

HWMR: CRYSTALLIZATION-STUDY OUTLINES FIRST AND SECOND CHRONICLES, EZRA, NEHEMIAH, AND ESTHER, (Week 6)

Scripture Reading: Ezra 9:1—10:44; Neh. 13:23-30a; Matt. 5:8; Rev. 21:18b, 21b; 22:4

**THE INTRINSIC SIGNIFICANCE OF THE
PURIFICATION OF THE RETURNED
CAPTIVES**

Nehemiah 13:23	In those days I also saw that the Jews had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab;
Nehemiah 13:24	And as for their children, half spoke in the language of Ashdod; and none of them could speak the language of Judah, but they spoke the language of the respective peoples.
Nehemiah 13:25	And I contended with them and cursed them and struck some of them and pulled out their hair; and I made them swear by God, saying, You shall not give your daughters to their sons nor take their daughters for your sons or for yourselves.
Nehemiah 13:26	Did not Solomon the king of Israel sin in these matters? And among the many nations there was no king like him, and he was beloved of his God, and God made him king over all Israel; yet the foreign wives caused even him to sin.
Nehemiah 13:27	Shall we then listen to you and do all this great evil by acting unfaithfully against our God in marrying foreign women?
Nehemiah 13:28	And one of the sons of Joiada the son of Eliashib the high priest was the son-in-law of Sanballat the Horonite, so I chased him away from me.
Nehemiah 13:29	Remember them, O my God; for they have defiled the priesthood and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites.
Nehemiah 13:30	Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,
Matthew 5:8	Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
Revelation 21:18	And the building work of its wall was jasper; and the city was pure gold, like clear glass.
Revelation 21:21	And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; each one of the gates was, respectively, of one pearl. And the street of the city was pure gold, like transparent glass.
Revelation 22:4	And they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.

Day 1

<i>Ezra 10:10-11</i>	<i>- And Ezra the priest stood up and said to them, You have acted unfaithfully and have married foreign women to increase the guilt of Israel. Now therefore make confession to Jehovah the God of your fathers, and do His will, and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land and from the foreign women.</i>
<i>Nehemiah 13:30</i>	<i>- Thus I cleansed them from everything foreign. And I appointed duties for the priests and the Levites, each in his work,</i>

- I. The Lord's recovery is unique, and it must be absolutely pure, single, and holy, without any mixture; thus, we need Ezras and Nehemiahs to carry out a purifying work; in all the steps of the Lord's recovery, there is the need of purification:**

- A. Ezra purified the recovery by causing “the holy seed” to be **separated** from anything heathen—Ezra 9:1—10:44:
 - 1. Before Ezra arrived, there was **mixture** because some of the Israelites had married heathen wives and had children born of this mixture; this is a type, which we should apply spiritually, not literally.
 - 2. In the Lord’s recovery there is the need of **purification** to separate “the holy seed” from anything that is heathen—9:1-2:
 - a. The Lord’s recovery is the holy seed; we must be so pure that the holy seed will **never** be mingled with anything heathen.
 - b. When the recovery is holy, we will see the Lord’s blessing—Ezek. 34:26.
- B. After the building up of the house, **we need purification** (seen under Ezra’s leadership), and after the building up of the city, we need to be purified again (seen with Nehemiah’s absoluteness)—Ezra 9:1-2; 10:1-44; Neh. 13:1-30a.
- C. In the local churches we must be **thoroughly** purified of all mixture; anything common and anything contradictory to the heavenly nature of the Lord’s recovery must be purged out—2 Tim. 2:19-22.

II. Babylon is a **mixture of the things of God with the things of idols, and the principle of Babylon is the principle of mixing the things of man with the Word of God and the things of the flesh with the things of the Spirit—2 Chron. 36:6-7; Ezra 1:11; Rev. 17:3-5:**

- A. **Anything** that is a part of Babylon is **abominable** in the sight of God, and anything Babylonian gives Satan the ground to defeat the people of God—Josh. 7:1-21.
- B. **God hates the principle of Babylon** more than anything else; only when we judge everything Babylonian in us can we confess that we too hate the principle of Babylon.

Ezra realized that the first return was not perfect, not complete. He realized that there was the need for someone who was **skilled in the law of God** to help the people to know God not merely in a general way but according to what God had spoken. Ezra had such a capacity, so he volunteered himself to go to the king and to request a decree from the king permitting the Jews to do everything freely.

Chapter one of Ezra tells us that **God stirred up** the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia to make a proclamation concerning the rebuilding of the house of God and that He also stirred up the spirit of the heads of the fathers’ houses of Judah and Benjamin, the priests, and the Levites to go up to build the house of God in Jerusalem. God was hiding Himself, but at the expiration of the seventy years, He came in to stir up the spirit of Cyrus. Cyrus must have been happy that the great empire of Babylon was in his hand, and regarding the Jews he might have wanted to do something that was opposite to what the Babylonians had done. Humanly speaking, Cyrus took the initiative to make the decree. Actually, this was initiated by God in a hidden way. Therefore, the first return from Babylon to Jerusalem was initiated by God.

The second return was initiated by Ezra, a priest and a scribe **skilled in the Word of God**. Ezra came to the king and appealed to him to grant his request. From this we see that sometimes God personally stirs us up in our spirit to do something for Him. However, often God is quiet, realizing that it is better that we do something because we have the capacity, as Ezra had. In this kind of situation, God is responsible for the things we do. Whether the things are stirred up by Him or stirred up by us, **He will be in them, stretching out His hand to do everything to help us**. (*Life-Study of Ezra, chapter 4*)

Day 2

2 Corinthians 7:1 - Therefore since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and of spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

Hebrews 4:12 - For the word of God is living and operative and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and able to discern the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

III. In Acts 21 and in the book of James, there is **mixture**; James mixed the Old Testament with the New Testament, the new dispensation with the old, the new people of God with the old, and the new man with the old man— James 1:1, 17-18; 2:1-4, 8-12; 3:2; 4:11-12; 5:10-11:

- A. Acts 21 exposes the terrible mixture in the church in Jerusalem; the Jewish believers still kept the law of Moses, remained in the Old Testament dispensation, and were strongly under the Judaic influence, **mixing** God's New Testament economy with the outdated Old Testament economy—vv. 18-21.
- B. They were **unaware** that the dispensation of law was altogether over, that the dispensation of grace should be fully honored, and that any disregard of the distinction between these two dispensations would be **against** God's dispensational administration and would be a **great damage** to God's economical plan for the building up of the church as the expression of Christ—John 1:16-17; Rev. 2:9.
- C. The law makes demands on man **according to what God is**; grace supplies man with what God is to meet what God demands; grace is God enjoyed by man—John 1:16-17; Gal. 6:18; 2 Cor. 13:14; 12:9; 1 Pet. 4:10; Eph. 3:2; 4:29; 6:24.

IV. A great problem among God's children is the **mixture of the self with the spirit**—Heb. 4:12:

- A. This mixture **disqualifies** many from serving God, for in their spirit there is much mixture, which is displeasing to God—2 Tim. 1:3.
- B. The spirit in our innermost part is pure and undefiled; however, when the spirit comes forth and passes through the soul and the body, it may become **contaminated** by filthiness and corruption—2 Cor. 7:1.
- C. Dealing with the spirit emphasizes dealing with **impure motives and intentions** and other mixtures within us—1 Thes. 5:23; 2 Tim. 1:7.

In dealing with the spirit, we have not only the accomplished fact of the Lord on the cross as the basis, but we have moreover the **life of the Lord's death and resurrection as the power**. Because this life issues from the death of the cross, it has within it the element of the death of the cross. Therefore, when His life flows into us, it brings us back to the death of the cross in order to unite us with the death of the cross, thereby joining us to the cross. This may be likened to the electric current flowing through the light bulb: it connects the bulb with the power plant, while at the same time the electricity of the power plant can manifest its function by causing the bulb to give forth light. Likewise, when the resurrection life of the Lord enters into us and moves within us, it produces the effect of death, which enables us to have the various dealings of putting to death. This life within us spontaneously gives us feelings that require us to deal with sin, the world, the feeling of the conscience, the boasting and desires of the flesh, the self-opinion, the ability of the natural life, and all the mixtures in the different parts of our whole being. All these dealings are in the accomplished fact of Christ on the cross and are now being experienced by us in the Holy Spirit. (*The Experience of Life, chapter 13*)

Day 3

Matthew 5:8

- Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

2 Corinthians 3:18

- But we all with unveiled face, beholding and reflecting like a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, even as from the Lord Spirit.

V. We need to be **pure in heart**, in **conscience**, and in **spirit**:

A. Those who are pure in heart will **see God**—Matt. 5:8; Job 42:5; Rev. 22:4:

1. To be pure in heart is to be **single in purpose**, to have the single goal of accomplishing God's will for God's glory—1 Cor. 10:31.
2. A pure heart is a heart that takes the **Lord** as the **unique goal**—1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; Psa. 73:1.
3. In the New Testament sense, **seeing God equals gaining God**, and to gain God is to receive God in His element, life, and nature so that we may be constituted with God; seeing God transforms us, because in seeing God we receive His element into us, and our old element is discharged—2 Cor. 3:18.
4. To see God is to be **transformed** into the glorious image of Christ, the God-man, so that we may **express** God in His life and **represent** Him in His authority—1 John 3:1-3; Gen. 1:26.
5. **We should be pure in heart and single for the Lord's recovery**; only then will we be a help to the recovery—1 Tim. 1:5; 2 Tim. 2:22; 1 Pet. 1:22.

Day 4

Acts 24:16

- Because of this I also exercise myself to always have a conscience without offense toward God and men.

2 Timothy 1:3

- I thank God, whom I serve from my forefathers in a pure conscience, while unceasingly I have remembrance concerning you in my petitions night and day,

B. We need to have not only a good conscience but also a **pure conscience**—Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Tim. 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:3:

1. A good conscience is a **conscience without offense toward God and man**— Acts 23:1; 24:16.
2. A pure conscience is a conscience **purified of any mixture**; such a conscience testifies that, like Paul, we are seeking only God and His will—2 Tim. 1:3.

Day 5

2 Corinthians 6:4

- But in everything we commend ourselves as ministers of God, in much endurance, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

2 Corinthians 6:6

- In pureness, in knowledge, in long-suffering, in kindness, in a holy spirit, in unfeigned love,

1 Timothy 3:9

- Holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience.

- C. The first qualification in the work is **purity of spirit**—2 Cor. 6:4a, 6:
1. It is very difficult to find a person whose spirit is pure (7:1); pureness is the prerequisite in the leadership and a basic condition of our service (1 Tim. 3:9; 1:5); the problem of mixture is the greatest problem among workers; **impureness is often the source of misunderstanding and suspicion** (2 Tim. 1:3; 1 Tim. 3:9; Titus 1:15).
 2. We need to **deal completely** with all the mixture in our spirit so that when our spirit is released, it will not be dangerous or cause trouble to others.
 3. If we want to be used by God, **our spirit must be released, and our spirit must be pure**—2 Cor. 6:4a, 6.

In the New Testament this mixture is enlarged. In spirit John saw a vision of the great Babylon. Babylon is decorated, gilded, with all the things of the New Jerusalem. The New Jerusalem is built with three precious materials: gold, precious stones, and pearls. **The great Babylon is gilded with gold, precious stones, and pearls.** She gives people the appearance that she is the same as the New Jerusalem, but she is **not built in a solid way** with these precious things; she is only gilded with these treasures as ornaments for outward display. This is a **deception** intending to entice people. It is the harlot's false appearance.

The difference between apostate Christendom and the genuine church is that one is a mixture, but the other is **pure**. In the New Jerusalem there is no mixture. Everything is pure. Revelation 21:18 says the city is pure gold. Also, the river of water of life is bright as crystal. It is absolutely pure, without mixture.

The description in Revelation 17 says that this evil woman, the evil Babylon, holds a golden cup in her hand. But this golden cup is “full of abominations and the unclean things of her fornication” (v. 4). Outwardly it is golden, **but inwardly there are evil things**. It is a mixture. It has spiritual persons, some precious stones, like Madame Guyon, Father Fenelon, and Brother Lawrence, who give some outward appearance. But inwardly it is full of all kinds of evil.

The local churches have to be clear as crystal, with no mixture. Those of us who were in Christianity can testify concerning its hypocrisy and falsehood. Many good things are there to give a good appearance, but when you get into it, you see the evil mixture. **We should not be deceived by the outward appearance of Babylon.** It has an outward gilding, an outward decoration, but inwardly the situation is different. (*The Living and Practical Way to Enjoy Christ, chapter 7*)

Day 6

- 2 Corinthians 5:21** - *Him who did not know sin He made sin on our behalf that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.*
- Revelation 1:20** - *The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.*
- Revelation 22:1** - *And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.*

VI. The city of New Jerusalem is pure gold, like clear glass, and the street of the city is pure gold, like transparent glass—Rev. 21:18b, 21b:

- A. Gold signifies the **nature of God**; the city's being pure gold indicates that the city is of the **divine nature** and takes the divine nature as its element—v. 18b.
- B. The pure gold of the street and the city is like clear glass, signifying that the entire city is **transparent** and not in the least opaque—v. 21b:
 - 1. If we take God's nature as our unique way, we will be **pure**, without any mixture, and **transparent**, without any opaqueness.
 - 2. If we are **infused** and **saturated** with the **life-giving Spirit**, our inner being will become transparent and crystal clear—2 Cor. 3:8-9, 18.
- C. If we want to have the real church life, the **church herself must be pure gold**, that is, altogether of the divine nature; here we need the work of the **cross** to purge us and to purify us—Rev. 1:11, 20.
- D. The difference between apostate Christendom and the genuine church is that one is a **mixture** and the other is **pure**; the local churches, like the New Jerusalem, should be crystal clear, **without any mixture**—22:1.

Revelation 21:21 says, "The street of the city was pure gold as transparent glass." The gates are for entering the city, whereas the street is for **the daily walk, the daily living**. The entering into the New Jerusalem as the holy city is through Christ's death and resurrection, whereas the daily walk, the daily living, in the city is according to the divine nature, signified by the street being pure gold. This indicates that following the entrance of regeneration, the daily life and walk of the saints **must be in the way of the divine nature**.

The street in the New Jerusalem is uniquely one. There is no maze, no leading astray, and no getting lost. No matter through which gate a believer enters, he will find himself on the unique street. On this unique street **we are one**.

The street of the New Jerusalem is a spiral, coming down from the throne of God to reach all God's chosen. Because the unique street is a spiral, **it reaches every gate**. This street also leads us from the gates to the throne.

Revelation 21:21 tells us that the street of the holy city is **pure gold**. The street is part of the city proper, and every part of the city proper is gold. We have seen that gold signifies the **nature of God**. After we enter into the New Jerusalem, we must walk on the divine nature as our way. As we walk on the golden street, we are spontaneously regulated, for a street regulates. In the New Jerusalem everyone is regulated by the unique street, by the golden nature of God within us.

The pure gold of the unique street in the New Jerusalem is "as transparent glass," signifying without any opaqueness. The golden street is crystal clear, without any opaqueness. This indicates that **if we take God's nature as our unique way, we will be pure, without any mixture, and transparent without opaqueness**. (