

INSPIRED WORD
November 7, 2018

SCRIPTURE / PRAYER

Revelation 21:2-7, 9-15: *Then I, John, saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; and I heard a loud voice from the heavens saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people. God himself will be with them and be their God, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more death, no sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain for the former things have passed away." And he who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And he said to me, "Write, for these things are true and faithful." And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts. He who will overcome shall inherit all things and I will be his God and he shall be my son."... "Come, I will show you the Bride, the Lamb's wife." And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God, her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. And she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at a gate, and the names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south and three gates on the west. Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates and its walls.* Father, we just thank You and praise You and exalt You that You have given us the true vision, the true sight of what is to come and the days after and what day we're standing upon. We're standing upon this day and we just thank You and praise You and exalt Your holy name, for You are the King, the righteous King of kings. Holy, holy, holy is the Lamb, righteous and true. Holy, holy, holy and true, righteous and just, righteous in all Your ways. And we do praise You and exalt You and magnify Your name.

IMAGE / SCRIPTURE / SENSE

It's been several weeks now but remember when I had the image of the ants crawling on the cross? If you weren't here, it was just the image of a group of ants crawling on one section of the cross of Christ. They were just kind of scurrying around, didn't seem to have purpose. The image did not show the whole cross so I don't know if Jesus was there or not but Jesus wasn't in my image and it was kind of disturbing to me. Different thoughts were expressed as to what that image might have meant because I didn't get any kind of message with it. A couple of weeks ago I was in adoration and God told me to read Proverbs. And would you believe that ants are mentioned in Proverbs? I would have never thought that. Proverbs is not brought up

here much as inspired word so I really did not know what to expect. But here's what I found out about what it said about ants. This is **Proverbs 30:24**. It says: *Four things on earth are small, but they are exceedingly wise...* And in the footnotes it says: Four small creatures which can teach man lessons. And we've got the lizard, locusts, badgers and ants. **Verse 25** says: *The ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer.* And there's quite a bit of commentary out there about this one verse and ants; I couldn't believe it. But the ants are a people not strong. I sensed that in the image of the ants, the ants were us so the ants are a people not strong. The ants, you know, are considered not strong because all you have to do is put your foot down on them and you can kill a whole bunch of them with one footstep, so they aren't strong in that sense. But if you've ever seen them trying to haul a bread crumb or piece of food, I mean, they're pulling something, hauling something that's four times the size of their bodies, so in that sense they are strong. They've got strength in them even though they're fragile. We as a people, if we look at ourselves certainly in comparison to God, we aren't strong at all. We're small, tiny, fragile, insignificant. But if we have His power within us, His strength, we can do anything. So the ants are a people not strong, yet they provide their food in the summer. The ants go out as a community; they look for food and they will bring it back to the nest, back to the rest of the colony. And it is shared with everyone else there. If we are the ants, we shouldn't be, you know, just tooling around, not doing anything. Our purpose, our goal, our aim is to make a beeline, or ant-line to Jesus, the bread of life, and take that bread of life to our community, our colony, and share it. You know, it says that in the summer they take it back and store it up for the winter; they share it with the whole colony. For some people out there, it's winter all the time – darkness, it's cold, it's lonely, there's no hope, there's no rebirth, new life or anything. So the message that I believe that God was trying to give us in that image was that, yeah, we are that colony, that community of ants and yes, we go toward Christ and we take Him and share Him with the rest of our colony.

SENSE / PRAYER

As I looked at this next song that Monique chose, I thought about what was just shared and I was like, "Lord, what's the connection here? What are You trying to bring us to?" And the thought that just popped into my head very clearly was that if we don't fix our hearts on the Lord, then we are like ants but not in a good way. We're like the scattering of ants that... I don't know if you've ever seen them come out of a hole, but it's like ants everywhere, they just go crazy and it's ants in all directions. If they lose the trail, they go crazy; they don't know where to go. There's a scent trail and they follow it. Well, the Lord teaches us through nature the lessons sometimes of the Spirit and of the heart. And Lord, be our trail. Help us know where to go to find Your heart so that we have something to bring back to the community. Otherwise, we're just lost.

SHARING

As we were singing that song at the very end the word that popped into my mind was “smitten.” Isn’t that cute? Like a relationship kind of thing. Kind of made me smile in my heart.

SHARING

In one of the conversations I had this weekend, we got talking about the things that we do for others, our job, our ministries, just the things that in our life are our responsibilities. And those are important things, and God does call us to do those things and to really minister in those moments. But I was reminded as we were talking that we’re not just our ministries; we’re not just our responsibilities. God loves us for us; He delights in us; He’s smitten with us, just for who we are. And I just thought of a parent who looks at their child and has dreams for their future and sees their gifts and talents and the ways that they’re going to serve and grow and just be that... And that’s all good, and that’s real and part of it, being a parent. But there’s also the joy of just holding that little kid and just loving on them for just being themselves. I’m not a parent but I’ve got the joy of having a lot of nieces and nephews, and since July I’ve gotten to see a lot of one family of nieces and nephews. And I’m telling you, they’ll twist your heart into a bow really fast. I envy you parents who get that joy firsthand – to watch a little towhead, blond little girl come running up to you all away from across the house and hug me so hard it about knocks me over. And I’m glad she’s little; I’m nervous for when she gets bigger. But she’s just happy that I’m there. And I know that God has that same feeling when we come to Him, and we come to this place on Wednesdays or Sundays or any moment of the day and hug His knees and say, “We’re here. I love You, God.” He says, “I love you!” “No, I love You more.” “No, I love you more.” That can go on awhile. And you know, that’s prayer. It doesn’t have to be more complicated than that. There’s a wonderful story of an old man who used to come and sit at the church. He’d come in the morning and be there most of the day. Someone finally said, “What do you do all day? What do you pray all day? How can you do it that long?” And he just kind of smiled and said, “I just look at the Lord; He looks at me. It’s enough.” It’s enough.

WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

Is there anyone here tonight that needs special prayer for something that they’ve been waiting on, for God’s time to happen, and would just like the community to pray for them a little bit for that intention? It was just the sense that there’s somebody who’s been impatiently waiting or patiently waiting for an intention to come, that they’ve been praying for and they’d just like the community to pray with them for that thing?

SCRIPTURE / EXHORTATION

I’d like to share a very short reading from the **Letter of Paul to Philemon 4-7**. It’s his shortest letter so if you ever need to read Paul, it’s a quickie. He’s a prisoner for Christ at the time and he was under house arrest in Rome, I believe, when this letter was written. But he was writing to Philemon and the community there and he said: *I always thank my God, mentioning you in*

my prayers, because I hear of the love and the faith which you have for the Lord Jesus and for all God's holy people. I pray that your fellowship in faith may come to expression and full knowledge of all the good we can do for Christ. I have received much joy and encouragement by your love. You have set the hearts of God's holy people at rest. I think the part that was speaking to me the most was that our fellowship of faith, which is what this community is – it's a fellowship of faith... would come to expression and full knowledge of all the good we can do for Christ. He's encouraging them to keep reaching out at the same time he's complementing them on their love for the people. And he's saying that he has received much joy and encouragement by their love. They ministered to Paul as much as he ministered to them. You have set the hearts of God's holy people at rest. The fellowship of faith and the love they had for each other and the prayers they offered for others brought peace to the people of God. And I just ask that we continue that as well, because when we pray for each other, or anyone who needs prayer, and are willing to offer that gift, then they come to the full knowledge of God's love and can be at rest as well, and maybe even come to be part of the fellowship of faith, to hand it on to somebody else.

CONFIRMATION

I have a word that popped into my mind a couple of songs and scripture back and it said "precious" so this song confirms that. As you're sitting on Jesus' knee, that is the most precious picture.

SENSE

When Monique just said that, what came to me was God's love letter to us and how much He loves us.

SHARING

That love letter is a series of scriptures from our Father God to us and it's one of the first things we use as an activity in the Life of the Spirit seminar to remind us of God's love. That's the whole message right there. "I love you. I love you more than creation; I love you more than you can imagine; I love you. Your Father, God."

PROPHECY

And know, my beloved, hear these words from me. I love you, my beloved. Precious are you in my sight. Beautiful and magnificent is the creation which I have made. Do you not see how great and how beautiful and how majestic you are? How wonderfully made I have put together you – you, my beloved one. I marvel at the words that I hear that come from your mouth but more special are the words that come from your heart. Tonight I have heard you speak these words to me. You have spoken them to me with the love that you carry for me. My beloved ones, I see your struggles. I know your concerns. I know your worries, your pain, your

problems, your troubles. But still I hear the words of praise that you call out to me. My love is always with you, my beloved ones, but tonight I desire to that you hear the words come directly from me. You are my beloved one; you are my special one. You, my beloved, it is you that I love.

CONFIRMATION / SCRIPTURE

Keep that song in mind – Jesus' name, the name of Jesus, the name of God. One other thing I found in Proverbs that I'm going to read because of that song. This is in **Proverbs 30**; it's just a man saying this **(3-4)**: *I have not learned wisdom, nor have I knowledge of the Holy One. Who has ascended to heaven and come down? Who has gathered the wind in his fists? Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment? Who has established all the ends of the earth? What is his name, and what is his son's name? Surely you know! And we do know!*