

# Seven Healing Streams

## Isaiah 1-10

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## Introduction

Pain, sorrow and anguish of spirit fill the hearts of people everywhere as a result of sin and sinful behaviors. Where might one find healing for such pain? God has compassion upon people who are hurting and wants to bring healing to them. Before real healing can happen, however, he must bring people to himself because; he alone is the source of real healing.

In the Biblical account we see God reaching out to the nation of Israel because they were hurting people. Israel was God's nation, but at the time of Moses they were slaves. Israel needed God's deliverance, and God needed them, thus the nation of Israel started on a journey beginning in Egypt when they were still slaves.

God worked mightily delivering them from bondage. He led them through the Red Sea and on through the desert to the mountain of the Lord where God first met with Moses. Here he met with the newly formed Israelite nation giving them his laws, and establishing a form of worship that spoke of the salvation needed to cure the sickness of sin in the hearts of humanity.

They journeyed on from there and after many difficulties and dealings, entered the land of promise. Here they encountered enemies on every hand. God enabled them, however, to defeat the enemies giving them peace equal to their obedience in driving out the enemies from the land.

Human nature being what it is, they fell short of total obedience to the Lord. Compromise is easier than conquest, therefore; they failed to totally defeat all their enemies. It was compromises that robbed them of lasting peace. The people of the land seemed nice enough, especially after they agreed to coexist and serve them peacefully, but God had a reason for commanding them to drive out all the inhabitants of the land.

Because they had been slaves they may have had compassion on the weakness of the remaining people and reasoned, "What possible harm can they be to us now." The harm they would experience came as a result of the religious practices of these people that in years to come stole the hearts of the people of Israel away from the Lord!

As time passed, the people of Israel wandered farther and farther away from the Lord, even though they were often very conscientious about maintaining a form of worship to the Lord. As time past either understanding of the purposes of the form of worship eluded them or they lost the understanding in the intervening years. By the time God raised up Isaiah, confusion reigned in the hearts of the people. To restore understanding and bring healing to his people; God called Isaiah to deliver his message.

# **Isaiah 1-10**

## **Lesson One**

In chapter one of the book of Isaiah, God reveals that he sees all the people of the nation as having been beat up, and bruised, with open sores resulting from wounds going unattended.

The reason for the problem is that they had perverted the worship of the Lord. Their concept of God had become faulty confusing forms of worship for worship. What I mean is this; they viewed God as wanting them to maintain a form of worship. They thought that, the more religiously they obeyed him, the happier he would be. Religious form had become their religion, just as idols had become the god's of the heathen. They didn't understand that God wanted heart worship, and that religious forms were given to enable them in worship. They thought that God wanted the blood of bulls, goats and lambs, and that the more they gave to him the happier he would be.

Religion had thus become an effort to appease God, but he took no pleasure in it. Therefore, God called upon the people to come and reason with him, giving them a promise of forgiveness and cleansing.

## **Lesson Two**

In chapter two the theme is further developed. When true worship can once more be realized, it results in a transformation of hearts that involves beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. At this point we see the problem of violence in the hearts of humanity being addressed. In the chapters that follow violence will be a continuing theme, some as a result of judgment, but all a result of man's fallen nature.

God deals with humanity, always working toward the goal of restoration. Humanity not only has become sinful, but also has come to love its sin. Sin separates man and God, but where the love of sin exists, all hope of restoration is gone.

If there is ever to be restoration, God must both reveal to man the nature of his sin, and sicken him on it. It isn't until man sees his sin as the cause of his pain that he can truly repent.

Alcoholics know that as long as they like to drink; they will continue to drink. When the pain caused by alcoholism becomes greater than the desire for it, hope is born. It is at that point that one can reach for God.

So it is with all sin. When the sinner is through with sin, he is able to repent. God, like a loving father, will discipline his children inflicting pain, so that the memory of the pain caused by wayward living will overcome the desire to sin.

The little nation of Israel started out as slaves in Egypt, but God delivered them taking them into the wilderness to give them a national identity, a religious institution and a culture uniquely their own. This was all accomplished in the course of a few months resulting in the formation of this unique nation on earth. They were faithful to their God, and for a time, enjoyed blessing and prosperity. As time past, however, they failed to do all that God commanded them regarding driving all the former inhabitants out of the land. The resultant influence upon them from these people with their foreign gods and cultures became the source of enticement as the people saw

their heathen friends doing strange things. Curiosity coupled with seducing spirits, or demons, soon led them into idolatry. Once they crossed the line, the love of sin led them down a destructive road until God in his love sent judgment to purge their hearts.

The practice of idolatry was an expression of arrogance toward the Lord God, just as all sin in the hearts of humanity is. When we set out on a course of evil knowing we are transgressing God's commands or will; it is an expression of arrogance and pride. Thus, in Isaiah chapter two, God addresses idolatry and pride. He speaks of what will result when judgment falls by describing people fleeing to the rocks and holes seeking to hide from what is befalling them.

### **Lesson Three**

As Isaiah continues his narrative going into chapter three, he speaks of how the people of Israel must not trust in humans, and how God will remove all support systems that have emboldened them. God had become very displeased with the perversion of justice along with their idolatry seeing how evil even the women had become exploiting the men with their sexual seductions.

The women of Israel had forsaken their God given roles as wives and mothers to pursue pleasure, resulting in corruption of spirit and in a deterioration of society. It is the women who bear the major role of training the next generation in the earliest years of life. When women become corrupt, society becomes corrupt. God promised judgment because judgment alone would drive the love of sin from the hearts of such people.

In chapter four, the pain of judgment is followed by a promise of blessing. Judgment is designed to cause disillusionment of spirit toward those things that are temporal. It is the affection in the heart of humanity for what is here and now that prevents us from looking to the Lord and placing our affections upon what pleases him. What we value dictates what we hold as treasures, therefore; until we place our hearts in heaven, we will seek those things that are earthy in nature. Judgment causes us to lose interest in the frivolous pleasures of life and to desire what is of true value, therefore; judgment prepares us for restoration because it brings us to grips with true spiritual matters. We are now ready to turn to the Lord.

### **Lesson Four**

In chapter five of Isaiah, God gives a parable of a vineyard. In it the Lord complains that the nation of Israel is like a vineyard planted on a fertile field yet failing to produce good fruit. Though it had fruit, it was wild fruit speaking of the flesh fruit of fallen humanity. Humanity has the potential of producing works after the fallen flesh nature, or the Spirit of God. The fruit they produced was selfishness, lust, greed, violence, deceit, and larceny, along with every other expression of their fallen natures. God desired Israel to produce after the Spirit, but they only produced after the flesh. God was disappointed with the nation of Israel after doing all that he had for them, because they had turned from righteousness to serving idols and all the resultant wickedness. The anger of the Lord was kindled and judgment soon followed.

Judgment serves two ends, one is social cleansing; the other is the provision of the catalyst for change.

There are some people who will recognize judgment and turn back to God, realizing they have fallen away from his love. They really want to walk with God, but the distractions of life have pulled them away. Judgment is mercy to these individuals.

There are others the Bible calls fools, no matter how much judgment falls upon them, they curse God all the more. Fools do not recognize that it is their bad behavior that is the source of their difficulties. There are no alternatives for such people, they and their influence must be destroyed. To do less is to pass on their evil ways to the generations that are still to come.

## Lesson Five

The next several chapters deal with the task of judgment, however; there are two important messages for the righteous. The first came in Isaiah 3:10; **“Tell the righteous it will be well with them, for they will enjoy the fruit of their deeds.”**

The other is the vision God gave Isaiah of himself. It's important to understand our God before we read the messages of judgment. God is high and lifted up; he is holy, holy, holy. The very nature and heart of God is love, gentleness, long-suffering, kindness and righteousness. It takes a lot of sin to bring God to judgment. He is slow to anger, but when the decision to judge is made, it will surely come to pass.

Finally we come to Isaiah chapter eleven, and in it we read some remarkable truths that we will discuss in the chapters to follow. May the Lord enrich your spiritual walk as you seek him for restoration and healing.

# Seven Healing Streams

## Isaiah 11

### Looking at the Text

#### The Means by Which God's Purposes are Accomplished

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse (Jesus); from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him— (1) the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, (2) the Spirit of counsel and of power, (3) the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD — and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. (4) He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. (5) He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. (The Word of the Lord) (6) Righteousness will be his belt (7) and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

#### The Result of God's Dealings

6 (1) The wolf will live with the lamb, (2) the leopard will lie down with the goat, (3) the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. (4) The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, (5) and the lion will eat straw like the ox. (6) The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, (7) and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

#### To Whom does it Apply?

10 In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. In that day the Lord will reach out his hand a second time to reclaim the remnant that is left of his people (1) from Assyria, (2) from Lower Egypt, from Upper Egypt, (3) from Cush, (4) from Elam, (5) from Babylonia, (6) from Hamath and (7) from the islands of the sea.

#### God's Intentions Expressed

12 He will raise a banner for the nations and gather the exiles of Israel; he will assemble the scattered people of Judah from the four quarters of the earth. Ephraim's jealousy will vanish, and Judah's enemies will be cut off; Ephraim will not be jealous of Judah, nor Judah hostile toward Ephraim. They will swoop down on the slopes of Philistia to the west; together they will plunder the people to the east. They will lay hands on Edom and Moab, and the Ammonites will be subject to them.

#### How it is Accomplished.

15 The LORD will dry up the gulf of the Egyptian Sea; with a scorching wind he will sweep his hand over the Euphrates River. He will break it up into seven streams so that men can cross over in sandals. There will be a highway for the remnant of his people that is left from Assyria, as there was for Israel when they came up from Egypt.

## **Isaiah 12**

### Why it is Accomplished

In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O LORD. Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me. Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation." With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

In that day you will say: "Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world. Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you."



# Chapter One

## Beginning Our Journey

As we approach this chapter we need to point out some basic truths to help direct our thinking. Chapter eleven is laid out by first giving us the means by which God will accomplish his purpose, then the result of his dealings, then to whom it applies, after that the how and lastly in chapter twelve the why.

Briefly, the means is Jesus, the root and offspring of Jesse.

The result of his dealings is peace, as the spirit of war is finally driven away from the nation of God.

The who is the remnant of Israel, which in the New Testament is all believers from all nations. The covenant that God made with natural Israel was broken, and a new covenant has now been brought into force. The nation "Israel" is now the blood bought people of the earth. We are the inheritors of the promises. Thus, the references to various nations from which they are gathered are symbolic of the gathering of all believers from every nation, tribe and tongue.

The how is given to us as first showing that judgment sets the stage for healing. We see God blowing on the gulf of the Egyptian sea (symbolic language for judgment) drying it up, and sweeping his hand over the Euphrates River dividing it into seven streams so that the remnant can pass through with their sandals on their feet.

The Euphrates River first appears in the Bible in the Garden of Eden, and means fruitfulness. The gulf of the Egyptian Sea was a barrier through which the armies of Egypt were prevented from following Israel. In this passage of scripture we see God removing the barrier so that the Egyptian remnant can come to the Lord. Next, we see the Euphrates River being divided into seven streams.

## The Spirit of War

In the beginning of the chapter, we see the spirit of war being dealt with. The nations that occupied the region of the Euphrates River had long gathered wealth and power through war. The spirit of war is the great barrier to peace. Thus, the river is symbolic of the spirit of war. Dealing with the spirit of war is necessary before the remnant of God's people can return to him in praise and worship.

The spirit of war holds many people captive. When the spirit of war is present in the life of individuals, fights erupt with family members, people at the work place, neighbors and even friends. When people so afflicted drive down the road, they are at war with the other drivers. The war is never their fault, they think; it's always because someone else has said or done something against them. Even when there is no conflict, they are in a defensive mode waiting for the next incident to trigger it.

These people are also at war with God. Oh, they may be very religious and even feel themselves spiritually superior, but the way of peace is far from them. They don't know God, but they think they do. In fact, they often feel that they know him better than anyone else does.

They pretend to be spiritual giants, but they don't live in the land of the Holy Spirit. These people are drawn to scandals and love to repeat gossip. The river that represents war is always between them and peace. There is no way for them to cross it, and what is worse; they don't even want to! Like the children of Israel who were slaves in Egypt, they labor for what does not

satisfy. God had to allow bitter suffering to soften the hearts of the Israelites causing them to cry out for deliverance, and he had to harden the Egyptian hearts so that they would not leave prematurely from the land of softening suffering.

When we have had enough of suffering and war, God will raise his hand against the river and break it into seven healing streams that we may cross over wearing sandals on our feet.

Feet in the scriptures represent our daily life experiences. Thus, we are told to walk in the Spirit, meaning; we are to apply the principles of the Spirit filled life to our daily life. But how can we? There are so many bad people all around us, and they are always picking on us!

Before we can journey to the Promised Land and take up permanent residence, we must cross through these streams before us because they have the power to restore fruitfulness

To those tired of war, pain, poverty, and always being the object of judgment, the journey continues.

## Chapter Two

### Healing Stream Number One

#### The Spirit of Wisdom and of Understanding

Returning to the first part of chapter eleven of Isaiah, we see how the Lord is going to come to the nation of Israel. I have broken this description into seven parts or healing streams, showing how it is that by these seven characteristics God will accomplish his purposes of healing and restoration along our journey to the Promised Land. This is the land where we dwell in peace, safety and contentment, finding our fulfillments in his presence.

The first of these characteristics is the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding.

When God formed Adam and placed him in the Garden of Eden, he planted a tree in the midst of the garden and called it the knowledge of good and evil. Eating fruit from this tree was forbidden because on the day they would eat of it; they would surely die. It apparently looked like any other fruit-bearing tree, and the fruit looked edible enough, nevertheless; Adam and Eve obeyed the Lord and only ate the fruit of the trees that God gave them.

One day a satanically embodied serpent came to Eve and enticed her to eat fruit from the forbidden tree. What was it about the fruit that made it bad? Was it in the chemical compounds found within it? Was it capable of stirring wonderful ideas in the brains of humanity? Why then would they die? Was it also poisonous? What sort of God would create such a wonderful fruit and make it poisonous?

I am convinced that the fruit of the tree was quite ordinary. I do not believe it possessed any special chemical compounds or poison. The curse of the tree was in the eating. The eating was an act of rebellion against a known command of God. Rebellion causes a breach of fellowship between two individuals or groups of individuals. When Eve ate of the fruit of the tree, she broke fellowship with God.

Many times Satan approaches people suggesting to them that there is no harm in doing a sin that God has forbidden. For example, many young people have reasoned that premarital sex is okay if they are in love and plan to get married. What possible harm can come of it as long as they are careful not to get pregnant? Again, the curse is not always found within the fruit itself but rather, in the act of rebellion against a known command of God!

There was another tree in the garden that was given to Adam to eat from; it was the tree of life. The tree of life may have had the necessary ingredients to sustain natural life, but God alone has the power over the life of the spirit of man. After sinning, Adam and Eve were cast out of the garden thus separating them from the tree of life. Death then resulted causing manifestations within their natures and the natures of those following because they lacked spiritual life. Sin is the natural expression of spiritual death and darkness and is the condition that exists when the Spirit of life is not present.

The death that entered humanity that day was the means of manifesting and producing the knowledge of evil. Evil does not exist in the presence of true spiritual life, just as darkness does not exist in the light. Spiritual life had to be removed before humanity could experience evil. It was then and only then that the darkness of evil could be seen!

To contrast this death, darkness and evil, God gave humanity glimpses of himself. Because God is light, he must always veil himself lest the darkness give way to light and the knowledge of evil be lost.

The only means man has of ever regaining his innocence is in repentance of his rebellion against God. It is at this point that fellowship is restored and maintained as long as acts of rebellion do not disturb it. Sin is a manifestation of rebellion against a known command of God.

When man transgressed, death was introduced into the spirit of fallen man. The penalty of sin is death.

Whereas there is a penalty of sin, there is also a result of sin. The result is not the same as the penalty. Both the results and the penalty are being experienced now that sin has entered. The penalty required death as its payment, but the result was the natural occurrences following the act.

The result of sin is not the judgment of sin, but the pain it causes is real. If a married person, for example, commits adultery, the result may be a broken home, separation from ones' children, and a consequent life of misery. This is all the result of sin just as venereal diseases are also the result of sin. A person may experience forgiveness from the offended spouse, but later suffer from the discomforts resulting from broken trust.

The plan of salvation provides for the restoration of spiritual life through the redemptive work of the cross, but healing is not always possible from all the results of sin. History is history, and some things are irreversible. If one commits murder for example, no amount of repentance can restore the damage done.

As we walk with God, we experience revelations of God. These revelations enable us to experience good as we emulate godly behaviors.

Fallen man may also do good deeds because he finds within himself the residue of goodness that evil has not totally taken from him, but it is salvation that restores life to the spirit of man.

There is no substitute for a relationship with God that sustains spiritual life. It is life that produces righteousness in the heart of man. Thus we see that fallen man may experience the knowledge of good and evil, but spiritual life is required to restore the soul of man.

When the serpent came to Eve with temptation, it wasn't simply the knowledge of good and evil she sought; it was wisdom! She ate because she saw that it was useful in gaining wisdom! Herein is the deception. What the serpent did not tell her was that wisdom belongs to God and the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom!

In our present world the fear of the Lord has been largely lost. No longer do men's hearts pound with fear when they are living a life of sin. The belief in a Day of Judgment has been scorned and replaced with the notion that all people go to be with God. God is no longer seen as a judge of evil, but rather, a sort of buddy, if he even exists. Preaching about hell has been replaced with a message of cheap grace, and an altar where genuine tears of repentance are shed has ceased to exist.

No one can have true wisdom until they are in proper relationship to God. Man may have good ideas, but wisdom embraces the fear of the Lord. A relationship with God is the key to the treasure house of true wisdom and understanding.

All knowledge that fails to embrace the fear of the Lord is incomplete and perverted. Jesus accurately said that he was truth. Statements thus made outside the acknowledgment of the person and position of Jesus, whether expressed or not, are incomplete and therefore not true. To take any idea or expression and state it as fact without acknowledging him, is an act of rebellion against God, and therefore, part of the lie.

The first cleansing stream one encounters upon his journey back from the land of bondage is the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding. Since all sin springs from a lack of the fear of the Lord, all wisdom must include an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of God. Those who think that they are free to decide what is right or what is wrong outside the counsel of the Lord have forsaken the path of wisdom.

The path of wisdom has its beginning in the fear of the Lord; all other wise sayings or thoughts are really not wise at all. The only wisdom that has any value is the wisdom that determines what is in the mind of God and how it applies to real life situations.

When we come to the first healing stream, we look at the events of our lives seeing how the lack of the fear of the Lord has caused us to go our own way, do our own thing and attempt to resolve our perplexing problems on our own. The lack of the fear of the Lord allowed for a careless attitude to abide in our hearts. We either forgot, or never knew that God really gets mad at sin, that when we sin, he gets mad at us and when that happens, we can expect trouble. How foolish to make God mad at us; don't we have enough trouble already?

When we find ourselves in difficulties, we may feel our need for counsel, but if we seek counselors who don't have a proper fear of the Lord, the counsel will be flawed coming from the human mind of the counselor.

The reason we need counselors is because we have become confused on our journey. We want to have peace with God and to experience his blessing of love, but we are not sure of the path. The markers marking the way toward eternal bliss are no longer clear to us. We stand at a crossroads and find conflicting signs. The lack of proper relationship to God has left us in darkness of mind and soul. Since we have left the path of the fear of the Lord, we will seek other counselors. The secularist tell us, not to worry about eternal matters, that there is no God anyway, and even if there is, who can know which road is the right one? False religions have posted their signs at the crossroads on this path of our choosing and they point to a path they call wisdom, but the footprints of the Savior are not found in them.

The one sitting at God's right hand beckoning us to join him has marked the path that leads to the throne of God. He marked the path with his cross and at each cross road we will find a cross for us lying there waiting to be picked up.

This path is less traveled than most, but when we bow to pick up our cross, we look and there before us is a way we ignored before not seeing its value. It is clearly the way of the cross and it alone leads to heaven's door. Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." (Matt. 16:24-25)

It is not possible to see the right path until one picks up his cross because it is only then that he is looking in the right direction. Before one picks up his cross, his attention is upon what is best for himself, his family or society.

Picking up ones' cross implies a change of heart toward all things temporal. The cross is a symbol of the place of death, not just any death, but a sacrificial death.

The death to self the Bible speaks of is not a suicidal death, or an abandonment of responsibilities, but rather, an adjustment to a better perspective that holds eternity as the only value that matters. All thoughts, ideas, decisions, affections, goals and or visions must have as their point of beginning the fear of the Lord, who alone is able to grant us access to heaven and home.

Once we have picked up our cross and focused our attention upon eternal matters, we look down the road it has marked for us, and then we discover understanding.

The Holy Spirit is now our teacher, Jesus is our Savior, God the Father is the love of our lives, and all our values are clarified and cleansed in the light of their instructions. Commands that seemed to be dead law are now our bosom friends, revealing the heart of our holy God. Pleasing him is not painful duty, but rather, joy. We walk boldly through the water, letting our sandaled feet bath in the refreshing stream. How good it is to discover real peace that comes from submission to the spirit of the cross.

We walk on, but how do we apply this principle to real life situations? What about those conflicts we have been having with our friends, employers, spouse or family? What about self-doubts, feelings of inferiority, self-hate, guilt and regret? What adjustments must we make? Is there healing for us?

The next stream will add its light and we will be filled with joy!

### Some Related Scriptures

#### Job 28:12-28

“But where can wisdom be found? Where does understanding dwell? Man does not comprehend its worth; it cannot be found in the land of the living. The deep says, ‘It is not in me’; the sea says, ‘It is not with me.’ It cannot be bought with the finest gold, nor can its price be weighed in silver. It cannot be bought with the gold of Ophir, with precious onyx or sapphires. Neither gold nor crystal can compare with it, nor can it be had for jewels of gold. Coral and jasper are not worthy of mention; the price of wisdom is beyond rubies. The topaz of Cush cannot compare with it; it cannot be bought with pure gold. “Where then does wisdom come from? Where does understanding dwell? It is hidden from the eyes of every living thing, concealed even from the birds of the air. Destruction and Death say, ‘Only a rumor of it has reached our ears.’ God understands the way to it and he alone knows where it dwells, for he views the ends of the earth and sees everything under the heavens. When he established the force of the wind and measured out the waters, when he made a decree for the rain and a path for the thunderstorm, then he looked at wisdom and appraised it; he confirmed it and tested it. And he said to man, ‘The fear of the Lord — that is wisdom, and to shun evil is understanding.’”

“To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his.” (Job 12:13)

# Chapter Three

## Healing Stream Number Two

### The Spirit of Counsel and Power

It is one thing to understand what God wants of us, having a right attitude and heart in every matter, and it is quite another to know how it is to be applied. How do we get rid of haunting feelings that surface at the most inappropriate times? How do we apply the principles of the Holy Spirit when decisions have to be made?

We have been subjected to the philosophies of the world and its ways, and yes; we have sat in the seat of the scornful! Ps. 1:1 tells us, “Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers.” Nevertheless, we have done just that, sat and been taught by those who either reject the knowledge of God, or have failed to understand it.

Our educational system has concluded that they must not teach about God, therefore, unwittingly, they have taught against him. In so doing they have unwittingly separated us from the source of true healing and peace of mind and heart.

We are constantly being barraged with the counsel and wisdom of the world. On legal matters, we go to lawyers; when we are sick, we go to doctors; when we are in financial need, we go to financial advisors; when it is a career we need, we go to a special school or college. Some of these instructors may be God fearing, but others are not; thus, we are instructed according to the curriculum or their knowledge rather than what is right in the eyes of the Lord.

Our minds work similarly to computers. All the educational processes have been programming our thought processes, teaching us how we are to think and react in every kind of situation. Some of what we have been taught is good, but if we have learned to rely upon our knowledge rather than our God, we have failed to learn God’s way. Our knowledge can become a substitute for dependency upon the counsel of the Lord, and therefore; it is a form of idolatry.

It is a basic principal that what we trust in is a god to us. It is for this reason that we need to sort through our thought processes and see whether we are truly trusting in the Lord, or whether we are trusting in the knowledge imparted by man. Even in our Christian theologies we find a mix of the counsel of the Lord and humanistic ideas.

As we journey on from the land of pain, bondage and separation from the Lord, we come to the stream of counsel and begin to walk in it. It is not easy to travel through this stream because the philosophies of the world are well established. We find deposits of wrong ideas, some in the form of religious teachings that were adaptations of law that ministered death to us. Others are from misguided teachers that are holding out a false hope based on some mystical form of so called faith, but are out of touch with the source of real life the true teachings and person of Jesus Christ. Disillusionment and despair stalk the land as a result of efforts that have born no fruit of change even though we sought it with tears. We find these teachings and ideas in layers, one upon the other, and cutting through to liberty may seem like an impossible task, but then we discover that we are not alone in the process.

Lest we despair we take note that this stream is not simply counsel, it is counsel and power! Whereas, Jesus is associated most closely with truth and the Word, the Holy Spirit is associated with the application of the Word as the teacher, and he is also associated with power. Thus, as

we come to this healing stream we find the Holy Spirit himself is the active ingredient of the waters of this stream.

What the Holy Spirit does in our lives is the fine and intricate work of application. Reorganizing our thought processes is a very detailed process and his work is accomplished through the ministry of the word that quickens our consciences. It is by the quickening of the conscience on a minute-by-minute basis that the voice of the Spirit teaches us. It is by this process that we are guided through this somewhat turbulent stream.

Scientists today are probing into some very interesting aspects of how life functions. They have discovered that at the very moment of conception when an egg has been fertilized there is an energy field that then surrounds the new life and within the cell a brand new DNA has been formed. This energy field along with the DNA is the plan and the power that will guide and construct the new life that has been formed. This is true in all life forms man included. They are now learning that matter is mostly energy, and is controlled by a super plan that, perhaps reluctantly they recognize to be God. I call scientist the “wow gang” because all they ever do is follow God around and say “wow.” As I have studied what they are learning I see confirmation after confirmation that the same God who created this natural realm is the same God who is the author of my salvation.

One of the areas of interest is in what they are learning about the issues of health. They are tracing direct links between what we think, believe, and dwell upon to health.

As I was perusing some of the information on this subject I came upon a list of what are good qualities and what are bad, and to my great interest it matched what I have learned pleases God and what displeases him. I have approached this subject from the perspective of life in the Spirit as opposed to life in the flesh. Interestingly, I have found that my list and theirs is the same! Their list had all the qualities found in the scriptures about how we are to live. What is pointed out as being bad for our health is the very things we are told about in the scriptures. They have concluded that the healthiest way to live is being loving, generous, forgiving, optimistic, peaceful, faithful, tenderhearted, sensitive, generous, and compassionate! They have found that those who are selfish, self-centered, egotistical, proud, fearful, lustful, full of hate, bitterness and unforgiveness, and such like, are the most likely to be sick people!

This book is not written to be a health guide, if good health happens as a result of what is learned here, so be it, but what is of concern is how we can have spiritual health that springs from a right relationship to God. It is not surprising to me to find that what is taught from a scientific perspective is the same as what is learned from a spiritual perspective. It is the same Lord Jesus that created our natural bodies that also is creating our inner man to be like unto himself. The principles that affect our outer man are often the same as those that affect our relationship to Christ. If we are healthy Christians, should it be surprising if we are also well Christians? I do not believe that physical health should ever be viewed as some sort of thermometer of our spiritual health, because even the most positive minded and spirit filled people becomes sick, however, it is fair to say that we without a doubt will be healthier applying our faith than we would be without faith or hope. Nor is this a discussion of the subject of divine healing for our bodies, however, divine healing should be sought and received in the process of growing in the Lord.

It is reassuring to know that growth is not a ‘do it yourself’ project! The river of pain, suffering, fear, anger, unbelief, selfishness, and violence that was once a barrier, has indeed been broken into streams that are passable, but there still remains obstacles and dangers in the passage.



Satan is still a formidable foe, and he is at work trying to maintain his control over each escaping subject. He does this by seeking to interject his influence upon what the Holy Spirit is doing in our lives. When the Holy Spirit convicts us of some sinful or incorrect attitude or action, the enemy suggests that if we apply our willpower to the situation, we can overcome it. When the Spirit shows us that our attitudes are out of harmony with the principles of life and righteousness, the enemy suggests that we just need to be broader minded. In this manner he seeks to defeat the second part of the ministry of the Spirit that comes to us as we, by faith, reach for his enabling power. Failure to reach for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit is to assure failure that leads to the loss of hope.

Many have come to this healing stream and have sat in its waters in hopelessness abandoning their journey. They don't want to return to the land of bondage, but they don't progress into victory either. Knowledge alone is not sufficient to liberate us, that is why Jesus sent us the counselor, the Spirit of Truth. It is he who teaches us all things, and it is he who enables us to walk in the victory of his lessons. Without an active relationship with the Holy Spirit, we can never achieve real healing in our lives.

I cannot over stress the need to reach for the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. Nothing that happens spiritually, that comes from God comes by any other means than by the Holy Spirit's work. This provision is for all to partake of, and will be given to any born again person of God. Having partaken of this relationship that results from faith, we are invited to ask for the gift of the Holy Spirit and to be filled with power from on high. (See Luke 11:9-13.)

## Some Related Scriptures

Ps. 1:1-6 "Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers." But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers. Not so the wicked! They are like chaff that the wind blows away. Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the assembly of the righteous. For the LORD watches over the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish."

Ps. 32:8-11 "I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him. Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!"

Ps. 73:21-28 "When my heart was grieved and my spirit embittered, I was senseless and ignorant; I was a brute beast before you. Yet I am always with you; you hold me by my right hand. You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will take me into glory. Whom have I in heaven but you? And earth has nothing I desire besides you. My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Those who are far from you will perish; you destroy all who are unfaithful to you. But as for me, it is good to be near God. I have made the Sovereign LORD my refuge; I will tell of all your deeds."

Ps. 107:1-15 "Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever. Let the redeemed of the LORD say this — those he redeemed from the hand of the foe, those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south. Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle. They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away. Then they cried out to

the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress. He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle. Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things. Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains, for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High. So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help. Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress. He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains. Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,”

Prov. 8:12-21 "I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence; I possess knowledge and discretion. To fear the LORD is to hate evil; I hate pride and arrogance, evil behavior and perverse speech. Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have understanding and power. By me kings reign and rulers make laws that are just; by me princes govern, and all nobles who rule on earth. I love those who love me, and those who seek me find me. With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and prosperity. My fruit is better than fine gold; what I yield surpasses choice silver. I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice, bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full.”

Prov 15:21-22 “Folly delights a man who lacks judgment, but a man of understanding keeps a straight course. Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed.”

## Chapter Four

### Healing Stream Number Three

#### Knowledge and Delighting in the Fear of the Lord

The third healing stream we come to on our journey back to the place of our inheritance is the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD and delight in the fear of the LORD.

The passage in Isaiah 11:2 relates to Jesus and how he would come, but since we have become a part of him it now relates to us as well. The Spirit of truth, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Knowledge. (1John 5:6)

The very first reference to the word knowledge in the Bible is the identification of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. It was the eating of the fruit of this tree that brought sin and death into the human experience.

As we stand on the shore of this stream, we reflect upon how Eve stood before the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Evil was present that day in the form of the serpent. Knowing the pain, sorrow and suffering that her decision to partake of it has brought upon all of us; we can't help wondering, is this stream capable of healing our wounds?

This stream, unlike the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, is knowledge and the fear of the Lord. Knowledge is good, but knowledge of evil involves forsaking the path marked for us by the Lord God. Human history is very bleak to behold being filled with struggle. Nations have risen to power by making war against their neighbors. War involves the destruction of human life and the taking of people captive making them servants to masters they do not wish to honor.

Along the road of human history are the markers of every kind of pain that one human can inflict upon another. The scars upon the backs of slaves are dwarfed by the scars upon the souls of individuals who have been victimized by those who should have been their protectors. One has to wonder how so much evil could come from the fruit of one tree.

As we stand on the shore of this stream still nursing our wounded spirits from the effects of sin or wrong concepts, the Spirit beckons us to enter, but it suddenly occurs to us; this is also the fear of the Lord. Where the fear of the Lord is, no evil thing can enter! It was the abandonment of the fear of the Lord that allowed Eve to partake of the forbidden fruit. When a young man or woman is whispering sweet words to persuade their partner to commit an act of sinful indulgence with them, the fear of the Lord is not in their voice! They are at that moment speaking words of seduction, which come from Satan. It is Satan that tempts us to abandon the words of instruction from the Lord. Many people have become the mouthpiece of Satan tempting someone to sin in one way or another.

As we ponder this stream we realize that these waters appear in contrast to the flood waters that John saw coming from the mouth of the beast of Revelations 12:15 as he seeks to destroy the woman who brought forth the holy Child. Those waters like all of Satan's waters seem gentle at first, but soon become a rushing torrent with whirlpools and undertow designed to capture its victims in an inescapable grip. How slippery are the sloping banks on the edge of Satan's river.

When one gets too close, even out of curiosity, he finds staying out of the water almost impossible.

These waters, however, to which we are called by God are gentle and beneath the surface are glistening gems, treasures that we could only dream of in the land of our bondage.

As we enter, an awesome feeling overcomes us, fear — yes fear, but it's different from the fear we have always known. There is comfort in this fear. This fear is the fear of love! This fear involves boundaries to protect us. This fear brings comfort into our hearts knowing there is one who is watching every move we make, monitoring every thought we think, and examining every intent of our hearts. We realize that the attention we are receiving is not from one desiring to control us, dominate us, or punish us, but rather; it is the attention of one who loves us so much he protects us even from the residue of our fallen natures by guiding us through these healing waters.

How different the fear of the Lord is to the fear we felt when we were being molested or abused. The fears that we felt when the neighborhood bully chased us home or we were caught committing some sinful act and knew we would be punished.

This fear we experience in the healing stream is the fear that has no torment; that comes from reverence resulting from knowledge of the Lord, and is not so much fear of him as fear of ourselves and how we might unwittingly hurt him or be an embarrassment to him. The fear we now feel comes from our desire to please, a quality kind of fear that leads to acts that reflect the worship of our hearts.

As we traverse this stream our steps stir what lies beneath the surface, but instead of dirt blocking our view of what is on the bottom, the stirring only seems to reveal treasures even grander than the ones our eyes first caught glimpses of standing on the shore. We are now permitted to gather gems of knowledge at will, as our teacher explains each gem to us, inviting us to ponder and explore. We have come to the stream of revelation knowledge and the power of the Holy Spirit is quickening our minds!

As we gather our gems of knowledge, we discover gems concerning the character of Christ and the God we love and serve. We discover righteousness, not belittling revelations designed to embarrass us with our shortcomings, but rather the liberating righteousness that loosens us from the bondage to sin and fears that once bound us. This quest we now find ourselves on has nothing to do with the knowledge of evil, but rather is exclusively the knowledge of good.

When we entered this stream, the fear of the Lord forced us to abandon all desire to explore the knowledge of evil. We had to make a choice, we couldn't have it both ways; it was the knowledge of good or the knowledge of evil. When we are through with sin, that is to say, when we are ready to forsake it completely, we can enter these cleansing waters.

It is in these waters that the Holy Spirit's classes convene. Daily instructions are given to those who will listen. Under his tutelage we learn about creation, righteousness, judgment, hope, faith, and love. Absent from his teachings are subjects involving disputes over words, concepts or doctrines. He does not endorse one man's teachings above another, nor does he identify himself with any special movement or cause. His classes are designed to teach us about God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. He teaches us about himself only to the extent needed to reveal his mission. He has come to us to prepare us for entry into the presence of our Father and his Son, Jesus, and to teach us about our relationship to them.

# Chapter Five

## Healing Stream Number Four

### About Judging Righteously

It seems fitting that having left the stream of Knowledge and the Fear of the Lord, that we now encounter this stream about judging. Knowledge can be a heady thing. Even the knowledge given by the Lord can cause us to view ourselves as being a cut above those we now may see as lesser Christians.

Pride is a terrible thing. It destroys the emotion of love, causes compassion to cease, and turns the spirits of even righteous people sour. Its manifestations may be very subtle, but the result is always hardness of heart. It is pride that causes people to judge others, seeing themselves as being better, or stronger.

It is when we view ourselves as strong and yet average, that we expect all others to live by what we see as a minimum requirement. We may reason that if we can live this way, anyone can. This sort of view is what causes us to remove ourselves from compassion, forgiveness and love, to a position of harsh judgment.

To be sure, there is a place for discernment of spirits in the body of Christ. We are to examine those who claim to be a voice for God to see if they are indeed that voice they think themselves to be. We also know that we are to deal with sin within the body of believers, not allowing Satan a foothold in either our lives or the life of the church.

Dealing with sin is one thing and being judgmental is quite another. To understand the difference we need to look at the text for this chapter. "He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth." (Isaiah 11:3-4)

Jesus is the judge that the whole world must face one day. When he sits in judgment, he judges according to the reality of what has happened. It is not what appears to be the case or what someone says is the case, but rather what actually is the case.

When the strong take advantage over the weak, God sees it. This is the basis of righteous judgment. When the weak or vulnerable are taken captive, it is an act of aggression or violence, but when the violent are taken captive it is an action of justice.

In our society we have a system of so called justice, but it is blind justice. The intent of blind justice in the United States is that all persons will receive justice regardless of wealth, race, or any other considerations. With Jesus, however, justice is real justice. He alone can see what no one else can see, the thoughts and the intents of the hearts. When he passes judgment, it is always absolutely correct being weighed in the light of the cross.

When we must judge any matter, if righteousness is to be served, we too must judge in the light of the cross. The light of the cross brings mercy to bear, and when the offender is repentant, judgment must be rendered in the light of mercy. Righteous people always remember the mercy they have been shown, if not by people, by God.

Jesus expressed the spirit of the cross while going through his cross experience. The first utterance expressing the spirit of the cross came while in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus prayed to the Father, “not my will by your will be done.” Such utterances indicate surrender to a higher will than the will of a person. Since it was not the will of Jesus to go to the cross, but rather the will of his Father, we see that the spirit of the cross is surrender to the will of God at any cost! I call this the vertical dimension of the cross.

The horizontal dimension was expressed by Jesus while hanging on the cross when he said, “Father forgive them for they don’t know what they are doing.” It is this spirit of forgiveness that enables us to love even our enemies! There is a wonderful release of healing power when we at last can truly forgive those who have wronged us, seeing that the wrongs came from the spirit of an unregenerated fallen person.

On an occasion I was counseling a man who was struggling with unforgiveness. Someone who should have been his protector had painfully wronged him. I explained to him that the offender too had been a victim of abuse, that his behavior reflected his own pain. As we talked about it, he was able to view his abuser in the light of one who was himself a victim, thus he was enabled to change his anger to forgiveness.

As we wade into the water of this healing stream we realize that with knowledge comes responsibility. We are responsible not only for the knowledge we have been given, but now how we use the knowledge.

We see that knowledge is not a whip or a sword to be used against one another, a weapon to control or suppress but rather an instrument to bring healing and correction. God’s word is a sword of deliverance from our real enemy, Satan. We realize that there may be times when this knowledge given by God may require us to take a stand against the rebellious, but even then it will not be pride that is involved, only righteousness.

In cases where vulnerable people are at risk, mercy must never be an excuse for timidity. There are times when the sinner must be cast out of the fellowship, home, or workplace. When such is necessary it is within the righteous demand that we do it. Saying we cannot or should not because we are not to judge is not according to the spirit of truth. There are righteous judgments and there are unrighteous judgments. Knowledge has qualified us to know the difference. That is why the stream of knowledge and the fear of the Lord precede judgment. It is only when we have passed through that stream that we are qualified to pass through this one with the Lord.

What Jesus desires to accomplish in each of us is total deliverance from the power and influence of Satan and his demonic helpers. It is their business to complicate our lives, and to entangle us in the mesh of sinful desires. It is mercy therefore, that motivates Jesus to bring correction into our lives. When Satan has been able to establish a stronghold of demonic power in our lives, it must be exposed if there is to be deliverance. These strongholds come in many forms.

One of these strongholds is low self-esteem. Demonic spirits seek to occupy areas such as this in a variety of ways, creating a sense of self-loathing, and hatred of those seen to be more perfect or acceptable. They create feelings of self-abasement and, or, self-destruction having feelings of inferiority as their excuse for existence. Sometimes it is pain that provides the reason for a Satanic presence because he creates the illusion that hate or resentment is comforting, therefore; one may seize them with unforgiveness and in this way break fellowship with the grace of our Lord. It is the gift of discernment of spirits that enables us to tell the difference between a person who is just struggling with low self-esteem and one who has been taken captive by a demonic presence.

Demonic spirits seek to occupy other areas as well. Lusts of the flesh, if allowed to go unchecked, provide opportunity for demonic activity. No one is exempt from struggles with lust in one form or another. Lust has many faces, and not all are sexual. Some expressions of lust are unnatural desires for power, food, clothes, possessions, vanity, or success. These are commonly called “the flesh”, but can also become a demonic habitation because, demons dwell in darkness and the fleshly nature is a place of darkness. (The flesh meaning, the fallen nature of man.) That is why we need Jesus to fill us with the light of truth. When the light of truth enters our hearts the conditions that have provided Satan opportunity to dwell in us are exposed, therefore repentance is the first step in real deliverance. As we repent and ask for the power of Jesus to enter us, delivering power is released, and as the light of Christ enters, demonic spirits loose their place of residence and are then easily cast out of the area that was once dark. (Satan’s native land is the darkness of deceit, hate, error and all forms of evil.) Deliverance is accomplished as we take authority in the name of Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Some people will object to the idea that their life could in some way be demonized. They will object saying that a Christian cannot have a demon. The argument is a silly one however, demons are not Christians and therefore do not respect a Christians rights. It is without question illegal for Satan to demonize a Christian, however; Satan does not respect legal. In such cases, we must insist upon our rights, demanding that the satanic presence leave us. We do this in the name of Jesus. We have great advantage in our struggle against sin in that we have the power of the Holy Spirit standing ready to assist us, and with him are the angels of God to make sure that what we believe for becomes fact.

Part of the problem that people have on this subject is that they confuse natural light with spiritual light. Jesus is the source of all spiritual light, but unlike natural light, spiritual light must be appropriated by faith. Spiritual light is spiritual truth. The process of light entering our hearts brings transformation. This light comes by revelation power, and adjustments are made through the process of repentance and appropriation by faith. When demonic strongholds are exposed in the process, they can then be cast out. Often this is the natural result of repentance and appropriation, but on some occasions more aggressive measures may be needed. The person so afflicted may be referred to as being caught in a snare. In such cases, those who are spiritual restore the captive, taking heed to themselves lest they also fall victim to a similar snare.

# Chapter Six

## Healing Stream Number Five

### The Slayer of the Wicked

Isaiah 11:4 “He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.”

(The Word of the Lord.)

Let there be peace in the heart of every Christian because; there is one who will triumph over all wickedness. One day all wickedness will end, all the aggressors will be cast into the lake of burning torment to receive their just judgment for the deeds done in this present world. All the child-molesters, adulterers, thieves, liars, perjurers, murderers, idolaters, and all such like whose sins have not been forgiven and whose hearts have not been cleansed in the power of the blood of Jesus, will be cast into this final abode.

To all who are victims of the wickedness of this world, this healing stream comes as sweet relief. On that day the Lord God will wipe all tears from our eyes, and we will remember wickedness no more. Forever silenced will be the accuser’s voice, and the remembrance of wickedness done against us forever forgotten. No longer will children fear the sound of approaching footsteps in the night as their molester comes to take advantage of their weakness. There will be no more tormenting dreams, as the remembrances of evil will forever lose their tormenting power.

As we begin our journey into these waters, we also become aware of the fact that not all evil comes as one who is an aggressor. The rod of his mouth is also called a two edged sword, that discerns the very thoughts and intents of the heart. There are sins that are sins of action and there are sins of reaction. Many people, who would never commit an act of murder, wish death upon those who have hurt them. They carry bitter unforgiveness in their hearts and though they would never commit an act of aggression in an outward way, subtly retaliate with every attitude and action.

Sin is a condition of heart where love, grace and mercy are not present. It’s our selfishness and self-love that cause us to sin. It’s when we want self-gratification, that we abandon concern for what pleases the Lord. There are action sins such as lustful acts, deceitful speech, and the like, while brooding anger with thoughts of vengeance are reaction sins. Angry thoughts and murderous emotions are just as evil as sins of lust or violence but can seem justified.

Wading into these waters we feel relieved knowing that God will judge the wicked. But then, the relief we feel gives way to the realization that unless the rod of his mouth is applied to our own hearts destroying the wickedness within us, we will be one of those destroyed along with all who have victimized us!

It commonly occurs that the victimized becomes the victimizer. Once power is shifted from the victimizer to the victim, evil also often shifts. The expression of this power is not always to commit the same sins against others that have been committed against the victim, but rather they



come with a different face, the face of hate, a desire for vengeance, or an obsessive need to control those we deem to be ours.

As we walk into this stream we feel the cooling breeze of the breath of the Lord as he breaths upon us. Our wicked hearts are being revealed, while at the same time we are being bathed in the power of his Word, and the record of our sins is being purged by the power released by the blood of Jesus.

It is in this stream that we learn the truth of the words that all have sinned and have fallen short of the glory of God. We learn that where we are going, all hate, unforgiveness and desires for vengeance must be abandoned. We leave them here in these waters, knowing that vengeance belongs to God; he will repay according to his righteous judgments. We need not carry this burden any longer, ah — we must not carry this burden any more! It is our place to pray for those who have hurt us. They are sinners, but so were we. God forgave us; it is our duty to forgive them and to desire the same forgiveness for them that we have found in our hearts. This may sound too painful to bear, but Jesus is able to give grace to the humble and he will enable all who come to him to do the unthinkable.

When we enter this stream giving to God what belongs to him, we find healing for our hurting hearts. We learn that he is the judge of the wicked; we don't have to bear that burden any longer. There is liberty in love, for when we love, our hearts are at rest. We can now trust the Lord to deal with wickedness. We now know that we cannot and should not control those around us, but rather we should minister to them in love and intercession.

As we emerge from this stream there is a new sense of purity, and oh how good it feels.

In the nineteenth chapter of Revelations Jesus is portrayed coming to earth riding on a white horse to execute judgment. He comes with a sharp sword proceeding from his mouth, not in his hand! His enemy is the flesh of men small and great. With that sword he delivers flesh to the vultures to consume. The flesh of mighty men, generals and kings, horses and riders and the flesh of all men bound or free are given as food for the vultures. The old systems of government are brought down and the old religious system has been destroyed in judgment. Kings give their crowns to the one who is worthy to wear them and the kingdom of God will soon be manifest. Truth wins over lies, and all evil is consumed in the final judgment.

There is great comfort in knowing that God will one day purge evil from the earth, that the deceiver will be finally fully exposed and that mankind will finally put Jesus in his rightful place.

# Chapter Seven

## Healing Stream Number Six

### Righteousness will be His Belt

It might seem that each stream we face should be easier than the one before it, but is it? Remember that we are not alone on this journey. This is a journey of our identification with Jesus. Each stream is characteristic of his being, how he came, and how he lived. In dying for us, he made us a part of himself. As a man takes a woman to be his wedded wife, so Jesus took us to be his bride, to become one with us, to redeem us, and then to cleanse us. The blood he shed purchased us; we are now free to be one with him.

Much of the redemptive work of Jesus in us is now history as we stand on the bank of this stream. We've come a long way with him and much work has been done in us. We have walked with the Lord through the streams that preceded this one, Wisdom and Understanding, Counsel and Power, Knowledge and Delight in the Fear of the Lord, Righteous Judgments, and Slaying the Wicked. However, all of these streams need the one we now face to tie them all together. Like pieces of clothing, a belt is needed to hold them in their proper place.

In retrospect, as we waded into the first stream, Wisdom and Understanding, applying the fear of the Lord to our previously proud and rebellious natures, it may have seemed that a sword had slain all that was contrary to the Lord who had redeemed us. Letting go of our pride and rebellion felt like death, and it was, and at that point fear was real fear, because we knew it was either surrender to his love or be cast into utter darkness. For the first time in our lives we applied real wisdom, and it was based on the understanding of our lost condition.

As we continued our journey coming to the next stream, Counsel and Power, we began to learn that living for Jesus is not always as easy as it might seem at first. Some adjustments had to be made and this required counsel. Our lives had become a twisted mass of loose ends, and many were hopelessly tangled. Who could untangle such a mess as we had made? Who could make any sense of it? It was at that point that we discovered we were not on this journey alone.

The Holy Spirit, (the counselor, and the enabler) himself was with us, to help us with power from on high. We learned how he counsels with wisdom and honor and knows what is the righteous thing to do in every situation. Even when conflicting moralities come to bear, he knows what is the applicable morality to choose. When strength is needed, he is there with power that has been given to us by Jesus through the gift of the Holy Spirit.

From there we went on to the stream of knowledge and the delight in the fear of the Lord. Here we found that the fear of the Lord has no torment, that knowledge of him has brought us knowledge of his love. It was in this stream that we began to understand who we are now that we have become one with Christ. Our fear is now more like awesome respect for we are now beginning to know our God. We learned that this fear is more the fear of ourselves and how we might unwittingly hurt or embarrass him whom we have now come to love. In this stream we found a delightful adventure of discovery as we learned the great truths revealed in the Word of God.

From there we went on to learn about righteous judgment, the difference between judging and discerning, and how that, for now at least, we are to leave judgment with the Lord. We are called to peace, to love our neighbors, and to remember that outside of Jesus we are also sinful.

Then we came to the stream we thought would not be here, the Slayer of the Wicked. How could it be that this stream would have significance to us; had we not been redeemed? Then we discovered that wickedness lurks within even our hearts waiting for opportunity to express itself. At first we didn't realize that the hate, resentment, bitterness, and anger we had was wrong because, it was so justly a part of us coming from wounds inflicted upon us. We didn't know then that there are sins of reaction just as there are sins of action. So into the stream we went, asking Jesus to forgive us, and to cleanse us of all wickedness lest he destroy us too.

Now at last we are on this shore, and we are hungry. We need something substantial to satisfy our hunger. We need meat to eat and so we are called to the next stream, the teachings about righteousness that tie it all together.

The writer of the book of Hebrews commented that the elementary teachings about Christ. He said that the teachings concerning the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, of faith in God, instruction about baptisms, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment, are all the milk of the Word. He previously characterized the teachings about righteousness as solid food in contrast to this milk. Milk is necessary when we are infants, but when we begin to mature we need to develop the ability to eat a solid diet. (See Hebrews 5:12-6:3)

Some people don't like meat; they prefer a lighter diet. It wasn't until Noah had emerged from the ark that meat was introduced into the diet of mankind. One author speculates that meat is needed to strengthen us, giving us what is needed to stand against demonic forces and the evils of our environment. Whether that is true on the natural level or not, I do not know, but I do know that the teachings about righteousness (meat) are needed to strengthen a Christian so that he will be enabled to resist the devil and turn from the onslaughts of evil.

As we begin to wade into the waters of this stream we wonder what are the teachings about righteousness? Why are they called the meat of the word?

The author of Hebrews apparently paused to ponder whether he should continue his journey of expounding the meat of the word. Deciding to continue, he gives forth a warning to all who pass the border of this stream, that if they are enlightened, and taste the power of the eternal kingdom, that if they fall away, there will be no more sacrifice for sin.

There is a point from which there is no returning. When the revelation of Jesus and what he came to do is understood, we dare not return to the land of bondage. How could we return? Why would we want to?

The knowledge of righteousness is tied to the redemptive work of Jesus, therefore, returning after being fully enlightened is to turn ones back on the redeeming sacrifice of the cross. Anyone who rejects the message of the cross is forever lost. Doing so is to put Jesus to open shame! It is the act of supreme pride and rebellion.

Some obviously have begun their journeys through the previous streams, and at some point returned to the land of bondage. They were, however, at some point inspired to once more follow the Lord and returned to the streams, but now we are at one with a warning that if we cross this one, returning is fatal. Rejection of the cross is rejection of the only hope of salvation. There is no other sacrifice that is acceptable.

As we continue on we are introduced to Jesus, who like Melchizedek, a mystery priest of Genesis, is the King of Righteousness, and the King of Peace. We learn that Jesus is not only a king but also a priest and as such made a sacrifice that once having made it, sat down at God's right hand, never to be repeated again. This sacrifice was to ratify a covenant that would draw

all that enter into its provisions, into a relationship with God. The terms of the covenant are such that one cannot, no indeed, must not, ever turn away from the meaning of it.

“This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their minds and write them on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, ‘Know the Lord,’ because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest. For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” (Hebrews 8:10-12)

This covenant was the result of the great love that God has for mankind. It was love that caused him to give us the opportunity to turn from the wickedness of this present world. By putting our faith in him, we receive forgiveness of sins and restoration to the fellowship that Adam enjoyed before the fall.

What we learn about this righteousness is that it is not about the righteousness the world honors, but rather a righteousness that is by faith from first to last! It is not about law, but rather, about the spirit of truth manifesting what is pure, honest, trustworthy, loving, and good in our everyday experiences of life.

We realize that it is the presence of the Holy Spirit working in us that gives us the “want to” to do what pleases the Lord.

The author of Hebrews explains the weakness of the Mosaic Law with its system of rules and regulations along with a system of sacrifices that could not meet the needs of humanity.

The new covenant with the kind of sacrifice that was made, opened a whole new arena of victory to humanity because it allowed God to give back the spirit of life that enables us to do by nature what we could never do under law.

The teaching about righteousness is not about knowing the law, but rather; knowing God so that we can please him by thinking like him, acting like him and enjoying fellowship with him. It is the desire to please him springing from love, that motivates righteous conduct. The value of law to us is that by studying it we see what sort of conduct pleases the Lord, and by living in the spirit of the righteous revelation of the law, we can live a life that pleases the Lord!

The emphasis of the teachings of righteousness, however, is not upon what we do, but rather what he does, the price he paid and how it is faith in that work that is the basis of our being declared righteous.

As we walk through the waters of this stream, we are cleansed of all self-righteousness, pride of accomplishments, and trust in religious rituals.

We learn to appreciate Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

We learn that righteousness is not earned, but granted to us by the one who loves us. All praise thus, belongs to him. This is the meat of the word that strengthens us against all the wiles of the devil.

# Chapter Eight

## Healing Stream Number Seven

### Faithfulness the Sash Around His Waist

Traveling is not always easy, but when our destination is desirable we must go on. The destination of this journey is indeed desirable for it is the place where peace is fully secured.

In Isaiah chapter eleven, we see seven examples of the vulnerable and the vicious, doing what is not natural in the present condition of the world. They are dwelling together without fear. It is not natural for a wolf and a lamb, or a calf and a lion to dwell together with a child leading them, but such is the promise.

The literal fulfillment of this passage in the natural world is a point to ponder, a question for the Biblical prognosticators to debate. We, however, on our journey, recognize that the beasts these represent once occupied the regions of our hearts. The violence that once oozed from our restless souls is now finding peace in these healing streams. Like Naaman who went to the Jordan River to dip seven times to be healed of his leprosy, we are now confronted with the seventh healing stream.

Unlike Naaman who had to dip seven times before any evidence of his healing appeared, we can already feel the difference as each healing stream has enabled us to walk on with a greater degree of wholeness and confidence.

Here we stand looking beyond the last healing stream and before us is the Highway of Holiness to be traveled into all that God has promised. To get there we must pass through this stream or we will have no choice but to return to where we once dwelt.

This stream represents faithfulness that must be worn as a sash around our waist. The sash that is spoken of in the Hebrew language is the innermost piece of clothing that covers and protects our most private parts. Faith or faithfulness, is also a manifestation of the fruit of the Spirit listed in Galatians. When we put these two ideas together we have faithfulness, especially in matters pertaining to sexuality, and all related matters.

Nothing brings out a spirit of violence like sexuality out of control. Whether it is in a predator or a victim, it always evokes violence or violent like responses. Before there will ever be peace in the land of the soul of any individual, all issues concerning sex must be resolved.

To understand the importance of this subject we have only to look at the results of wayward ideas and actions. We need only cast a glance in the direction of rape and molestation victims to see the pain that such predators have caused.

The whole subject is not confined to these alone, however. We can look at the victims of divorce to see another arena of pain and rejection that is filled with violent feelings that often go unresolved.

Then there is the arena of flirtation and adultery. This is where we find insecurity, jealousy, and disillusionment.

The armor of God that we are given to wear as a protective cover has a belt of truth. It too was designed to cover this part of the human body. The truths we speak of are the commands of God regarding sexual behavior, family relationships, and interpersonal contact with people of the

opposite sex. Paul instructed Timothy, “Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.” (1 Tim. 5:2)

We have many conditions to deal with in our present world. Society has revolted against God’s laws of sexual behavior and has struck out on its own seeking to establish a new code of behavior that accommodates the baser desires of human nature.

God, who is our creator, does not seek to accommodate desires outside his intentions. These desires come from the sin within our natures and only rarely are the result of some genetic confusion.

We are also wrestling with the challenges of a society of change where politics, education, and technology have caused unintended complications in our lives.

Human weaknesses and resultant vices are also added to the mix producing a society of frustrated and confused individuals trying to make their lives resemble some sort of stability. Our failure to remain anchored to the rock of time-tested values has cut us adrift to be cast upon the destructive shore of selfish abandon.

When God judged the river of violence, he broke it into streams that could be crossed over with sandaled feet. Any person can traverse these streams who is willing to take it one step at a time. This stream of faithfulness is not a stream one can jump across or ignore, nor can we say we are exempt due to some circumstance of life.

God’s intention concerning human sexuality is that a young person be sheltered and protected from contact with sexual stimulation until old enough to act responsibly and then with proper guidance to find a suitable mate and get married. Once they have been joined together, they may explore the wonderful world of human sexual behavior that exists within the boundaries of God’s laws. These individuals are to come together in a bond of love and unity and blend their talents and their strengths into a fortress nothing can destroy.

There is no place within this union for any outside romantic involvement. It is a place where the absolute rule of life is faithfulness to each other.

In our present world unfortunately sexual stimulation is all about us. Sexually titillating material is abundantly available. To totally protect children from exposure is unrealistic in such a sexually corrupt society. Vigilance on the part of parents is more necessary today than at any recent time.

Parents need to be involved in the educational process giving solid Biblical standards and values to their children. Children left to drift without parental guidelines will be vulnerable to whatever seduction happens to appeal to their natures. Even with parental vigilance and guidelines, special prayer and discernment is needed.

Many who begin to wade into this healing stream come with pains in their hearts resulting from a variety of experiences. Some were victims of sexual abuse as children or young adults; still others were victims of sexual activity outside the boundaries of God’s laws. These have resulted in damaged emotions, disease, or painful guilt. Others have sought an abortion to terminate an unwanted or embarrassing pregnancy only to find themselves caught in a web of guilt that only God can heal.

The depth of pain such an individual experiences is unfathomable to those who have not experienced such abuse. Because this lack of understanding exists, the pains often go untended and healing is delayed.

It hasn’t been until recent that understanding has been given so those victims could be understood and helped. As it is in the natural so it is in the spiritual. In the physical if a wound goes untended it may become infected and may result in death. So it is in the life of a person

who has become the victim of abuse. If care is not given that individual may experience wounded emotions that will never heal properly.

Some people coming to this stream have been victimized by exposure to perversion of various sorts. Some due to low self-esteem or lack of guidance have plunged headlong into activities that were lust driven and encouraged by those who live on the dark side of human experience. Prostitution, homosexuality, pornography, group sex, and sex with animals are a few of the areas where serious damage occurs to the human spirit.

Then there are those who for one reason or another have developed an unnatural hatred of sex as a result of what they have either been exposed to or have observed ruining the lives of those they love.

Sexual damage done to children is especially serious because sexual experiences in adolescents and children usually occur in situations where their physiology is on heightened alert. Fear is present in one form or another causing adrenaline to be added to the many emotions already present. What occurs here is indelibly engraved upon their conscious and subconscious minds. What information goes into the subconscious is largely amoral, that is morally neutral, because the child is usually not morally equipped to make judgments. Like the immune system of our bodies, our subconscious mind learns to recognize threats and defend against them. If what occurs is a mix of right and wrong the result will be confusion that can last a lifetime. Sexual experiences, and other experiences as well, that are outside the boundaries of divine and parental approval, whether forced or the result of seduction, have elements of what under right circumstances would be acceptable. Young people caught in illicit affairs may have feelings that feel very right, but are at the same time very wrong. The subconscious mind has difficulty giving a right response to an action from a right source, when it has seen the same condition from a wrong source. The response to a correct source of stimulation may cause a very wrong result and visa versa. A person may become confused in later life when stimulations that should be correct come from wrong sources. Example, a person harboring feelings of being neglected at home may find attention coming from outside that is very wrong and yet the same attention coming from the appropriate source would be right. Sorting through these responses in later life requires skill on the part of a counselor and person in need of healing.

Healing needs to be applied to all who come to this river. The sort of healing needed is a God kind of healing that is applied by the Holy Spirit, and is the love gift of Jesus.

Some who come to this river have had a wonderful upbringing, have developed healthy personal attitudes and behaviors, and have established healthy relationships with others, who like them, developed normally, yet have ideas that are contrary to God's word with reference to those who are damaged.

Our society has embraced a very tolerant attitude toward sexual deviancy. The problem with the position of society is that they have crossed the line from tolerance to permissiveness. It is one thing to love a person who is in need of healing and instruction in righteousness and quite another to be permissive toward wrong behaviors.

For example, the Christian community has been accused of intolerance because we don't accept homosexuality as a normal condition. We call it sin, and deny that they were born that way. The charge is not a valid one, however, because permissiveness is not required to be tolerant.

I am tolerant of all those who, for one reason or another, need healing or instruction, but my tolerance does not include permissiveness. My lack of permissiveness does not indicate a lack of love or compassion, or the lack of a willingness to go the second mile in an effort to help those in

need. Jesus taught us that unless we are without sin we have no right to throw stones at an offender. Jesus himself was sinless, but did not cast a stone. Instead, he offered counsel to the woman taken in adultery, telling her not to continue in sin. Under the law it was a capital crime to be taken in adultery, yet Jesus granted mercy, but not permission to continue sinning.

There are those who view mercy as requiring permissiveness because they feel sorry for the person who has developed a devious lifestyle or appetite and feel that change is a hopeless endeavor. I agree it is hopeless unless the Holy Spirit's power is present changing and delivering them. The individual needing change must desire the change to the extent that they persevere in the pursuit. Some individuals seek change with the mindset that they will give it a try, and if it doesn't work, well at least they tried. Others give it a try more to please others than out of a real desire to be free. To those individuals who are unwilling to repent or seek change, I have pity but not comfort.

I have not been called to make sinners comfortable in their sins no matter how understandable their plight. My call is to preach deliverance and healing so that we might be whole again.

Being a sinner is the reason to come to Jesus. He is the one who is willing to touch, counsel, deliver and heal, but we must do our part. Too many people are like Naaman who wanted Elisha to wave his hand over his leprosy so that he would be healed. When he was told to go wash seven times in the Jordan River, he was offended and disappointed. He didn't see the point; however, healing did finally come when he was willing to obey. It takes all the dips to qualify for healing. I do not say that it is easy for a person who has developed their sexual responses and pleasures around sinful deeds to learn proper sexual response mechanisms finding expression and fulfillment in the approved manner. I do, however, insist that if we are to continue on in our journey, we will have to do just that. Those who find this unbearable will likely follow the path of the rich young ruler when he left the Lord to return to his life of pleasure.

The trip across this stream may be an easy one for a lot of people, needing only minor adjustments, but whether minor or major, there is no real peace until the water of this stream has done its job. Only after this stream has brought healing and cleansing to every heart can fear of one another give way to perfect love. It is at this point that the venom of the viper has been neutralized and the violence of the lion and bear tamed. From this point onward, we can live together peaceably.



# Chapter Nine

## Hallelujah, Victory at Last

Isaiah 12

In that day you will say: "I will praise you, O LORD. Although you were angry with me, your anger has turned away and you have comforted me. Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The LORD, the LORD, is my strength and my song; he has become my salvation." With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation.

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God has a reason in his heart for the journey he has called us to. His purpose is to bring us into fellowship with himself while giving us peace to coexist with our neighbors.

God desires to dwell in the heart of his people, but he is not able to fellowship with unrighteousness. When we hold to unrighteous ideas or behaviors, we grieve the Holy Spirit. Conformity to his nature is the necessary ingredient of fellowship. God will not change to accommodate us; we must change to accommodate him!

God gave instructions to Moses to give to the people of Israel regarding how they were to come to him,

"Make an altar of earth for me and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, your sheep and goats and your cattle. Wherever I cause my name to be honored, I will come to you and bless you. If you make an altar of stones for me, do not build it with dressed stones, for you will defile it if you use a tool on it. And do not go up to my altar on steps, lest your nakedness be exposed on it. (Ex.20: 24-26)

When we come to the Lord, we must come to him without pretense. An altar of earth or an altar of uncut stones symbolizes this condition of heart.

We are never to polish the stones upon which we place a sacrifice, meaning; we must not try to be something we are not, but rather, we are to build our altar on unaltered truths concerning ourselves and our needs.

When we come to the Lord, we come with the truth about our struggles with temptation. Next to it we place the stone of the knowledge of our weaknesses, then the stone of pains and subsequent desires for revenge. We include stones of the knowledge of past sins and failures. We leave nothing out nor alter one stone.

We then prepare to sacrifice, but what can we put upon such an altar? There is nothing beautiful here, at this altar of earthiness. Like Abraham of old who brought his son Isaac to the mountain, we come but what do we have to offer him? It took everything we are to build the altar, what can we give him?

Only what he has given us! Abraham had a son, but it was God's gift to him. Yet, it was that son that would please God. Abraham prepared to offer him, but it was not Isaac really, that would please God. It was Jesus whom Isaac symbolized. Therefore, God did not allow Abraham to offer Isaac, for he too was mortal, but rather, God gave him a ram as a substitute until the day when Jesus would become the sin sacrifice for the world.

When we build our altar, we find that God has already provided the lamb. We lay the stones in place. God then covers them with the life and death of his Son Jesus. The blood he shed when applied to an acceptable altar cleanses every stone upon which he is brought to cover. Each is sanctified, cleansed and transformed into a part of the total worship of our soul. We fully acknowledge our needs and draw from the wells of salvation.

Our joy is in the knowledge of sins forgiven, and that, though flawed stones we are, those stones have now been sanctified and blessed and their ugliness has been transformed into beauty as the blood of the Savior has covered them!

How we thrill at the testimonies of sinners saved by grace. The more honest the testimony, the more beautiful the grace that covers it! Any effort to change it defiles it. But it is not just the knowledge of failures and needs that this altar is made of; we also bring the stone of our talents, our good works, and all our hopes and dreams. We are the altars of our sacrifice; therefore it must be all of us, it is of the earth, the good and the bad. But the sacrifice is not like the altar, the Lord of heaven provides our sacrifice; he is our lamb.

Thus, an altar that pleases God is one where heaven and earth are joined in redemptive union, where no pretense disturbs this holy event. We have come here and found wells of salvation through healing streams and hard and hot trials, but the water of his life bathes our souls and we are refreshed and revived and glory in the knowledge of our God.

We now have a word for all to hear,

“In that day you will say: ‘Give thanks to the LORD, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done, and proclaim that his name is exalted. Sing to the LORD, for he has done glorious things; let this be known to all the world. Shout aloud and sing for joy, people of Zion, for great is the Holy One of Israel among you.’” (Isaiah 12 4-6)

Each of the seven healing streams requires adjustments on our part but the end result is not only peace with God but also peace with our neighbor and us. God wants to bring us to a place where we can trust and not be afraid. Where we receive strength from him, and draw the water of life from the wells of salvation. Then there will be great peace within. No longer do wild untamed passions of a heart of rebellion devour the lamb of righteousness that God is seeking to establish in us.

As we ponder the path that we have traversed in these pages, we are struck with the knowledge that what has been brought to us here is not a philosophical argument designed to bring us into peace of mind, but rather, a work that the Holy Spirit must perform in us. This book only points out the areas of need enabling us to see more clearly what it is that God wishes to accomplish in us. Unless what is outlined becomes a living experience, we will have failed to benefit from the knowledge gained.

The exposure to information serves to facilitate cooperation the Holy Spirit on our part, but the real work is a miraculous accomplishment of God. We can desire change, long for deliverance, and seek forgiveness and release from guilt, but it is a direct work of the Holy Spirit that makes it real in us.

No amount of study, prayer or human effort will ever make us righteous, it is accomplished when God sees that the altar of our heart is now fully prepared, that all the stones are there, that the final work of deliverance is accomplished.

A man I once knew came from a life of sinful living. He had freely indulged in many of the sins of the flesh, and as a result had acquired an appetite for sin. He also was being called to a life of holiness as God dealt with his heart. He had sought the Lord for forgiveness of sins that I

am sure he received. Yet, the struggle persisted, but so did his perseverance. Finally one day he came to my house and began to share his struggles. As we talked, I asked him when these sins had first entered his life. The Holy Spirit quickened his memory to a very young age when an older cousin drew him into a sexual experience. He admitted that he knew it was wrong, but that he went ahead anyway.

As we talked he came to realize that it was an act of rebellion against known righteousness, and that rebellion was the stronghold in his heart all these years. The sexual temptations gained power over him because; he was harboring a rebellious spirit in his heart. Once the stone of rebellion went into the altar of his heart, deliverance followed.

Getting rid of the spirit of rebellion is no guarantee that we will never be tempted, but the power of temptation is lessened when we are no longer in rebellion against God. When we are embracing righteousness from our hearts, the memory of past sins loses its appeal. We come to hate what once bound us. Having been set free; we joyfully draw life-giving water from the wells of salvation.

There can never be peace in the land of our soul until the wild beasts of rebellion and love for sin have been tamed; neither can there be peace until the serpent of selfish desires has given up its venomous poisons of greed, covetousness, bitter envy, and pride.

The wolf of lustful desires must yield up its wild nature to respectful love, and experience transformation from one who desires self-gratification to one who desires wholesome expressions of human passions.

There is an altar to which we are all called; it is the cross. Like the altar of uncut stones, the cross is the place of total surrender of all that pertains to this present life.

When Jesus went to the cross it was a total severance of all human experiences. That is to say, he would never again be able to relate to this world in the same way as he did before. He had to leave his ministry, friends, relatives, and disciples and go to a place to which they were being called.

We are called to the same sort of experience, only ours does not involve physical death only a change in how we relate to the world in which we live. What is of value to humans was no longer of any value to Jesus after his resurrection. He now lived in a different realm. Once we have been born again, we live in a different realm as well. Our values have now taken on a different dimension, if a thing has no eternal value; it loses its importance to us.

We now have a different worldview. What was once viewed as important career choices are now only seen as a possible means to an end. Careers are no longer goals; they are now seen as facilitators enabling us to do the work of the Kingdom of Heaven.

We now know that wealth is not treasure that treasures are those things that are of eternal worth. We now see lose of wealth as a temporary condition looking beyond to what has been prepared for us. To have or not to have is only of value so far as it serves to advance our journey toward that which is heavenly.

Having crossed the streams we now realize we are citizens of a heavenly kingdom. The land of bondage is only a distant memory. We're changed now, new creations with new values and affections. Truly the old is gone and the new has come. We're free people now, and we're at peace.

Joyfully we sing the songs of the redeemed. Worshipfully we honor our God. We now love what once we were reluctant to embrace, and passionately hate what we once served.

When we seek the Lord now, it is with the understanding that everything of value emanates from him.

