

HIDDEN THINGS OF THE HEART

By
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The dealings of the Lord recently have been concerning my heart: the condition of my heart. I have been greatly challenged by a scripture in **2 Chronicles 25:2** regarding King Amaziah who ruled over Judah. *“And he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, but not with a perfect heart.”* This at first puzzled me, but then I sadly realized that we can DO things that are right in the sight of the Lord, but NOT with **a perfect heart**: not with a heart that is completely pure and right regarding God. And I think we all have to admit that this defines a lot of our “Christian activity”. We appear outwardly to be obeying the Bible, obeying the “rules” of our doctrine of Christianity, doing good and noble things that can be applauded by others. They are what we say ‘The Lord would have us to do’, but the question is what about our hearts? What is the motivation of our heart in doing this? Is it truly to please God, or to please man (even ourselves), so that we can be exalted and honored? And the word ‘perfect’ here means wholeheartedness for God, single mindedness, with sincerity. So this challenge is not something to be taken lightly.

And immediately the Lord took me in His Word to **Matthew 15:7**, *“Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, **8** This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.”* The prophet Isaiah had spoken to the nation of Israel regarding this more than 700 years earlier, and Jesus was saying this hypocrisy was still in the Jews of His day. And the word ‘hypocrites’ means to speak or act

under a false part, an assumed character, in deceit. And notice Jesus said their heart is far from Me. This has been a concern of Jehovah for His people: is there a heart singularly for Him or not? Do they worship Him outwardly by doing religious things – religiously, thinking that the “doing” pleases God? Or are they “doing” what appears to be right with hearts that are not wholly for the Lord: feeling good about what they are doing, but not really concerned with The Lord and what He desires?

The issue of the heart of God’s People was important to Him. He didn’t want them just to obey a set of rules that He required of them. He was a loving God who was in their midst, as their God: to those who He had brought out of the realm of death unto Himself – as His own. I hope we can see here how very personal this was to God. And He wanted them to appreciate and love Him for who He was to them, and what He had done for them. So over and over He reminded them of who He was to them because He wanted their hearts to be grateful to Him and willingly serve and obey Him. King Solomon spoke this beautifully at the dedication of The Temple in Jerusalem in **1 Kings 8: 54**, *“And it was so, that when Solomon had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication unto the Lord, he arose from before the altar of the Lord, from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread up to heaven. 55 And he stood, and blessed all the congregation of Israel with a loud voice, saying, 56 Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one word of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant. 57 The Lord our God be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us: 58 That he may incline our hearts unto him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his judgments, which he commanded our fathers. 59 And let these my words, wherewith I have made supplication before the Lord, be nigh unto the Lord our*

God day and night, that he maintain the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Israel at all times, as the matter shall require: **60** That all the people of the earth may know that the Lord is God, and that there is none else. **61 Let your heart therefore be perfect with the Lord our God, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day.**” And as the Lord has dealt with me I see a direct correlation between the condition of our heart and our ‘walk’: how we live daily. We may be able to ‘walk in a religion’ outwardly, but we can only truly walk in His Statutes and keep His Commandments if our hearts are singular, sincere and wholeheartedly focused on The Lord.

And I have begun to recognize that we need to seek the Lord more diligently and allow Him to do something in our hearts. The Psalms attest to this. Just one example is **Psalms 51: 6**, “Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom... **10** Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. **11** Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. **12** Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit. **13** Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee... **16** For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering. **17** The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.” In order for us to walk in true Covenant Relationship with Him – in Oneness, our hearts have to be right: singularly for Him. And we have to admit that even though we are ‘saved’ and have Christ in us, there is still darkness that can remain in our hearts. Now God knew this, and this is why when He gave us Life - Christ, His light was given **in our hearts. 2 Corinthians 4:6**, “For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.” And it is His Light, His Life, His Truth now

shining IN US that will first of all expose the darkness that remains in our hearts, and then dispel that darkness so that we can be filled with His Light and Life.

I want us to seriously consider this because it is the darkness that still remains in us – hidden in our hearts that causes us not to enjoy the fulness of our Relationship with the Lord. **1 John 1:5**, *“This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. 6 If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: 7 But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.”* Because of Christ coming to the earth to go to The Cross, and now with His Resurrection Life and Power dwelling in us, we no longer have to walk in darkness. Consider **Colossians 1: 13**, *“Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.”* Note also **verse 10**, *“That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God.”*

What God has done is to be manifested in our WALK: our daily living. **Ephesians 5:8**, *“For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light...11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.”* We now - because of the indwelling Christ have the capacity to walk in Light, in Life. It is because of what the Lord has made us to be. Remember all that God had planned for His People - natural Israel of the Old Covenant is now fulfilled in Believers - The Church, The Body of Christ functioning in the earth today. **1 Peter 2:9**, *“But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light; 10 Which*

in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God: which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.”

God had always planned to have a People in the earth who He would dwell in the midst of. And they would make Him known. He had brought a People out unto Himself, to be His special treasure. They were to be an expression in the earth of who THE I AM is. In the time of the Old Covenant God summed up His view of this in Jerusalem – The City of God where His King ruled, and where His People came to worship Him: at His Temple, where He dwelled. And God’s heart was always faithful towards this Place: towards what pleased Him. He honored and protected this Place, and wanted His People to honor and obey what Jerusalem was. But it was not just in the physical buildings of the City. This City represented not a religion, but a People in **Relationship** with their Jehovah God. This City represented His Kingdom, His Rule over them: and He had great expectations for them, for this City. **Isaiah 62:1**, *“For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. 2 And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. 3 Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God. 4 Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married. 5 For as a young man marrieth a virgin, so shall thy sons marry thee: and as the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee. 6 I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence, 7 And give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the*

earth.” (Hephzibah = My delight is in her. Beulah = Married.)

But as we painfully see from the books of the Kings and Chronicles, many of God’s People did not honor Jerusalem as they should have. And even though they continued with outward religious practices in the City, something was wrong even with the Kings. Something was wrong with their hearts. There was darkness that still remained in them: hidden things in their heart that they often kept to themselves, but sadly they were dictated by. King Jeroboam made altars, idols, high places, feasts and priests that “*he had devised in his own heart*” (**1 Kings 12:33**). And this was all totally contrary to what God had planned for them. And even when they were confronted by Prophets speaking to them about their disobedient and rebellious hearts, and even when they received God’s judgment and severe punishment because of their actions, they still kept this darkness. They continued walking in their own ways, doing their own things.

We see this expressed very poignantly in **Ezekiel 36: 17**, “*Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings: their way was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. 18 Wherefore I poured my fury upon them for the blood that they had shed upon the land, and for their idols wherewith they had polluted it: 19 And I scattered them among the heathen, and they were dispersed through the countries: according to their way and according to their doings I judged them. 20 And when they entered unto the heathen, whither they went, they profaned my holy name, when they said to them, These are the people of the Lord, and are gone forth out of his land.*” Because they did not honor God but did things their own way – not His, they polluted the land and brought a reproach against The Lord and His City. Remember they were brought into this Covenant Relationship with Jehovah to make HIM known to the

other nations, but they were not fulfilling God's Plan for them. Rather than being The Testimony of Jehovah – they brought a reproach against His Name!

And as I see this in the Scripture and realize these 'stories' are written for our admonition, I realize that we of ourselves cannot change our hearts. It takes The Lord appearing - coming in His fulness and His brightness: manifesting His Life and Light in us that we must experience in order for our hearts to be changed. This is His judgment working in US: exposing the hidden things in OUR hearts. He is separating Light from darkness; Life from death. We see this clearly in **1 Corinthians 4:5**, *"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."* He is the one that brings to light the hidden things of the darkness that remains in us, and makes known the counsels of our heart. This is a Work of the Lord that is very difficult for us to accept, but it is necessary. This judgment is not something we can do by ourselves - to ourselves. If we judge (evaluate) ourselves, we find ourselves pretty good and will be motivated by our flesh and a self-centered heart. This is why we must accept and allow The Lord to do the judging of our hearts. The measurement is not us (I'm not as bad as them): the measurement is HIM –the fulness of The Life of Christ that we now have.

Remember that we are God's House, His City, and He has a right to 'examine us' and 'measure us' because of the price He paid for us - The Cross of Christ. **1 Corinthians 6:19**, *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? 20 For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."* And in regard to this, the Lord has painfully but

lovingly taken me into the book of Ezekiel and the words and actions of the Prophet. The Prophets were raised up of the Lord to call God's People back to Him, and to bring before them The Mind and The Word of The Lord. Ezekiel was raised up to speak to God's People during the time they were in the Babylonian captivity. This was what God had brought upon them because of their disobedient and rebellious hearts who had turned from Him to other gods.

And in **Ezekiel 8** God takes Ezekiel on a spiritual journey so that he will know what the people had done to Jerusalem: to God's Temple and God's City; to the Testimony that they had defiled. It is during this time that God makes known to Ezekiel the things that were still in the hearts of God's People against Jehovah, and why He was justified in sending them into captivity. I pray we will prayerfully and seriously consider what God showed Ezekiel. And if this Word must be applied to OUR hearts today ... may we let the Lord do that! May we let HIM search our hearts and uncover those things that WE still have hidden: those things that must be exposed and done away with if THE LORD is to be glorified in HIS HOUSE!

Ezekiel 8:1, *“And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I sat in mine house, and the elders of Judah sat before me, that the hand of the Lord God fell there upon me. 2 Then I beheld, and lo a likeness as the appearance of fire: from the appearance of his loins even downward, fire; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of amber. 3 And he put forth the form of an hand, and took me by a lock of mine head; and the spirit lifted me up between the earth and the heaven, and brought me in the visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the inner gate that looketh toward the north; where was the seat of the image of jealousy, which provoketh to jealousy. 4 And, behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the*

plain. 5 Then said he unto me, Son of man, lift up thine eyes now the way toward the north. So I lifted up mine eyes the way toward the north, and behold northward at the gate of the altar this image of jealousy in the entry. 6 He said furthermore unto me, Son of man, seest thou what they do? even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here, that I should go far off from my sanctuary? but turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations.”

Notice it is the Hand of God that took Ezekiel: The Spirit lifted him and brought him in the Visions of God to Jerusalem. This all relates back to the image that God had shown to Ezekiel in the first chapter. Ezekiel would be shown by The Spirit what God sees and that He knows what is happening within His Temple. We’ve read the word ‘behold’ suggesting not merely natural sight, but a ‘seeing’ by The Spirit of God. Verse 2 speaks of the appearance of fire, but the fire (speaking of God’s judgment and separation) is likened to a man. And what was going to be shown to Ezekiel provoked the Lord to jealousy. He had already warned His People that they should have no other gods because He is a jealous God. (**Exodus 20:5**) But even at the door of the inner gate is an idol: at the very entrance into The Temple! And I just want to challenge us: have we set up our religious idols, preventing us from fully entering into communion with God? It may look ‘religious’, but nothing should be made by us to hinder us from worshiping Him as He desires.

Now the glory of the Lord was there – in His Temple as He had promised, but he is questioning whether He should stay there because of the great abominations Israel is committing here. Remember it is His sanctuary, not theirs! And God knew what Israel was doing in His House!

7 And he brought me to the door of the court; and when I looked,

behold a hole in the wall. 8 Then said he unto me, Son of man, dig now in the wall: and when I had digged in the wall, behold a door. 9 And he said unto me, Go in, and behold the wicked abominations that they do here. 10 So I went in and saw; and behold every form of creeping things, and abominable beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel, pourtrayed upon the wall round about. 11 And there stood before them seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel, and in the midst of them stood Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan, with every man his censer in his hand; and a thick cloud of incense went up. 12 Then said he unto me, Son of man, hast thou seen what the ancients of the house of Israel do in the dark, every man in the chambers of his imagery? for they say, the Lord seeth us not; the Lord hath forsaken the earth.

So The Spirit now brings Ezekiel to the court and he sees a hole in the wall that has a door – denoting something hidden from view. And here are every form of creeping thing and abominable beast, and all the idols of the house of Israel on the wall! These idols were not visible outside that door, but hidden inside. And elders of Israel were there with incense: in the rooms of **their** imagination, the rooms of **their** idols – worshiping those idols. And they said the Lord doesn't see us. Just consider how deceived 'religious man' can be! Believing that they can worship their idols and that God doesn't see or care. And the abominations just get greater because the people think that the darkness covers them from their God.

13 He said also unto me, Turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations that they do. 14 Then he brought me to the door of the gate of the Lord's house which was toward the north; and, behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz. 15 Then said he unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? turn thee yet again, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these. 16 And he brought me into the inner court of the Lord's house, and, behold, at

the door of the temple of the Lord, between the porch and the altar, were about five and twenty men, with their backs toward the temple of the Lord, and their faces toward the east; and they worshipped the sun toward the east. 17 Then he said unto me, Hast thou seen this, O son of man? Is it a light thing to the house of Judah that they commit the abominations which they commit here? for they have filled the land with violence, and have returned to provoke me to anger: and, lo, they put the branch to their nose. 18 Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them."

Now Ezekiel sees at the door of the gate women worshiping a Syrian deity in a fertility ritual: seeking life from a dead idol. Then in the inner court of the Lord's House (this is how God sees it – HIS House) there are 25 men with their backs against The Temple, worshiping the sun! They are in The Place to worship the True God - their God, but they have rejected Him and are worshiping the natural elements. And to God this is serious! This is not something trivial that can't be overlooked. The 'branch to the nose' means they were thumbing their noses at their God, rejecting Him. And God said because of these hidden things: what they are doing by worshiping other gods in my temple, they have desecrated and polluted the land and have provoked me to anger, to fury. And God brings a great judgment and destruction on them with no pity! And remember that God's People knew what He desired, especially regarding His Temple and His Relationship with them. They were without excuse before Him, and they would suffer for this. But I want us to understand these were all things that were HIDDEN: hidden in the hearts of God's People, and they thought God could not see what was hidden.

God now shows Ezekiel the slaughter of the guilty in **Chapter 9**.

This is centered on One Man, clothed with linen (speaking of Christ). **Ezekiel 9:2**, *“And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. 3 And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub, whereupon he was, to the threshold of the house. And he called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side.”* And notice “the glory of the God of Israel” was moving. It went from the cherub to the threshold of the house. Why? Because of what God’s People had done. This is speaking of His Presence and His Pleasure. It no longer could remain in its place because of the heart of God’s People.

The man marks those that are concerned about the abominations they have done, but the others will be destroyed. So we still see God’s mercy extended to His People even in the midst of judgment. **Verse 4**, *“And the Lord said unto him, Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and that cry for all the abominations that be done in the midst thereof. 5 And to the others he said in mine hearing, Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: 6 Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my sanctuary. Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house. 7 And he said unto them, Defile the house, and fill the courts with the slain: go ye forth. And they went forth, and slew in the city.”*

And notice God’s judgment begins at “My Sanctuary”: with the ancient men, the elders! Ezekiel was distraught seeing this destruction of Israel, but God tells him why. **Verse 8**, *“And it came*

to pass, while they were slaying them, and I was left, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord God! wilt thou destroy all the residue of Israel in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem? 9 Then said he unto me, The iniquity of the house of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the land is full of blood, and the city full of perverseness: for they say, The Lord hath forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not. 10 And as for me also, mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head.” And please notice what God is doing: repaying THEIR way upon their head. This is all because of THEIR deeds: what was in THEIR hearts, what they thought they had hidden from THEIR God.

And not only are many of God’s People destroyed, but The Glory begins to depart from The Temple. **Ezekiel 10,18**, *“Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims. 19 And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and ... every one stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above.”* **Ezekiel 11:23**, *“And the glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the city, and stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city.”* And this is something very serious that we need to consider for ourselves. So many of us are not enjoying the continual Presence of the Lord: are not experiencing the fulness of the Oneness He has brought us into. Could it be that there are things that we still have hidden in OUR hearts: OUR idols, and OUR ways of worshiping God that God cannot accept and He removes Himself from? This is the reason we have to ask the Lord to search our hearts, expose the darkness that remains and remove it, so that we can be filled with the fulness of His Light and Life.

For purposes of this sharing I just want to go now to **Ezekiel 40** where the Lord continues to evaluate and judge His House. And

His measuring is done by HIS Man: the one who has God's measure. **Ezekiel 40:2**, *"In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south. 3 And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a man, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a line of flax in his hand, and a measuring reed; and he stood in the gate. 4 And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel."* The "line of flax" and the "measuring reed" is so that he can do a full measure of the House – in big areas and in small: ALL will be measured by HIS measure!

We must understand that God is serious about His House and His People: those He has brought into Union with Himself. He is the measure of all things in this Relationship, and all things must be according to what He desires. And only as we allow the Lord to 'measure us': to expose the 'hidden things of darkness' and the 'counsels of our hearts' and remove them, then The Lord will have the expression of Himself that He desired to have in the earth. At the end of the book of Ezekiel after this man with a measuring rod has finished measuring the whole House and everything that pertains to it is in its proper order, something wonderful is said: something that satisfies the very Heart of God. **Ezekiel 48:35**, *"...the Lord is there."* This is the reason why God works in us the way He does: that we would be the witness in the earth, and to the world that **"THE LORD IS THERE."** - in us. May we yield our hearts to HIM!