



**B**EHOLD, *I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* (Psalm 51:5-7)

This is a prayer hymn of petition and praise to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Both the lyrics and tune are the composition of a Methodist minister, James Nicholson, in 1872. The tune title shares the title of the hymn.

### **Lord Jesus, I Long to be Perfectly Whole**

Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole;  
I want Thee forever to ransom my soul.  
Break down ev'ry idol, cast out ev'ry foe:  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Chorus:

Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow;  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Lord Jesus, for this I most humbly entreat;  
I wait, blessed Lord, at Thy crucified feet.  
By faith, for my cleansing I see Thy blood flow:  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. [Chorus]

Lord Jesus, Thou knowest I patiently wait;  
Come now, and within me a new heart create.  
To those who have sought Thee, Thou never said No:  
Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. [Chorus]

*1 Lord Jesus, I long to be perfectly whole; I want Thee forever to ransom my soul. Break down ev'ry idol, cast out ev'ry foe: Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* You could be the most conditioned Olympic runner or wrestler in history, but without Christ, you would not be whole. How often did Christ, in healing lepers and others, pronounce them not only healed of their physical malady but also whole in every sense. That means their sins, their most deadly disease, were forgiven them. Jesus always practice a medical approach called 'TRIAGE' a French term meaning to treat the most serious affliction first – this, He always did! Example: A man paralyzed with palsy was brought by others to Jesus. Before commanding the man to arise and walk, Jesus

remitted his sins first because that disease is more serious than leprosy, palsy, blindness, etc. *And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.* (Matthew 9:2) Once ransomed by the Lord, always ransomed. When the Strong Lord abides truly in your heart, He will vanquish every demon and idol. When you are washed by the Lord, you are washed every whit. *He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.* (John 13:10) That one which was clean was the son of perdition – Judas.

**2 Lord Jesus, for this I most humbly entreat; I wait, blessed Lord, at Thy crucified feet. By faith, for my cleansing I see Thy blood flow: Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. [Chorus]** There was a handful only of disciples at the foot of the cross of Jesus – all women disciples except for John. The hearts of the women were filled with love for Christ, and John was the disciple for whom Christ bore an especial love perhaps owing to his youthfulness and natural innocence. It took courage to remain at the cross in the face of powerful enemies, yet love compelled them there. Love will compel every believer called by the Holy Ghost to that cross. It is by way of the cross of Christ that we are washed of our sins. But we, too, must bear our cross in following Christ – even if it leads to our Calvary. The recurring refrain concerning being washed ‘whiter than snow’ is addressed in the chorus of this song at the end of this devotion.

**3 Lord Jesus, Thou knowest I patiently wait; Come now, and within me a new heart create. To those who have sought Thee, Thou never said No: Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. [Chorus]** Blind Bartimaeus waited patiently for the first many years of his life for the passing Savior; Zacchaeus climbed a tree and patiently waited for a surprised first meeting of the Lord; the Samaritan Woman at Jacob’s Well made many grueling trips to that well in the heat of the day for that same confrontation with the One who could provide for her the Water of Life; and the woman taken in Adultery was dragged by her worst enemies to the only One who could do her the greatest good. Patience in waiting upon the Lord is proof of faith and perseverance in our search for the Way, the Truth, and the Life. *31 But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.* (Isaiah 40:3) *1 & 13 I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living. 14 Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.* (Psalm 27:12-13)

### **Chorus**

***Whiter than snow, yes, whiter than snow; Now wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.*** I have often written of this degree of whiteness as explained in Scripture. *Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.* I apologize to my regular readers for covering this same verse again (I have done so often in the past, but I feel it vitally essential in understanding the manner in which the Lord washes us. First of all, it helps to be reminded of the natural use of hyssop in cleansing the body, and the unique means by which snowflakes are formed in the upper atmosphere. Hyssop is a medicinal herb used in the Middle East as a purgative. It cleanses the intestinal tract. Before our Lord cleanses our actions and behaviors, He must cleanse our inner man. That is what is meant by ‘*purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean.*’ Every snowflake that is formed in the upper atmosphere requires a tiny impurity of smoke or dust around which to form and coalesce. Without that speck of impurity in the crystal, there can be no snowflake. So, even though snow appears to be perfectly white, let us recall that every snowflake has a tiny impurity at its core; but not the ransomed of the Lord – He will remove every blemish! We are, in fact, made to be whiter than snow – not by appearance only, but by nature and character.