

Ashes To Beauty

To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for ashes, The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified. Isaiah 61:3

The Lord Jesus Christ, Messiah, is anointed to trade our ashes for His beauty. Time and time again, as I watch Immanuel do His amazing work, He does just that. Often in my own work, I cannot conceive of a solution to my traumatic memory, but He brings me to righteousness, peace and joy. When I expect harsh judgment, He gives mercy. When I have deep seated lies, He gives truth. When I've done it all wrong, He gives love and forgiveness. When I have nothing, He becomes everything.

Studies included in this article are: Sackcloth And Ashes As A Sign of Repentance; Dust And Ashes As A Sign of Absolute Nothingness; Ceremonial Uses of Ashes; Ashes Signifying Death; Sitting or Rolling in Ashes As A Sign of Abject Grief And Destitution; Ashes As Symbols of Dispersion; Life After Ashes; Our Redeemer; Scriptures of Restoration (Money and Goods; Israel/Nations; Years of Loss; Relationships With Family; All Things); Examples of Ashes to Beauty (King Nebuchadnezzar; Naaman; The Temple of the Lord; Prodigal Son; Jesus; Believers).

[For more information on this topic, please see: "Amaazing!"; "Restoration"](#)

Sackcloth And Ashes As A Sign of Repentance

Esther 4:1 When Mordecai learned all that had happened, he tore his clothes and put on [sackcloth and ashes](#), and went out into the midst of the city. He cried out with a loud and bitter cry.

Esther 4:3 And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in [sackcloth and ashes](#).

Isaiah 58:5 Is it a fast that I have chosen, A day for a man to afflict his soul? *Is it* to bow down his head like a bulrush, And to spread out [sackcloth and ashes](#)? Would you call this a fast, And an acceptable day to the LORD?

Jeremiah 6:26 O daughter of my people, Dress in [sackcloth](#) And roll about in [ashes](#)! Make mourning *as for* an only son, most bitter lamentation; For the plunderer will suddenly come upon us.

Daniel 9:3 Then I set my face toward the Lord God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting, [sackcloth, and ashes](#).

Jonah 3:6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered *himself* with [sackcloth and](#) sat in [ashes](#).

Matthew 11:21 Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in [sackcloth and ashes](#).
Cp. Luke 10:13

Dust And Ashes As A Sign of Absolute Nothingness

Genesis 18:27 Then Abraham answered and said, "Indeed now, I who *am but* [dust and ashes](#) have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord."

Job 30:19 He has cast me into the mire, And I have become like [dust and ashes](#).

Job 42:6 Therefore I abhor *myself*, And repent in [dust and ashes](#).

Ezekiel 27:30 They will make their voice heard because of you; They will cry bitterly and cast [dust](#) on their heads; They will roll about in [ashes](#).

Ceremonial Uses of Ashes

Exodus 27:3 Also you shall make its pans to receive its [ashes](#), and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans; you shall make all its utensils of bronze.

Leviticus 1:16 And he shall remove its crop with its feathers and cast it beside the altar on the east side, into the place for [ashes](#).

Leviticus 4:12 The whole bull he shall carry outside the camp to a clean place, where the [ashes](#) are poured out, and burn it on wood with fire; where the [ashes](#) are poured out it shall be burned.

Leviticus 6:10 And the priest shall put on his linen garment, and his linen trousers he shall put on his body, and take up the [ashes](#) of the burnt offering which the fire has consumed on the altar, and he shall put them beside the altar.

Leviticus 6:11 Then he shall take off his garments, put on other garments, and carry the [ashes](#) outside the camp to a clean place.

Numbers 4:13 Also they shall take away the [ashes](#) from the altar, and spread a purple cloth over it.

Numbers 19:9 Then a man *who is* clean shall gather up the [ashes](#) of the heifer, and store *them* outside the camp in a clean place; and they shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for the water of purification; it *is* for purifying from sin.

Numbers 19:10 And the one who gathers the [ashes](#) of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until evening. It shall be a statute forever to the children of Israel and to the stranger who dwells among them.

Numbers 19:17 'And for an unclean *person* they shall take some of the [ashes](#) of the heifer burnt for purification from sin, and running water shall be put on them in a vessel.

Hebrews 9:13-14 For if the blood of bulls and goats and the [ashes](#) of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, "how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"

Ashes Signifying Death

2 Samuel 13:19 Then Tamar put [ashes](#) on her head, and tore her robe of many colors that *was* on her, and laid her hand on her head and went away crying bitterly.

1 Kings 13:3 And he gave a sign the same day, saying, "This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the [ashes](#) on it shall be poured out."

1 Kings 13:5 The altar also was split apart, and the [ashes](#) poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD.

2 Kings 23:4 And the king commanded Hilkiah the high priest, the priests of the second order, and the doorkeepers, to bring out of the temple of the LORD all the articles that were made for Baal, for Asherah, and for all the host of heaven; and he burned them outside Jerusalem in the fields of Kidron, and carried their [ashes](#) to Bethel.

2 Kings 23:6 And he 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.

Job 13:12 Your platitudes *are* proverbs of [ashes](#), Your defenses are defenses of clay.

Psalms 102:9 For I have eaten [ashes](#) like bread, And mingled my drink with weeping.

Isaiah 44:20 He feeds on [ashes](#); A deceived heart has turned him aside; And he cannot deliver his soul, Nor say, "*Is there* not a lie in my right hand?"

Ezekiel 28:18 You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to [ashes](#) upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you.

Malachi 4:3 You shall trample the wicked, For they shall be [ashes](#) under the soles of your feet On the day that I do *this*," Says the LORD of hosts.

2 Peter 2:6 And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into [ashes](#), condemned *them* to destruction, making *them* an example to those who afterward would live ungodly.

Sitting or Rolling in Ashes As A Sign of Abject Grief And Destitution

Esther 4:3 And in every province where the king's command and decree arrived, *there was* great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; and many lay in [sackcloth and ashes](#).

Job 2:8 And he took for himself a potsherd with which to scrape himself while he sat in the midst of the [ashes](#).

Jeremiah 6:26 O daughter of my people, Dress in [sackcloth](#) And roll about in [ashes](#)! Make mourning *as for* an only son, most bitter lamentation; For the plunderer will suddenly come upon us.

Jeremiah 25:34 Wail, shepherds, and cry! Roll about *in the* [ashes](#), You leaders of the flock! For the days of your slaughter and your dispersions are fulfilled; You shall fall like a precious vessel.

Lamentations 3:16 He has also broken my teeth with gravel, And covered me with [ashes](#).

Jonah 3:6 Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered *himself* with [sackcloth and](#) sat in [ashes](#).

Ashes As Symbols of Dispersion

Exodus 9:8 So the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Take for yourselves handfuls of [ashes](#) from a furnace, and let Moses scatter it toward the heavens in the sight of Pharaoh.

Exodus 9:10 Then they took [ashes](#) from the furnace and stood before Pharaoh, and Moses scattered *them* toward heaven. And *they* caused boils that break out in sores on man and beast.

Psalms 147:16 He gives snow like wool; He scatters the frost like [ashes](#).

Life After Ashes

Isaiah 61:3 To console those who mourn in Zion, To give them beauty for [ashes](#), The oil of joy for mourning, The garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

Jeremiah 31:40 And the whole valley of the dead bodies and of the [ashes](#), and all the fields as far as the Brook Kidron, to the corner of the Horse Gate toward the east, *shall be* holy to the LORD. It shall not be plucked up or thrown down anymore forever.

Our Redeemer

Job 19:25 For I know *that* my [Redeemer](#) lives, And He shall stand at last on the earth.

Psalms 19:14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart Be acceptable in Your sight, O LORD, my strength and my [Redeemer](#).

Psalms 78:35 Then they remembered that God *was* their rock, And the Most High God their [Redeemer](#).

Proverbs 23:11 For their [Redeemer](#) *is* mighty; He will plead their cause against you.

Isaiah 41:14 "Fear not, you worm Jacob, You men of Israel! I will help you," says the LORD And your [Redeemer](#), the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 43:14 Thus says the LORD, your [Redeemer](#), The Holy One of Israel: "For your sake I will send to Babylon, And bring them all down as fugitives—The Chaldeans, who rejoice in their ships.

Isaiah 44:6 "Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, And his [Redeemer](#), the LORD of hosts: 'I *am* the First and I *am* the Last; Besides Me *there is* no God.

Isaiah 44:24 Thus says the LORD, your [Redeemer](#), And He who formed you from the womb: "I *am* the LORD, who makes all *things*, Who stretches out the heavens all alone, Who spreads abroad the earth by Myself.

Isaiah 47:4 *As for* our [Redeemer](#), the LORD of hosts *is* His name, The Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 48:17 Thus says the LORD, your [Redeemer](#), The Holy One of Israel: "I *am* the LORD your God, Who teaches you to profit, Who leads you by the way you should go.

Isaiah 49:7 Thus says the LORD, The [Redeemer](#) of Israel, their Holy One, To Him whom man despises, To Him whom the nation abhors, To the Servant of rulers: "Kings shall see and arise, Princes also shall worship, Because of the LORD who is faithful, The Holy One of Israel; And He has chosen You."

Isaiah 49:26 I will feed those who oppress you with their own flesh, And they shall be drunk with their own blood as with sweet wine. All flesh shall know That I, the LORD, *am* your Savior, And your [Redeemer](#), the Mighty One of Jacob."

Isaiah 54:5 For your Maker *is* your husband, The LORD of hosts *is* His name; And your [Redeemer](#) *is* the Holy One of Israel; He is called the God of the whole earth.

Isaiah 54:8 With a little wrath I hid My face from you for a moment; But with everlasting kindness I will have mercy on you," Says the LORD, your [Redeemer](#).

Isaiah 59:20 "The [Redeemer](#) will come to Zion, And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob," Says the LORD.

Isaiah 60:16 You shall drink the milk of the Gentiles, And milk the breast of kings; You shall know that I, the LORD, *am* your Savior And your [Redeemer](#), the Mighty One of Jacob.

Isaiah 63:16 Doubtless You *are* our Father, Though Abraham was ignorant of us, And Israel does not acknowledge us. You, O LORD, *are* our Father; Our [Redeemer](#) from Everlasting *is* Your name.

Jeremiah 50:34 Their Redeemer is strong; The LORD of hosts is His name. He will thoroughly plead their case, That He may give rest to the land, And disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

Scriptures of Restoration

Money and Goods:

Exodus 22:4 If the theft is certainly found alive in his hand, whether it is an ox or donkey or sheep, he shall restore double.

Leviticus 6:4-5 Then it shall be, because he has sinned and is guilty, that he shall restore what he has stolen, or the thing which he has extorted, or what was delivered to him for safekeeping, or the lost thing which he found, or all that about which he has sworn falsely. He shall restore its full value, add one-fifth more to it, *and* give it to whomever it belongs, on the day of his trespass offering.

Proverbs 6:30-31 People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy himself when he is starving. Yet *when* he is found, he must restore sevenfold; He may have to give up all the substance of his house.

Israel/Nations:

Jeremiah 1:10 See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, To root out and to pull down, To destroy and to throw down, To build and to plant.

Jeremiah 24:6 'For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up.

Jeremiah 31:28 And it shall come to pass, *that* as I have watched over them to pluck up, to break down, to throw down, to destroy, and to afflict, so I will watch over them to build and to plant, says the LORD.

Jeremiah 32:41 Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will assuredly plant them in this land, with all My heart and with all My soul.

Jeremiah 42:10 'If you will still remain in this land, then I will build you and not pull you down, and I will plant you and not pluck you up. For I relent concerning the disaster that I have brought upon you.

Years of Loss:

Joel 1:4; 2:25 What the chewing locust left, the swarming locust has eaten; What the swarming locust left, the crawling locust has eaten; And what the crawling locust left, the consuming locust has eaten...So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you.

Relationships With Family:

Proverbs 22:6 Train up a child in the way he should go, And when he is old he will not depart from it.

Psalms 27:10 When my father and my mother forsake me, Then the LORD will take care of me.

All Things:

Acts 3:19-21 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until [the times of restoration of all things](#), which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Romans 8:28-29 And we know that [all things work together for good to those who love God](#), to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Revelation 21:5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "[Behold, I make all things new.](#)" And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful."

Examples of Ashes to Beauty:

King Nebuchadnezzar: All this came upon King Nebuchadnezzar. At the end of the twelve months he was walking about the royal palace of Babylon. The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honor of my majesty?" While the word was still in the king's mouth, a voice fell from heaven: "King Nebuchadnezzar, to you it is spoken: the kingdom has departed from you! And they shall drive you from men, and your dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field. They shall make you eat grass like oxen; and seven times shall pass over you, until you know that the Most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomever He chooses." That very hour the word was fulfilled concerning Nebuchadnezzar; he was driven from men and ate grass like oxen; his body was wet with the dew of heaven till his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws. And at the end of the time I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted my eyes to heaven, and my understanding returned to me; and I blessed the Most High and praised and honored Him who lives forever: For His dominion is an everlasting dominion, And His kingdom is from generation to generation. All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; He does according to His will in the army of heaven And among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand Or say to Him, "What have You done?" At the same time my reason returned to me, and for the glory of my kingdom, my honor and splendor returned to me. My counselors and nobles resorted to me, I was restored to my kingdom, and excellent majesty was added to me. Now I, Nebuchadnezzar, praise and extol and honor the King of heaven, all of whose works are truth, and His ways justice. And those who walk in pride He is able to put down. Daniel 4:28-37

Naaman: Now [Naaman](#), commander of the army of the king of Syria, was a great and honorable man in the eyes of his master, because by him the LORD had given victory to Syria. He was also a mighty man of valor, *but a leper...* So he went down and dipped seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God; and his flesh was restored like the flesh of a little child, and he was clean. 2 Kings 5:1, 14

The Temple of the Lord: Who is left among you who saw this temple in its former glory? And how do you see it now? In comparison with it, is this not in your eyes as nothing? ...For thus says the LORD of hosts: 'Once more (it is a little while) I will shake heaven and earth, the sea and dry land; and I will shake all nations,

and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,' says the LORD of hosts. 'And in this place I will give peace,' says the LORD of hosts. Haggai 2:3, 6-9

Prodigal Son: Then He said: "A certain man had two sons...And not many days after, the younger son gathered all together, journeyed to a far country, and there wasted his possessions with prodigal living... But when he came to himself, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 'I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants. And he arose and came to his father. But when he was still a great way off, his father saw him and had compassion, and ran and fell on his neck and kissed him. Luke 15:11, 13, 17-20

Jesus: But if the Spirit of Him who [raised Jesus](#) from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you. Romans 8:11

Believers: No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will [raise him](#) up at the last day... Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will [raise him](#) up at the last day. John 6:44, 54

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