

Mrs. Thomas Morgan, Feb. 4

The King's Highway

An Advocate of Scriptural Holiness

"And an highway shall be there and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness."

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FULL SALVATION IN PROPHECY

John W. Veal

"Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Ezek. 36:25-28

Here we have one of the exceeding great and precious promises of God given in the days of Ezekiel, about six hundred years before the birth of Christ, to the people of God. To me, it is one of the greatest and most precious promises in the Bible. I have been familiar with this pledge of God for over fifty years but I see more in it now than ever before. I take pleasure and delight in reminding the devil that such wonderful language is to be found in the word of life. This text gives us some conception of what the Holy Spirit can accomplish in the human soul where he has a chance.

Let us see what we have here in the line of a great salvation. "And I will put my Spirit within you." Here we have the assurance that the Holy Ghost will inhabit us, live in us, abide in us. The book declares this many times I. Cor. 3:16, 17: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy, for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are." "What, know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God?" Jesus says, "If a man love me, he will keep my sayings and my Father also will love him and we will come unto him and make our abode with him." And when the Holy Spirit takes possession of us, several works of grace happen.

"I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh." How hard is the natural heart, so stone-like, it does not soften under the pleadings, tears and prayers of friends and loved ones. So cold and dead it does not break down under the goodness, forbearance and long-suffering of God. It does not repent under the punishments of the Lord. That kind of a heart does not yield even to the workings of the Spirit. One old infidel said he buried two wives and several children and had much trouble, but never shed a tear until God broke his heart and then he could pity others and weep with those who wept. The Book says, "Behold today if ye will hear his voice harden not your

heart." "A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh."

"A new heart also will I give you." We not only need to be saved from the old heart but we need a new heart. A God-given heart, one to reverence, fear, love, serve and obey God. To try to live the Christian life without a change of heart, is like trying to see without eyes, hear without ears, walk without feet, feel without nerves and live without life. It never has worked. It never will. "Ye must be born again." "A new heart also will I give you."

"And a new spirit will I put within you." David prayed, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." We need a Christ-like spirit. "Let this mind be in you which was in Christ Jesus." Some people show a very ugly disposition. Think of King Saul after he had broken with God, and an evil spirit possessed him. A spirit of envy, jealousy, hatred and murder. How perseveringly he tried to destroy David. But it is said of Daniel, "An excellent spirit possessed him." A spirit that broke with the politicians to be true to God. A fearless, faithful, uncompromising spirit was Daniel. What a beautiful spirit Stephen manifested in death toward his murderers, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." How do we feel, look and act when we are crossed and cannot have our way?

"From all your filthiness will I cleanse you." Andrew Murray says, "Filthiness of the flesh is all self-gratification and filthiness of the spirit is all self-seeking. Man is found with an unclean heart: "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked." So a man can be filthy in business life, unclean in social life, unholy in home life, unrighteous in private and rotten in his thoughts. But the Holy Spirit can make him pure. David, after he had been guilty of both adultery and murder, prayed Psalm 51:7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." If God could make whiter than snow such a great sinner, he can do the same for any other soul. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean."

"And from all your idols will I cleanse you." An idol is anything on which we set our affections. The Quaker said to the young mother who had just buried a child: "I see thee has not forgiven God for taking thy child." She idolized her offspring. An idol is that to which we indulge on excessive and sinful attachment. A minister had a rapid racing horse. He sold it. People asked why he parted with the animal. His reply was, "Every time I entered

the pulpit, I took that horse in with me. So I thought it was time to get rid of the beast." An idol is anything which usurps the place of God in the hearts of his rational creatures. A young woman lost her life and her soul over a new and expensive dress that she wore to a dance on a bitter cold night. Dress was her god. That is a man's idol or God from which he seeks his happiness. The poet says:

"The dearest idol I have known,
Whatever that idol be,
Help me to tear it from thy throne
And worship only thee."

That is a man's idol which prevents him from seeking and finding his all in God. It was wealth with the rich young ruler. He went away with a sad heart, for he had great possessions. Let us pray:

"Break down every idol,
Cast out every foe,
Now wash me
And I shall be whiter than snow"

The Holy Spirit can expel all idols from our soul and keep them out and keep us clean inside.

"From all your idols will I cleanse you." "And I will cause you to walk in my statutes and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." This is the climax of this sermon. Here God says he will furnish the power, the strength, the grace to walk in his ways and do his will. He'll be a gasoline engine inside that will cause us to go down the river of life without strain and struggle and unnecessary effort on our part. He'll be an electric motor which will furnish the power to run up the high and difficult hills of life without dying of spiritual heart failure.

The Spirit within us will make the Christian life as simple and easy as God intended it to be. The poet says:

"Tell me not of heavy crosses
Nor of burdens hard to bear,
For I've found this great salvation,
Makes each burden light appear;
And I love to follow Jesus,
Gladly counting all but dross,
Worldly honors all forsaken,
For the glory of the cross."

Jesus says, "My yoke is easy, my burden light." The Bible says, "His commandments are not grievous." Heb. 10:16: "This is the covenant I will make with them after those days sayeth the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them." Blessed it is to have a propelling power in our soul, which causes us to do the will of God.—Pentecostal Herald.