Shalom AZ Ministries

In Pursuit of Israel's Redemption

"Purge the Infection that Pervades Me"

Rabbi Cosmo Panzetta

Devotion and Discussion Questions

Key Texts (TLV): Psalms 6, 36, 66, 126; *Jer. 17:9-10; Prov. 9:10*

When an infection gets into the body, the body responds. A fever rises. Heat works against what threatens our health. Sometimes treatment itself is uncomfortable, even painful. Yet the purpose is not to destroy the person; it is to destroy what is destroying the person. There are times when healing requires dealing with an infection we would rather not face. And the same can be true of our hearts. There is an infection that can pervade us—a "me-first" infection, the rebellion of wanting our own way rather than ADONAI's way.

These four psalms take us through that journey: from weakness and tears, to recognizing the rebellion within, through the LORD's refining work, and finally into restoration and joy. He desires to heal, correct, purify, and bring us into the fullness of life that comes from knowing Him. So the question is not simply, "Lord, how do I get out of this?" It is also, "Lord, what needs to be purged from my heart so that I can live as You intended?"

1. RECOGNIZE THE INFECTION IN MY OWN HEART (PS. 6; 36)

David begins Psalm 6 in a place of profound weakness. *"Be gracious to me, ADONAI, for I am weak. Heal me, ADONAI—for my bones are shuddering with fear"* (Ps. 6:3). Even his soul is shaken. He cries out, *"and You, ADONAI—how long?"* (Ps. 6:4). He is worn out with groaning and tears. This is someone recognizing, "I am at the end of myself. I need You, LORD." He asks ADONAI to turn toward him, rescue him, and save him because of His *chesed*—His covenant love and lovingkindness. And in the midst of his tears, he becomes confident that ADONAI has heard his prayer.

Psalm 36 takes us deeper, from the pain we feel to the condition of the heart. David begins with *"An oracle of Transgression—to the wicked one/wickedness within my heart"* (Ps. 36:2). It is so easy to recognize rebellion in somebody else. But what about the rebellion in ME? The rebellious heart flatters itself, excuses itself, and justifies itself until it can no longer recognize its own iniquity. Yet this psalm turns from the self-ruled heart to the character of ADONAI: His love reaches the heavens, His faithfulness the skies, His righteousness stands like mountains, and His judgments run deeper than we can understand. *"For with You is the fountain of life—in Your light we see light"* (Ps. 36:10). We need His light to see ourselves truthfully—and His mercy to heal what the light has revealed.

2. LET THE LORD PURIFY WHAT IS DESTROYING ME (PS. 66)

Psalm 66 celebrates the awesome deeds of God. The psalmist remembers how ADONAI turned the sea into dry land and brought His people through. But salvation is more than

a dramatic moment of escape. It also includes the LORD's guidance, correction, and discipline along the way. The psalmist declares, *"For You have tested us, O God—You have purified us as silver is refined"* (Ps. 66:10). The refiner examines the metal for impurities and uses heat to separate what does not belong. Likewise, the LORD's work in our lives is not meant simply to make us uncomfortable.Sometimes the discomfort is Him working to deal with what corrupts and weakens us, so that our hearts can be wholly His.

The psalm does not minimize the difficulty: there are burdens, oppression, fire, and water. Yet it says, *"Yet You brought us out to superabundance"* (Ps. 66:12). The LORD was at work not only in deliverance but in their formation as His people. And after coming through to the other side of the difficulties, the psalmist invites others to hear what God has done for his soul. He also says, *"If I had cherished iniquity in my heart, the Lord would not have listened"* (Ps. 66:18). We cannot cling to the very rebellion He is seeking to purge and call that surrender. We come honestly, letting Him uncover what we have excused. And we trust His lovingkindness even when the refining process is difficult.

3. KEEP SOWING THROUGH THE TEARS UNTIL JOY COMES (PS. 126)

Psalm 126 shows us the other side of the pain. *"When ADONAI restored the captives of Zion, it was as if we were dreaming"* (Ps. 126:1). Those who had known captivity and sorrow were suddenly laughing and singing. And the people themselves confessed, *"ADONAI has done great things for us—we are joyful!"* (Ps. 126:3). This is the God who brings His people through. The discipline, the tears, and the difficulty of exile are not the end of the story. His heart is to bring us through the discipline of exile to life and restoration. The LORD's faithfulness is greater than what we have walked through.

But notice that this psalm also contains a prayer: *"Restore us from captivity, ADONAI, like streams in the Negev"* (Ps. 126:4). Sometimes we are still sowing in tears, still waiting, still choosing to be faithful. *"Those who sow in tears will reap with a song of joy"* (Ps. 126:5). So keep sowing His Word into your life. Keep sowing it into your family, your home, and your community. Keep bringing your heart before the LORD, even when you are tired. Ask Him to deal with the rebellion within you, and commit to continue walking in His ways. He can bring streams into dry places, and He can turn the season of tears into a testimony of His goodness.

CONCLUSION

Taken together, these psalms give us a picture of the LORD's healing work. In Psalm 6 we cry out from our weakness. In Psalm 36 we recognize that the problem is not only the wickedness around us, but the rebellion within our own hearts. In Psalm 66 we see the LORD purifying His people through the very difficulties they would never have chosen. And in Psalm 126 we see captives restored, mouths filled with laughter, and tears giving way to joy. It is a call to trust the character of ADONAI in the midst of it all—His *chesed*, His faithfulness, His righteousness, and His goodness.

We may want the LORD to remove every uncomfortable circumstance immediately. Yet sometimes our deeper need is for Him to remove what is poisoning our hearts. So rather than simply asking Him to change our circumstances, let us ask Him to change ***us***. Let the cry of our hearts be, "LORD, purge the infection that pervades me. I do not want a heart that flatters itself and resists You. I want a heart that fears You, trusts You, and is willing to follow You into the fullness of life."

Perhaps you recognize yourself in David's tears. You are exhausted, shaken, and wondering how long this season will last. Or perhaps the Spirit is revealing something harder to acknowledge: the excuses, the resentment, the self-pity, or the stubborn insistence on your own way. Do not turn away from what He is showing you. He is inviting you to surrender your actual heart to Him. Today, come to ADONAI with honesty. If you have been clinging to sin, release it. If you have been resisting His correction, yield to Him. If you are weary from the fire and water, ask Him to sustain you. And if you have not entrusted your life to Yeshua, come to Him in repentance and faith, trusting Him to forgive and make you new. Ask the Spirit to purge what is destructive, to form the character of Messiah in you, and to restore the joy of walking with Him. He hears the cry of a heart that truly turns toward Him.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In Ps. 6, David is honest about his weakness and tears. What might change in your prayer life if you brought that same honesty before ADONAI?
2. Ps. 36 describes a heart that excuses and flatters itself. Where might you be justifying an attitude or behavior rather than allowing the LORD to examine it?
3. How does the contrast between the rebellious heart and ADONAI's *chesed*, faithfulness, and righteousness reshape the way you understand His correction?
4. Ps. 66 presents deliverance and refining as parts of God's work. What difficulty in your life might be an opportunity to seek His guidance and growth, without assuming every hardship is punishment?
5. What does it look like, practically, to keep sowing God's Word in your home, relationships, or community while you are still waiting for restoration?

CLOSING PRAYER

ADONAI, be gracious to us, for we are weak, and we need You. Search our hearts and show us the rebellion we have excused, the ways we have flattered ourselves, and the things we have held onto instead of surrendering to You. We do not want to be merely outwardly obedient while our hearts resist You. Heal us, LORD. Purge the infection that pervades us. When Your refining work is uncomfortable, help us trust Your love and faithfulness. Teach us to fear You, walk in Your wisdom, and receive Your correction with humble hearts. Sustain us through the fire and water, and give us strength to keep sowing even through tears. Restore what is broken, fill our mouths with praise, and let our lives tell others of the great things You have done. Make us more like Yeshua.

B'Shem Yeshua, In the name of Yeshua, amen.