GOOD RIDDANCE
Making a Clean Break

Israel’s 70 year captivity brought a stop to their worship of God.

And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes; all these he brought to Babylon. And they burnt the house of God... (2 Chron. 36:18,19)

The return of Israel to Jerusalem was a return to worship.

Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,

Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he hath charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

Who is there among you of all his people? his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of the LORD God of Israel, (he is the God,) which is in Jerusalem. (Ezra 1:1-4)

Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. (Ezra 1:7,8)

Isaiah prophesied the return of God’s people to their holy land and worship after being in captivity for 70 years.

Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the uncircumcised and the unclean.
Shake thyself from the dust; arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion. (Isaiah 52:1,2)

1.) The BEAUTIFUL FEET of TRUE EVANGELISTS

In the day of the return, "beautiful feet" would go forth with good news declaring to “Zion” that their God rules and had delivered them from the hand of the earthly powers that held them captive.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! (Isaiah 52:7)

The beautiful feet of Jesus declared that He had come to bring complete deliverance from captivity to sin.

They answered him, We be Abraham’s seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever.
If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. (John 8:33-36)
The beautiful feet of Paul declared that through the cross of Christ the reign of sin was over.

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin. (Romans 6:6,7)

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. (Romans 6:14)

Paul admonished the redeemed in Christ to offer each liberted part of their body, which was previously employed in the unclean service of sin, to the worship and service of God.

But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness.

I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness.

For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness.

What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death.

But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. (Romans 6:17-22)

2.) The FOCUSED EYES of TRUE WATCHMEN

Isaiah prophesied that in the return, watchmen who saw “eye to eye” would lift up their voice and sing together.

Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion. (Isaiah 52:8)

The prophetic watchmen were responsible for warning the people to turn from their sin.

Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. (Ezekiel 3:17)

The temple watchmen (i.e. porters) were responsible for guarding the temple from defilement.

And he set the porters at the gates of the house of the LORD, that none which was unclean in any thing should enter in. (2 Chronicles 23:19)

God gave Israel a holiness code and priests to teach them what would defile and destroy their holy standing and disqualify them from temple worship.

And they shall teach my people the difference between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. (Ezekiel 44:23)

In this day when the ceremonial law and Levitical priesthood have been abolished, how does one know what defiles?

The Holy Spirit is great enough to teach every surrendered saint what is unclean.
For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:
And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest. (Hebrews 8:10,11)

But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him. (1 John 2:27)

How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? (Hebrews 9:14)

True watchmen who “see eye to eye” major on what God majors on.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. (Matthew 23:23)

The Pharisees did not “see eye to eye” with Jesus.
They deemed themselves watchmen and believed that Jesus was not doing a good enough job as a watchman.

Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,
Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.
But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? (Matt. 15:1-3)

Jesus placed the focus of defilement on heart attitudes that are reflected by our speech.

But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man.
For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:
These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man. (Matthew 15:18-20)

Apostolic watchmen also warned the saints of the defiling power of corrupt or bitter words springing from the heart.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. (James 3:6)

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)

Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:
Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled (Hebrews 12:14,15)
3.) The CLEAN HANDS of TRUE WORSHIPPERS

Because His people would be "bearing the vessels of the Lord" they were charged to make a "clean break" with the defilements of their captivity.

Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD. (Isaiah 52:11)

One cannot stand in God’s presence or worship Him in an unclean state.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. (Ps. 24:3,4)

And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb’s book of life. (Revelation 21:27)

_defile > Greek verb - koinoo > to make common, to render unhallowed, to declare or count unclean

We become unclean when we have “touched” the demonic.
Before worshipping God at Bethel, Jacob charged his family to be clean by putting away their "strange gods."

Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments:
And let us arise, and go up to Bethel; and I will make there an altar unto God, who answered me in the day of my distress, and was with me in the way which I went.
And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. (Genesis 35:2-4)

The things which defiled us in the world are those things which were not of the Father, but of the devil.
In order to worship God in spirit and truth we must no longer “touch” the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (1 John 2:15,16)