

*The Wilderness of
Self-Rejection*

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are from the King James Version. Italics for emphasis are ours.

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INTRODUCTION

One of hell's most effective policies in its war against the human race and the plan of God is the policy of rejection. As with all of Satan's policies, rejection is rooted in lies. These lies, however, can be overcome by the power of the Word of God. The syndrome of rejection is nullified by the truth, and through our death, burial, and resurrection in Christ, believers can stop the effect of Satan's lies.

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word "policy" means a course of conduct. In the propagation of demonic strategies and doctrines, the policy of rejection is Satan's chief consideration. We live in a fallen world where the wounds of rejection are many and can often be traced to prenatal impressions. If those wounds are compounded, they become a syndrome of rejection that can be a paralyzing force to a person's spiritual and emotional well-being.

This booklet, with fresh illuminations on the

spiritual analogies of Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, and Jordan, looks at the story of Elisha and Elijah in Second Kings 2. It describes how each believer can progress from a having brand-new beginning in Christ to experiencing the reality of Colossians 3:3: "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."

Chapter One

THE SEEDS OF REJECTION

Medical research has revealed that tremendous impressions of rejection are often engraved on the fetus in the womb. For example, if an expectant mother does not want her child and she is fighting with her husband, or has a poor self-image, then the child feels rejected, without knowing the source or the reason for such feelings. Even a one-day-old baby can experience rejection.

If the mother is a perfectionist, the baby can receive imprints of perfectionism in the womb. Or if the mother has a melancholic temperament, the baby may also develop melancholic tendencies. Scientific observation in the secular field also has proven that the reason many of these conditions seem incurable is because they are engraved and imprinted in the womb.

Without proper prenatal and postnatal parenting, a child can easily grow up with feelings

of rejection. Sadly, many children are not brought up in an atmosphere of love with God as the center of the home. They may have parents who scream at them or who arrogantly make demands that are beyond the children's capacity. Some parents expect certain grades in school from children who cannot legitimately achieve such goals. Though they may somehow meet the standards, it takes every ounce of strength, reason, and reality out of their emotions.

Self-Image Vulnerability

During the adolescent and teen-age years, the self-image is understandably vulnerable to attack. Some young people excel in athletics; others do not. Some are very good students; others do not do as well in school. Consequently, to the degree that a poor self-image has infected a young person's emotions, they begin to take on the rejection syndrome.

For a diversity of reasons, this syndrome can continue to affect them into young adulthood. Many will struggle in unhappy marriages because of insecurity and poor communication skills. Even their health may be affected. To some degree, they allow themselves to become

victims of problems through the blame game. And all of this goes back to the rejection of their childhood and, beyond that, to their prenatal rejection in the womb.

Mid-life Crises

The rejection syndrome often plagues people in their middle-age years, causing them to doubt their own worth. "What have I accomplished? What kind of meaning has my life had?" A Christian might ask himself, "Have I really pleased God? Shouldn't I have done more?"

In old age, the rejection syndrome brings in fears of death or of nursing homes. These folks fear the possibility that their health will fail and that they will not have money enough to see them through. They fear the rejection of abandonment, which becomes a reality for so many who are in nursing facilities, forgotten by the family that they raised and cared for.

It is easy to see how Satan's policy is to use rejection to destroy the capacity of God's people to enter into faith rest.

Chapter Two

OVERCOMING LIES
THROUGH FAITH

Rejection leads to some of the most drastic human measures imaginable. Recently, a beautiful young model suspected that her husband, a well-known comedian, was interested in another woman. Their marriage was failing, and she ended up shooting him to death, then killing herself. Money, affluence, and popularity did absolutely nothing to sustain her life. Her beauty and status in the modeling world did not stop her from firing the gun. Even though their children were home when the shooting took place, that didn't keep her from committing homicide and suicide in a moment of despair. Drug abuse compounded the lies against her own worth. As much as she felt rejected by her husband and many friends, she also rejected herself.

Children who grow up with feelings of re-

jection eventually enter into degrees of sublimation. They respond to peer pressure in an effort to avoid such feelings. Most of the time, these children have not had a compatible home life where their self-image can be developed in peace and happiness.

How can a person in the Christian community be delivered from the lies of Satan?

Going Through Withdrawal

One of the meanings found in the Greek word "*cosmos*" is to withdraw from human society and to get out of the norm because a person feels rejected. Therefore, one of the primary results of rejection is a withdrawal from God's institutions. For example, a wife stops loving her husband and no longer wants to have sex with him. Children go against their parents and refuse to submit, even to loving authority. Ironically, many times it's because of the old sin nature rebelling in the midst of beautiful, well-ordered homes.

It is the policy of Satan to get people to reject themselves so that they feel rejected in social environments and even in spiritual fellowship. Divorcees can become vulnerable after being single for a long time, and they may enter into this re-

jection syndrome. Yet, we must understand that when we accept rejection, we experience Satan's lies. We can believe something that is not true about people and experience a lie for years when there is no biblical basis for such feelings.

Empirical and Rational Perceptions vs. Faith

Satan is living in a lie (John 8:44). He *is* a liar, and everything he does is a lie. Through the rejection syndrome, he modifies Adam, minimizes Christ, and gets people to experience his lies in their self-image and in their relationships to others.

Satan's lies are based upon perceptions rooted in empiricism and rationalism. *Empiricism* is a system of perception that relies on the senses as its source of knowledge. The natural senses feed the emotions, and in turn the emotions, which were never designed to think but to respond, begin to process impulses which develop into projections in the soul.* *Rationalism* involves human viewpoint based upon natural reasoning, sight, experience, and the natural culture of Adam, without regard to the senses, therefore rendering a sterile process that disregards faith.

Faith, however, is the only system of percep-

tion that God accepts. He never accepts rationalization or empiricism, but only faith that “cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17). Faith is the substantiation of everything hoped for and the evidence of things that are not yet seen. “Without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6).

2 Corinthians 5:7 tells us to walk by faith and not by sight. Distractions from the atmosphere and from human viewpoint will affect my interpretation of life. If for one moment I get anxious, or worried, or live in self-evaluation through rationalization or empiricism, then my entire system of living and perception have alienated me from God.

**Read Imaginations of the Heart by Pastor Stevens, Grace Publications, 1998.*

Chapter Three
NEW BEGINNINGS,
NEW OPPORTUNITIES

“And it came to pass, when the LORD would take up Elijah into heaven by a whirlwind, that Elijah went with Elisha from Gilgal” (2 Kings 2:1).

“Gilgal” is a place of beginnings. It was the first place the people of Israel entered into after crossing the Jordan River. Gilgal represents a place where, by faith, everything is new—*right now!* It represents the place where we fellowship with the power of Christ’s resurrection, in the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable unto His death. Gilgal speaks of our beginning, as those who have been raised from the dead and who walk in the filling of the Spirit, using rebound when we fail.

In the spiritual analogy found in Second Kings 2, Elisha stands for the believer and Elijah represents Christ. Elisha is the follower; Elijah is

the leader. Elijah will go up to heaven just as Christ did, in Acts 1:9-10. Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father" (John 14:12). Elisha following Elijah is a picture of us following Christ and doing much more than He did on earth because we live in the power of His resurrection.

Elijah said to Elisha, "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Bethel." But Elisha responded, "As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee" (2 Kings 2:2). So they both went down to Bethel.

A Place Called Bethel

"Bethel" points back to Abraham, the father of our faith, who built an altar and worshipped God there (Genesis 12:8). He also returned there when he came back from Egypt (see Genesis 13:1-4).

Situated 2,880 feet above sea level, Bethel holds a unique place in history. It was a place of sacrifice, a place of teaching and hearing the Word of God (2 Kings 17:27-28). It was the place Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar could never conquer because the angel of death was power-

less in Bethel. There Jacob took the stone he had used for a pillow, set it up as a pillar, and anointed it as a memorial unto God (see Genesis 28:17-22). The memorial stone that was anointed with oil is a picture of Jesus Christ, the Chief Cornerstone (1 Peter 2:6; Isaiah 28:16). The pillars represent principles of Bible doctrine.

Bethel also stands for the Cross and resurrection. It represents being quickened by every Word of God and being able to commune with God on the basis of the pillars—the precise categories that come through preaching and through the hearing of the Word of God.

Elisha followed Elijah to Bethel, located between Hebron (which represents fellowship) and Ai (which represents the old sin nature). It was a picture of a place between fellowship with God and the old man, Adam. The Ark was stationed at Bethel, representing the living presence of God upon the Mercy Seat.

Bethel is the place where we overcome rejection; it is the place where the process of being “re-gened” begins.* Regardless of the prenatal imprint that was deeply engraved upon the makeup of our personality, we can follow Christ to Bethel and experience resurrection life from on high. Thank God, we were redeemed and re-

ceived the life of Christ through the new birth the moment we were saved. But because of that, we are *continually* being made new, re-gened and conformed to Christ's image as the process removes the corrupted genes of Adam.

Bringing Down the Walls of Rejection

“And Elijah said unto him, Elisha, tarry here, I pray thee; for the LORD hath sent me to Jericho. And he said, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they came to Jericho” (2 Kings 2:4).

While Jericho was a place of destruction, it also stands for the place of opportunity. Think of Rahab the harlot, who hid the two Israelite spies on her roof and saved herself and her family. She put the scarlet thread (which represented the blood of Christ) in her window (see Joshua 2:1-21; 6:17). In this application, Jericho is a place where the blood of Christ can save us, but if we are not saved, it is a place where the old sin nature takes us into rejection and self-destruction.

Everyone except for Rahab and her family died in Jericho. The priests and the people of Israel walked around the city of Jericho once each day for six days, carrying the Ark. The people were told to be silent as they walked. But on the

seventh day, they were to walk around the city seven times and on the seventh time, they were told to shout at the sound of the priest's trumpets, and the walls would come down (see Joshua 6:1-20).

It is a sad thing when people don't get redeemed at their Jericho. They continue in self-destructive patterns and in satanic rejection. God is not willing that any should perish, but because God cannot look upon sin, those living in such patterns live in an old man, Adam, who has already been condemned, just as Jericho was condemned.

At the same time, Jericho was given to Israel by faith (Joshua 6:2). This means that God, through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection, gives us the victory over what has been condemned to the grave. It is not by our works that we overcome! It is a gift of grace.

**Read Re-Gened by Pastor Stevens, Grace Publications, 1996.*

Chapter Four

FOLLOW THROUGH TO THE LAND OF PROMISE

“And Elijah said unto him, Tarry, I pray thee, here; for the LORD hath sent me to Jordan. And he said, As the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. And they two went on” (2 Kings 2:6).

The Red Sea speaks of Christ’s death for us (Romans 5:8); the Jordan River represents our death with Christ.

Think of Christians who have accepted Christ’s death on the Cross for them. Positionally, they have been delivered from Egypt. But they are still in the wilderness, and they have never followed the Ark of God’s presence over the Jordan River. In Joshua 3:14-17, the priests remained in the midst of the Jordan River, holding the precious Ark until every single person passed over. In the same way, Jesus Christ—our great High Priest—finished His work so that all

who receive Him as their Savior can pass through from death to life. They receive not only His death *for* them but also their death *with* Him.

All of those verses we claim—"I am crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20) and "our old man is crucified" (Romans 6:6)—are past tense references to the Jordan River. When the believer has passed clean over the Jordan River, he is finally at a place where he can say every morning, noon, and night, "I am crucified with Christ, and I am buried with Christ."

Strength for the Journey

What a journey this is! We start at Gilgal to receive the power of a risen life to fellowship through the Word of God and through Jesus. Then it's on to Bethel, where we are made brand new. At Jericho, we were redeemed from self-destruction. No longer do we live in the lies of Satan. Finally, over the Jordan River we go to the place where we finally enter into positional truth in our experience.

When we receive the lies of rejection, which are lies from Satan, we become a revelation of a lie from the father of lies himself; we withdraw into the cosmos, the world system which Satan holds together. He accomplishes what he does

by causing people to feel rejected, and then by degrees he draws them into his kingdom.

Here is how it works. A husband may think, "I haven't brought up my family properly, and now they reject me." That is a lie. That man must resist this kind of projection because rejection is a lie from the father of lies.

"I'm getting older and I'm not married yet," another might say as Satan tries to get him or her to experience a lie regarding the self-image. Meanwhile, others who are wondering why they ever *got* married are revealing another form of rejection.

Christ Is in Charge

In Joshua 5:13-15, Joshua met "the captain of the host of the LORD" as he went up to take Jericho. The captain said in so many words, "Take your shoes off for this place is holy. *I* will be in charge of your Jericho, not *you*." When we get to our Jericho, it is Christ who delivers us; we cannot deliver ourselves.

Then, when we finally get to the Jordan, we simply walk through it on "dry ground." Israel reached the Jordan during the flood season and the waters "rose up upon a heap very far from the city Adam" (Joshua 3:15-16). It would have

been impossible to cross over it but for the miracle of God that took place. As the priests carrying the Ark dipped their feet in the brim of the river, the waters were cut off.

“Far from Adam” reveals how experiencing our death with Christ is different from experiencing His death for us. The city of Adam refers to our beginning. We have come far from Adam, through many experiences, to how old we are now. We came to Gilgal for a new beginning and now we are clean over the Jordan, leaving behind all of the lies of rejection.

CONCLUSION

Once we have crossed over into the land of God's promises, we face many enemies. There certainly will be challenges, but we have the guarantee of victory. We have the promise that Christ will never leave us nor forsake us. Feelings of rejection cannot hinder us any more.

Each place the soles of our feet touch is ours. We have gone through the Red Sea, through the wilderness of carnality, over the Jordan River, and now we are walking in the land of promises. Let's accept those promises, put our feet down, and refuse to return to the wilderness of rejection and lies.