



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

JULY 2021

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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July 2021

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The *agape* meal

The *agape* meal is our participation, publicly and from house to house, in the table that belongs to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. By receiving the word of present truth, ministered by those whom the Lord has set as stewards over His house, we have a participation, or fellowship, in Their table. **Luk 12:42.** John, the apostle, explained, 'That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ.' **1Jn 1:3.**

The apostle Paul exhorted us to eat and drink of the Lord's table in a *worthy manner*. **1Co 11:27.** In short, we eat and drink in this manner when our participation in the body of Christ, which is the Father's house, is consistent with the culture of Their fellowship. This offering culture will be demonstrated through our conversation and conduct within our houses, from house to house, and as we gather as a church community for communion. **Php 1:27.**

Importantly, eating and drinking in a worthy manner does not mean that we have attained a level of righteousness that qualifies us for participation in the fellowship of Yahweh. Neither does it mean that the Lord accepts us at His table in whatever condition we come. Consider, for example, the parable of the wedding feast. In this parable, Jesus described a man who presumed to attend the feast without being appropriately attired. The king, who had set the feast, said to the man, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." **Mat 22:11-13.**

Living in peace

Eating and drinking in a worthy manner means that we are being diligent to be found in Christ, *in peace*. That is, we are walking before the Lord 'without spot and blameless', accepting that our fellowship in the longsuffering of the Lord is salvation. **2Pe 3:14-15. Php 3:10-11**. In this fellowship, we are receiving the peace of God, which guards our hearts and minds. **Php 4:7**. Guarded in this way, we are not driven by the anxious pursuit of our own desires; nor do we consider ourselves to be the victims of our circumstances in life. **Php 4:6**. Instead, we are able to receive the mind of Christ as those whose end is in the obedience of Christ. **Php 2:5**. As we walk blameless before the Lord, we live at peace in our families and in the body of Christ. **Rom 12:18**. In other words, we are living in right relational order in Christ.

Those who walk blamelessly accept that their fellowship in the sufferings of Christ is *necessary* for their deliverance from sin; it is the means by which the other law is removed from their heart. Through their participation in this process, the healing of their spirit, which is necessary for every person, springs forth speedily! **Isa 58:8**. They understand that they have works to fulfil which are according to their name as a son of God and as a member of the body of Christ. Their obedience is not dependent on how they feel; nor is it based on their own understanding of God's will for their life. Rather, by the Holy Spirit, who enables their fellowship in the travail of Christ, they *watch* with Him, praying, 'Not my will, but Yours, be done'. **Luk 22:42**.

Taking heed to ourselves

Jesus warned us to *take heed to ourselves*, lest our hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and the cares of this life. **Luk 21:34**. Christ's exhortation was not only a direction to avoid the excessive consumption of alcohol and to abandon the investment of oneself in the affairs of this world. He was also addressing a way of living and relating with others that affects a person's perception of reality, and causes their feet to stumble so that they deviate from the pathway of salvation. **1Jn 2:10**.

Addressing this subject, King Solomon wrote, 'Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaints? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? Those who linger long at the wine, those who go in search of mixed wine. Do not look on the wine when it is red, when it sparkles in the cup, when it swirls around smoothly; at the last it bites like a serpent, and stings like a viper. Your eyes will see strange things, and your heart will utter perverse things.' **Pro 23:29-33**.

According to Solomon, woe, sorrow, contentions, complaints, wounds without a cause, and persistent fatigue, are indicators that a person is becoming weighed down by carousing and drunkenness. 'Wounds without a cause' are notable among these signs of intoxication. This may refer to people who manifest illnesses that have no identifiable, physical cause. It can also refer to those who consider themselves to be victims of relational hurts, which may have been imagined or were the outcome of a misunderstanding. Some people carry wounds that are, in reality, unresolved offences stemming from historical, and vaguely recollected, incidents. Individuals who are wounded without a cause inevitably seek remedies for their pain outside of fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. This is a characteristic response of those who 'look on mixed wine'.

FURTHER STUDY ISAIAH 28

In search of mixed wine

To 'look on mixed wine when it is red' describes a person who gives their attention and voice to a conversation that is based in a word other than the gospel of sonship. For some people, this happens when they 'mix' the gospel of sonship with their own understanding of God's word. Others who look on mixed wine, give their ear and speech to another gospel and conversation altogether. In this instance, they are seduced by a message that seems to 'sparkle' with wisdom as it is communicated in a manner that appeals to their natural senses. The apostle James called this wisdom, which does not proceed from the fellowship of a presbytery, 'earthly, sensual, demonic.' **Jas 3:15.**

Solomon warned that when a person participates in a conversation such as this, 'at the last it bites like a serpent and stings like a viper.' **Pro 23:32.** Satan gains an advantage in their life. Not only are they ensnared again to fear, but they also become inflamed, and even embittered, towards Christ and His messengers. Jesus resisted this kind of speech when it was exemplified by Peter, who *rebuked* Jesus for openly teaching that He would suffer many things, be rejected by the Jewish leaders, be killed, and raised after three days. **Mar 8:31-32.** He said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.' **Mar 8:33.**

Without recovery, a person who has been envenomed with the poison of Satan will develop a backbiting tongue that is full of cursing and bitterness. **Rom 3:13-14.** The apostle James described the backbiting tongue, which has the deadly poison of an adder within it, as 'a fire, a world of iniquity'. He said that it is 'so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature.' **Jas 3:6.** The backbiting tongue is more than just the conversation sourced from the other law. It has a poisonous, destructive intent toward others. **Jas 3:6.**

Consuming mixed wine

The one who 'consumes mixed wine', by entertaining and engaging a fellowship that is based in the wisdom from beneath, will begin to see strange things, and their heart will utter perverse things. **Pro 23:33**. In other words, they define and express themselves from the basis of their delusion. This is because they are unable to perceive the word of truth which comes by illumination, and they have no understanding concerning the way of life that is in Christ. They are left only with a perverted expression of themselves. Their life and works will be at odds with whom the Father has named them to be, even while they remain convinced of their acceptability before Him. **Jud 1:12-13**.

People who live this way are *unable* to participate in the *agape* meal in a worthy manner. They are not in the Spirit, and they are not walking according to the truth of their name as a son of God. Their engagement in the communion is little more than a religious activity that is often accompanied by discontent, complaint and relational reservations, particularly towards those who are spiritual.

Describing the mindset of a person who is weighed down with carousing, drunkenness and the cares of this life, Moses wrote, 'He blesses himself in his heart, saying, "I shall have peace, even though I follow the dictates of my heart" – as though the drunkard [those who are weighed down] could be included with the sober [those who are spiritual]'. **Deu 29:19**. Jesus concluded His exhortation to examine ourselves by saying, '*Watch* therefore, and pray always that you may be *counted worthy* to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.' **Luk 21:36**.

The cares of this life

Those who are weighed down by the cares of this life are disconnected from the order of headship on the ground of new creation. This is particularly notable in marriages that are not being restored to the culture intended by God. Drawing attention to this principle, Paul wrote, 'He who is married cares about the things of the world – how he may please his wife ... she who is married cares about the things of the world – how she may please her husband.' **1Co 7:33-34**.

Paul was not saying that marriage is inherently corrupt or that it is better for people not to marry. Rather, he was drawing attention to the fruitless, or thorny, culture in marriages that are not being restored to the order of headship through the cross of Christ. **Mat 13:22**. These marriages operate by the principles of the world that were established through the fall of Adam and Eve. **Pro 22:5**. The first married couple disobeyed God in an endeavour to have life apart from obedience to His word. Instead of obtaining life, they were subject to the curse of sin as the woman's desire was for the man, and the man endeavoured to rule over her. **Gen 3:16**.

This relational orientation became the fundamental expression of 'the cares of this life'. Its distressing effects within a marriage, including contention, dishonour and grief, cause a couple to become weighed down. Without repentance and faith towards God, they will endeavour to find life, individually, and as a couple, through activities which they believe will afford them the life they covet. This romantic project is an illusion that, at best, only grants them passing pleasure.

Jesus described a person whose heart is weighed down by these things as 'weary and heavy-laden'. **Mat 11:28**. They are bereft of grace. This is because the pursuit of their own desires (carousing, drunkenness and the cares of this life) is a violation of the order of headship through which the grace of life is ministered to every believer.

He who overcomes

In the book of Revelation, we read that Jesus admonished the church in Sardis, saying, 'You have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.' **Rev 3:1**. Although these congregants claimed to be alive in Christ as believers in the church, Jesus had not found their works perfect, or blameless, before God. This is because they had not been watchful, or discerning; neither had they been diligent to maintain the culture of godliness which they had previously attained. **Rev 3:2**. **Php 3:16**.

However, Jesus noted that there were a *few names* (meaning, a few sons of God) in Sardis who had not defiled their garments. Commending these ones, He said, 'They shall *walk with Me in white, for they are worthy*.' **Rev 3:4**. Jesus then promised, 'He who overcomes shall be clothed in *white garments*, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.' **Rev 3:5**.

To be appropriately clothed and worthy to walk with Christ as a participant in the table that He sets before us, we must be an *overcomer*. What are we overcoming? It is the devil and the alternative principle of life that he fathered in the hearts of mankind. **Rev 12:9-10**. Helpfully, the Scriptures are unequivocal in their explanation of what this means for us. We overcome by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of our testimony, and because we do not love our lives to the death. **Rev 12:11**.

We *overcome by the blood of the Lamb* as His blood is sprinkled on our hearts. This happens through our fellowship in the seven wounding events that caused the shedding of Christ's blood. Our participation in Christ's offering is only possible when we walk in the light of the present truth word that is ministered by His messengers. **1Jn 1:7**.

FURTHER STUDY 1 PETER 1

Walking in the light

Importantly, our fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ is contingent upon our relational connection with one another in His body. If we remain disconnected from others in the body of Christ because of our offences, the sufferings and distress that we experience in life will remain a judgement upon us. We are not availing ourselves of the blood of Christ and are, therefore, finding no deliverance from our sin. **1Jn 1:7**.

However, if we are receiving the word of life, and are having fellowship with one another, including those who proclaim God's word, we are able, through faith, to *draw near* to the Lord. Our hearts are sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies are washed with the pure water of the word. **Heb 10:22**. The implication of being cleansed and washed in this manner is that we are being delivered from living according to the dictates of our own heart, and we are able to serve God as part of a kingdom of priests. **Heb 9:13-15**.

Overcoming by the word of our testimony means that we are being conformed to the name that we have been given by the Father, in Christ. **1Ti 6:12**. Of course, obtaining and expressing the life of God according to our name from the Father is dependent upon our deliverance from the desire to name ourselves. Our name as a son of God is expressed as a testimony when we are fulfilling the works that the Father has prepared for us to do, in Christ. Our engagement in these works is not dependent upon how we feel or whether we believe that our circumstances are conducive to obedience. In the same way that Christ did not deviate from the works of His obedience as He tasted the sufferings of death for every person, a son of God who is standing in the grace of God does not draw back from the works of their sonship when the circumstances of their life become unfavourable.

Committed to His lordship

The third aspect of overcoming is *laying down our lives to the death*. This refers to our fundamental and absolute commitment to the lordship of Christ. Paul exhorted us, in this regard, saying, 'Whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ.' **Col 3:23-24**. Our commitment to the lordship of Christ is demonstrated as we forsake all mechanisms of self-preservation and self-promotion. We count them as loss, acknowledging that they are being taken out into the sea of God's forgetfulness. As we are conformed to Christ's death, we are losing our life for Christ's sake, and are finding our life in Him. **Mat 10:39**.

True blessing and healing are only found as we participate in the *agape* meal in a worthy manner. As we walk with Christ in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, we find deliverance from sin and the other law. Each day, as we acknowledge that we are crucified with Christ, we cease from seeking to save our life. In fact, we confess that we no longer live by the principles of the flesh. Rather, Christ lives in us. We live His life by the faith that we receive by hearing and receiving the word of present truth. **Gal 2:20. Rom 10:17**.

As we walk this way, we are not only delivered from sin but, also, we know the healing, or regeneration, of our spirit; and we are being transformed by the renewing of our mind. **Rom 12:2**. We are changing because our mind is set on the Spirit who leads us in all truth. **Rom 8:5. Joh 16:13**. That is, He enables us to participate in the fellowship of Christ's offering, where we are able to fulfil the works of our sonship that the Father has prepared for us.

Many are sick

Eating and drinking the *agape* meal in a worthy manner means walking before the Lord without spot and blameless. **2Pe 3:14**. To walk blameless before the Lord is to overcome sin and the other law by the blood of the Lamb, the word of our testimony, and by 'loving not our lives to the death'. **Rev 12:11**. With this in view, it is clear that a person *discerns* the Lord's body through participation in the process of overcoming.

The apostle Paul urged us to *examine ourselves* in relation to our participation in the *agape* meal. **1Co 11:28**. He warned that 'he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgement to himself, not discerning the Lord's body'. **1Co 11:29**. Significantly, when we eat and drink in an unworthy manner by failing to discern the Lord's body, we come under the judgement of God. Paul said that it is for this reason that *many* people in the church are weak and sick, and many have fallen asleep. **1Co 11:29-30**. When a person has fallen asleep in this manner, they have lost their sonship.

Paul's statement is striking. He was highlighting the fact that there is more sickness within church congregations than there should be. Why is this so? It is because many Christians remain ignorant of the word of the cross which Paul preached and exemplified. **Gal 3:1**. It is not being ministered to them. However, even in churches where the word of the cross is being proclaimed, too many people continue to harden their hearts against the gospel of sonship. **Heb 3:13-14**. They demonstrate that they are not mixing the word with faith, because they are not turning from their former church traditions and alternative doctrines. **Heb 4:2**. They are not experiencing cultural reformation in their marriages or households. They are becoming weak in faith and their service in the body of Christ is restrained. Commonly, this is attributed to their perceived failing health.

The absence of peace

The absence of peace in a person's life is a telling indicator that they are not walking blameless before the Lord and are, therefore, participating in the *agape* meal in an unworthy manner. Their hearts and minds remain unguarded. As a consequence, their illnesses may become increasingly psychosomatic. In these instances, their poor health is indicative of an unsound mind that is not stayed on Christ. **2Ti 1:7. Isa 26:3.** Furthermore, they may become increasingly insecure and anxious when their self-projections are not accepted by others or when they fail under pressure. As their identity continues to dystrophy, they become increasingly vulnerable to demonic oppression.

Another indicator of this weak and sick condition is a congregant's desire to alleviate their suffering by withdrawing from the works that the Father has prepared for them each day in the fellowship of Christ's offering. **Heb 10:38-39.** They begin to draw back from their responsibilities as a spouse, or as a parent, or as a friend, or as an employee, or as a student. Their offering in the body of Christ is also limited. Often, they will invest themselves in pleasure-seeking activities to compensate for their fatigue and to alleviate their suffering. **Pro 14:14. Pro 1:29-33.** Their orientations to life demonstrate that they have let go of the spirit of adoption by which they would, otherwise, engage in the offering and sufferings of Christ. Consequently, they have become ensnared again to the fear of death. **Rom 8:15-17.**

A notable inclination of those who eat and drink in an unworthy manner is their anxious and varied pursuit of remedies for their physical and psychological distresses. This is where they put their trust. **2Ch 16:12-13.** Increasingly, these treatments include natural therapies and psychological counselling, demonstrating that their hearts and minds are not being guarded by the peace of God. They seek deliverance from their anguish and confusion through worldly advice and through treatment methods that may even have questionable efficacy.

FURTHER STUDY JOHN 16

Failure to ask, seek, and knock

If a person is not willing to receive the washing of regeneration that comes through the word of God, they will not be transformed through the renewing of their mind. **Eph 5:25-26**. Their mind is renewed when, by the mercies of God, they present themselves as living sacrifices in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. **Rom 12:1-2**.

Sadly, those who set their minds on the flesh pursue alternative treatments with vigour, instead of giving their primary attention to prayer in the secret place where they can *ask* the Father for His will to be done in their lives. **Mat 6:6**. They do not apply themselves to *seek* understanding regarding their unique participation in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. They fail to *knock* on the door of the church in order to find fellowship with those who minister the gospel. **Mat 7:7-8**. And, when they do seek counsel, it is received as complementary to the other remedies that they are pursuing.

We are not saying that people should not seek medical attention when they are infirmed. The course of treatment that doctors prescribe for *actual* ailments is part of God's general providence to enable our ongoing participation in the fulfilment of His will as His sons. However, we are saying that God's grace is sufficient for our unique fellowship in Christ's offering and sufferings. **1Co 12:9**. Often, a person's pursuit of various therapies is an endeavour to escape from fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. **Pro 21:25**. They do not believe that this fellowship is the way of escape from the judgement of God. Some reject the invitation to journey with Christ because they are unwilling to be restored to the order of headship to which the Spirit is calling them. Others refuse to walk in the light of the word because they derive some form of identity from being a victim of their circumstances.

Your healing shall spring forth

Speaking of the purpose for our fellowship in His offering and sufferings, the Lord Jesus proclaimed, 'Is this not the fast that I have chosen: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, and that you break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and that you bring to your house the poor who are cast out; when you see the naked, that you cover him, and not hide yourself from your own flesh?' **Isa 58:6-7**. The Lord's point is that when we are joined to His offering and sufferings, we cease from being the focus of our life. Our focus becomes the ministry of life to others. **2Co 3:5-6**. We are participating in the culture of Yahweh's table!

The wonderful promise to those who receive Christ's words in the *agape* meal, and who walk by faith in the fellowship of His offering and sufferings, is, 'Your light shall break forth like the morning, your healing shall spring forth speedily, and your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and He will say, "Here I am"'. **Isa 58:8-10**.

The Lord is bringing a season of revival among us. Healing will come speedily to those who give their ear to the word of the Lord and forsake their own way. As they turn to the Lord and are sanctified to their unique participation as a member of the body of Christ, many ailments will cease in a moment. Moreover, they will find peace as their spirit is revived, and they are delivered from the demonic oppressions that afflict the rebellious.

Unclean spirits in the family

In the fellowship of Yahweh, the divine nature is administered by God the Father from the ground of headship. **1Co 11:3**. From there, it proceeds through Christ to every family. Christ exercises His headship from this ground. He takes authority over every familiar and unclean spirit that seeks dominion within Christian families. These unclean spirits gain access to a household through dysfunctional marital and family relationships. They cause spiritual, psychological, emotional, and even physical distress to individuals within a family. The oppression of these family members is the manifestation of an unclean spirit. **Deu 28:29**.

An unclean spirit will depart from our families, and from a Christian community, when we become relationally obedient to Christ within the order of headship that the Father has prescribed for us. Our obedience is only possible when we, individually, and collectively, mourn with godly sorrow in response to the word of God. Under the influence of a spirit of grace and supplication, we sorrow because we are able to see how we have rejected the headship of Christ through our relational dysfunction and treachery. **Zec 12:10**.

This sorrow leads to repentance as we turn from our rebellion. **2Co 7:10**. Our rebellion is our refusal to take responsibility and accountability for our identity, and for the name and works that the Father has given to us in Christ. As we turn in repentance to Christ, we begin to receive the cleansing that comes from the fountain for sin and uncleanness that flowed as blood and water from the pierced heart of Christ. **Zec 13:1. Joh 19:34-37**. Explaining the effect of this cleansing activity in our lives, the Lord said, 'I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they shall no longer be remembered. I will also cause the prophets and *the unclean spirit to depart from the land*.' **Zec 13:2**.

Obedience to the word

The word of our sonship, which is proclaimed to us by God's messengers, is instinct with life. It brings illumination and understanding regarding our lives and families. Furthermore, it has the power to accomplish within us that for which it is sent. **Heb 4:12-13. Isa 55:11.** That is, the word of God has the power to set us free from our bondage to sin so that, by faith, we can be whom the Father has called us to be, and can *choose to obey* what He is saying to us. **Rom 6:17.** This word proceeds to us from the headship of the Father *only* as it is ministered by Christ from the presbytery.

When hearing the word of God, that is preached by the messengers of Christ, many people in families and in the church make the mistake of believing that *choosing to receive the word* is submission to the headship of Christ. They think that this is an expression of their 'freedom' as a son of God. However, by 'choosing to choose' the word of a messenger who has been sent by God, a person makes themselves equal with the messenger.

Grasping for equality in this manner, they are not submitted to the headship of Christ at all. They use the word, which *they* have chosen, to craft a religious culture and service that is in their own image. Their ensuing undertakings within the family, and in the church, are not obedience to the word of Christ. They are the works associated with their religious projections as they *commend themselves* to the presbytery. **2Co 1:12,18.** Those who live this way remain separated from the headship of Christ, and their house continues to be vulnerable to unclean spirits.

The headship of Christ

If a person maintains the right to *choose the word*, it demonstrates that they have a *collegial* attitude and mindset. Their choice to choose the word shows that they do not actually accept that the headship of Christ is ministered to them by overseers whom Christ has placed over them, and to whom they should demonstrate relational obedience. **3Jn 1:9**. Paul exhorted us all to this fellowship, writing, 'Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.' **Heb 13:17**.

Overseers who are a part of a presbytery speak in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, without coercing, or compelling, a response from their hearers. **2Co 10:1,12**. They do this, believing that illumination will engender faith obedience in their hearers, and not just compliance for one's personal advantage. This does not mean that Christ's messengers are timid or uncertain about the word of truth they have been sent to proclaim. Their 'yes' should be 'yes' and their 'no' should be 'no'. **Mat 5:37**. They must not equivocate in relation to what the Spirit is saying to the church.

If the culture of a leader's life does not reflect the word that is ministered from the fellowship of the presbytery, they are prone to the devil and at risk of being accursed. **Mat 5:37**. **Gal 1:8-9**. Jesus described leaders who are not committed to the cultural reformation that is called for through the ministry of the word, as stewards who 'eat and drink with the drunkards'. **Mat 24:48-49**. Because of their 'mixed' conversation, Christ comes to them in judgement, on a day when they are not looking for Him, and at an hour of which they are not aware. **Mat 24:50-51**.

The importance of sanctification

In this present season, the Holy Spirit is urging us individually, as married couples, as families, and as church communities, to walk before the Lord and be blameless. **2Pe 3:14**. This is the call to be restored to the order of headship on the ground of Yahweh's fellowship. A notable implication of our disconnection from headship is the susceptibility of our houses to unclean spirits. We observe the effect of these spirits in the many who are weak and sick, and spiritually asleep, among us. **1Co 11:29-30**. They find no deliverance from their oppression, even though they pursue sundry remedies. Their sorrow is not a fellowship in Christ's sufferings.

Another notable indicator of this unclean influence in houses is the dishonour shown to parents by their children, and by spouses to one another. We note the Lord's warning to those who stumble because 'their tongue and their doings are against the Lord'. **Isa 3:8**. He said, '*As for My people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them. O My people! Those who lead you cause you to err, and destroy the way of your paths.*' **Isa 3:12**.

Households that are not established in the headship of Christ are exposed to unclean spirits. This is particularly notable in the households of those who continue to embrace and support children who have departed from the faith. When parents do this, they dishonour Christ and His messengers, as well as their own sonship; and they slight their believing children. They *compromise* on the culture of godliness that is established by the word of God, in order to encompass and legitimise the lifestyle of their rebellious children. Their readiness to do this reveals that their 'yes' is not 'yes', and their 'no' is not 'no'. Jesus said, '*Whatever is more than these is from the evil one.*' **Mat 5:37**. It is for this reason that they are subject to the oppression of familiar and unclean spirits.

FURTHER STUDY ISAIAH 3

Deliverance from unclean spirits

Unclean spirits can gain access to households through the instruction which their children receive from the education system. In the world, children are taught to question their parents and to trust in their own understanding. **Jer 4:22.** When a household has *not* been established in the conversation of faith that comes by receiving and obeying God's word, the children become disposed to the appeal of the world's wisdom. **Jer 10:23.** This is the wisdom that is taught by Satan, the chief unclean spirit. Children who have embraced a culture of dishonour and disobedience are under the influence of the evil one. Jesus warned that dysfunction and betrayal in families will increase as the time of the end draws near, saying, 'Now brother will deliver up brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.' **Mat 10:21.**

In contrast, the word of God has unfettered access into a house that is being restored to the order of headship. A husband or wife who is standing in this grace is able to apply the word that they are receiving to their household. This is because their 'yes' is 'yes', and their 'no' is 'no', in relation to the word that they are hearing, and the culture that they are living. **Mat 5:37.** They are, therefore, able to deliver their children from the influence of familiar and unclean spirits that would, otherwise, provoke the pursuit of a projection, and cause them spiritual, psychological, emotional or physical distress. The responsibility to cultivate the divine nature in this manner belongs to every household. It does not belong to the church.

An offering for sin

Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and to save everyone who was lost to God as a consequence of the fall of mankind. **Luk 19:10**. In order to recover the sons and daughters of men to the high calling of sonship to which they had been predestined, the Father made the Son, who knew no sin, to be an offering for sin. **2Co 5:21**. We know that there were two aspects of this sin offering, which were symbolised in the Old Covenant as two goats – the Lord’s goat and the scapegoat.

As our scapegoat, all of our sins, and all of the reproachful accusations that mankind has made against God the Father, were laid upon Christ’s head. **Lev 16:21-22**. Speaking of this offering, the prophet Isaiah declared, ‘The Lord has *laid* on Him the iniquity of us all.’ **Isa 53:6**. King David prophesied, ‘The reproaches of those who reproach You have *fallen* on Me.’ **Psa 69:9**. Through this prophetic statement, Jesus revealed that it was our reproaches of the Father which fell upon Him as the scapegoat.

As the scapegoat, the Son became the embodiment of all sin, bringing it under the judgement of God for both punishment and destruction as He journeyed from Gethsemane to the cross. He journeyed to a land that was forsaken and was, Himself, lost to God. On this journey to the land of forgetfulness, our reproaches against the Father, which had been laid upon Christ as our Sin-Bearer, caused Him unimaginable grief. Regarding this implication of His offering, Isaiah prophesied, ‘Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.’ **Isa 53:4**.

Godly sorrow

The grief that Jesus experienced was not the grief that we experience because of our sin. Neither was it a benevolent grief, like the weeping of those who pitied Him as He journeyed to Calvary. In fact, He said to the women who mourned and lamented in this manner, 'Daughters of Jerusalem, do not weep for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children.' **Luk 23:28**. Jesus was exhorting them to a different kind of mourning; a mourning that would be revealed through the fulfilment of His travail.

The grief that Jesus bore was for the Father who had lost everything. It was also for the Holy Spirit who was grieved because He had laid down His life, in the covenant of Yahweh, to become the expression of the name of every son of God. The Son's grief was caused by our reproaches against the Father. It was the sorrow of the Father as we rejected Him and claimed to be the victims of His fatherhood. This was the breach of the *agape* fellowship in the family of God.

Jesus began to bear this sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane, as our sin and our reproaches of the Father fell on Him. The stress of this occasion caused Him to sweat blood that fell as clots to the ground. **Luk 22:44**. His prayer to the Father in the garden was, 'Reproach has broken My heart, and I am full of heaviness; I looked for someone to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none.' **Psa 69:20**.

This prayer of Christ continued throughout His offering journey to Calvary. As Jesus Christ hung on the cross from 12pm to 3pm, He was completely submerged under the waters of God's eternal judgement. **Psa 69:2**. In His flesh, as the Son of Man, He took sin and Satan out into the sea of God's forgetfulness. **Mic 7:19**. In so doing, the body of sin was forsaken and completely forgotten by God. **Isa 43:25**.

The broken heart of Christ

Christ's heart was broken when He cried to the Father, ' "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?" which is translated, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me"?' **Mar 15:34**. This was the greatest sorrow that was ever expressed. His sorrow was not the expression of one who had forsaken God through rebellion. Jesus was not a victim who believed that He was being denied justice, even though His justice had been taken from Him. **Act 8:32-33**. The sorrow of the Father was the agony of Christ that caused His heart to break.

The Lord's cry, 'Why have You forsaken Me?' revealed that His heart had been *broken* by reproach. **Psa 69:20**. It expressed that, in the cross, all is lost and forsaken, including the 'why' of our rebellion. He silenced it forever. As His heart was broken, He proclaimed the end and destruction of all sin and iniquity that belonged to mankind. They were broken and destroyed.

It is important to recognise that Christ's *physical heart* was also broken at this point. This marked the end of His physical capacity to sustain His mortal body. As His heart stopped beating, it was broken and ruptured. Significantly, this was the seventh sprinkling of His blood as the Lord's goat!

When Christ's physical heart was broken and ruptured, His blood congealed and separated into blood and water. He was still alive, even though His heart had stopped beating and pumping blood through His body. Despite this physical reality, Jesus *remained* a living sacrifice by the power of *exanastasis* that had been perfected in His mortal body. He continued to offer Himself to God as a whole burnt offering, by the power of *exanastasis*, until His offering was finished.

Sanctification by the Spirit

When the heart of Christ was broken, the Father was near to Him and drew Him out of the many waters of judgement. **Psa 34:18. Psa 18:16.** God drew near to Jesus, because *our* capacity for repentance was the fruit of His broken heart. This was the glorious point that Paul made when he explained that Jesus Christ was 'delivered up *because* of our offences, and was raised because of our justification'. **Rom 4:25.**

The broken heart of Christ was both the full revelation of sin and iniquity that is eternally separate from God, and the full revelation of obedience and righteousness. It was the breakpoint where mercy and judgement met in the physical body of Christ, on the cross, and where mercy triumphed over judgement. **Jas 2:13.** New Creation was brought forth as the fruit of this redemptive action.

The grief of the 'why' was absolute in the Son and the Father. It is the ultimate statement of sorrow. The Holy Spirit sanctified the relationship of the Father and Son, as Christ expressed the grief of the Father through His own cry, 'Why have You forsaken Me?' He sanctified Their relationship; each to Their own – the Father to the Father, and the Son to the Son. In this regard, They did not sanctify Themselves, even though this was Their desire. Instead, They *received* the sanctification of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit also sustained the Son, in Whom dwells the Father, with *exanastasis*. We know this because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of resurrection, bringing forth new creation. Making this point, the apostle Paul said that Jesus Christ was 'declared to be the Son of God with power *according to the Spirit of holiness* [the Holy Spirit], by the resurrection from the dead'. **Rom 1:3-4.** We note, therefore, that Christ's declaration, or expression, 'Behold, I make all things new', is by Eternal Spirit. **Rev 21:5.** This is because it is the fruit of Christ's offering, which was by Eternal Spirit. **Heb 9:13-14.**

Joined to His broken heart

Unless we are connected to the broken, or circumcised, heart of Christ, we are unable to find repentance and salvation. The prophet Ezekiel described the uncircumcised heart of a person as a 'heart of stone'. **Eze 36:26**. Not only is that person unable to repent, but they are also incapable of loving the Lord. **Deu 30:6**. However, God promised that, through the offering of Christ, 'I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you'. **Eze 36:25-26**. How do we avail ourselves of this marvellous New Covenant provision? We must join the broken heart of Christ.

The apostle John declared that the blood and water that flowed from the heart of Christ was the fulfilment of the Scripture, 'They shall look on Him whom they pierced'. **Joh 19:37**. When the word of the cross is proclaimed to us, grace and supplication enable us to look on Him whom we have pierced. We see that we are dead with Christ. **2Co 5:14**. Our hearts are broken as we are joined to the broken heart of Christ. The power of the other law is broken within us. This is the blessing of becoming poor in spirit. **Mat 5:3**.

When we are joined, by grace and supplication, to the broken heart of Christ, we cease from the self-centred sorrow, or grief, associated with our unfulfilled expectations of life. This kind of sorrow only produces death. Instead, we are able to mourn with the sorrow of God. This sorrow leads to repentance, through which we are able to forsake our own way. It is left in the sea of God's forgetfulness. The fruit of Christ's life is produced in us as we journey with Christ on the pathway of salvation that He has pioneered for us.

God has spoken to us

In his opening statement of the book of Hebrews, the apostle Paul explained that God the Father has spoken to all who are lost, *by His Son*. Specifically, he wrote, 'God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days *spoken to us by His Son*, whom He has appointed heir of all things'. **Heb 1:1-2**.

The message that the Son proclaims to us is our sonship. This message is the light of the glory of God that shines from the face of Christ. **2Co 4:6**. He is the express image of the fatherhood of God to us. When we first look into His face, we see what we have lost by forsaking God as our Father. However, if we do not draw back from Him as He speaks to us, we see that He is not ashamed to call us His brethren. **Heb 2:11-13**. He declares to us the name of the Father, and makes those who receive Him, to be sons of the Father. By this means, He causes us to belong to the Father's name. **Joh 14:6**.

The Father gives us to the Son as members of His house. **Joh 6:44**. The house of the Son is revealed when we become members of His body and join His offering. Only those who are born of God are members of the body of Christ and participants in the fellowship of His offering. We note the words of Paul, 'Christ as a Son over His own house, *whose house we are* if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm to the end'. **Heb 3:5-6**. Describing this same principle, the apostle Peter identified us as living stones, who are being built together into a spiritual house so that we can offer up spiritual sacrifices to God the Father, through our fellowship in the offering of Christ. **1Pe 2:4-5**.

Walking by the Spirit

Paul summarised the process of repentance and faith as seven steps of mourning, writing, 'For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter.' **2Co 7:10-11**. Through repentance and faith, we are able to stand up in Christ as part of the new creation and walk by the Spirit in the New Covenant.

The New Covenant is the Holy Spirit. This is because our fellowship with the Father and the Son is only active by the Holy Spirit as we receive the word of the cross. This is why the apostle John said, 'That which we have seen and heard we declare to you [by the Holy Spirit], that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ [by the Holy Spirit]'. **1Jn 1:3. 1Pe 1:1-2. Php 2:1-2**.

The expression of our sonship, and our work as priests in the house of the Son, is only possible by the Holy Spirit. He is the expression of our name as a son of God in a firstfruits measure. **Rom 8:23. Eph 1:13-14**. Furthermore, the Holy Spirit joins us to the priestly travail of Christ, and strengthens us with the same Eternal Spirit with which He strengthened Christ. **Rom 8:26. Rom 5:5. Heb 9:13-14**. Because of this grace, we are able, each day, to priest ourselves as living sacrifices in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. Living this way is what it means to walk by the Spirit in the New Covenant.



Restoring
my Soul