



Restoring my Soul

HE RESTORES MY SOUL, HE LEADS ME IN PATHS

PSA 23:3

SEPTEMBER 2021

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A FIVE DAY DEVOTIONAL GUIDE

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September 2021

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The bride city

In the book of Revelation, the bride of Christ is identified as 'the New Jerusalem' which descends out of heaven from God. **Rev 21:2,9-10**. The world of the future, described as 'the new heavens and earth', will be governed from the New Jerusalem. **Rev 21:24-26**. It is the administration of God that is set over the works of His hands. **Heb 2:7**.

The first great revelation concerning Christ's bride, the New Jerusalem, belonged to Abraham. He received this revelation from Christ while he was living in Ur of the Chaldeans. It motivated Abraham to depart from that region, later known as Babylon. Although the Lord promised to give Abraham the land of Canaan as an inheritance, Abraham was illuminated to see that the promised inheritance was a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God. **Heb 11:8-10**.

The apostle Paul highlighted this point, writing, 'But now they [Abraham, Sarah, Isaac and Jacob] desire a better, that is, a *heavenly country*. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has *prepared a city* for them.' **Heb 11:16**. As Abraham waited for this city, which he saw from afar, he confessed that he was a stranger and pilgrim on the earth. **Heb 11:10,13**. He looked for the bride city to be his eternal dwelling place. This pursuit became the primary focus of his life.

Abraham looked for the New Jerusalem, which would come *down out of heaven from God*. Although the builder and maker of this city is God the Father, it would be formed from the elements of water, blood and Spirit that flowed from Christ's offering as He journeyed from Gethsemane and died on the cross. The bride of Christ would be brought forth from the body of Christ when He was lifted up on the cross.

The formation of the bride

In the covenant fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, before the foundation of the world, Yahweh the Son emptied Himself to become the Father's Son. **Php 2:7**. Christ's body became a household for God the Father, in which the seed of God, with the names of all the sons of God, resided. This was when 'heavenly places' was established. Christ's corporate body is depicted in the Scriptures as a 'house' or a 'temple'.

The first man, Adam, was a type of Christ. The identities of all mankind were committed to Adam through the word of the Father as He breathed the breath of lives into man's nostrils. **Gen 2:7**. When no helper who was comparable to Adam could be found in heaven or on earth, the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon him. The Lord God took a rib from Adam's side and formed it into a woman who would be able to multiply his seed as children, and thus be comparable to him. **Gen 2:18-23**.

This 'operation' foreshadowed the work of the Father to bring forth the bride of Christ through the offering of Jesus on the cross. When Christ's offering was completed on the cross, and He had committed His Spirit to God the Father, His physical body *fell asleep in death*. **Luk 23:46**. A centurion then pierced Christ's side with a spear, causing blood and water to flow from His side. **Joh 19:34**.

The apostle John was an eyewitness of this event. He explained that it was the fulfilment of Zechariah's prophecy, 'And I will pour on the house of David and on *the inhabitants of Jerusalem* the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.' **Zec 12:10-11**.

Becoming part of the bride

On the Day of Pentecost, a great multitude of people received the message of the apostle Peter. They were born again, and were baptised into the name of Jesus. **Act 2:41**. A person who is born again and baptised into Christ is raised and seated with Him in heavenly places. **Eph 2:4-6**. The temple of His body is the context of their priestly work, where they present themselves as a living sacrifice, and prove the will of God, which is their sanctification as a son of God. **Rom 12:1-2. 1Th 4:3**.

They also became part of the bride of Christ as they drew near to Him with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having their heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and their body washed with pure water through the ministry of the fountain for sin and uncleanness that flows from Christ's side. **Heb 10:22**. This is the ministry of the washing of the water by the word, through the headship of Christ in the church. **Eph 5:25-27**.

The multitude who received Peter's ministry on the Day of Pentecost became members of the church in Jerusalem, which was the *local* expression of the bride of Christ. Significantly, they were no longer citizens of the natural Jerusalem, which the apostle Paul described as 'Hagar', the bondwoman, whose children were in bondage under the Old Covenant. They were now citizens of the Jerusalem from above, the bride of Christ, who is the mother of the sons of God. **Gal 4:26**. This is true for every person who is born of God and baptised into Christ.

As part of the bride of Christ, we are joined to the travail through which others on earth are brought forth as sons of God through the gospel. **Gal 4:19**. We note, for example, that as the members of the church continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers, the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. **Act 2:40,46-47**.

FURTHER STUDY ACTS 2

Bringing forth godly seed

Significantly, the motherhood of the church is seen *in every believing family*. The children of parents who are born again and baptised into Christ, are also born as sons of God. Paul highlighted this reality, saying, 'For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; otherwise your children would be unclean, *but now they are holy*.' **1Co 7:14**.

When God formed woman from the rib of man, the one man was made two so that identities could be multiplied through *procreation*. However, God's plan was not simply for the proliferation of the sons and daughters of men. He predestined us all to adoption as sons of God in Christ. **Eph 1:3-6**. His desire is for *godly seed* – sons and daughters who are born of God and are brought forth into covenant families.

Under the Old Covenant, the Lord endowed a husband and a wife with 'a remnant of the Spirit' to enable the two to become one so that they could bring forth godly seed. **Mal 2:15**. This was an anointing of the Holy Spirit that belonged to those who, like King David, lived by faith. **Psa 51:10-12**. Because of this anointing, a believing couple under the Old Covenant was able to be one as they remained faithful to the covenant of circumcision; that is, as they walked in the same blameless manner as their father Abraham had done. **Gen 17:1,10-14**. Accordingly, their children were heirs of the resurrection that God promised to Abraham.

In the New Covenant, the remnant of the Spirit that is given to believing parents is not only an anointing; *it is the divine nature*. Their family belongs to the bride city, which Abraham, and the great men and women of faith under the Old Covenant, saw from afar. **Heb 11:39-40**.

Birth before labour

In the fellowship of Christ's offering and travail, a Christian couple is made one as they put off the fallen ways of the flesh, and avail themselves of the life that is in His blood. Walking blameless in this manner marks them as a household of faith and recipients of the blessing of Abraham. Paul explained that the blessing of Abraham is '*the promise of the Spirit through faith*'. **Gal 3:13-14**.

A child who is conceived in a new covenant household is a son of God even before they are brought forth from their mother's womb through natural labour. At the point of conception, a new, natural identity with a biological body is formed. Because their parents are part of the bride of Christ, the Father births this new identity as His own son by forming Christ, His Seed, in their heart. **Gal 4:19. Eph 3:16-17**. Christ has already been formed in their heart as they continue to grow and develop in the womb of their mother. Amazingly, from conception, they have been raised into heavenly places and are part of the temple of Christ's body. If they die in the womb, heaven remains their place of abode.

The prophet Isaiah spoke of children who are born of God before they are brought forth through the natural labour of their mother. This birth belongs to those who are part of God's covenant people. Isaiah declared, 'Before she was in labour, she gave birth; before her pain [natural labour] came, she delivered a male child [a son of God]. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion [the mountain upon which Jerusalem was built] was in labour, she gave birth to her children.' **Isa 66:7-8**. Isaiah was referring, figuratively, to Jerusalem as the church, the bride of Christ, in the New Covenant.

Christ's seventh wound

Christ was wounded a seventh time in the course of His offering journey when His heart was broken, rupturing under the stress and grief of bearing the Father's reproach. This moment was marked by His cry, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" ' **Mat 27:46**. The grief, or sorrow, which broke His heart, was caused by mankind's rejection of God's fatherhood. Mankind chose Satan as an alternative to the fatherhood of God.

As Christ's heart was broken, the Father was near to Him. **Psa 34:17-18**. He reached down and drew the Son out of the waters of judgement, which are described in the Scriptures as 'the sea of God's forgetfulness'. **Psa 18:16**. **Mic 7:18-19**. The Son was brought forth as the Firstborn from the dead; the Head of a corporate new creation. **Col 1:18**.

This seventh wound caused Christ's heart to cease beating, and for blood and water to separate within Him. After it had accomplished its atoning and perfecting work, Christ was sustained only by *exanastasis* – the resurrection life of the Father, which was in His blood.

Now living only by the resurrection life of God, the Son presented His body as a whole burnt offering, manifesting the new creation. The new creation was revealed when Jesus drank the sour wine which was lifted to His lips, using a branch of hyssop. **Joh 19:29-30**. At the last supper, Jesus took a cup, gave thanks, and gave it to His disciples, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. For this is My blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom.' **Mat 26:27-29**. Evidently, the cup of the New Covenant was the wine that was lifted up to Christ's lips, using hyssop.

The significance of the hyssop

Describing the inauguration of the first covenant, the apostle Paul explained, 'For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the Law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water, scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, "This is the blood of the covenant which God has commanded you." Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.' **Heb 9:19-21.**

With respect to the blood of the Everlasting Covenant, water, scarlet wool and hyssop are symbols of the word of the Father, the *zoe* life that was in the blood of Christ, and the application of these elements to our lives by the Holy Spirit. In this regard, hyssop speaks of the work of the Holy Spirit, lifting up the wine of participation in the New Covenant.

Noting the use of hyssop for the application of the elements of blood and water, we recall that the blood of the Passover lamb was applied with hyssop to the doorposts and lintels of the Israelite houses. **Exo 12:22.** Similarly, the water of purification for sin and uncleanness was applied to a person or to their house, using hyssop. Num 19:18. Significantly, hyssop was used to lift the sponge, which was full of sour wine, to the mouth of Jesus so that He could be the first to drink wine in the new creation kingdom of God. **Joh 19:29.**

As Christ drank this wine, He gave to us a participation in His body and blood, along with our fellowship in His offering, which He had accomplished for us. This fellowship gives us access to the washing of regeneration; enables us to be born of God as a new creation; joins us with Christ as sons of God, and restores us to the Father's house in the kingdom of God. **Tit 3:4-5. 2Co 5:17. Joh 1:12-13. 1Jn 3:1-2. Isa 56:5.**

Looking upon Him

After Christ committed His Spirit into the hands of the Father, His lifeless body remained nailed to the cross. A soldier pierced His side with a spear and, immediately, blood and water gushed from His side. **Joh 19:34**.

The apostle John explained that this fulfilled the word of the Lord brought by the prophet Zechariah, who declared, 'And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced.' **Zec 12:10**. Evidently, the spirit of grace and supplication was poured out *with* the blood and water that gushed from the broken heart of Christ.

The Holy Spirit, in fellowship with the Father and the Son, was able to take our sinful action of crucifying and piercing Christ and make it the means by which the life of God would flow from the heart of Christ as the source of eternal life. The spirit of grace and supplication is the means by which the water and blood are applied to the life of a person by the Holy Spirit, who is symbolised in the Scriptures as hyssop.

In the first instance, the spirit of grace and supplication causes us to look on Him whom we, along with the soldier, pierced, and into whose hands and feet we drove the nails to crucify the Lord of glory. **Zec 12:10. Joh 19:37. Act 2:22-23,36. 1Co 2:7-8**. By the word of the cross, which is sharper than any two-edged sword, our heart is divided and cut open by the word of God, joining us to the pierced, broken heart of Christ. **Heb 4:12**. As we meet Christ, broken heart to broken heart, and eye to eye, we are able to see our own sin and our accountability for the death of Jesus.

Receiving the blessing of God

Under the influence of grace and supplication, the hearer can *draw near* to receive the cleansing and blessing of the fountain of life that flows from Christ's pierced side. **Heb 10:22**. The broken-hearted hearer who draws near to the Lord becomes *poor in spirit* as they are illuminated to see their sin and to accept their accountability for the death of Christ. **Mat 5:3**.

The Holy Spirit convicts the hearer so that they can mourn. **Joh 16:8-11**. They are able to mourn and repent because of the insight and conviction of sin that the Holy Spirit bears witness to within them, making known to them the wickedness of their heart and the evil that comes from the works of their hands. By the Spirit, they are being enabled to see what Christ sees as His eyes search their heart and reveal the thoughts and intents of their heart. **Heb 4:12-13**. **Rom 8:26-27**. **Rev 2:23**.

Consequently, they mourn alone for the desolation of their sonship, as they crucified the Son of God through their sin and rebellion. **Zec 12:10-12**. They are blessed with comfort as they *mourn* in this manner. **Mat 5:4**. This comfort demonstrates that the Lord is healing their broken heart by removing, through circumcision, that which Satan has fathered in them and is causing their death through separation from God. **Psa 147:3**.

Satan fathered another law within mankind when Adam and Eve received his alternative word and disobeyed God. Living by this law keeps a person in bondage to the law of sin. **Rom 7:23**. They are unable to receive and obey the word of their sonship. However, when, through mourning, they are joined to the broken heart of Christ, the power of the other law is broken within them. They are delivered from their slavery to sin and become *meek*, or humble.

Blessed are the meek

Jesus said that the meek are blessed because they are able to inherit the earth. **Mat 5:5.** Having been delivered from the power of the other law, which kept them in bondage to sin, the believer is able to receive the word of their name and to become obedient to their predestination as a son of God in Christ. **Jas 1:21.** That is, they are able to be born again as a son of God.

Christ demonstrated meekness when, having become a Man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. **Php 2:8.** The meek, who have now been born of God, are also able to be obedient as they are joined to the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. Paul summarised this point, writing, 'But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.' **Rom 6:17-18.**

Baptism is 'the form of doctrine' to which a believer is delivered through the word of the cross. They now *present themselves* as slaves of righteousness for holiness, or sanctification. **Rom 6:19.** Jesus described this as 'hungering and thirsting for righteousness'. They are blessed because they are *filled* with all the fullness of God, as their whole being – body, soul and spirit – has become a temple for the *agape* expression and fellowship of Yahweh. **Mat 5:6. Rev 3:20.**

A person who presents themselves in this manner does so by the mercies of God, which they obtain as they are merciful, or actively compassionate, to others. **Mat 5:7.** They present themselves for fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ as a living sacrifice in the temple, or house, of the Son. **Rom 12:1.**

Obtaining our sanctification

A son of God is being purified through obedience to the word of truth, as they walk each day in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. **1Pe 1:22**. This is because their heart is being sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and they are being enabled to serve God according to their name as a son of God. **Heb 10:22**. In other words, they are obtaining their sanctification as a son of God. This is the fruit, or blessing, that belongs to those who are slaves of righteousness. **Rom 6:18,22**. The pure in heart are blessed with the capacity to see God because they are obtaining their sanctification. **Mat 5:8**. Paul exhorted us to pursue sanctification, or holiness, 'without which no-one will see the Lord' **Heb 12:14**.

In as much as a son of God pursues their sanctification, they pursue peace with all men. **Heb 12:14**. This is only possible in the cross of Christ. **Eph 2:14-15**. The reason for peace is that, in Christ, a son of God is reconnected with the Law in a different way. It is no longer being misappropriated as the basis of judging themselves and others, which causes conflict. Rather, the motivation to take of the Law in this manner is being removed from their heart, and the Holy Spirit is pouring the love of God into their heart. **Rom 5:5**. They fulfil the Law, in Christ, through their fervent and unfeigned love of the brethren. **1Pe 1:22**. The apostle John said that this love for another is the evidence that a person is born of God. **1Jn 4:7**. Summarising this point, Jesus said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.' **Mat 5:9**.

Christ portrayed as crucified

The word of the cross is the gospel of sonship. It is proclaimed by those who are obtaining the blessing of God that belongs to the citizens of the kingdom of heaven. Through their ministry, Christ is publicly portrayed as crucified among their hearers. **Gal 3:1**. They are able to minister the gospel in this manner because they are being persecuted for Christ's name's sake. Summarising this work of a messenger, Jesus declared, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.' **Mat 5:10**.

The persecution and mistreatment that a messenger experiences is often, initially, at the hands of those to whom they have been sent with the gospel of sonship. This mistreatment can take various forms, including discrimination against them, endeavours to limit their expression, fiery reactions to their message, plundering their resources, and deceitfully cleaving to them with flattery. **Dan 11:33-35**.

These injuries to the messengers of God were ultimately endured by Christ in the course of His offering journey, culminating in the piercing of His side. Accordingly, as the messenger is being injured, and their heart is being broken, Christ is portrayed as crucified to their hearers. Their hearers are able to meet the Lord, broken heart to broken heart. Paul exemplified this principle, writing, 'O Corinthians! We have spoken openly to you, our heart is wide open. You are not restricted by us, but you are restricted by your own affections. Now in return for the same (I speak as to children), you also be open.' **2Co 6:11-13**.

The messengers of Christ are to show forth the Lord's death until He comes. **1Co 11:26**. It is important, therefore, that Christ's messengers do not respond in the flesh to those who mistreat them. In doing so, they would be injuring Christ, as well as those to whom their indignation is directed.

The example of Mary

The implications of being joined to the broken and pierced heart of Christ were exemplified in the life and experience of Mary, Jesus' mother. When Joseph and Mary went to the temple to dedicate Jesus, Simeon blessed them both, and said, specifically to Mary, 'Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against (yes, a sword will pierce through your own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.' **Luk 2:34-35.**

Simeon's prophecy revealed that the cross would come to bear upon Mary's life in the same way that it impacts upon every person. She would wound her Son, and pierce His side, and her heart would be broken and opened to expose her thoughts and intents.

When did Mary wound Jesus and pierce His side? This happened through a relational rift within their family. After Jesus had commenced His earthly ministry and had appointed the twelve disciples, Mary and her other sons sought to speak with Him. **Mat 12:46-47.** It appears that they thought He was 'out of His mind'. **Mar 3:21.** However, Jesus answered the one whom they had sent to retrieve Him, saying, 'Who is My mother and who are My brothers?' **Mat 12:48.** He stretched out His hand towards His disciples and said, 'Here are My mother and My brothers! For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother.' **Mat 12:49-50.**

Scepticism regarding the ministry of Jesus as the Christ continued within the family. Notably, the apostle John recorded that Jesus' brothers directed Him to leave Galilee and to enter Judea in order to prove His appointment as the Christ. Because they did not believe in Him, they said to Him, 'Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing. For no one does anything in secret while he himself seeks to be known openly.' **Joh 7:3-5.**

FURTHER STUDY LUKE 2

A sword in every family

Jesus taught that He had come to bring a sword in the context of every family. He said, 'Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to "set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law"; and "a man's enemies will be those of his own household." He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.' **Mat 10:34-37.**

Following His seventh wound, but before He drank the wine, manifesting the new creation kingdom of God, Jesus said to Mary, from the cross, 'Woman, behold your son!'; and to John, 'Behold your mother!' **Joh 19:26-27.** Through this ministry, from His finished offering, Christ addressed the issue of dysfunction in Mary's family, and reordered the family in the cross.

Mary and John witnessed the spear being thrust into the side of Christ. **Joh 19:35.** The spirit of grace and supplication was poured out upon them, causing them to look upon Jesus whom they had pierced. Mary's heart was broken as she was illuminated to see that her familial expectations had not only been at odds with God's will, but also had been a reproach laid upon Christ, causing Him to suffer. It is evident that this had been broken and circumcised from her heart, because John recorded, 'from that hour that disciple took her to his own home.' **Joh 19:27.**

It is evident that Mary was born of God when Christ breathed on the disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit', for she continued, in the care of John, praying and supplicating with the disciples after Christ's ascension into heaven. Wonderfully, Jesus' brothers were part of this company, indicating that they, too, had met Christ, broken heart to broken heart and eye to eye, on the day of Christ's crucifixion, and had been born from above. **Act 1:14.**

The love of God

God is love. **1Jn 4:8,16**. The unique expression of the divine nature, which is the love of the Father, is multiplied within the offering fellowship of Yahweh Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **2Pe 1:2-4**. This multiplication of love was expressed by predestining the name and works of a numberless company of sons of God who would be brought into being through Their offering work. The apostle Peter called this company of sons, 'elect according to the *foreknowledge of God the Father*'. **1Pe 1:1-2**.

Revealing this Everlasting Covenant initiative of Yahweh, Jesus proclaimed, 'God [the Father] so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but *have everlasting life*.' **Joh 3:16**. Everlasting life is the divine nature of the Father. The sons of God are born of this life, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit.

Peter summarised this process, explaining that we are born again, 'not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, *through* the word of God which lives and abides forever'. **1Pe 1:23**. In this statement, Peter made a key distinction between the word and the seed. If Christ is the Word of God, what then is the seed which causes us to be born of God?

In the deepest sense, the Holy Spirit is the seed of the new birth because it is *the Spirit who gives life*. Through the Spirit, the life of the Father becomes the life of a son. Paul explained that this was the essence of the New Covenant, writing, 'Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who also made us sufficient as ministers of the *new covenant*, not of the letter but *of the Spirit*; for the letter kills, *but the Spirit gives life*'. **2Co 3:5-6**. The life that the Spirit gives is the divine nature.

FURTHER STUDY 1 JOHN 4

The seed of the divine nature

According to the apostle Paul, the new man is a new creation. It is a person who is in Christ. **2Co 5:17**. They have been born from above and bear the image of the heavenly Man. **1Co 15:47-49**. The heavenly Man is Jesus Christ, whom Paul described as 'the last Adam'. **1Co 15:45**. He is the Son of God the Father, who was begotten as the Son of Man in the womb of the virgin Mary. He was born of the divine nature of the Father. It is the Holy Spirit, who, through offering, has become the incorruptible seed, or *sperma*, of the Father's life. **Luk 1:35**. To this end, the Spirit brings the substance of the Father's life to a hearer.

Those who are born of God receive this same divine nature as the new principle of their life, for the seed is the divine nature. They are born of this incorruptible seed, which is the Holy Spirit, and remain a son of God, for this seed, which is from the Father, through Christ, *remains in them*. **1Jn 3:9**. A hearer receives the seed of the divine nature when Christ comes into their heart and He *breathes* on them, giving to them the Holy Spirit. **Joh 20:22**. The Holy Spirit, as the seed of the divine nature, is poured into them, as an effusion, from the breath of Christ.

With this understanding in view, Paul described the seed of the divine nature as a firstfruits, or earnest, of a believer's eternal inheritance as a son of God. **Rom 8:23**. **Eph 1:13-14**. This is the inheritance of eternal life that belongs to a son of God.

The Scriptures identify four progressive and essential aspects of receiving eternal life, which is salvation, from the Father, through the Son, by the Holy Spirit: Forgiveness of sin; being born of the divine nature; sanctification of the Spirit, and joining and becoming a dwelling place of God. **Eph 1:7**. **1Pe 1:22-23**. **2Th 2:13**. **Joh 14:23**.

A temple of God

Once the Son breathes the Holy Spirit into us and we are born of the Father, our body becomes a temple of the Holy Spirit. **1Co 6:19**. He bears witness with our spirit that we are a son and heir of God on the condition that we suffer with Christ. **Rom 8:16-17**. However, as a temple for the Holy Spirit, our body is also the expression of the Holy Spirit. We note that, in the same way that the Holy Spirit is symbolised in the Scriptures as the stars of heaven, the sons of God were likened by the Lord to the stars of heaven. **Gen 15:5**. Furthermore, describing the glory of our resurrection bodies, Paul said, 'There is one glory of the sun, another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differs from another star in glory.' **1Co 15:41**.

The Holy Spirit, through whom we are baptised by one Spirit into one body, makes our whole being – body, soul and spirit – a temple of God through Eternal Spirit. **1Co 3:16**. This is the final statement of our eternal life and the focus of Christ's prayer to the Father, saying, 'And the glory which You gave Me I have given them, that they may be one just as We are one: I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me.' **Joh 17:22-23**.

When we become a temple of God, our being becomes a temple for the *agape* expression and fellowship of Yahweh. We note the word of Jesus to the church in Laodicea, 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.' **Rev 3:20**. Paul described this reality as 'the *high calling* of God in Christ Jesus.' **Php 3:14**.

The Everlasting Covenant

Within the fellowship of the Eternal Covenant of Yahweh Father, Son and Holy Spirit, before creation, the Father gave to the Son the fullness of His own expression as Father. **Heb 1:1-3**. This happened when the Son emptied Himself to become the Father's Son, and the Holy Spirit laid His life down to become the Helper of the Father and the Son. **Php 2:6-7. Joh 14:6**.

Yahweh the Son was begotten as the Son of God by the word of the Father, who said, 'You are My Son, *today* I have begotten You'. **Heb 1:5**. This birthing action, was the work of the Holy Spirit. When the Father said, 'Today I have begotten You', the Holy Spirit, who had laid down His life to reveal the Father as the *sperma* of God, brought the Spirit of the Father to the identity of the Son, causing Him to be substantively born *anew* as the Son of God.

This portion of the Father's Spirit, through the Holy Spirit, was the seed and name of every son of God who would ever be brought to birth through the work of the Son and the Holy Spirit. By this begetting action in the Covenant of Yahweh, the Son became the Word of the Father. **Joh 1:1,14**. Furthermore, having received the fullness of the Spirit, the heavenly body of the Son became the heavenly temple, which was composed of living stones. **1Pe 2:4-5**. These living stones are the sons whom the Father had named in the Son.

The Son comes into the heart of a person when Christ is proclaimed to them by a messenger. Christ is the Word of the Father, bringing within Himself the Spirit of the Father as the Seed from whom they will be born as sons of God, thus fulfilling the words of Jesus, who said, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.' **Joh 14:23**.

The Word of the Father

The word of God is ministered by messengers who are sent by Christ. **Act 13:2-3**. Through their ministry, Christ is publicly portrayed as crucified among their hearers. **Gal 3:1**. They minister the light of the gospel to those who are otherwise in darkness. **Act 13:47**. Their hearers are in darkness because of the blindness of their hearts and their alienation from God. **Eph 4:17-19**.

A spirit of grace and supplication, ministered by the Holy Spirit, accompanies the proclamation of the gospel. This prevenient grace frees a person from any influence that may otherwise affect their capacity to receive the call of sonship that God is offering to them. **2Co 3:17**. They are free to choose or reject the kind invitation of God. **Tit 3:4-6**. **Rom 6:17-18,22**.

As the hearer receives the word of the messenger, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, comes into their heart, calling and proclaiming the word of the Father to them. As Jesus said, 'He who receives whomever I send receives Me; and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.' **Joh 13:20**. This action gives illumination to the spirit of a hearer.

The word of the Father, which Christ proclaims to the hearer when He comes into their heart, is the word of their name as a son of God. The Son is the expression and image of who they are to become as a son of God. For this reason, He comes into their heart, expressing their name, crying, 'Abba! Father!' **Gal 4:6**. Although He has *come* into their heart, He is yet to *dwell* in their heart. His cry, 'Abba! Father!' will become the expression of their sonship obedience once they are born again by the work of the Holy Spirit.

The faith of the Son of God

The Son's cry of 'Abba! Father!' reveals the faith of the Son of God. The person who hears the Son's word, receives His faith. **Rom 10:17**. By faith, they are able to believe the word proclaiming their name as a son of God and become obedient to their sonship destiny within the family of God. **2Co 4:13**. **Rom 1:5-6**.

Christ then breathes and speaks into their identity the Holy Spirit, through whom they are connected to the Eternal Spirit, the regenerating life, and the power, of Yahweh Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Joh 20:22**. Through regeneration, their spirit is made alive from the death of sin. At this point, they also receive the redemption that was accomplished for them through the shedding of Christ's blood, and are able to repent and receive the forgiveness of their sins. They are then justified freely by the grace of God, because of their faith in Jesus. **Col 1:13-14**. **Rom 3:21-26**.

By the incorruptible seed, or *sperma* of God, which is the Holy Spirit, they are then born again as sons of the Father. The Spirit takes their sonship name and life, which is in the Son, from the Father, and causes them to become a new creation through birth. Jesus described this work of the Holy Spirit when He said to His disciples, 'He will glorify Me, for He will take of what is Mine and declare it to you. All things that the Father has are Mine. Therefore I said that He will take of Mine and declare it to you.' **Joh 16:14-15**. Through birth, by the Spirit, Christ becomes their life, and they are able to live this life by the faith of the Son of God. **Gal 2:20**.

We cry 'Abba! Father!'

When Christ has become the life of a believer, by the Holy Spirit, *they* now cry out 'Abba! Father!'. **Rom 8:15**. The word of the Son, 'Abba! Father!', has now become the word in their mouth as they call upon God who is their Father. **1Pe 1:17. 2Ti 2:22**. They are proclaiming their faith obedience as His children.

They have, in this action, also become a temple for the Holy Spirit. **1Co 6:19**. He now bears witness with their spirit that they are a son and heir of God on the condition that they join Christ in the fellowship of His sufferings. The purpose for Christ's offering and sufferings was to *bring many sons to glory*. **Heb 2:10**. He Himself was glorified through His offering in obedience to the Father. **Joh 12:23**. Those who are born of God are brought to glory through *fellowship* in His offering and sufferings.

Explaining this point, Paul wrote, 'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together'. **Rom 8:16-17**. The Holy Spirit then becomes the power and expression of their name, enabling them to live and walk in obedience, serving as son-priests in the house of God.

A person who has been born as a son of God, by receiving the Holy Spirit, will desire baptism into the name of Jesus Christ, acknowledging that they have become a member of His body. As the apostle Paul explained, 'For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body – whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free – and have all been made to drink into one Spirit'. **1Co 12:13**. This gives every member of the body of Christ access to God, calling Him Father. **Eph 2:17-18**. This is the context in which they cry, 'Abba! Father!', having been born of incorruptible seed.

Baptism into Christ

Baptism marks a son of God's acknowledgement of the necessity for their fellowship in the offering and sufferings of Christ. In this regard, Paul reminds us, 'As many of us as were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into His death. Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.' **Rom 6:3-4**. In the fellowship of Christ's death and resurrection, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. **Rom 8:10**.

Furthermore, Paul explained that baptism joined a person to the circumcision of Christ, writing, 'In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.' **Col 2:11-12**.

The Spirit of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit now reside within the spirit, soul and body of the believer. They have become a temple of God through this work of the Holy Spirit. As Paul taught, 'Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?' **1Co 3:16**. They have been filled with all of the fullness of God, and they are able to know and express the love of God as unfeigned fellowship in the body of Christ. **Eph 3:19**. We note that a person is equally a temple of God and a living stone in the heavenly temple, which is Christ's body. **1Pe 2:5**. We cannot be one without the other.

Sanctification of the Spirit

Having been born again, a son of God is purified through obedience to the truth by the Spirit. **1Pe 1:22-23**. They are the elect of God, according to His foreknowledge, through the sanctification of the Spirit, as they continue their pilgrimage on the pathway of salvation which Christ pioneered for them through His offering. **1Pe 1:1-2. 2Th 2:13-14**.

In this fellowship, they are being purified as their hearts are being sprinkled from an evil conscience by the blood of Jesus Christ, and they are able to serve God according to their name in Christ. **Heb 10:22**. Their service is evident through their sincere and fervent love of the brethren in Christ. **1Pe 1:22**. This is the sanctifying work of the Spirit and describes what it means to walk blameless before the Lord. **2Pe 3:14**. If we do not walk in this manner, Christ swears in His wrath that we will not inherit our sonship. **Heb 4:1-3**.

Christ, who is the Word of grace, teaches every believer to live blamelessly. Paul summarised 'living blamelessly' as 'denying ungodliness and worldly lusts' in order to live 'soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age'. **Tit 2:12**. This describes a person who is illuminated by the word of the cross as Christ comes among His people with eyes as a flame of fire. **Tit 2:11-13**.

Through repentance and faith, which have been set as foundations in their life, they participate in the offering and sufferings of Christ, through which He redeemed them from their lawless deeds and purified them as His own special people. They are led by the Spirit, each day, to walk in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. Through the circumcision of Christ, they are being delivered from living by the principle of the flesh, and Christ's blood is sprinkling their heart clean from the seven aspects of an evil conscience. Importantly, they are fulfilling the works of sonship that belong to their name, for which they are zealous. **Tit 2:14**.

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Obedience to the truth

Obedience to the truth, through the Spirit, is the expression of a believer's sonship. This requires them to receive the word of those who are sent by Christ, who bear witness to the truth. The Spirit is our Helper with respect to our obedience to the word. **Joh 14:26**. When the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin, righteousness and judgement, He is bearing witness to the word of God as it is proclaimed by the Spirit of Christ through His messengers. The Holy Spirit ministers a spirit of grace and supplication to us so that we are free from any factor that may hinder our ability to respond in faith to the word we are hearing. **2Co 3:17**.

When we reject the word, we are resisting the Holy Spirit. Stephen described those who engage with the word in this manner as 'stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears'. **Act 7:51**. We see that obedience to the word that is ministered to us by the Spirit is a condition of *purification*. It is the means by which we are joined to the circumcision of Christ through which our heart is circumcised and sprinkled with His blood. A person is unable to purify themselves if they are disobedient to the word of the messenger. This reveals that their hope is not in Christ. **1Jn 3:3**. They are not anchored by Christ in the fellowship of Yahweh. **Heb 6:19-20**.

Because they reject the word ministered by Christ's messengers, they have no fellowship with the presbytery and no fellowship with the Father and the Son. **1Jn 1:1-3**. Failing to walk in the light of the word with their brethren, they remain disconnected from the offering and suffering body of Christ where the blood can sprinkle them for purification, cleansing them of their sin. **1Jn 1:7**. They are unable to make acceptable offering, which would otherwise be the expression of fervent love and the evidence of the divine nature within them.

From faith to faith

Faith is not simply believing that Jesus died for our sins so that we could be forgiven and accepted by God. Paul said that *faith is the substance of things hoped for*. **Heb 11:1**. Christ is our hope because He pioneered and finished our faith. **Heb 12:2**. Through His offering and sufferings, He perfected our sonship and fulfilled the works of our obedience as sons of God. He has entered the most holy place of the true tabernacle, which is the context of life and fellowship in Yahweh. **Heb 9:12**.

We, who have been born of the Spirit, walk by the Spirit, from faith to faith, in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings. **Gal 5:25. Rom 1:16**. We receive the faith of the Son of God, by which we live, by hearing the word as the Spirit of Christ addresses us through the ascension gift messengers whom He sends to us. **Gal 2:20. Rom 10:17. Eph 4:11-12**.

As the Spirit leads us each day in the fellowship of Christ's offering and sufferings, Christ's blood sprinkles our heart clean from an evil conscience, and we fulfil the works of sonship which Christ, our hope, finished for us. In other words, we are being sanctified by the Spirit in relation to what Christ has already perfected for us. **1Pe 1:1-2. Heb 10:14**. Walking in this manner describes the life of a pilgrim, who is obtaining their election according to the foreknowledge of God. **1Pe 1:2**.

This is only a reality for us when, having been born again, we continue in fellowship with the presbytery and with one another in the body of Christ, which is the heavenly temple. **1Jn 1:3. 1Jn 1:7. Eph 2:21**. This is where we are to abide if we are to receive eternal life. **1Jn 2:24-25**. We know that we have passed from death to life because we love one another in the context of the body in which the Father has placed us. **1Jn 3:14**.

FURTHER STUDY ROMANS 1



Restoring
my Soul