SPIRITUAL PRACTISES OF THE LATTER RAIN MISSION

Spiritual Practises:

The purpose of humanity's creation is to glorify the Lord their God. As children of the Lord, believers' greatest desire should be to worship God. When believers worship God, they acknowledge who He is and ascribe worth to Him.

We regard the various practices in the Latter Rain Mission as different expressions of worship to the Lord. In the process, all these practices should serve to strengthen believers' personal relationship with Jesus Christ, promote growth towards spiritual maturity, build up the congregation, and expand the kingdom of Jesus Christ on earth.

1. With Clapping of Hands and Shouts of Joy!

Praise is a very important element of our relationship with the Lord for Latter Rain believers. We do this spontaneously by clapping our hands and accompanying it with declarations of praise, e.g. "Hallelujah!"; "Praise the Lord!"; "Praise Him!"; "Praise His wonderful Name!", etc. Praise with heart, mouth, and hands is part of our daily lives as individuals, as well as during prayer meetings and services, as the Holy Spirit leads us.

Psalm 47 begins so beautifully with: "O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph!" We should not only clap our hands; we must also shout to the honour of the Lord with a voice of rejoicing!

Not only humanity, but all of creation must praise the Lord! Let the rivers clap their hands, and let the mountains rejoice together before the presence of the Lord (Ps. 98:8, 9).

As believers, we also do this when we sing songs of praise to magnify His Name in worship, with our hands, our voices, and our bodies!

2. Song and Dance

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; sing and make music in your hearts to the Lord (Eph. 5:19).

In this verse, we read about various types of songs with which believers glorify God: psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Joy and gratitude sometimes lead to a spontaneous exuberance and a desire to sing songs of praise. At other times,

believers feel the need—while in a spirit of worship—to lift their hands toward Him as they sing songs of adoration.

2.1 Chorus songs (koortjies) are songs consisting of only a single refrain. (We also describe these as songs of praise.)

Spiritual Dance (koordanse) are spontaneous dances performed to the rhythm of a song that has a single refrain. We typically sing these chorus-songs in the form of lively hymns (songs of praise) to glorify the Lord through both melody and lyrics: "*I will build you up again, and you will be rebuilt, O Virgin Israel! You will again adorn yourself with your tambourines and go out to join the dance of the merrymakers*" (Jer. 31:4).

It is also while singing these songs that we clap our hands and- like David - dance before the Lord to the beat of the music: "Let them praise His name with dancing, and make music to Him with tambourine and harp" (Ps. 149:3). We do this with total abandon, just as King David did when he danced with all his might before the presence of the LORD (2 Sam. 6:14).

2.2 Worship songs are spiritual songs, typically structured with verses and a chorus, and sung at a moderate to slow tempo. Through the singing of these songs, our sole intention is to offer worship and adoration to our God. The lyrics generally focus on the victory achieved through the work of Christ on the cross and cleansing by His blood; the triumph of Christ's resurrection from the dead; and the reverence due to God the Father, Jesus Christ the Son, and the Holy Spirit (as is also the case with short choruses).

Worship songs and short choruses are sung interchangeably during prayer meetings and services, depending on the leading of the Holy Spirit for that specific occasion.

3. Spiritual Struggling

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul mentions that we, as children of the Lord, are engaged in a spiritual struggle. The way in which this struggle is practiced and carried out can be either literal or figurative in nature.

Believers may experience an inner spiritual struggle (within the mind and heart), or even, to a literal extent, a physical struggle before the Lord against evil spirits in the atmosphere—manifested by "rolling in the dust," through actual rolling movements on the ground: "*In Beth-Ophrah I have rolled myself in the dust!*" (Micah 1:10). During a time of mortal danger, God instructed His people: "*Daughter of My people, gird yourself with sackcloth and roll yourself in the ashes*" (Jer. 6:26).

Wrestling is a deeply personal practice, usually engaged in during the privacy of a believer's quiet time with the Lord, or sometimes during prayer meetings, should the Holy Spirit lead us to do so.

4. The Cleansing Blood of Jesus

Throughout the New Testament, the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ is affirmed: "*But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin*" (1 John 1:7).

In prayer, we often make use of this precious manifestation by praying (pleading) the blood of Jesus Christ over ourselves—and especially when praying together with fellow believers who require a cleansing prayer regarding certain bondages in their lives.

Praying the blood of Jesus Christ for the purpose of cleansing is a precious way to glorify the finished work of Christ on the cross.

5. Confessing of Sin

According to James 5:16, we, as New Testament believers, are encouraged to confess our sins to one another.

Confessing one's sins to a fellow brother or sister during prayer serves as a precious and liberating force for every believer's spiritual growth and life.

Once prayer has been offered together - and sins, transgressions, and bondages have been voiced - we also pray collectively for the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ to be applied to these matters. ("...and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...").

Furthermore, James states that the prayer of a righteous person has great power; therefore, we believe it is important that - after sins have been dealt with by bringing them before the Lord in the presence of a brother or sister - a prayer for cleansing and deliverance be offered. This is because certain sins and transgressions create spiritual bondages in our lives, from which we must be set free.

6. Sackcloth and ash

According to Matthew, Jesus referred to the use of sackcloth and ashes as a form of humiliation and repentance: *"Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have*

repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.

In Old Testament times, the concept of "sackcloth and ashes" served as a symbol of humiliation, repentance, and/or mourning. A person would put on sackcloth, sit in ashes, and scatter ashes upon their head. The sackcloth was originally made from coarse goat hair, making it very scratchy and uncomfortable to wear. Such sacks were used for storing grain - much like the material (hessian/burlap) used for sacks today. The ashes were obtained from burnt wood and symbolized desolation and destruction.

When King Ahasuerus issued a decree that all the Jews were to be killed on a single day, their reaction was as follows: "*And in every province where the king's command and his decree arrived, there was great mourning among the Jews, with fasting, weeping, and wailing; many lay in sackcloth and ashes*" (Esther 4:3).

When a person humbles themselves - symbolized by sackcloth and ashes - and the Lord delivers them from their distress, the psalmist writes: "*He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap*" (Ps. 113:7).

If the need arises, we may freely use sackcloth and ashes during times of seclusion and prayer before the Lord, as a symbol of humility and submission. Of course, it is not merely the use of sackcloth and ashes that moves the Lord's heart, but rather the sincere humility before God that such an act demonstrates: "*Because your heart was tender and you humbled yourself before the LORD... I have also heard you, declares the LORD*" (2 Kings 22:19).

Even the apostle James advocates for humility before the Lord in order to be heard: "*Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up*" (James 4:10).

Following sincere repentance, God's forgiveness leads David to rejoice with these words: "*You have turned my wailing into a dance; You have removed my sackcloth and clothed me with joy*" (Ps. 30:12).
