

And owing to its everlasting treasure, spiritual purity today continues to stand out as the guarded bedrock upon which christian salvation was launched at the Calvary Cross

## PURITY IN CHURCH

Lessons from Israel



**T**HE DIVINE proclamation that launched the church into being, requires that believers live their lives as a *distinct* and *separate* people, in accordance with GOD's *Exacting law*. That marvellous *blue-print* demands that Christians sustain a clear *identity* of *consecration* and *separateness*. It is this *distinctiveness* that was originally intended to *mould* the church into a people totally *detached* from the *decay* of this *evil world*, both in their *belief* and manifest *lifestyle*.

But you are a chosen people, a royal priest hood, a holy nation, GOD's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light (1 Pet 2:9).

A lofty calling of this *kind* is what essentially defined the *water-shed moment* for the church, at her creation. It was upon this same *platform* of *separation* that JEHOVAH had *hitherto* proclaimed, not only the existence of the ancient nation of Israel, but also HIS everlasting *covenant* with them. The LORD ensured that such a covenant would encompass a spiritual *austerity* that would enforce a *strict adherence* to

the *separateness* of Israel as a chosen people.

<sup>5</sup> Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, <sup>6</sup> you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words you are to speak to the Israelites." (Exodus 19:5-6).

Consequent to that holy *treaty* then, Israel was required to *inexorably* comply with a firm observance of a holy *segregation* unto the LORD. GOD's chosen people subscribing to such a *Supreme Law* with their own Creator, now demanded that they live their lives within the confines of that governing *Law*. The holy *Law* being discussed here is what brought with it the *sacred* instruments of *restraint*. A classical case in time is when the LORD restrained Israel as HIS covenant people, from *intermingling* with the defiled communities that defined their neighbourhood.

Obey what I command you today. I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Be careful not to make a treaty

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with those who live in the land where you are going, or they will be a snare among you. (Exodus 34:11-12)

On the matter of Israel's *eternity*, GOD ALMIGHTY did not leave anything to *chance*. He deliberately assigned such a *gruelling* regime of *sanctions* and *restraints* upon Israel, that she may walk exclusively along GOD's *predetermined* path, and *achieve* her appointed *destiny*. Being very much aware of the *cunning* nature of the communities among whom Israel was intending to live, the LORD had to raise the above *caution* prohibiting Israel from *excessively* engaging with those *defiled* communities. Central among the most enticing *affronts* that such communities were likely to advance towards Israel were the *social* and *inter-community agreements* that often arise in the so-called observance of *good neighbourliness*. The LORD was very much aware that it is the short-term *social gains* entailed within these inter-community agreements, that would act as *alluring baits* to *ensnare* Israel to mixing with those *defiled* communities, and unnecessarily suffer the dangers of *occult*. The danger here arose from the fact that anytime a community engages in a *bilateral treaty* with another, it often involves a voluntary *agreement*, *truce*, *accord*, and *settlement* that normalize the said communities. The LORD knew it too well that it is this particular form of *compromise* that often goes a long way to erode the *edge*, *uniqueness*, *distinctiveness* and *peculiarity* of HIS people from the world. So was the case with Israel, when the LORD intended

to *tower* them *high* above those *subordinate* communities. However, in all this, the LORD did not at any one stage envisage a scenario in which Israel would hold a *truce* or *agreement* of whatever kind with such *evil* and *defiled* heritages. As GOD's covenant people, Israel had already *secured* for herself a *glamorous* future that JEHOVAH HIMSELF had designed for them in HIS *blueprint*. And the truth of the matter is that such a *flamboyant* future indeed had nothing to do with the *occultism* that was being commissioned by the *Amorites*, *Jebusites*, *Hivites*, *Hittites*, that lived within her *neighbourhood*. The Jewish nation was essentially being preserved by the LORD, as a *witness* that Christ the Messiah would be born as a *seed* of Abraham. The LORD had initially planned to use *purity* in order to *shield* Israel, to the extent that unless Israel should consent to *temptation*, she could not be overcome by any schemes of the devil. And because Israel bore the image of GOD, every *failure* or *defeat* on their part would give occasion for the devil to *reproach* The LORD. The *rigorous* requirements that had to define the path of the Messiah, had now *dawned* on Israel as a *chosen* nation. It is this *yardstick* of *purity* that caused the LORD to further tighten the *noose* on these free-ranging former slaves, very much aware that they would easily have *embezzled* their newly earned freedom. An additional *spiritual instrument* had to be appointed into Israel's safety regime, in order that they may not be *entrapped* by the *deception* and *seduction*, of the otherwise *proscribed* marriages.

Do not intermarry with them. Do not give your daughters to their sons or take their daughters for your sons, for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods, and the LORD'S anger will burn against you and will quickly destroy you (Deut 7:3-4).

They were from nations about which the LORD had told the Israelites, "You must not intermarry with them, because they will surely turn your hearts after their gods." (1 Kings 11:2).

It is for this very reason that the holy bible plainly instructs both Israel and the church; Speak to the entire assembly of Israel and say to them: 'Be holy because I, the LORD your GOD, am holy. (Leviticus 19:2).

## The Church

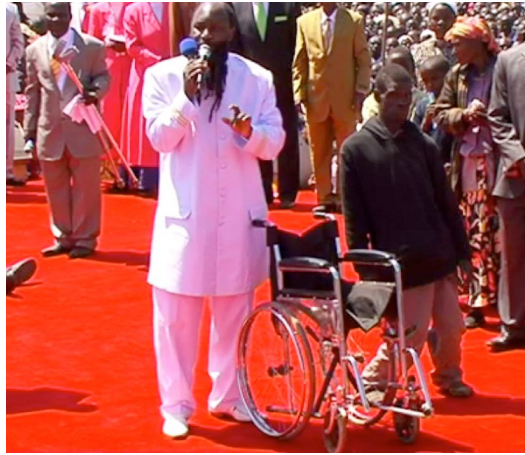
This *separation* of Israel by JEHOVAH is what ought to have been a very important lesson that today's church could well have learnt from, for her own good. As was the case with Israel, so is the case with the present-day church of Christ, that her *failure* to pursue *purity*, has indeed become the occasion for the adversary to *reproach* Christ. Such significant *injunction* as GOD *levied* on Israel for purposes of protecting her *purity*, is what was also intended to *sieve out* all the *sullyng* influences of this dark world, that we today see totally *devastate* the church. This is how the LORD meant it to be for the church of Christ, that she may realize her *salvation* as a people solely *consecrated* unto the LORD. GOD's *purity* requirement upon humanity is not a thing that has just began today, but instead been a long running *standard* for man since creation. The landmark *pronouncement* that the LORD enacted upon Adam and Eve at creation, is what was primarily intended to define in place the need for GOD's people to *procure* unto themselves *purity* as an *existential* necessity. In this way, we vividly see that a life of solemn *purity* in the church, was never meant to be an optional lifestyle, but a matter of life and death for the believer! At creation, GOD

ALMIGHTY had promised Adam and Eve that for as long as they would observe the *purity* of *righteousness*, they would never live to see *death*. While this simple instruction may have come in the form of a *cautionary measure* deterring them from eating from a certain *tree*, it however beheld a very central *key* to the *righteous purity* of the LORD. That is the *righteousness* with which GOD intended to sustain *purity* in that early church. As time went by, we see that *spiritual purity* began to take on a more central role even in the redemption formula that the LORD employed to *rescue* mankind. That is why at the Calvary Cross, *spiritual purity* indeed became the *bedrock* of GOD's salvation for humanity. Be it as it may, we see that for Israel, GOD did not fail to lay down several *parameters* of caution regarding *spiritual impurity*. So has HE laid down such a warning upon today's church, on the dangers of *spiritual impurity* and *apostasy*. If there was any single factor that can be today attributed to the fall in the church, then it is the blatant *flouting* of the Law of *purity* among believers in today's body of Christ. *Spiritual purity* can then be defined as a state of lack of *impurity*. But *spiritual impurity* on the other hand is denoted by the complete embodiment of the *confederacy* of all the evil forces of *corruption* and *defilement* that today *run* this dark world. In this case, the *classical* caution that brings to context this virtue of *spiritual purity* in today's church, then becomes a very relevant discourse in the present-day body of Christ. Unfortunately, this is a conversation that has lacked to a greater extent and for a very long time, thereby *sidelining* GOD's essentials on adherence to *righteousness* as the *standard* for christian living. No where is GOD's desire for *spiritual purity* of *righteousness* in the church more expressed than in Romans 12:2. In that scripture, the LORD also presents novel biblical *safe guards* that go a long way in protecting the hard-won *Calvary purity*

when He says;-

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what GOD's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will (Romans 12:2).

And because *righteousness* lasts forever, while *wickedness* on the other hand, is perpetually under the constant *betrayal* of its *mortal* self, the two present very *opposite* and *antagonistic* poles. This is the *distinction* that the LORD had hoped that today's church would *grasp*, in order to entrench her *salvation* into



NAKURU REVIVAL 2013: This Cripple Got Up From The Wheelchair & Walked

*righteousness* as a refuge from the *assault* of this dark world. However, going by the manner in which the present-day church of Christ conducts her life, one can only come to the *distasteful* conclusion that she after all may not have captured the *eternal treasure* of *purity*. Since the *duo* of *righteousness* and *wickedness* share absolutely nothing in common, one would not have expected that the church would have bought into mixing the two in her Christianity. This is principally why the LORD put in place deliberate effort to clearly *distinguish* the *christian lifestyle* from the *spiralling defilement* of the present day. While many may advance their own reasons for *apostasy* in their lives, the church however cannot because *decay* has not come to her in the dark of night! It has instead *assaulted* her in the open broad daylight!

The reason I say so, is because it is indeed common knowledge that *spiritual impurity* presents in none other than the same old vices of *immorality*, *deception*, *falsehood*, *false prophets*, *false apostles*, *witchcraft*, *pornography*, *homosexuality*, *the gospel of prosperity*, *shame* and *death*. Like Israel in her most *compromised* state, today's church is equally confronted with a *cocktail* of challenges that perpetually attempt to push her towards *disinheriting* her *distinct* and *holy* stature. These *defiling* influences are responsible for *annulling* the *edge* that the pulpit in the church ought to have enjoyed against this dark world. That is why by adopting the practices of the *wicked* communities in her surrounding, Israel too not only lost her *edge* over them, but also fell way below the standards of those *defiled* settlements. It is no secret that the church has today found herself in this very place! Because of the eminent *vulnerability* to sin that the church often presents, the LORD in HIS infinite *wisdom* has always placed upon her, a restriction that prohibits *excessive indulgence* with this dark world. In her darkest hour, such restraint is what had literally *barred* Israel in her early days, from *intermarriages* and *treaties* of any kind with the *defiled* communities that defined her neighbourhood. It is hence unfortunate that in her later days, Israel went ahead and intermarried thereby *violating* all these *sacred laws* that JEHOVAH had put in place. The rare account of Lot's life in Sodom, and Abraham's *alarming* experience in Egypt, indeed *applaud* the unorthodox *faithfulness* with which they beheld onto *spiritual purity*, despite the *harsh assault* from a *predacious* evil surrounding. On the contrary, the *melancholy* that encompasses the narrative of Lot's wife in Sodom, and the *lustful* king in Egypt, are just but a few most *sordid* lessons that sound a serious *warning* to the church on the dangers of succumbing to *spiritual adulteration*. When one observes the present-day Christians going to church *immorally* dressed and the *pew* being largely

## PUERTO ORDAZ, VENEZUELA



populated with virtually *undelivered* Christians, then you can't help but *wail* for her because of such a *contemptuous* ignorance on the virtue of *spiritual purity*. In order to see the kingdom of GOD, today's fallen church must therefore deliberately set out on a crusade to *safeguard* herself from any form of *spiritual impurity*, as a matter of life and death. However, it is suffice to point out that *spiritual purity* can only be *achieved* and *sustained* in the church through the *onliest* act of **REPENTANCE**. And the unwavering *obedience* unto the LORD becomes the cornerstone that preserves that *spiritual purity*. This implies that the Holy Spirit continuously desires a church that *strives* to achieve a soul that is *purged-off* sin, and eternally *anchored* to *perfect* worship. In that way, it goes without saying that the type of *purity* which JEHOVAH GOD seeks in the church, is indeed none other than that *unadulterated divine purity* of the soul. This *acclaimed* state of *spiritual purity* is the *highest* and most *honoured* order that the LORD ponders over when HE *assesses* the hearts of the believers in the church of Christ. The attainment of such a lofty order of *purity* in the church, is what was initially meant to unleash a *plethora* of *righteous virtues* from the soul of the believer into the whole known wide world. Such virtues include *uprightness*, *right standing with GOD*, *holiness*, *humility*, *gentility*, *self-control*, *patience*, and all the fruits of the Spirit that constitute the LIGHT OF CHRIST. If evangelism was meant to attain an *ultimate* achievement in the soul of

mankind, then this was it. Nevertheless, such a highly exalted state of *purity* of the soul, can never be attained through *half-baked therapies* which simply seek out to *massage* on the surface of a fallen church, instead of getting to the *core* of the problem and squarely dealing with it. Today's *apostate* church has perfected the art of fronting these temporary measures such as *wellness conferences*, *prosperity gatherings*, *retreats*, *sowing of seeds*, etc. This she has done in an attempt to develop a quick-fix solution to overcome the consequences of *spiritual impurity*. The modern-day christian has committed this error of omission perfectly well as an attempt to navigate her salvation through this *unforgivingly* sinful world. If only she could know that the deep wounds of *spiritual impurity* can never be wished away, nor healed by such *superficial* solutions, but rather their healing is only achievable through the *time-tested* mechanism of **GENUINE REPENTANCE**. GOD preserves those who walk the path of *purity* but to depart from it is to venture into satan's ground. And this detour is exactly what your present-day christian has done. While it may be abundantly true that many a time a *veil* of evil hovers over the believer's soul, it however is also true that a **GENUINE REPENTANCE** in the church can help lift such a *beclouding mask*, leading to the *liberation* of the soul into *purity*. It is a process that endeavours to *anchor* the soul to her heavenly CREATOR, while equally *bolting* her onto the heavenly worship of *holiness*. The enemy often

lays claim on the believer's soul through such veils as *passion*, *immorality*, *anger*, *attachment*, *greed*, *ego*, *malice*, *deception*, *addiction*, name it. It is such bundles of *evil traits* that have often *waved* the souls of men, thereby entangling today's body of believers with this cunning world. On the other hand, the LORD Jesus on the Cross indeed *delivered* the church by untangling such *unwarranted* claims and facilitating the *recovery* of the believer's lost identity, back to a place of perfect *purity*. The Messiah literally lifted the *veil* off the eyes of the *beclouded* souls of man. However, presumption has today led the church to *transgress* this *sacred* law of *purity* by believing that Christ's great love would save them from the consequences of sin, without **REPENTANCE** and striving for *holiness*. Christ Jesus Himself did not *presume* on GOD's promises by going *unbidden* unto temptation, neither did HE give up to the *despondency* of this dark world! Having said that, the day the current church will finally *assiduously* adhere to the path of **REPENTANCE** and *righteousness*, she indeed will on that day overcome all the evil *sways* of the adversary, and commence a spiritual journey of *purity*. This is the much celebrated *highway of holiness* that leads towards the most glorious Kingdom of GOD (Isaiah 35:8-9). That will assuredly be the day when the *unclean* souls of today's believers will progressively begin to *sparkle* their own *light* as a sign of their true form of *bliss*. This bliss of the soul marks the most *exalted* state in heaven. In GOD's eyes therefore, *spiritual purity* constitutes the *sanctification* of the heart and the *consecration* of the believer's inner soul. When the church is outrightly *rejected* by this dark world, and constantly *continues* to engage in the pursuit of a more *perfect companionship* with GOD, then she can be referred to as *separated* unto The LORD. This greatly underscores a most *dignified* and *coveted* order of *purity* within GOD's hierarchy of *preparedness* for *rapture*. It is important to note that

on that day of *reckoning*, as the LORD appears in HIS magnificent glory at *rapture*, it will be absolutely *mandatory* for every believer to have attained a stature of *spiritual purity* of the soul. *Without blemish, wrinkle, or spot*, such a *superb* bride of Christ meets the heavenly requirement and accomplishes a perfect *oneness* with GOD ALMIGHTY. The lasting lesson arising from this, is that whenever Christians fail to *obey* GOD's command, they inevitably *descend* into the *pits* of the *abyss*, unless speedily *rescued* by the power of **REPENTANCE**. Unfortunately, this chronic lack of *awareness* concerning *purity*, is what has today tragically swayed the church away from the *righteousness* of the LORD, and instead drawn her into the *wicked* enticements of this *immoral* world. And yet the LORD Jesus clearly taught us that we should never lose *courage* when assailed by the *temptations* of this world. How come then that today's believer has not gathered enough courage to *storm* the tempter with his wicked *temptation*? Such a *wafting* away from the *truth* as being discussed here, is very deadly, and mirrors the *sully*ing influence that the Canaanites employed to *blemish* the children of Israel. During the forty days and nights of HIS temptation in the wilderness, the LORD'S eyes were greeted with gloom and desolation that defined that *loneliness*, and then all of a sudden to be *re-greeted* by the *loveliness* and prosperity of this world! When confronted with this, the LORD Jesus

outrightly rejected the devil's presentations and offers in that wilderness encounter. The more the sunlight began to set on the cities that the enemy had paraded, the more the shadows of the clouds *toned* their beauties! Very much knowing the treasure HE beheld, the LORD Jesus without a doubt outrightly rejected satan's schemes. The LORD Jesus must have wondered how come, by the one who had *revolted* from heaven, now the kingdoms of the earth were being offered to HIM? This was definitely a trick and the LORD Jesus could not have failed to see it. The enemy has continued to repeat this same trick unto the church, year after year, over and over again. The adversary appears to *trick* the church with the promise of the *dominions* of this world, while on the other hand he *creeps* in to take *dominion* over their souls. How come the church has failed to see this trick? Didn't the LORD HIMSELF promise her that HE would take good care of her and provide all her needs outside satan's realm? Where is her patience? How come she has not learnt from the radical pursuit that Jesus launched for singular focus unto GOD.

## Purity & the Cross

The *salvation* that our LORD Jesus generously *unveiled* on the cross was essentially meant to instil upon the church a *steadfastness* on *purity* and *righteousness*, in order that she may fulfil GOD's new law of heavenly *grace*.

Therefore, since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for GOD (2 Corinthians 7:1).

*Spiritual purity* is not only mentioned in every *revered* gospel of the Cross, but also declared as *Supreme Law* in all scriptures of the Old Testament. All the Seers of old who were privileged to foresee the glorious coming of the Cross, have in their *pious* proclamations attached an immense worth on *purity* in the *sacred* command in the mission of Christ the Messiah. In attempting to rank the increase in the glory of the Cross, these Prophets of old have earnestly submitted that, when that dispensation of the Christ arrives, there would be an *uncontested* increase in HIS glory at HIS coming. In their submissions therefore, these Prophets have extensively testified about the increase of the *purity* that the Messiah's Kingdom would release. They however did not stop there, but went on to describe how that increase in the glory of the Messiah would translate into an increase of *purity* in the church. As they put pen to paper regarding the *vast dominion* of that Kingdom's King, these Seers did not hesitate to underscore that the Messiah's reign would fundamentally rest on the unshakable *cornerstone* of *purity*. In their observation then, the Prophets of the bible submitted that *spiritual purity* would be the one single factor governing *spiritual growth* in the hearts of the believers. Hence during their watch, these holy Prophets adduced that movement up the heavenly order

would be *well-nigh* impossible, if the people of that upcoming *dispensation* would in any way fail to embrace this *supreme law of purity*. That was because the Seers already saw that the upcoming *dispensation* of the Messiah would be a *spiritual dispensation*, whose Kingdom would be founded on *justice* and the *purity* of *righteousness*. ■

DOUALA, CAMEROON 2014



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THE PROPHET OF THE LORD cautioned the Priesthood in Cameroon to urgently prepare the church in absolute holiness and in the righteousness of the LORD because the Messiah is coming. They were warned to stop preaching the false gospel of prosperity, false prophets, false apostles, witchcraft in the House of the LORD because the rapture is near.

Behold, I come like a thief... (Rev 16:15)