lives in England, always wants to show me his garden because he is so taken up with it and so proud of it. In the same way, we want to develop the garden of our heart so that we can say to the Lord, “Oh, my Beloved, come into my garden.” We want Him to indeed rejoice in what He finds in our garden.

The condition of the garden of our hearts will determine the gardens that we will be allowed access to in heaven. There was a little eleven-year old girl in one of our affiliated orphanages in Guatemala. That girl was taken to heaven by an angel in a vision one night, and she was placed on a path that was in a garden. As she and the angel walked on this path, they passed from one garden into another garden, each garden more beautiful than the last. Finally, they arrived at the ultimate garden. At the end of this garden was a throne where Christ was seated.

There she saw two ladies dancing before the Lord—one was Mary the mother of Jesus. Then, this little girl said, “The other one was Sister Bailey.” The director of the institute asked (because the little girl had not known my wife when she was alive), “Well, how did you know that?” She said, “The Lord told me it was the wife of Pastor Bailey.” My wife had qualified to be in that garden because of the condition of her heart.

Then there is also a reference to all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old in the garden: “*The mandrakes give*

a smell, and at our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits, new and old, which I have laid up for thee, O my beloved" (Song 7:13). Mandrakes are basically love fruit in the Hebrew, a form or expression of love. This passage speaks of constantly seeking out new truths, and yet not abandoning the old truths.

In Song of Songs 8:6, the Bride says to the Beloved, "*Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm...*" In the days of Solomon, it was not unusual for the bridegroom to write on his arm the name of the bride. That is what we see here.

We need to be washed from even the desire to possess heavenly things, so that Christ is the one and only passion that envelops our heart.

I believe that when we get to heaven, we will see His arm, and if we qualify, we will see our names written on that arm. There are various levels of spiritual maturity in heaven. Some of those in the lower levels are absorbed with the activities and pleasures of heaven, but as one ascends in spiritual maturity, one becomes absorbed with Christ. As He holds you, and you look upon Him, you will see that your name is inscribed upon His heart, His

arm, and upon the palms of His hands. Thus in a certain sense, we need to be washed from even the desire to possess heavenly things, so that Christ is the one and only passion that envelops our heart.

That is what I desire for each and every one of you, that you will so walk that His desire will be towards you, and that you will be permitted to enter into that garden where His throne is. God loves gardens, and we must be the garden that delights Him!

Chapter Five

Washed to Become Supple

In this chapter, we will look at selected references to washing in the Old Testament.

The Book of Isaiah

The first is found in Isaiah 4:3-4: *“And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem: When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning.”*

The Lord has been quickening to me the phrase “he that is left in Zion.” There has been a purging of people in our congregation and elsewhere. The reason is

that for many years, some had been given the opportunity to change but because they have not, God has taken them out. Jesus said in John 8:34-35, “...*Verily, verily, I say*

**We want to be
among those that
are left in Zion
who will experience
being washed
from their filth,
qualifying for
the glory of God.**

unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.”

When Charles Finney had those great revivals, he ministered with a heavy heart as well as a joyful heart. As God showed him the churches to which he would minister, Finney had a heavy heart because he knew that some who had been churchgoers for a very long time would leave when revival came. That was because they had not met God in their own hearts and were therefore not accepted by Him. However, he also had a joyful heart because many would come into the church.

We want to be among those that are left in Zion. According to Isaiah 4:4, it is those who remain in Zion who will experience being washed from their filth. Then comes the spirit of judgment and burning, culminating in fire and glory that we are looking for: *“And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence”* (Isa. 4:5).

The Book of Ezekiel

The thought of washing is also found in Ezekiel 16. Here, Jerusalem is likened to a little baby girl who was rejected and left out in the wilderness to die. In verse 4,

we read, *“And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all.”* Then the Lord saw her and had compassion upon her.

I want to focus on the phrase “washed in water to supple thee.” When a newborn comes into the world, it is washed with water to supple its skin. What is the definition of supple? It means being capable of being bent without creases, cracks, or breaks. As Christians, we need to be made spiritually supple, and one of the ministries of the Lord to His people is to wash them to make them supple.

**Suppleness is the capability
of being bent without creases,
cracks, or breaks.**

The Making of Quality Leather

We can glean spiritual truths on suppleness by studying the process of leather making. Christians, like leather, need to be made supple. Some of the finest leather in the world (from which the famous “Gucci” products are made) comes from the hides of cattle bred in the province

of Tuscany, Italy. The fine quality of this leather comes at a cost. *It has to go through a long process* to become the beautiful, soft leather that is so desirable for making handbags, shoes, and other luxury items.

The Process of Feeding and Confinement

In the natural realm, supple leather comes from good quality hides, which are produced by feeding the cattle with good food and confining them to stalls. Those hides then must undergo a process of washing to become supple.

Good leather begins with good food. A calf has to be well fed in order to produce the finest quality leather. For example, in Italy, the best leather comes from cattle that are fed from the lush valley of Chiana in the Tuscany province.

In the same way, we have to be fed with the finest of God's Word so that when our time of washing comes, we become like "good leather." In Psalm 81:16, there is a reference to being fed with the "finest of the wheat," speaking of the finest of God's Word.

We must study the Word of God. As pastors or teachers, we need to feed our people on the finest of the wheat, because that is the only way to bring them to this state of suppleness.

The best hides come from cattle that are not allowed to leave their stall, lest they be scratched. In that respect, we have a spiritual analogy found in Malachi 4:2, where the prophet speaks of God's people as calves of the stall: *"But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall."* Calves in the stall grow very quickly because they do not use their strength to go out into the fields; they are fed very carefully.

As we meditate on this, we think of the lives of Joseph and the Apostle Paul. Both had to experience times of confinement. However, there was a purpose behind that. In confinement, they would not be subject to certain things that would mar their lives, and they were being made spiritually supple. In the case of Joseph, the promises that God had made to him were ever before him—thus the Word of God tried him, as we read in Psalm 105:17-19: *"He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant: Whose feet they hurt with fetters: he was laid in iron: Until the time that his word came: the word of the LORD tried him."* Was Joseph going to believe those promises that one day he would rule over his brethren, or was he going to reject those promises and say, "No I do not believe them"? Joseph chose to believe what God had said. We, too, have to go through similar experiences. We have to be confined so that the Word of God works within us, and we are made supple.

We have a residential Bible school in Waverly, New York, and when students come, they experience a certain confinement. Some embrace this confinement with a holy contentment, while others resist and chafe at the restrictions. I have noticed in life that if we continually submit to God, we shall enter into the stall experience of Malachi 4:2, growing up as calves in the stalls.

The Process of Washing

The hide then undergoes the process of washing with water, which is necessary to make that leather soft, smooth, and supple. There is a spiritual significance to this. Water signifies the Word of God in Scripture (Eph. 5:26). As we are washed by God's Word, we become capable of being bent without cracking, breaking, or having creases that reflect the battle that we have been going through. God wants us to be supple.

Let us look at the spiritual aspect of having the Word of God wash us to make us supple. We are a tripartite being. We have a spirit, soul, and body, and all three must be supple.

The spirit reflects our will, and our will must be supple. I have experienced that day by day. Perhaps I want to do something, but it is not possible. What is my response going to be? Am I going to accept it or rebel against

circumstances? No I must accept it. I have found that things start to work within me when I started to adopt these attitudes. I have seen many people get upset because they want to do a certain thing and circumstances prevent them. They lose their victory, becoming out of sorts, and end up being unpleasant to those around them. Our will must be subjected to the Word of God so that we yield graciously to His will when He brings something into our lives that we would not have chosen.

Then there is our soul, which is the seat of our emotions. That soul has to have the Word of God washing it continually to be made supple. The soul often experiences turmoil because of discontent. However, the antidote is found in Philippians 4:11: *“Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.”* We have got to let the Word of God teach us and minister to our souls so that indeed we come to that place where we have a holy contentment, no matter what the situation is. It is worthy of note that Paul said, “I have learned...to be content.” Holy contentment does not come over night, *“But godliness with contentment is great gain”* (1 Tim 6:6).

Finally, there is the body, and that has to be washed to be made supple too. As I was contemplating how to bring this out, this little scripture came to me: *“And into whatsoever city ye enter, and they receive you, eat such*

things as are set before you” (Lk. 10:8). In other words, we have to accept the situation and the fare that is put before us. We must triumph in the area of appetite, and in all those other physical aspects of life.

We often associate washing with just cleanliness, but it is more. Through the ministry of the washing of the Word of God, we are made supple so that we can be bent in any direction, and yet spring back without any creases or cracks.

The Danger after Washing

Ezekiel 16 also speaks of God’s doing His work and then clothing this young lady with all kinds of beautiful garments: *“I clothed thee also with broidered work, and shod thee with badgers’ skin, and I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk”* (Ezek. 16:10).

Here, she is clothed with the finest of the linen. Linen speaks of righteousness. We want to be clothed upon with God’s righteousness, not our righteousness which is as filthy rags (Isa. 64:6). Another thing that God wants to cloth us with is silk, which is the epitome of beauty. He wants to clothe us with His beauty.

Her feet are shod with badger’s skins. In Ephesians 6:15, the feet are shod with the Gospel of Peace. Isaiah 52:7 says. *“How beautiful upon the mountains*

are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!” We want to have our feet shod with the gospel so that we are messengers of hope.

Then He places bracelets on the wrists of this young lady: *“I decked thee also with ornaments, and I put bracelets upon thy hands, and a chain on thy neck”* (Ezek. 16:11). Bracelets speak of covenant relationship. At the coronation of the Queen, she had bracelets put upon her. She was in covenant relationship with her people. We, too, want to have our wrists garnered with those bracelets. We want to be in covenant relationship with God so that the covenants of David and Abraham are given to us personally.

Then He also places a chain around her neck. There is a similar scene in the life of Daniel where he is made the third ruler of the kingdom (because Belshazzar was the second, and his father, who was away, was the first): *“Then commanded Belshazzar, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet, and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom”* (Dan. 5:29). The chain placed around Daniel’s neck speaks of authority and position. We want to have the chain of God around our necks, having the authority of the kingdom when we speak and when we act.

The Dangers of Being Blessed

Looking again at Ezekiel 16, I wish the account finished with placing bracelets and a necklace upon the young lady, but it does not. Instead, it ends tragically. The account of Jerusalem continues: *“But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by... And I will judge thee, as women that break wedlock and shed blood are judged; and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy”* (Ezek. 16:15, 38).

If you want to test a man’s character, give him power.

There is always a danger that when one is blessed of God, one relies upon that blessing and upon one’s own strength. Abraham Lincoln once observed, “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” I believe he was right. We never really know a man in adversity, but his heart is revealed when he has been elevated to a position of authority and trust. As Proverbs 1:32 says, *“...the prosperity of fools shall destroy them.”*

When we look into the Word of God, we find that this was a real problem, and a common one as well. When certain people were elevated, the blessing, power, and position destroyed or well nigh destroyed them. King David, for example, had been successful in warfare, but after a while he felt that it was not necessary for him to go out with his army and fight Israel's battles. However, this was a mistake, because in remaining behind, he fell into adultery with Bathsheba and was nearly destroyed.

I have read of many accounts in the newspapers of people who have risen to prominence in politics or in other areas of life, only to lose all they have gained. One reason is that when they have been elevated to a certain position, they fail to control their boundaries, thinking that they are no longer under the law.

When King Hezekiah was blessed with a wonderful healing from the Lord, there were people from all nations coming to him and congratulating him. Unfortunately, it was almost too much for him and for Jerusalem to handle. They could not contain the blessings. As their hearts became lifted up in pride, they were an abomination to God. It was only through God's mercy that they repented.

The clearest example of pride concerns Satan. There is a description of Satan, who was formerly the "covering cherub" in Ezekiel 28:16-17:

“By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.”

Here, we see that Satan must have looked at himself and become lifted up because of his beauty. One of the great dangers I have seen in life is that people become lifted up for various reasons, and then they think that there are no boundaries for them.

We have to be very careful, Beloved, that when God meets with us and blesses us, we do not trust in our own beauty or ability. We must not let our hearts become lifted up because of what God has done for us. Satan could not handle the blessings of God that were given to him. He did not sustain the proper attitude and humility as he looked upon his own beauty and accomplishments. Hezekiah and David also had trouble because of the great blessings and power God had given them.

Many think that after they have been elevated, they have become exceptions to the rule of honesty and righteousness. I have met many influential leaders in

the Christian world who did not keep the boundaries and broke the laws of God and nations, thinking that God would understand. But as we have seen, God is no respecter of persons.

Returning to the theme of being washed to become supple, a person who has been washed by the Lord to become supple in the spirit is beautiful to behold. That person is flexible in the Lord's hands, not set in his own way like a fragile vessel that can crack or break under strain. The supple one has no thought of exerting his own will over the will of God. Suppleness is an aspect of humility that accepts whatever comes into one's life as being the will of God with a holy resignation. Naturally, one has to discern on occasions the source of the trial, for sometimes it does come from the enemy through a lack of diligence on our part.

However, when we have attained to this position of being spiritually supple and blessed of God, we have to be careful that we do not see ourselves as being in a "different position" (an "exception to the rule") in comparison to others. May God grant that we cry out to Him, "O God make me supple."

Chapter Six

Being Washed from National Sins

Whereas in the previous chapters, we have looked at the thought of being washed from individual sins, we will now focus on being washed from national sins. We have the responsibility to pray for our nations and for the people who occupy positions of leadership. I would like to bring out some thoughts here concerning the state of Israel during the time of Isaiah—a condition which was very much like that of the USA today.

In Isaiah 1:2, the Lord said through the prophet, *“Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.”* Some time ago, a father came to me saying, “I have done everything I can for my child, and yet this child rebels against me. What have I done wrong?” I showed him this scripture and said, “The Lord Himself was in the same condition.” No one is a better father than the Heavenly Father, yet His children in the nation of Israel have rebelled against Him. Thus, while it is important that we as parents look after our children and seek to guide them in God’s ways, we should not be disheartened if they rebel against us, because the Heavenly Father went through the same experience.

The nation of Israel was in a terrible state at that time: *“From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment”* (Isa. 1:6). Israel is likened to a patient filled with sores. Some children rebel against their parents and then go down and down into sin, ending up in a condition similar to that of Israel, as described by Isaiah in this verse.

In Isaiah 1:10, we find that the nation of Israel had allowed homosexuality to come into the land: *“Hear the word of the LORD, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.”* God called them “rulers of Sodom” and “people of Gomorrah” because they had actually approved that practice.

Just recently, a state governor in the United States made an impassioned appeal for gay marriages. Interestingly, I have observed in life that when one does not keep one’s own boundaries, one also does not enforce the boundaries of those for whom one is responsible. It is a very sad situation for that particular state, because God’s judgment is going to come upon that area which has become like Sodom. We must realize that when the laws are changed to contradict God’s laws, He will judge. We need to cry out as Christians, “O God, move in revival and turn the hearts of those in government!”

The spiritual condition of a nation's leaders is often a reflection of the spiritual condition of its people. If a nation does not walk uprightly, God will often give the citizens unrighteous leaders. We see this in Isaiah 3:4-5, where the Lord pronounces judgment on Jerusalem and Judah, saying, *"...I will give children to be their princes, and babes shall rule over them. And the people shall be oppressed, every one by another, and every one by his neighbour: the child shall behave himself proudly against the ancient, and the base against the honourable."* Historically, the kings that followed the godly King Josiah were far too young to rule, and they oppressed the nation.

The life of a leader, too, has a great impact on the lives of those he leads. In the Song of Songs 1:4, the Bride says to the Bridegroom, *"Draw me, and we will run after thee..."* As the leader is drawn by God, his people will follow.

Leaders Need to Be Washed

What does the Lord say to the rulers? In Isaiah 1:16, He said, *"Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil."* That is the theme running through the Word of God—washing.

He continues in Isaiah 1:17, saying, *"Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow."* We have to learn to do

well. It is so important that we understand that we cannot compromise with the evil. God hates compromise, and we have to be people who are righteous through and through without compromise in our lives.

The Lord then issues an invitation to His people in Isaiah 1:18, *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”* When Harold Wilson was Prime Minister of England and Lyndon Johnson (a wicked and immoral man) was the President of the United States, Harold Wilson quoted this verse to Lyndon Johnson—his point being, “Come now let us reason together.” I do not know if he continued with “though your sins be as scarlet.” Interestingly, Lyndon Johnson had an experience with Christ at the age of 15, but sadly, he then compromised. The result was that he then lived a life of sin and terrible immorality.

**It is the end of life
that counts.**

It is the end of life that counts. What was the condition of his life towards the end? I happened to meet him once, and I shook his hand. At that time God told me: “This

is the next president of the United States; and he will become president sooner than he thinks.” But when I looked into his eyes (which are the entrance to the soul), I saw that they were filled with sadness. Towards the end of his presidency, he was having his secret service taking him to little churches in Texas. He was looking for the joy that he had once had, but regretfully, he chose to continue in his evil life of immorality.

Senator Edward Kennedy was a man who had lived immorally for virtually all his life. Then he was struck with cancer, and was told that he had a very short time to live. In response to that, he went around to various churches and even visited the Pope to find solace for his soul, but he could not.

Before he died, I had a vision of him. In that vision, I saw behind him (in a spiritual body) Mary Jo, the girl he had left to die after an automobile accident. She was tormenting him, and it appeared that he had no rest from her. She was waiting for him to die. Just before he died, he confessed that he could never forget her, and that he was tormented by her.

When one studies life, one observes that people who have once known the Lord when they were young, and later turn away, often seek to get back on the path. In order to do that, they have to learn to do good and change their ways. Unfortunately, they often do not

succeed in turning from evil and doing good. The result is that they do not find peace or enter into the kingdom of God.

When Harold Wilson said to Lyndon Johnson, “Let us reason together,” in actuality, it was the Lord who was speaking to Lyndon Johnson that he should return to Him. We must realize that it is the end of life that counts. How are we going to enter eternity? That is the question. If we leave the pathway of God and then try to return to His path, we will have to cover the same distance that we have walked away, retracing our steps until we find the path once again.

If, however, a leader turns to the Lord and allows God to wash him, he can influence the nation for God. We see this in the account of King Josiah in 2 Chronicles 34:31-33: *“And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the LORD, to walk after the LORD, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book. And he caused all that were present in Jerusalem and Benjamin to stand to it. And the inhabitants of Jerusalem did according to the covenant of God, the God of their fathers. And Josiah took away all the abominations out of all the countries that pertained to the children of Israel, and made all that were present in Israel to serve, even to serve the LORD their God. And all his days they*

departed not from following the LORD, the God of their fathers.”

God’s People Need to Be Washed

Naturally, the leader does not have the sole responsibility for the spiritual condition of the nation and its people. Second Chronicles 7:14 bears this out when the Lord said, *“If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.”*

The Result of Being Washed

The Lord concludes that thought in Isaiah 1:19: *“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land.”* In other words, He was saying that if the people will return to Him with their whole heart, then He will open up the windows of heaven to them. He will become a blessing to them rather than the Judge that He must be when they are sinful.

Then in Isaiah 1:21, Jerusalem is described as follows: *“How is the faithful city become an harlot! it was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers.”* Jerusalem, the faithful city, had become a harlot. In my experience in life, immorality is one of the strongest spirits that can draw a man or woman away

from God. Let us not be like those who turned from the path. God, in His goodness, gives warnings. For example, John F. Kennedy had a premonition that he would not finish his presidency.

The Lord in His graciousness offers to Jerusalem the hope of restoration, saying, *“And I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin: And I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterward thou shalt be called, The city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness”* (Isa. 1:25-27).

Although God does restore, nonetheless, turning from God is a terrible thing; it brings great sorrow to the heart. Let us therefore keep our commitment to the Lord, stay on His path, and not turn to the things of this world.

Staying on the Path

What are some of the keys to staying on the path? One important key lies in the condition of our hearts. Proverbs 4:23 says, *“Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”* It is out of the abundance of the heart that life proceeds.

In Isaiah 2, we have a picture of what God will establish in His house in the last days. This chapter describes a

time of revival when “..many people shall go and say, *Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem*” (Isa. 2:3).

God will teach us His ways, which are found in the truths of the Tabernacle of Moses. One is never too young to learn of God’s ways. We are to teach these truths that are of utmost importance to both young and old, so that they learn God’s ways, and will not turn to the right or to the left, but will walk straight on His path.

Isaiah 2:3 also mentions the law going forth from Zion. We need to have the laws of God (including the Ten Commandments) written upon our hearts. This is essentially the meaning of the New Covenant. There is a difference between a person who has the laws of God written upon the fleshly tables of his heart, and one who just hears the message each Sunday. If we have the law written on the fleshly tables of our hearts, we will not turn to the right or to the left, but we will keep the law.

There are times when we see people making wrong decisions. Having pondered over this often, I have come to the conclusion that in the ministry, one has to know who a person truly is. This comes when we ask

the Lord for a revelation of that person's nature and character.

It is profitable to ask the Lord what your own spiritual name is. The Lord can give you a name from the thousands in the Word of God, and say to you, "I want to make you like that one."

In New Zealand we had an administrator who said to me one day, "I asked the Lord what He wanted me to be, and He said, 'A Nethinim.'" (That is basically a servant to the Levites, as is mentioned in 1 Chronicles 9:2.) He continued, "I am called to be your servant. There are things that you should not have to do, and I am called to look after you and to provide you with what you want." I thanked the Lord very much for the revelation that He had given that brother. He knew that he was not a preacher or a pastor, but that he was to serve those in ministry.

While it is very wonderful to know who you are, it also important, when you are in the ministry, to know who others are. I have often asked the Lord to tell me the spiritual name of a person so that I know what he is going to do and the pathway that he will choose.

Left in Zion

The thought of being washed as a nation is found in Isaiah 4. We begin in Isaiah 4:3 which says, "*And it*

shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem.” The Lord quickened to me that little phrase “He that is left in Zion;” and He brought to my remembrance a class that I used to teach in a particular Bible college.

It was a time of revival at that Bible college and we had there, as students, luminaries who are now senior pastors in our fellowship of churches—such as Dr. Paul Caram, Rev. Robert Tucker, and Rev. Daniel Gazaway. The Lord began to speak to me about that class. Out of 30 students, there are already eight who have died prematurely, mostly in their sixties. They will not see revival or the glory that comes.

But there are also those who remain on Zion’s pathway. We want God to plant us in Zion that we might abide in His presence. We also want Him to impart to us the spiritual vision of attaining God’s very best and highest calling in our lives, so that we can enjoy what He has promised. In Isaiah 4:3, He has promised that those who are left shall be called holy, because they have been tried and have remained faithful.

In Isaiah 4:4, we have the thought again of being washed: *“When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of*

judgment, and by the spirit of burning...” How we want to cry out, “Lord, wash me from all filth!” These saints who are left in Zion will also be purged by the Spirit of judgment and the Spirit of burning. That is what John the Baptist said of the Lord Jesus, “...*He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire*” (Mt. 3:11-12). It is the fire of God that will work through us and cleanse us.

Isaiah 4:5 tells us the purpose of such cleansing: “*And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence.*” It is so that the Church—God’s holy nation (1 Pet. 2:9), would manifest the glory of God. God is going to bring many churches to spiritual Mount Zion. The result is that we shall see the glory of God given to all those churches that have made the vision of Zion their goal.

Some time ago, the angel of Zion—the one who led the children of Israel from Egypt to Zion—visited me. When I see angels, I tremble because they are so different from us in that they are modelled, made, and formed exactly as the Father would have them, whereas we are in the process of being changed. But this angel was filled with anger. I could not look at his face because

of the tremendous anger that was there. He said, “You are to tell My people that their goal is Zion. Look at Hebrews 12. They are not to stop at Mount Sinai, but they are to go on to Zion.” I can imagine how this angel dealt with the children of Israel, because the Lord said to them in Exodus 23:20-21, “*Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him.*”

We are not to stop at Mount Sinai, which speaks of the Pentecostal experience, but we are to go on to Zion where our goal is to win Christ.

I am currently 86 years of age, and I have seen a broad spectrum of life, especially noticing the end of those who have gone astray—they are so miserable. While they may attempt to return to God, they are often not willing to pay the price.

May we continue to stay on God’s path. May our goal be to experience the glory of God and to win Christ, declaring with the Apostle Paul, “*Yea doubtless, and*

I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ” (Phil. 3:8). What we do here on earth—the life we lead and the goals we set—will be reflected in heaven above. May our goal be Christ.

Chapter Seven

Washed by the Spoken Word

The focal point of this chapter is John 15:3: “*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.*” Here, we see that Jesus cleanses us by the spoken word. This thought is also found in Ephesians 5:25-27 which says, “*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*” It is the Word of God that cleanses us.

As I was meditating on this, I realized the tremendous power of the Word of God to wash and cleanse us. When I was in the Philippines many years ago, I was speaking to a group solely composed of pastors, without their wives. After I had finished speaking, I felt that I was to ask them to pray. During this prayer, I received from the Lord the word “tobacco.” I asked, “Now is there anyone here who is bound with tobacco?” As it turned out, there were about ten pastors who were bound by tobacco. The Lord then said to me, “Release and wash them from that tobacco,” and so I prayed accordingly. A few days later, pastors came to me and said, “I was cleansed of tobacco. I was washed by the spoken Word.”

Tobacco is not the only thing that one can be cleansed from. Even chains of immorality can be cleansed by the spoken Word. Through the spoken word, I have seen chains fall off people who have been bound for years with various sins. That is what Jesus meant when He said, “You are clean through the Word that I have spoken to you.”

We are told by the Apostle John: “*And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen*” (Jn. 21:25). Obviously amongst the things that Jesus did, He must have said many things to His disciples that were not recorded in the gospels. He washed them through speaking to them. It is the Word of God spoken under the anointing of God that can wash us.

Washing in Marriage

The Lord also directed my mind towards married couples, and how the husband should cleanse his wife by speaking right things to her. Let me explain it in this way. Ephesians 4:15 says, “*Speaking the truth in love...*” When one marries, the husband has the duty of speaking to his wife and cleansing her by the Word of God.

The husband has to be the conduit through which God can speak, saying, “Dear, you are going to change. We

are not having (for example) anger or a bad temper in our house.” The husband can speak the Word and the wife can be washed from those things. This is what the Lord was speaking to me about—the tremendous power that a husband has to speak the Word of God to his wife and transform her.

Through the spoken word, I have seen chains fall off people who have been bound for years with various sins.

The wife may be troubled by fear—and I understand that many women are fearful. The husband can speak so that fear leaves his wife. I knew of a certain pastor and his wife who were going into a very unpleasant situation involving relatives, and they were in a state of fear. They had many questions: “Shall we go? Shall we do this or that?” I said to them, “I believe God does not want you to come under the bondages of those people but to take ascendancy and dominion over them spiritually.” In other words, when we are under God’s authority, and speak with His authority, fear will go.

We should not have the fear of man or woman because that is a snare. Proverbs 29:25 says, “*The fear of man*

bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe.” It is very dangerous to be afraid of someone. If it is the wife who is afraid of someone, the husband can take authority, speak the word, and say, “I am releasing you, Dear, from that fear.”

Washing Ourselves

That brings me to Ephesians 5:19: *“Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”* Here, we see that we have the ability to wash ourselves by speaking the Word of God to ourselves.

An example of this in the Bible is when King David spoke to his soul in Psalm 43. His soul was troubled because the army of Absalom was coming out to fight him, and he said in verse 5, *“Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? hope in God: for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God.”* He was addressing his own soul. He was going to wash his own soul from fear. Therefore, in Ephesians 5:19 and in Psalm 43:5, we have confirmation that not only can we speak to one another in love, but we can also speak to our own soul and say, “Why art thou fearful?”

We can cleanse our soul from fear and any other problem such as, for example, criticism. Many years ago, I was a

hotel director in Switzerland, and I had many maids and cooks for whom I was responsible. They all knew that I absolutely hated criticism, and they would never speak ill of people in my presence. The Lord had taught me that I must not criticize others, as it was objectionable to Him. Thus by the grace of God, I sought to keep that standard. When I married, my wife began to tell me about all the things that happened amongst the girls, and I was horrified. I could hardly believe they were Christians after all that I was hearing. They were subtly criticizing one another. If we struggle with this problem, we can likewise speak to our own soul by saying, “I am washing you from criticism and a bad temper, from speaking unkind words.”

We do not want to be those who are pure in their own eyes, although in reality they are filthy. We really need to go to the spiritual mirror of the Word of God (Jas. 1:23) and ask God to show us what blemishes and other things in our lives He wants to cleanse us from.

The Creative Power of God’s Word

Thus far, we have dealt with being washed from the negative traits. Now I would like to turn to the positive thought that the Word of God is creative. For example, in Genesis 1, the Lord said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. The Word of God not only washes, it also creates. One of the things that we have got to

watch concerning washing is that while we want to be washed from a negative trait, we do not want to leave a void. We want to fill that void with something that is fruitful.

The Apostle Paul says, in 2 Corinthians 3:18, *“But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.”* In other words, we do not just want to be cleansed from hatred; we want to have the opposite trait, love, filling that void.

If, for example, we struggle with being mean, not only do we want to be washed from that negative trait, we also want to be filled with goodness. When Moses asked the Lord to show him His glory, the Lord responded by saying, “I will show thee My goodness” (Ex. 33:19).

There is a little expression we have in England which applies to the female gender, and that is to be a “Lady Bountiful.” We use that title for ladies who go out to look after the poor and those in need. These ladies are generally married to quite wealthy people. They have a bountiful eye—in other words, they can see the needs of others, and they go out to meet those needs, with the goodness of God flowing through them. We want the goodness of God to flow through us. I once had a beautiful vision of the Lord, resplendent in glory, and from Him flowed His goodness.

There is another aspect of the Lord to consider here. He has many names, and one of them is Jehovah Jireh. It means that the Lord sees and provides. It was Abraham who gave the Lord this title in Genesis 22:14. There, Abraham was about to slay Isaac as a sacrifice, when he was stopped by an angel of the Lord. Then he saw a ram in the thicket that the Lord had provided as a sacrifice. Abraham called God “Jehovah Jireh,” meaning “The Lord sees and provides.”

When I was in Switzerland, we always had problems in just meeting our bills. I told the Lord that I never wanted to be the head of a work, or to be responsible for a compound, or to have need of financial help. Of course, all those things came upon me. I had to learn this name of God—God had to be my Jehovah Jireh.

We are putting in a compressed natural gas line in our premises. To save money and preserve our financial bottom line, we were going to have our maintenance staff dig the trench for the gas line. However, the more I thought of it, the more I could see the danger of someone who was not a professional laying a trench for natural gas, which is very delicate. I asked the Lord how He saw it, and He told me to give the whole of the work to a specific Christian contractor. I then said to my staff, “God has told me to give the work to the professionals. I know it is going to cost more money but when God tells me to do something, He will back

it up with a payment.” As it turned out, the money did come in for that additional work. Praise the Lord! He is Jehovah Jireh. I do not tell anyone about our needs; I simply look to the Lord to provide.

We have to know the Lord as our Jehovah Jireh. However, we cannot believe Him to provide unless He has told us to do something. Provision can encompass money, a ram (as was the case for Abraham), or even God’s delivering us from one thing and replacing it with a good fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Finally, it is wisdom that will wash us from error. Godly wisdom is defined in James 3:17-18: *“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace.”*

The seven pillars of wisdom bear repetition, as wisdom is the principal thing (Prov. 4:7). Godly wisdom is first pure. We read in 1 Thessalonians 4:3, *“For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication.”* Sexual purity is one of the most outstanding differences between Christianity and other religions. We should, therefore, as Christians realize that down in our hearts, others admire Christians for their purity. We must ensure that this is ever the case by our high moral standards that the Bible demands.

It is also peaceable. We have to have peace *with* God and also the peace *of* God. In Mark 4:36-39, when Jesus and His disciples were in a boat on the lake in that terrible storm, Jesus washed it all away by speaking the words, “Peace, be still.” There is tremendous power in peace. It washes us from fear and temptation.

Wisdom is also gentle, and easy to be entreated. We want to be those people who are willing to yield where yielding is possible.

**Let us seek the Lord for revelation of our
‘platform’—that skill or ability
for which we are known.**

It is full of mercy and good fruits of the Spirit. We must ask the Lord to wash us from hatred and fill us with His love. Finally, it is also without partiality or hypocrisy.

When the Lord appeared to me as Wisdom, He showed me people throughout the world performing certain works. The Israelites understood the importance of having a skill or ability, and they insisted that each fellow have a trade. Everyone should be known for a particular ability. That is an area of wisdom in this life. Let us ask God, “What my ability? What is my platform?” By

“platform” I mean something by which you are known and in which you are competent. The Apostle Paul, for example, had tent making as a platform, and whenever he went, he made tents.

We have seen that in John 15:3, we are clean through the Word that the Lord speaks to us. May God grant that we might speak to one another in love, and cleanse one another with the Word. We can sing and speak unto ourselves, and thereby cleanse ourselves, also.

Spiritual washing is a daily necessity. We would do well to remember that at the Last Supper, shortly before Jesus was going into heaven, one of His God-given duties was to wash the feet of His beloved apostles (Jn. 13). It was customary in the olden times to have one’s feet washed when entering a house.

Looking at it from our perspective, we would want our feet (speaking of our daily walk with him) to be washed before we meet Him in heaven above. In the natural realm, we wash ourselves consistently throughout the day. This speaks of the daily necessity of being washed through obedience to the Word. This washing will make us clean and keep us clean from the results of contact with the world. May we be a people that are truly washed by the Word of God and made ready for the coming of the Lord.

EPILOGUE

In having read carefully and studied the truths of this little book, we hope that the cleansing waters of the Word will enable Jesus to present you without spot or wrinkle before His Father.

Perhaps it will be necessary for you to read and re-read the truths contained in this book, so that you are indeed thoroughly washed by obedience to His Word. God bless and be it so for you.

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