

ARE YOU BEING SIFTED LIKE WHEAT?

*“Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift all of you as wheat.
But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail.
And when you have turned back,
strengthen your brothers.”*

Luke 22:31-32

This 22nd Chapter of the Gospel of Luke opens speaking of the Festival of Unleavened Bread, the Passover. It then speaks of satan: *“Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve. And Judas went to the chief priests and the officers of the temple guard and discussed with them how he might betray Jesus.”* (Luke 22:3-4)

How fascinating that later in the same chapter we have sifting like wheat and satan. The testing that God allows is the removal of personal leaven. If you have ever experienced being “sifted like wheat” it is NOT a pleasant experience. It can even feel downright cruel of God to allow such a thing.

Yet if we approach and receiving everything as an opportunity to become more like Christ Jesus, how might that change the way we view and experience being sifted like wheat? How might it change the way you process these difficult tests?

Perhaps we can use the Word as our strength, our guide and our salve.

We Pray....

Dear Heavenly Father, Abba, I come to You today asking for your help and guidance as I am sifted like wheat for purification, sanctification and ultimately, glorification in Christ Jesus; as 1 Corinthians 15:49 declares: *“And just as we have borne the image of the earthly man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly man.”*

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Revelations 3:4-5 brings me a vision of hope of what this ultimate spiritual victory looks like: *“Yet you have a few people in Sardis who have not soiled their clothes. They will walk with me, dressed in white, for they are worthy. The one who is victorious will, like them, be dressed in white. I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.”*

Be Sober-Minded

- ◆ Dear Father God, Your Word in 1 Peter 5:8 warns: *“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”*
- ◆ Help me Heavenly Father, to be “sober-minded”, attentive, discerning, clear-thinking and grounded; that I may quickly detect falsehoods and traps. Let your angels protect and help me lest I dash my foot against a rock, according to Psalm 91.

Our Ego Gets Sifted

- ◆ Dear Father, I see in Luke Chapter 22 that before Jesus told His disciples they would be sifted like wheat, tested by the adversary, the disciples were vying for status. Their egos were on display. Lord God, I surrender my ego vanities to You and ask You to take them away with gentle lovingness.
- ◆ For Luke 22:24-27 describes: *“A dispute also arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest. Jesus said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them; and those who exercise authority over them call themselves Benefactors. But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.’”*

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- ◆ Dear Lord Jesus, help me to be humble as You are, with a servant's heart, not seeking my own purposes, agendas or desires; but only my Heavenly Father's Will in ALL things.
- ◆ Lord Jesus, help me to be with You eating at Your table, as Luke 22:28-30 shares: *"You are those who have stood by me in my trials. And I confer on you a kingdom, just as my Father conferred one on me, so that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*

Even Your Most Righteous Are Accused

- ◆ Dear Father God, Your Word in Zechariah 3:1 proves that even your most righteous are accused by satan: *"Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him."*
- ◆ If Joshua the high priest can withstand the tests of satan and triumph, I surely can in Christ Jesus; because in my weakness I am made strong in and through Him. *"I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me"*, says Philippians 4:13

I Yoke to Christ Jesus Yeshua

- ◆ Dear Lord God, I take hold of John 10:10, that life in Christ Jesus Yeshua is my means of overcoming the adversary: *"The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full."*
- ◆ Lord Jesus, I yoke myself to You, your heart, your strength. I anchor myself to your purity, your light, your goodness, your selflessness; that the arrows and slings of the enemy will bounce right off of me; that the buttons he pushes shall not find an emotional reaction in me. My truth is in Christ Jesus.

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Tribulations Are the Way to the Kingdom of Heaven

- ◆ Dear Heavenly Father, Acts 14:22 reminds me that it is not an easy path to your Heavenly Home: *“It is through many tribulations and hardships that we must enter the kingdom of God.”*
- ◆ The comfort I can take in this passage is that I am not a victim. I am not being picked on by You or fate. I am not a helpless vessel. I am strong in Christ and a victor in Christ Jesus. It is through tribulations that I shall gain my passage to your Heavenly Home.
- ◆ 1 Peter 1:6 confirms this: *“In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials.”*

All Works to Your Good

- ◆ Heavenly Father, I take encouragement from Your Word in Romans 8:28, *“And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.”*
- ◆ This reminds me and encourages me that whatever challenges come my way, You can alchemize them to become victories — I am made stronger, purified of character flaws and bad habits, cleansed of temper and poor temperament, brought to a deeper expression of love and *made in Your image.*

Patient Enduring

- ◆ Abba Father, Your Word in 2 Corinthians 1:6 says: *“But if we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; or if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which is effective in the patient enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer.”* (NASB) OR
- ◆ *“And whether we be afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation, which is effectual in the enduring of the same sufferings which we also suffer: or whether we be comforted, it is for your consolation and salvation.”* (KJV)

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- ◆ This passage tells me that my suffering can serve the salvation of others. I can offer my suffering up for the spiritual good of others, as well as my own spiritual good and growth. How comforting!
- ◆ Lord God, I take great comfort in Philippians 1:6, that no matter how I move through each day and moment, imperfectly and imperfect as I am: *I am certain that God, who began the good work within me, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

We Triumph Through Love

- ◆ Holy Father God, Job 1:20-22 demonstrates how love for You can cause us to triumph over seemingly cruel tests and tribulations. If I choose to hold my love for You above ALL else, it is my anchor and my victory! *“Then Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head [in mourning for the children], and he fell to the ground and worshiped [God].”*
- ◆ *“He said, ‘Naked (without possessions) I came [into this world] from my mother’s womb, and naked I will return there. The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; Blessed be the name of the Lord.’ Through all this Job did not sin nor did he blame God.”*

Jesus Intercedes

- ◆ Dear Father God, Hebrews 7:24-25 declares: *“Jesus holds His priesthood permanently and without change, because He lives on forever. Therefore He is able also to save forever (completely, perfectly, for eternity) those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to intercede and intervene on their behalf.”*
- ◆ Lord Jesus Christ, it is YOU that I yoke to especially in my tests and trials, so that I may become like you more and more: *“A High Priest [perfectly adapted to our needs], holy, blameless, unstained [by sin], separated from sinners and exalted higher than the heavens.”*

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- ◆ Thank you my beloved Jesus, for your promises in John 17:9, *"I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours."* Thank you, that I am yours always and forever!

SEALING PRAYER:

*"Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:
'Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Messiah.
For the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
who accuses them before our God day and night,
has been hurled down.'"*

Revelations 12:10

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