

The Journey of the Bride out of the City

From Chapter 10:

There is one last puzzle piece to be put in place before the power to reign over the whole kingdom is granted to David. There is an unfulfilled marriage covenant outstanding! He is not prepared to go anywhere without His wife Michal at his side!! He wants to fulfil his marriage covenant with her. How powerful and prophetic! When David fled from Saul to save his life, Saul married his betrothed daughter to another man, so that David could not have her. How incredibly spiteful... and how cruel to his daughter. Betrothal was such a powerful stage of the marriage covenant that anyone breaking it was guilty of adultery! Saul cared so little for his daughter and his hatred of David was so great that he was willing to place his daughter in a position of continual adultery before God, just to rob David of what was rightfully his. The full bridal price had been paid and Saul had accepted it. There was no excuse for what he had done and it was not until two years after his death, that justice was restored.

POLYGAMY AND BARREN WOMBS

Beloved, this is what the spirit of Saul has done to the Betrothed of the Lion of the Tribe of Judah in the Body of Christ. He has taken her and married her off to something other than her Bridegroom, in an attempt to keep her from fulfilment of her marriage vows and to prevent her ever experiencing true intimacy with the King after the order of King David and bearing sons and daughters for His house. As long as Michal remained in this counterfeit marriage to Paltiel, she remained under the watchful eye

of Saul and in a state of adultery, condemnation and broken-heartedness, through no fault of her own. And it looked like the bridal price had been paid in vain...

David represents the One Who is of the House of David, the Bridegroom Who has paid a bridal price of us, His Bride. His intention is to carry us away from the House of Saul and install us as His Queen, ruling and reigning with Him.

2Sa 3:14 And David sent messengers to Ish-bosheth, Saul's son, saying, Give me my wife Michal, whom I betrothed for a hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

Do you hear the roar of the Bridegroom, "Give Me back My wife" as it emerges from the lips of the coming king David?

2Sa 3:15 And Ish-bosheth sent and took her from her [second] husband, from Paltiel son of Laish [to whom Saul had given her].

Are you 'married' to something other than God's eternal purposes for you; faithfully serving something other than the One who paid a bridal price in Blood for you? Do you feel robbed and unfruitful and trapped in an arrangement which you didn't choose, but which you seem to be unable to get out of? Take heart! Your Betrothed has not forgotten you even though it has been many years since you have seen His face or heard His voice, He still considers you His. You may have even been in the bed of

another man, giving everything of yourself day after day, year after year, for something you were not destined to be involved in. But your time of release is coming. The Lion of the Tribe of Judah is roaring, "Give Me back My wife!" and the spirit of Religion and the spirit of Saul and every other counterfeit masquerading as your husband is about to be sent packing as the Father of Lights accompanies you on your journey back to the House of David.

Paltiel means 'God delivers'. Imagine Michal, forced to marry a man she didn't love to further her father's vendetta against her rightful husband. Every time she calls her new husband's name, she thinks, "Is God going to deliver me?" Shame cloaks her no matter what robe she puts on in the morning, and people talk about her in whispers when she passes by on her way to the market... and she is helpless, completely unable to free herself from this snare. Her father's house has brought this upon her. Perhaps she lies awake in bed at night and thinks about David, her handsome, brave Betrothed, who killed one hundred men in order to pay the bridal price set by her father. She wonders if David ever thinks of her and hopes he is safe and that her father will never catch up with him. "Deliver me, Abba Father" she prays, even as she wonders if David would even accept her back now that she has been defiled by another. After all, he is going to be king one day. He probably wouldn't want her now anyway.

And then one day, a man comes to the door. It is Abner, the commander of King Ishbosheth's army. And he brings

astounding news, “Pack your bag. You are going back to your first husband!” She can hardly believe her ears. It’s impossible. This is her deepest heart’s desire but nobody knows that. “The King orders you to be released from this marriage. It is now annulled.” Just like God told Moses declare to Pharaoh, “Let My people go!” so His Bride could wed Him at Mount Sinai, so too, Abner told Ishbosheth to let this bride go so she could wed David at Hebron.

Just as the Israelites were suddenly thrust out of Egypt by the command of Pharaoh, so too Michal is suddenly released from years of bondage at the command of the king. She is a type of the Bride of Christ trapped in a system and bound to that which enslaves and defiles her – victim of a devilish plot to keep her from intimacy with her Beloved Bridegroom; to prevent her from experiencing full oneness and becoming fruitful. She has been used and abused and held captive, but God is now delivering her.

Psa 45:10 Hear, O daughter, consider, submit, and consent to my instruction: forget also your own people and your father's house; Psa 45:11 So will the King desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, be submissive and reverence and honour Him.

Which king desires her beauty? Not the one who is of her father’s house! It is the one who paid the bridal price for her, who considered her worth one hundred philistines. So Michal turned her back on her past and all she had known before. She knew this meant her family was dead

to her. Her life was no longer about being the daughter of Saul or the shame-filled wife of Paltiel. She was the Betrothed of the coming king and he had sent for her. She set her face like a flint and began to walk away from all that was familiar, towards the fullness of her future and her Bridegroom. All she thought about was that she was soon going to see him face to face and feel his arms around her. How she had missed him and secretly longed for the sound of his voice.

RETURN TO YOUR FIRST LOVE

Beloved Betrothed of the coming King, He has sent for you. Whatever you have been enslaved by because of your father's house and your people, is now at an end. Your covenant with whatever you have been bound to by the house of Saul is annulled because the covenant that was made before it still stands. The sound of the Blood that was paid for you before the foundation of the world has never fallen to the ground. It still resounds from the mercy seat and it covers all your defilement by the systems of men and their schemes to use you for their own purposes. In the eyes of your waiting Bridegroom, there is no flaw in you! The superior marriage covenant stands, and all else that has had a claim on you is now powerless to hold you back.

That however does not mean that your jailer gives up without a fight. Satan is not at all keen for you to slip out of his clutches. Look what unfolded with Michal:

2Sa 3:16 But her husband went with her, weeping behind her all the way to Bahurim. Then Abner said to him, Go back. And he did so.

Imagine the wailing and the soulish manipulation that Michal was subjected to as she put one foot in front of the other. But she did not turn back or look back. She was single-eyed and at a certain point in her journey, Abner intervened! He ordered Paltiel to go back to where he had come from! And Beloved Bride of the Lamb, this is exactly what is going to happen to you. At a certain point in your journey, the interference and warfare and pressure in the spiritual atmosphere trying to stop you leaving is going to be silenced and the Father of Lights Himself is going to roar at all that has been trying to retard your progress on this journey back to the Bridegroom, "Go back!" With all the authority of the Commander of the Army of Light, He is going to order those demonic and soulish powers to go back where they came from! And you will journey on, unimpeded by sound pollution and spiritual vexation, to your face to face appointment with the Bridegroom.

This whole journey is a gradual separation unto holiness. First Michal is separated from a place or positioning in the house of adultery AND, more importantly, from her father's house. Then a further sifting and a deeper work occurs as unholy covenants are completely severed. The place where this separation occurs is significant. Bahurim means 'choice young men'. This is the place where those who are vessels of honour are separated from those who have not cleansed themselves of worldly lusts and are therefore not fit for the Master's use. As Paltiel's wailing voice fades into the distance, Michal is returning to her

first love and leaving all lesser lovers. She is leaving her past and all that has defined and defiled her far behind.

As Paul says, forgetting what is behind and pressing forward to what is ahead, she presses on to take hold that for which she was taken hold of so many years before. She was chosen and paid for. The Lamb wants His wife back and what He wants, He gets. It is recompense and restoration time. All that is stolen is now returned. All that had fallen to the ground is now resurrected and the oil of joy replaces mourning. Beauty is appointed to replace the ashes of broken dreams and lost hopes. It is Jubilee time!

By its very nature, the return to our first love requires the separation from all other lesser claims on us. It requires movement from us. David did not come and fetch Michal on his way to sit on the throne. It was necessary for her to leave her father's house and the area of its rule. The daughter born in the house of Saul must leave that environment on her own two feet, by her own volition, and move to the place where God is preparing the ruling company in waiting. It was necessary that she come and dwell at Hebron.

Psa 45:14 She shall be brought to the King in raiment of needlework; with the virgins, her companions that follow her, she shall be brought to You.

Michal was brought to the King. Rebekah was brought to Isaac. You must be brought to where the Bridegroom is.

He is not in the city. He is outside the city, at Hebron, and once you have become one with Him, you will both ascend to the place of rule together. But first, all stolen belongings must be returned. Recompense and restoration must be carried out. The thief must restore completely what he has taken illegally and that includes inheritance.

Pro 19:14 House and riches are the inheritance from fathers, but a wise, understanding, and prudent wife is from the Lord.

Michal was David's inheritance from the Lord. And dwelling with her husband was her blood-bought right. And full intimate experiential knowledge of the Son of God as we dwell continually in His presence is our inheritance. It is time for it to be restored. Decree over your life that every unholy covenant that challenges your bridal covenant with the Lion of Judah is annulled. Decree to every Paltiel in your life that the Father of Lights says, "Go back"!

Declare that you are leaving all that has kept you from fully experiencing what is rightfully yours as the wife of the Lamb. And keep on going forward to your face to face appointment with your first Love! Ignore the wailing and manipulation of all those trying to keep you from intimacy and restoration of all you have lost. Leave all lesser lovers, all lesser callings, all lesser responsibilities and affiliations and press on toward the high calling.

Heb 13:13 Let us then go forth [from all that would prevent us] to Him outside the camp, bearing the contempt and abuse and shame with Him. Heb 13:14 For here we have no permanent city, but we are looking for the one which is to come.

Paltiel's father's name was Laish, which means '(to knead in the sense of crushing; a lion (from his destructive blows)'. Beloved, you have been through your season of crushing (as if you didn't know that!). Just as incense is crushed for use at the altar of incense, so too, the crushing blows that have fallen on your life seem to have pulverised your very soul. But take heart. Unless incense is crushed, it cannot release its fragrance. And now that the long painful experience is complete, the Bridegroom will be able to breathe in the fragrance that comes from your beautiful, surrendered heart.

You have been tried in the furnace of affliction and now you are coming forth as gold. The altar of incense is the last outpost before intimacy in the holy of holies, where you come face to face with what you were betrothed to so long ago. God's ways are not our ways. We would have liked David to come galloping in and kidnapping Michal on his white horse one week after she was sent to Paltiel. We would prefer to circumvent the route of suffering altogether. But we are not our own. Only those who share His sufferings are appointed to share His glory. You are subject to God's timing and this is God's order of preparation for the Bride of the Lamb. When your life has become a sweet fragrance to the Lord through many crushings; when your soul is crushed very fine, then your

next appointment is face to face with the ark of His presence.

The high priest used to take two handfuls of incense crushed very fine into the Holy of Holies behind the curtain on Yom Kippur. This incense thrown on coals in the golden censor created the cloud of fragrant perfume that protected the high priest from dying in the presence of God. Bahurim is like the separation point of that curtain. On one side is incense on the altar, crushed to normal size. But past Bahurim goes Michal, crushed very fine, on into the place of intimacy; the place of the ark of His manifest presence.

Michal returning to David is also a picture of dislocation becoming relocation. A dislocated limb causes pain to the body. When you are positioned wrongly, you cannot fulfill your purpose. Every joint must supply. Dislocated joints (knees, ankles, shoulders, wrists) mean that the body cannot run and work the works of God. You are being called into alignment with purposes ordained before the foundation of the earth. Your rightful position was paid for with Blood. You were not bought with a price in order to live married to Paltiel for the rest of your life. The queen stands at the right hand of the King. There is a trumpet call in the Spirit, calling the Bride to be rightly aligned to her rightful Bridegroom and all dislocation (wrong location) to become relocation! It is time to accompany the Father of Lights as He walks you toward your waiting Bridegroom.

Chapter 11 ~ THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW

Every step of Michal's journey from Jerusalem to Bahurim, and then on to Hebron is an amazing prophetic parable of the way the Spirit of Holiness works with those He is jealously protecting and helping to make themselves ready for their face to face with the Bridegroom.

Jerusalem has 3 valleys, laid out in the shape of the Hebrew letter Shin; a letter used as an abbreviation for the Name of God Himself. In order to go be with her groom, Michal had to go out of the gates of Jerusalem and walk through the Kidron valley which separated the city from the Mount of Olives. What many people do not know is that this valley was also known as the valley of the shadow of death! Yes, that's right, David was referring to a literal valley when he wrote psalm 23!

Why was this valley given this name by the locals? Well, during Tabernacles, four giant oil lamps were lit in the courtyard of the women (the place we have already talked about concerning the gate Beautiful). The light from these lamps was so bright that it lit the whole of Jerusalem during this feast. But what it also did was cause the Kidron Valley to be in deep shadow, because it was situated quite far below the level of the city. In this valley, many tombs of righteous Jews were buried, including Ezra. So, a trip through this valley was considered a journey through a place where death and the tomb was very present. And when David fled both from Saul and from Absalom through this valley, the shadow of possible death hung over him. What is really important to remember is that as you traverse this valley, you need not fear any evil because the Lord is with you. Those who are part of the Saul system may be raging threats and seeking to do you in because you have left their clutches, but God's rod and staff will comfort you during this whole journey. The rod speaks of His governmental rule and discipline in your life and the staff His shepherding and caring for your every need. The only reason you are walking in deep shadow is because you walk in the shadow of His hand, you are moving in the shadow caused by His light.

THE SOUND OF THE LILIES

The king's garden spoken of in Song of Songs was at the bottom end of this Kidron valley and he grazed his flocks amongst the lilies in this valley. The word 'lilies' is 'shoshanim' in the Hebrew and it means lilies or trumpets. Psalm 45, known as the wedding psalm, is written to the tune of Shoshanim. So in this place, the King of King's Lily Trumpets are releasing their sound, decreeing the coming wedding and the separation of the Bride unto her Groom. As Michal walked, she would have passed lilies growing along the way. Bride of Christ, you will encounter lily trumpets on your way, positioned right where you need to hear a word of encouragement or direction. These vessels have walked the journey before you and are fully prepared to release the sound the Spirit has forged within them. Passing through the valley of weeping, they have made it a place of springs, which will serve you refreshing water of the river of Life. They will urge you to press on in your high calling, to not look back like Lot's wife. It is the time of being washed with the sound of separation and holiness released from these lily trumpets.

The Lord commissioned Moses to make two silver trumpets during the journey through the wilderness. Amongst other things, they were to be used to call the people to break camp because the cloud was moving on (Numbers 10). The word used for trumpet in this case comes from a root word meaning 'to surround with a stockade, to separate from the open country'. Beloved, as these silver trumpets release their sound over you, you are wrapped in protection and separated from the open country, so the enemy can no longer maraud you. You are His and anyone who touches you touches the apple of His eye.

WASHING YOUR GARMENTS

Not coincidentally, seeing as we are on a journey of cleansing, the Kidron Valley is also known as the Valley of the Fullers. Here the garments of the priests were washed and laid out to dry upon the rocks. As you journey through the Valley of the Fullers, you will encounter teaching both from the Spirit and those who have been appointed to help wash the garments of His priests. This is a time of cleansing from the filth of the Saul system and the defilements forced upon you by its ways. Malachi 3:2 speaks of the Lord coming as a fuller's soap. This is a reference to the thorough washing of your garment so that you can again be clothed in robes of righteousness.

Mal 3:2 But who can endure the day of His coming? And who can stand when He appears? For He is like a refiner's fire and like fullers' soap; Mal 3:3 He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and He will purify the priests, the sons of Levi, and refine them like gold and silver, that they may offer to the Lord offerings in righteousness.

A fuller would trample the garment under his feet in a basin containing soap, in order to loosen ingrained dirt. Years and years of involvement in the House of Saul's unclean atmosphere, not to mention your polygamous marriage to any Paltiel you have been joined to, will have taken its toll upon your garment. En-Rogel, the fountain of the Fullers, was situated right at the juncture of the valley of Hinnom and the Kidron Valley. It is water from this fountain that was used to wash the priest's garments. The Valley of Hinnom was the place where children were offered as burnt offerings to Molech and it later became the refuse dump for Jerusalem. Saul had offered his daughter as a living sacrifice at the altar of his own hatred and desire for revenge, just as many of you have been bound and forced to serve to suit the schemes of the Saul system. The Bridegroom has ordained that you be washed with the water of the Word as you journey through this Valley of the Fuller, thoroughly cleansing you from all defilement.

Interestingly, the Kidron Valley was also the main trade or trafficking route and we have discussed in detail the trafficking and buying and selling of souls prevalent in today's Church. Michal did not travel along this route, going the same way as the traders. She crossed over it, fully focused on meeting her husband and making a transition out of the system that dealt in the buying and selling of souls. Beloved, it is time to travel at cross purposes with the general flow of traffic in the general Church. There will always be another program, another conference, another group to sign up for. But it's time for allegiance to the Lamb. It's time to walk in His footsteps through the valley of the shadow of death. The journey Michal took is the same walked by Jesus on the night of His betrayal. He and his disciples left Jerusalem after the last supper and traversed the Kidron Valley to reach the Mount of Olives. David fled through here to save his life but Jesus walked this valley twice in one night

– once to pray and fully surrender His will to the Father, and then again when He was led, bound in ropes, to give His life as a ransom for many.

Do you remember how it was 'necessary' for Jesus to go through Samaria on His way back to Galilee?(John 4:4). On a map, this was the long way round,

but Jesus knew He had an appointment with the Samaritan woman. She had had five husbands and was living with a sixth man, and it was time for her to be married to the Truth and cleansed from her defilement. She is a picture of someone who has some knowledge of the truth but has joined herself to house after house in the hope of finding happiness and fulfillment. But only the living water dispensed by Jesus will quench our deepest thirst. He is not looking for worshippers who worship in this or that location. It isn't about location as much as intimacy and face to face relationship. And the Bridegroom is determined to release the thirsty to find the True Source of living water.

In the same way as this journey Jesus took, each part of the journey back to the Bridegroom is absolutely necessary. Even though Hebron is south of Jerusalem, it was necessary for Michal to go through Bahurim, which is east of Jerusalem, on the slopes of the Mount of Olives. Why? Bahurim, the village of the choice young men, is the tarrying place of those who offer themselves willingly in the day of His Power (psalm 110). The Mount of Olives is the place of the oil press; the place where fresh oil for the journey ahead flows; the place where you say, "Not my will but yours be done."

It is the place of separation – of Jesus from the other disciples; of the willing from the sleeping; of the Bride who is following in the footsteps of her Bridegroom from all that has bound her and kept her from full surrender. It is the place where an angel from Heaven will come and strengthen you as you press through to the place of full surrender (Luke 22:43). The Mount of Olives is also the place where the first drops of Jesus' blood were shed for you and the power of the Blood of the Lamb is available to you there. You also have access to the mind of Christ in any area you are wrestling to let go of.

CLEANSE ME WITH HYSSOP

The Mount of Olives is also the place where the ashes of the Red Heifer were kept and anyone who had been in contact with a dead body and needed cleansing was to go there and be sprinkled with the water that contained those ashes. This had to be done twice; on the third day and the seventh day of his week of separation (Numbers 19). The sprinkling could only be done by a clean person. Beloved, the body without the spirit is dead and if you have been in contact with any group calling themselves 'the Body', yet there has been no evidence of the Spirit, then you need the sprinkling of the waters of

the red heifer, because you have been in contact with death. Of course, Jesus was our red heifer, slain outside the camp for the uncleanness of men. He is also the Clean Man who sprinkles us through the words of His mouth. Once the sprinkling with the water containing these ashes took place, one was pronounced clean and could have contact with people again.

The water was sprinkled using a hyssop branch, the same species of branch that was used to apply the Blood on the doorposts of the Israelite houses in Egypt to protect them from the angel of Death. Hyssop was also added to the burning carcass of the heifer as it was incinerated. When praying for forgiveness after his adultery with Bathsheba, King David cried out, "*Cleanse me with hyssop and I shall be clean*" (psalm 51). Hyssop is a symbol of intense and complete cleansing. The journey to Bahurim on the Mount of Olives for Michal depicts the completion of cleansing and the separation from the period of defilement. This is why Paltiel was commanded to go back at this point in her journey. What fellowship can light have with darkness and the spirit of Christ with Belial? All that has been used in your life to keep you from full oneness with the One Who paid the bridal price for you, comes ultimately from Belial. He may use men of the cloth, he may use programs, he may use busyness and being yoked to the visions of spiritually ambitious men, but ultimately satan's purpose is to bring separation and barrenness to your spiritual womb. At Bahurim, you are separated from that which has rendered you unclean and that assignment of barrenness is broken and your spiritual womb is cleansed and prepared for fruitfulness with your Betrothed.

Let us also examine what other significant events occurred at this place called Bahurim. Many years later when King David was fleeing again from someone who wanted to kill him, this time, his own power-hungry son Absalom, he had a disturbing encounter at Bahurim:

2Sa 16:5 When King David came to Bahurim, a man of the family of the house of Saul, Shimei son of Gera, came out and cursed continually as he came. 2Sa 16:6 And he cast stones at David and at all the servants of King David; and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left.

Note that someone of the house of Saul was cursing David and throwing stones at him and all who had aligned themselves with the House of David!

Beloved, persecution is part of the package for those who want to be conformed to the image of the Son. In fact, Jesus said, "If they hated Me, they will hate you." Shimei was a mouthpiece for all the hatred and bitterness stored up in the household of Saul over the years. He accused David of being responsible for all that had befallen Saul, but in actual fact, he had brought it on his own head with his disobedience and rebellion. So Bahurim is the place of cursing and persecution by those whom you are no longer a part of, by those of the House which God has rejected.

It is really important to note David's response. One of his men wanted to kill Shimei but David seemed to know it was a test from the Lord as to whether he was of the same spirit:

2Sa 16:10 The king said, What have I to do with you, you sons of Zeruiah? If he is cursing because the Lord said to him, Curse David, who then shall ask, Why have you done so? 2Sa 16:11 And David said to Abishai and to all his servants, Behold, my son, who was born to me, seeks my life. With how much more reason now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone; and let him curse, for the Lord has bidden him to do it. 2Sa 16:12 It may be that the Lord will look on the iniquity done me and will recompense me with good for his cursing this day.

As it so happened, David *was* recompensed with good that same day as he got to the Jordan. Someone was there waiting with food and drink for his weary household. Beloved, ignore the curses and the accusations that the House of Saul hurls at you as you reach this village of the choice young men. You are part of a different household. Whatever the enemy has intended for evil, God will turn for good for you. Do not seek to pause and defend your reputation or your actions. Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus and press on to your destination. Your Bridegroom is waiting anxiously for a sight of your beloved face at Hebron. Press on to take hold of that for which He took hold of you!