



# Behold, I make all Things New Revelation 21 :5

Spiritual Retreat 2022

## Week 4 : I am repentant

### Monday 21/3/2022 - Luke 15 : 11-32 The Prodigal Son

At the beginning of this fourth week, we meditate the repentance of the youngest son. The elder son is finding a difficulty living brotherhood, happiness towards the good of others, understanding the logic of love, mercy and forgiveness that pushed the dad to run to meet his son. After being attracted to accomplish himself and his desire to consumerism, the youngest son returns to his dad's home because of interest and profit.

Repentance is an attraction of love at first (Just like Paul said to Jesus Christ when He picked him (review Philipians 3:4-16) before being repentance for sins.

I imagine the scene of the return of the youngest son. I take a special role in the life of this family (being the dad, the elder son, any of the servants or neighbors, or the mom, etc...). I imagine the reunion of the younger son with the older son. I hear the conversation and what each is saying to the other. I see what is happening and who is taking part in the conversation, etc... I jot down what I have discovered and what I have felt. Where do I stand from the concept and dynamic of the relationship between mercy and justice? Where do I stand from prioritizing repentance as an attraction to love and prioritizing repentance as a feeling of guilt for the sin I did?

### Tuesday 22/3/2022 - Isaiah 58 : 1- 12 Fasting that pleases God

The prophet Isaiah calls for reasonable and internal religious practices. He focuses on fasting as an act of love for the other and not by abiding to the Jewish sharia and the law. This passage includes distinctive criteria to the understanding of positive repentance that a believer lives.

Positive repentance concept (Isaiah 6-12)		Negative repentance concept (Isaiah 3-5)	
Repenting sets me free	Liberation from slavery	Repenting publicly	Public manifestations
Repentance reflects the spirit of giving and hospitality	Share your bread with the hungry	Repentance contradicts my love to myself	Self-torture
	You welcome the wretched and the cast out in your house	Repenting through grief and mourning	Preying Anointment and Ash placement
	Cover the naked	Repenting is based on a way of eating and mourning	The Fast
Repenting is fruitful	The fruits of righteousness, holiness and abundance	Repenting is not fruitful	The fruits of enmity and dispute
Repenting is fruitful	God responds	Repenting according to the law	No response from the Lord

I reiterate my negative practices of repentance which focus on the form and appearances and I evaluate them. I see the extent of fear that drives them. What are the fruits that I am gaining from these practices and what is changing inside of me and my personality through them?

I review my positive repentance practices, the ones which focus on the content and the basis: the love of God, myself, and my neighbor. Where do I stand from them?

## Wednesday 23/3/2022 - Psalm 51 : Have mercy upon me, Oh God

In Psalm 51, the experience of repentance is based on realizing the sin, crushing the heart, and then doing the purging that results from the enlightening and reconciling work of God. Since the Lord has forgiven me, then I confess my sin. I am loved; therefore, I repented. I am forgiven; that's why I confess my sin before the Forgiving Lord. Repentance is a result and the fruit of being conscious about God's love to me. It is not a goal by itself. To repent means that I turn my face towards the Lord who grasps me and likewise I do not see what God Is Not.

### **Psalm 51 : 3-11 : The control of the sad dimension of repentance : being conscious about sin and purging is associated with having faith in the outburst of God's mercy.**

- I picture myself before God. I imagine His gazes at me. What is He telling me? What is He emphasizing on? What and how will I respond to Him?

- Without delving into the details of my sins, what is my essential sin?

### **Psalm 51 : 12-19. The control of the happy dimension of repentance: repentance, salvation and renewal are associated with the new birth of the soul and heart.**

- I picture God approaching me and stretching His hand out and touching my heart. How do I picture the new heart that He is creating in me?

- What do I promise the Lord to do? I taste God's loving gaze at me and I spend time with Him talking heart to heart.

### **Psalm 51 : 20-21. The liturgical dimension describing this act of repentance in its two dimensions: a rereading of all the prayer which will allow us to enter the liturgy of repentance in the Holy Temple.**

- Do all the religious practices I take part in show me God's merciful and loving gaze, or do they provoke in me a feeling of fear and push me to a continuous effort to earn God's love?

## Thursday 24/3/2022 - Luke 10 : 25-37 The Good Samaritan

The reading of the Good Samaritan embodies the effective and positive repentance. The Samaritan repented; however the priest and the Levite didn't. He "turned" (metanoia) his face away from himself and saw him. He "returned" from the road he had taken attracted by the other who is wounded and in pain. The Samaritan is liberated from the practices of the Jewish Law and the religion that are based on chastity and purity. I picture the scene; I imagine the place and the people who are passing by. I watch what the Samaritan is doing in details, and I hear what he is saying. I jot down what I am feeling.

The Samaritan's repentance is based on several small interconnected acts. I fill this table according to the experiences I have.

The acts of the Samaritan towards the others	I remember an act of Love that I did and that moved me	Overall evaluation of my acts towards the other
1. Awareness and attention		
2. Compassion		
3. Closeness		
4. Care		
5. Act of accompanying		
6. Cooperation		
7. inclusiveness		

## Friday 25/3/2022 - John 8 : 1-11 The woman caught in adultery

We meditate the story of the woman caught in adultery and who was led to the middle of the town square to be stoned according to the Jewish Law. I put myself among this circle (I imagine myself as one of the people who want to stone her, or as one of the witnesses, or as the woman herself, etc...). I imagine the scene. I see the details of the place; I hear the screams and the chats. I meditate Jesus's behaviour, His movement and His words. I see the crowd leave one after the other. I taste the outburst of mercy and the spirit of love in comparison to the harshness of justice and the religious law. Repentance, therefore, appears as a result of an outburst and an excess of love. I taste the extent of God's endless love to me, a love that has no rule, no condition, and no change. This love does not decrease and does not increase.

- compression
- shyness
- insult
- unfairness
- rejection/ refusal
- abandon/separation
- betrayal
- disappointment
- violation
- loss
- conflict
- gossiping
- disagreement
- manipulation/ attraction
- maliciousness

Which one of these aspects of stoning am I inflicting on others? Or I am being subject to myself?

## Saturday 26/3/2022 - Recapitulation

At the end of this fourth week, I review all the fruits that I have collected from my meditations. I try to link them and I write a letter God address to me in person. The letter includes four paragraphs, each starts with:

- I love you
- I create you
- I liberate you and make you a free man
- I forgive you

## The way to meditate

Before meditation: Like any other meeting, for this meeting of love, one should take an appointment with the Lord. That's why; I should pick a calm and beautiful place during the retreat where I can be alone. If the place is not in nature, I can arrange it and organize it to my taste (a candle, a holy icon, a painting, a carpet, etc...). The place can be changed afterwards depending on the circumstances or if it is not helping me meditate. I specify the time I vow to use to meet the Lord during (between 15 to 30 minutes – 30 minutes for the persons who have a good expertise in meditation)

During the meditation: I sit in a comfortable manner, for I am my body, and I will use this body to pray through it, with it and in it. I start exercising relaxation: I gradually feel my body parts and move the parts I feel are stiff. I concentrate and carefully listen to the close or far sounds around me. I breath slowly (inhale, exhale), and I try to hear my breath and my heart beats. I then slowly read the biblical passage and reread it another time. In narrative passages, I employ my senses using my imagination. I try to imagine myself in the place that is mentioned in the passage; I relate to a character I know and I become an observer of the actions taking place. I listen to the noise, words, sounds, and speeches. I smell the odours; I taste; I touch... I then stop at the thing that moves me from the passage, and I let the Spirit guide me. Meditation is not based on a thorough thinking or abundance in talking, but it is rather based on putting our self in the presence of the Lord. The steps of meditations aim to help me and are by no means mandatory. I finish my meditation – in any personal way I want – and with respect to the time I have assigned earlier for my meditation.

Post meditation: I reiterate whatever I have experienced during my meeting with the Lord. I jot down the things that moved me and what I have experienced and I write my thoughts, feelings, and questions. I try to remember that throughout the day (holy icon, thought or image, etc...)