

Messages From the Gates of Jerusalem
#13 - Dung Gate - Part I - Throw Out the Waste & the Garbage

Summary Points of the Valley Gate:

1. Develop in me the humility of Jesus Christ.
2. Self, the flesh, my sin nature: PRIDE must be slain. I must decrease; He must increase.
3. Promote spiritual growth and maturity.
4. Be equipped with proper attitude.
5. I am in "boot camp" as He prepares me to rule and reign in His literal, 1000 year Millennial Kingdom. Remember: Suffering comes before Glory. Servant comes before rulership.
6. Instructions for successful passage in the valley: Delight in the Lord; Depend on His strength alone; Set my heart on the journey with the attitude of being a "pilgrim"; Dig a well in the valley; Drink from the well. Praise while I dig and dig while I praise.

Call of the Dung Gate > It's Time to Take the Garbage Out

The Valley Gate has revealed weaknesses and sin in my life.

As a child of God, I must, in obedience, contend with the rubbish and refuse in my life.

Note: We are descending to the lowest part of the city and gates.

Nehemiah 4:10 *"The strength of the laborers is giving out, and there is so much rubble that we cannot rebuild the wall."* Rubbish and accumulated debris needed to be carried out and burned so that the work could be accomplished and completed.

"Well, what are you going to do about it? Get rid of the garbage and the power will come."

I. Purpose of the Literal Dung Gate

A. Important for Health of Physical Body

God in His wisdom provided numerous ways to rid our body of the daily toxins that bombard us. Killer T-cells to attack foreign invaders, a liver for toxins in our food, kidneys for toxins in our blood, tear ducts to wash dirt from our eyes, a bladder and colon to remove waste products, lungs to rid us of carbon dioxide. If we don't eliminate this waste, we will quickly be in serious physical jeopardy.

B. Important for Well-Being of Ancient Cities like Jerusalem

The Dung Gate was important for health, safety, and prevention of disease. People were employed in the removal of biological waste and dead organisms. (There was no plastic, etc.)

II. Purpose of A Spiritual Dung Gate

Warren Wiersbe "The sanitary disposal of waste materials is essential to the health of a city. This gate did not have a beautiful name, but it did perform an important service!

It reminds us that, like the city, each of us must get rid of whatever defiles us, or it may destroy us." Garbage in our lives will drain our strength.

The Dung Gate is the port for cleansing from defilement.

A. The Cry Of the Dung Gate - Its ascending smoke and perpetual fire remind you of your necessity to use this gate frequently.

1. Bring me all the rubbish and garbage of your life; the stench and filth; the pride.
2. Bring me your sin of self-reliance; self-exaltation; self-will; external religion
3. Bring me all your unconfessed sin.
4. Bring me your negative emotions.
5. Bring me your instances of grieving the Holy Spirit. (Eph. 4:25-32)

Extra Thought: The Holy Spirit is to be in me what I can NEVER be by myself.

He gives me the ability to be victorious. He makes Jesus REAL to me. He desires that I yield to Him, obey and open my heart to Him. He rushes in, changes me and transforms me.

Tragedy: Yet I GRIEVE Him by ignoring Him, resisting Him, doubting Him, sin against Him, refuse to Obey, and turn my back on Him.

Truth: I cannot be continually "filled" with the Holy Spirit unless I confess my garbage, present myself to Him in absolute surrender.

B. Message Of the Dung Gate: Necessity of Sanctification - Submit & Allow It

I Thess. 4:3 For this is the will of God, your sanctification

Rom. 8:29 It is the purpose to which He has called you - Be conformed to His image.

Sanctification Involves Obedience; Humility; Surrender > Transformation of Your Soul

A. Death of Our Flesh - Sin, which smells bad and destroys our heart and mind, must be put away, by the dying of the flesh. Mortify the Deeds of the Flesh

B. Walk in the Spirit.

C. Purify yourself; Be holy even as I am holy.

D. Be clothed with the humility of Christ

E. Be an empty vessel for His use.

Question: Wait! I am overwhelmed by these commands. I can't possibly obey and perform these commands. I can't sanctify or purify myself. I can't transform myself.

Good News: God's Holy Spirit, dwelling in believers, will "do the work" of sanctification (growing in holiness) in those who are willing to humble themselves and surrender to Him.

My Part: Applying this gate to my life and diligently using it will bring victory.

Continual, proper use will allow the power of the Holy Spirit to burn away the sin and garbage of my soul so I can experience the "fullness of Jesus" in my walk with the Lord.

Truth: Our Father has provided an abundant, victorious life for us in the fullness of Jesus Christ. He has given us the power of the Holy Spirit for this life to be lived and experienced in us. He desires that each of us successfully run our race and finish well.

Admonishment: Heb. 12:1 Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,
Use of The Dung Gate forces me to cast aside the weights and sin that so easily trip me up in my service to the Lord, my spiritual growth and from being molded into His image.

Spiritual "dung:" These will prevent me from absolute surrender, humility and knowing Jesus.

I. The Glory Of The Old Life - What did Paul "count as dung, rubbish"?

Phil. 3:4-6 If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

Philippians 3:7-10 But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Paul's confession: I want to KNOW Christ and the power of His resurrection, participate in His sufferings, become like Him in His death. I do ONE thing and I press toward the mark. Confidence in outward things will keep my soul from knowing Jesus.

As God's new creation, we count the glory of the old life as "dung" compared to knowing and experiencing the glory of Christ. We dump all this refuse out the Dung Gate.

Scripture admonishes us to bring the following to the dung pile and throw it out of our life.

II. Throw Out Strange gods & Idolatry

An idol is anything which takes the place and preeminence of God.

II Kings 23:6-8 And he (Josiah) brought out the wooden image from the house of the LORD, to the Brook Kidron outside Jerusalem, burned it at the Brook Kidron and ground *it* to ashes, and threw its ashes on the graves of the common people. ⁷ Then he tore down the *ritual* booths of the perverted persons that *were* in the house of the LORD, where the women wove hangings for the wooden image. ⁸ And he brought all the priests from the cities of Judah, and defiled the high places where the priests had burned incense, from Geba to Beersheba; also he broke down the high places at the gates which *were* at the entrance of the Gate of Joshua the governor of the city, which *were* to the left of the city gate.

II Chron. 33: 15 He took away the foreign gods and the idol from the house of the LORD, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of the LORD and in Jerusalem; and he cast *them* out of the city.

Acts 19 Ephesus was a center for the occult. God had enabled Paul to perform many miracles and demonstrate God's power in Satan's territory. However, Satan always sends a counterfeit to oppose the work. He knows many cannot tell the difference. After Paul, seven Jewish priests tried to cast out demons. Since they had no personal relationship with Christ, they invoked the name of Paul. Their scheme did not work. The demon said, "Jesus I recognize, and Paul I am acquainted with; but who are you?" The demonized man attacked the 7 priests and drove them from the house. If this exorcism had succeeded, it would have discredited the name of Jesus Christ. God used this scheme to defeat Satan and bring conviction to the believers who were still involved in magical arts. Instead of disgracing the name of Jesus, the event magnified His name and caused the Word of God to spread more rapidly.

Acts 19:18 And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds. The tense of the verb indicates that the people kept coming...kept confessing...kept showing."

The believers apparently had not made a clean break with sin and were still practicing their magic, but the Lord dealt with them.

Acts 19:19-20 Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned *them* in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and *it* totaled fifty thousand *pieces* of silver. (This was equivalent to the total salaries of 150 men working for an entire year.) These people did not count the cost but repented and turned from their sins. Result: So the word of the Lord grew mightily and prevailed.

III. Legalism > the attempt of man to sanctify himself by trying to carry out self imposed rules. Those who live by legalistic rules often place their unreachable standards on others, which can lead to judgmental attitudes. "Legalism stinks of pride and self inflicted rules."

a. Legalism and our flesh bring us into bondage.

b. We are to live in the liberty of Christ, relying on His Holy Spirit to empower us to obey God's Word.

Gal. 5:1 Christ has set us free to live a free life. So take your stand! Never again let anyone put a harness of slavery on you. I am emphatic about this. The moment any one of you submits to circumcision or any other rule-keeping system, at that same moment Christ's hard-won gift of freedom is squandered. (The Message)

II Cor. 3:17 Where the Spirit of the Lord *is*, there *is* liberty.

Phil. 2:13 for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure.

Truth: I must throw out all legality from my heart; Legality can't live with freedom in Christ. Throw out the legal spirit; take it right through the Dung Gate and dump it.

IV. Throw out Being Judgmental

Matt. 7:1-5 Judge not, that you be not judged. (*The tense signifies a once-for-all final judgment*)² For with what judgment you judge, you will be judged; and with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.³ And why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?⁴ Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the speck from your eye'; and look, a plank *is* in your own eye?⁵ Hypocrite! First

remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.

- a) If I judge myself first, I am preparing for that final judgment when I face Jesus Christ.
- b) The Pharisees "played God" as they condemned other people. They never considered that God would one day judge them.
- c) Purpose of self-judgment is to prepare us to serve others. We are obligated to help others grow in grace.
- d) The Pharisees judged and criticized others to make themselves look good.
- e) Christians should judge themselves so they can help others look good.
- f) If I do not face up to my own sins and confess them, I blind myself to myself. I cannot see clearly enough to help others.
- g) The Pharisees saw the sins of others, but would not look at their own sins.

Spiritual Outlook Matt. 6:22-23 "The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light. ²³ But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in you is darkness, how great *is* that darkness!
Thoughts: Eye represents the attitude of my mind. If my eye (mind) is focused on serving and glorifying God, there will be light within. If my eye (mind) is focused on self and things of the flesh, there will be darkness within. If what should be light is really darkness in my life, then I am being controlled by darkness. Outlook determines outcome.

- h) I must not pass judgment on others' motives. I can examine their actions and attitude.
- i) It is possible for a person to do a good work with a bad motive.

It is possible to fail in a task and be very sincerely motivated.

- j) When we stand before Christ at the Judgment Seat, He will examine the secrets of the heart and reward us accordingly.

Col. 3:22-25 Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God. ²³ And whatever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord and not to men, ²⁴ knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance; for you serve the Lord Christ. ²⁵ But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality.

- k) After I have judged myself honestly before God and have removed the things that blind me, then I can help others.

V. Throw Out The Stumbling Block

Isa. 57:14 Take the stumbling block (a cause of falling or sinning) out of the way of My people."

Rom. 14:13 Therefore (For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.) let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in *our* brother's way.

I Cor. 8:10-13 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse. ⁹ But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak. For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols? ¹¹ And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? ¹² But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ. ¹³ Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

Note: This is addressed primarily to the stronger Christians

Paul's Concern: Stronger Christians must help the weaker Christians to grow and mature.

The Issue: Stronger Christians are an offense (stumbling block) to the weaker Christians. Christian Liberty is the heart of the issue. Can a Christian eat meat that has been sacrificed to idols? Today: Should a Christian attend the movie theatres; watch TV; attend dances; drink, etc. ?

a) Knowledge: They knew that idols cannot contaminate food.

It is okay for ME to eat this meat.

b) The weaker Christians were offended (this act was a stumbling block to them).

They had been saved out of pagan idolatry. Why are you eating this meat?

c) Paul's counsel: Strong Ones KNOW that a nonexistent god cannot contaminate the meat.

d) You cannot always solve a problem with logic. Illus.: A little child who is afraid of the dark will not be assured by arguments, especially if the adult adopts a superior attitude.

e) Knowledge can be a weapon to fight with or a tool to build with. It knowledge "puffs up," it cannot "build up" (edify).

f) Paul's concern: Strong ones were puffing up self instead of building up the weaker ones.

Truths: A know-it-all attitude is evidence of ignorance.

It is one thing to know doctrine; it is quite another thing to know God. It is possible to grow in Bible knowledge and yet not grow in grace or in one's personal relationship with Christ.

g) Weaker Christians:

Need the security of laws and rules; afraid to use their liberty in Christ yet.

Weaker Christians are prone to criticize and judge stronger Christians.

Weaker Christians are prone to stumble over what the stronger Christians are doing.

h) Love & Knowledge must go together. Speak the truth in love. (Eph. 4:15)

i) Knowledge coupled with Love will build up the weak by putting others first.

j) Knowledge without love yields a big head instead of an enlarged heart.

"Some Christians grow; others just swell."

l) The conscience bears witness to God's moral law. It depends upon knowledge.

As I increase in spiritual knowledge and act on it, my conscience becomes stronger.

m) Christians with a weak conscience:

Recently born again - they need to be guarded carefully.

Those who will not grow. - Ignore their Bible - remain in a state of infancy

Those who are afraid of freedom - They are like a child who is old enough to go to school, who is afraid to leave home and must be taken to school each day.

- n) Conscience of a weak Christian: It is easily defiled; easily wounded; easily offended
- o) Therefore: Paul's Counsel > The stronger Christians must defer to the weaker Christians and do nothing that would harm them.
- p) The weaker Christian may imitate the stronger Christian and be led into sin.
- q) NOTE: Defer in love ONLY that the stronger one might help the weaker one mature. Seek to edify or build up. OR both could become weak.

Matt. 16:23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan (adversary)! You are an offense (literal: stumbling block) to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God (What was God's will for His Son), but the things of men."

- a) Peter had said it was not right for Jesus to suffer and die. Thinking like a man
- b) Until Peter was filled with the Spirit, he had a tendency to argue with God's Word.
- c) Notice: Peter could not believe that it was right for Jesus to suffer and die. Satan agreed with Peter's words. He used the same approach to tempt Jesus in the wilderness.

Point to Ponder: Am I thinking like man? Do I accept by faith that I am to die to self and suffer? Do I listen to Satan's whispers of poison? > Hath God really said? Surely, He didn't exactly mean that? Do my actions reveal that I am arguing with God about humility and absolute surrender? What is preventing me from obeying God's will for my life?

- d) Where do I find the mind of God? In His Word
- e) Jesus presented 2 approaches to life.

Deny Yourself	Live for Yourself
Take Up Your Cross	Ignore the Cross
Follow Christ	Follow the World
Lose Your Life for His Sake	Save Your Life for Your Own Sake
Keep Your Soul	Lose Your Soul
Share His Reward and Glory	Lose His Reward & Glory

- f) Deny Yourself: Give yourself wholly to Christ. Share in His shame and death.
- g) Take up your cross: DOES NOT mean to carry burdens or have problems
- h) Take up your cross MEANS: Identify with Christ in His rejection, shame, suffering and death. Suffering always leads to glory!
- i) Matt. 16:27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works.

Challenge: Am I willing for absolute surrender? Am I willing to surrender ALL to Jesus?