

PRAYER
FASTING
AND
SPIRITUAL
WARFARE



GEORGE AKALONU

Imprint

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Prologue

PRAYER, FASTING AND SPIRITUAL WARFARE

This book presents fresh insights into the issue of Prayer and Spiritual Warfare. This is a vital ministry and spiritual activity which, when misused, abused or wrongly applied produces negative fruit. We therefore find it necessary to present a biblical understanding of this vital ministry.

Synopsis

In order to better understand this subject, these core questions need to be answered:

- What is Prayer?
- What are the linkages between prayer and the will of Yahweh?
- In what way can we rightly describe intercession as the birthing of the will of Yahweh or partnering with Him to bring His counsel to pass?
- What kind of example did Yeshua, Jesus leave us in the ministry of prayer?
- What is the pattern of prayer He instructs?
- Why are saints torn between setting aside the pattern Jesus taught and making it a rigid religious construct?

What is Fasting?

When and how is fasting to be added to prayers

- What is spiritual warfare?
- How do we distinguish between spiritual, spiritist, soulish and devilish operations in the arena of prayer and spiritual warfare?
- What are doctrines of devils (demons) in the ministry of prayer and spiritual warfare?

Chapter One

PRAYER

Definition

Prayer is the lifestyle and act of communicating with Abba, our Father in heaven in order to worship Him and draw down His Divine Power intervention on earth.

Linkages between Prayer and the will of Yahweh

Our definition implies that Prayer is not just talking to Abba or dumping our needs on Him and hurrying out of His Presence. It implies rather that, by prayer, we take a posture of coming to Him to forge a strategic partnership through which His strength combines with our legal mandate as He assigns on planet earth to bring all things and events in line with His determinate Counsel.

Understanding of some scriptures will usher us into a whole new dynamic in the arena of prayer and spiritual warfare:

“²⁶ And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. ²⁸ And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth”.

Genesis 1:26-28

Right in the first chapter of the Holy Bible, a critical truth which helps us to pray with burden and authority is established. We are created in the image and likeness of Elohim and planted on earth to be His assigns or legal representatives. Look at this way: those who walk with Elohim, the creator of the universe and align with Him in the understanding of why He created them as expressed in this passage will come to a place where they have a healthy spiritual esteem of their mission and mandate. As Ambassadors of the Kingdom of heaven in the earth realm, they know instinctively that reporting for duty before the Throne of the Most High is a normal activity. No Ambassador can successfully represent a King if he has no real relationship. In the

same way, no Ambassador can successfully represent a Kingdom without constant recourse to the Capital of his nation, no prayer warrior can represent heaven on earth without constant visits to the Throne Room of the Most High!

“¹⁵ And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it”. **Genesis 2:15**

Let this truth sink into us that we are planted in the earth realm to ‘dress it and keep it’. This means we cannot be indifferent to things happening anywhere on the face of this planet. We cannot assume that anything does not concern us. If we truly understand our Genesis 1:26-28 and Genesis 2:15 mandate, we will surely seek to know the will of Abba in ALL things so that we can align our will and prayers with same!

“¹⁶ The heaven, even the heavens, are the LORD'S: but the earth hath he given to the children of men”. **Psalms 115:16**

This scripture establishes with finality, that the earth realm is given to humans to manage! We may not have political, economic, social or financial power as humans count such. But if we understand and walk in our spiritual standing as Legal Ambassadors of the Most High who created the earth and dare to constantly seek His will and purpose in everything and pray accordingly, He will simply use us to re-direct the course of life and natural events on earth!

From the day that Yashua, Jesus was conceived in the womb of Mary, heaven invaded the earth realm. The prophecy of the Seed of the woman who would crush the head of Satan was activated to be fulfilled on Calvary when Yashua, Jesus pronounced with finality ‘It is finished’!

Mankind is the legal assign of Yahweh to manage and rule the affairs of the earth. That legal right was stolen by the Devil through subtlety when he deceived Adam and Eve. At the Cross, Jesus broke that legal right Satan plucked off man and restored us to pre-eminence in Yeshua, Jesus. In teaching us how to pray, Yashua made the will of The Father a fulcrum:

“¹⁰ Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven”. **Matthew 6:10**

As long as our lives are under submission to Abba and as long as His Word is our will, we will pray prayers that are after His heart and we will receive His positive response.

In a real sense, those who truly pray act as spiritual mid-wives who posture themselves to know and bring to pass the counsel of the Most High in the earth realm!

In prayer, we do not try to dump a wish list on a tight-fisted, impersonal 'god' but come to the fountain of wisdom, intelligence and knowledge. He knows exactly what is best for us, when and how to release it. Aligning ourselves to his heart and frame of mind draws down His blessings!

The Holy Spirit helps the infirmities of saints for two reasons. The first is that our finite minds may not always comprehend the infinite mind of Yahweh. Secondly, on a day to day basis, saints may have allowed clutter and cares of this life to block their spiritual senses. The Holy Spirit comes to our rescue at such times.

*“²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God” . **Romans 8:26-27***

Implications of Prayer

To pray therefore is to exercise confidence and trust in Yahweh our Father and to rely wholly on His ability to take care of the issues we bring to Him!

Whatever therefore that keeps us away from communing consistently with Yahweh in prayer is actually part of the web of intrigue spun by Satan to make saints lose their precious axe head! It is time to recover the axe head and begin to grow our prayer life to the degree that we all – regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity or socio-economic status - can literally demonstrate the Kingdom wherever we are on planet earth!

The Kingdom to which we are called is not in words but in power so much so that the word “impossible” should never feature in the lexicon of saints. This is serious business, saints: we must rise up from slumber and go forth as Ambassadors of the King of Kings with the trade mark ability to call forth things that be not as if they were and see them manifested, because we dare to pray with importunity and unwavering faith, an inheritance from Abraham who secured the gift of righteousness or right standing with Yahweh by simply trusting Him and hanging on to His word of promise by prayer that is released in unwavering faith!

“¹⁶ Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, ¹⁷ (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were. ¹⁸ Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. ¹⁹ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: ²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; ²¹ And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. ²² And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness” . Romans 4:16-22

With this introduction, we are now ready to dig into deeper waters of this critical subject. A prayer less saint is a powerless saint. A praying saint will tap into the authority of King Yeshua, Jesus and activate the power of His Blood. Heaven needs more of such people to bring back the fire into the cold pews and altars! Once prayer life is truly activated anywhere, Evangelism, Discipleship and other expressions of Kingdom Church life can run smoothly! This is why Satan works over time to quench the fire of prayers of Faith in the Body of Yashua, Jesus on earth!

Components of Prayer

Let us remember the context in which Yahweh, our heavenly Father instructed us to begin this study on Prayer, Fasting and Spiritual Warfare. Satan knows his time is coming to an end and is therefore unleashing the full capacity of evil on inhabitants of the earth. While he labours to keep unbelievers in blissful ignorance, he unleashes all manner of attacks against saints, seeking to make them stumble or fall permanently.

In prayer, we learn the excellent Kingdom habit of regularly reporting for duty at the court of our King to commune with Him and receive marching orders for each day and circumstance of life we face! It is also by prayer and spiritual warfare that we can engage and rout out Satan and his agents!

However, in order to pray effectively, it is important that 7 distinct but integrated components be present in our actions as part of a package:

1. Knowledge of the Will of Yahweh concerning the matter we want to pray for. No one is permitted to pray for anything outside the will of Yahweh. Emotion-driven

desires fluctuate but the will of Yahweh is ever valid. The will of Yahweh is revealed through two principal avenues:

1.1. The Word of Scriptures. The Word is the express, revealed will of Abba with no shadow of turning. The word is inspired by Him and preserved in the Bible for our study. Knowing the Word therefore implies knowledge of the will of Yahweh on a broad range of issues. That is why we are encouraged to study, meditate on and apply the Word to everyday life. When the Word is made flesh in us, we have an internal compulsion to pray according to the will of Yahweh. If any thought or idea for prayer crosses our mind which is contrary to the Word or if our emotions are stirred to desire anything contrary to the word, the Holy Spirit will not allow us to proceed to ask and our conscience will not be at peace. It makes sense therefore to diligently search the scriptures, base our desires and needs on what is written and steadfastly refuse anything which is contrary. These scriptures reveal the vital necessity of the Word of Yahweh as basis of our Kingdom lives, including the context and content of our prayers:

“⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success”. **Joshua 1:8**

“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.² But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.³ And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper”. **Psalm 1:1-3**

“⁷ If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you”. **John 15:7**

“¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord”. **Colossians 3:16**

Let no man or woman deceive you with sweet words! Any desire that you have that is contrary to express provisions of the Holy Scripture is unholy! It is called lust. Lust is a desire for what is not permitted by Yahweh.

1.2. Fresh revelation from the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is still speaking today, bringing forth the mind of Yahweh, our Father to His own people. We need to keep our lives fresh and wholesome so that the Holy Spirit will find them fit as His dwelling place. When He is comfortably resident, the outcome is obvious: He guides us into all truth; reveals the mind of Yahweh to us and guides our decision making processes.

“¹³ Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come”. **John 16:13**

He is able to quicken scriptures and turn general promises for all saints into specific divine plans for our lives. He ministers and speaks to us in various ways: an audible voice, prophecy, words of knowledge, words of wisdom, burdens laid on our hearts, impressions on our spirit man, a quickening or illumination of Scriptures or just the simple way of ordering our steps into the will of Yahweh, among many other ways.

‘Thus says the Lord’ cannot and should not contradict ‘It is written’

Let this be said with clarity: The Holy Spirit does not speak of Himself but of Yeshua! He reveals to us the meaning of the written Word and brings illumination that aligns what we read with the mind of the Father. Neither through prophecy nor any other means through which He speaks will He contradict the written Word! Rhema does not contradict logos but rather clarifies it. As you get set to pray over anything, make sure that ‘thus says the Lord’ does not contradict ‘it is written’. If there is a contradiction, know with certainty that the enemy is at work! He accuses Yahweh before saints as shown with what happened with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden! If a Prophet therefore gives you a ‘word’ which contradicts **The Word**, know with certainty that he or she is not speaking from Yahweh but from the flesh or a backslidden spirit!

Understanding the specific ways the Holy Spirit ministers to you is essential to true spiritual growth and a victorious Kingdom life where all things are possible. He is the voice of Yeshua, our King and Saviour! If we cultivate an intimate communion with Him, we will always hear the voice of Yeshua, Jesus!

“²⁷ My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me”. **John 10:27**

In summary therefore, to pray according to the will of Yahweh is to be certain that the blessings asked for are already granted! 1 John 5:14, 15. In effect, the highest

ideal of the redeemed is to be used of Him to birth the will of Yahweh in the earth realm. Yeshua exemplified this lifestyle

“³⁰ I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me”. **John 5:30**

“³⁸ For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me”. **John 6:38**

We should emulate His example and enter the realm of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit where we do not expend our prayer lives asking for bread and butter or things which catch our fancy but rather we want His desires to be our desires. Romans 14:17-18. By doing this, we become mature sons that the world awaits the manifestation of, with our highest ideal being simply to see His will come to pass. This will be our desire regardless of whether it is convenient to us or not. All we want is for His Kingdom to come! Matthew 6:10; Romans 8: 18 – 23.

2. Understanding the Nature and Power of Yahweh that inspires Trust and Confidence . The truth is that you simply cannot pray with certainty unless you first come to an understanding of who He is and the awesomeness of His power to do all things and answer as it pleases Him!

“⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him”. **Hebrews 11:6**

To pray effectively, we must settle it in our hearts that we are coming to our God, who is Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent, Omni benevolent and All Merciful! This inspires us to trust Him wholly and bring our causes with confidence to His Throne of Grace.

“³ Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.⁴ Delight thyself also in the LORD: and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. ⁵ Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. ⁶ And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. ⁷ Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass”. **Psalms 37:3-7**

“⁵ Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. ⁶ In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy

paths. ⁷ Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil”.

Proverbs 3:5-7

*“²⁷ Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?” **Jeremiah 32:27***

*“² Thus saith the LORD the maker thereof, the LORD that formed it, to establish it; the LORD is his name; ³ Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not” . **Jeremiah 33:2-3***

3. A Release of Faith in what we are assured by His Word and the Holy Spirit is His will for us.

Faith is specific, quantifiable receiving in our spirit-man and mind, the things we desire of the Lord based on a prior apprehension of what He has desired for us. The manifestation of answers to prayer generally follows a prior tangible receipt of those things with the eye of faith.

*“¹¹ Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen”. **Hebrews 11:1***

In the Kingdom, whatever is not of faith is sin. Romans 14:23. It is our duty therefore to overcome wavering and double mindedness and hold on to what we have received as ours by the Word and ministration of Holy Spirit. The Word warns against doubt and double mindedness in prayer.

*“⁵ If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. ⁶ But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.⁷ For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord. ⁸ A double minded man is unstable in all his ways”. **James 1:5-8***

Throughout His earthly ministry, one thing was clear: Yeshua, Jesus placed a great premium on the faith of those who came to Him to receive what they desired. In Mark 11: 22–24 we are told that prayer and faith are two wings of miracle creating action.

4. Accept Yahweh’s invitation to Pray!

It is interesting that the Ruler of the whole earth beckons us to come and pray. He wants us to pray all kinds of prayer appropriate for all situations. He invites us in very clear language to make our relationship and communion with Him and His

perspectives the hub on which everything about our lives and circumstances revolve! This is an awesome privilege which the redeemed of the Lord should not shun in any way.

In Jeremiah 33: 1 - 3, Yahweh introduced Himself to Prophet Jeremiah and also us. He calls on us to pray and receive answers beyond the scope of what we asked for! The following scripture makes this clear:

“²⁰ Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us” Ephesians 3:20.

In Jeremiah 32:27, He asks the question *“is anything too hard for me?”*

In this scripture below, we see that fervent prayers are the key to secure our destinies:

“¹¹ For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.¹² Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you.¹³ And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart”. **Jeremiah 29:11-13**

In Matthew 7:7, 8, King Yeshua, Jesus calls on us to ASK; SEEK and KNOCK!

To illustrate the seriousness of the divine perspective, Jesus in Luke 11: 5-10 and Luke 18: 1-8 exhorts us to importunity! Jesus Himself exhorts us to remain in steadfast faith until the breakthrough of that which we need from our heavenly Father comes through.

Importunity in Prayer

This is the grace to continue praying until the result that conforms to will of the Most High is manifested. Many times, the enemy may try to weaken our faith or ability to hang on to what the Most High said. Those who are easily discouraged may be swayed by various reasons Satan will bring to imply that Yahweh is not interested in answering certain prayers. It is important to emulate Abraham just as he did with the promise of Isaac. Scripture is very clear that we are to emulate Abraham in matters of faith!

“Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. ² Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him” **Isaiah 51:1-2.**

King Yeshua Himself emphasised importunity in prayers. Let us consider the import of the story Yeshua, Jesus told of the person who needed favour from his friend because of an urgent need at midnight:

“⁵ And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; ⁶ For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him? ⁷ And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. ⁸ I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. ⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. ¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. ¹¹ If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? ¹² Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? ¹³ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?” **Luke 11:5-13**

Let us also examine the case of the widow who refused to take no for an answer from the unjust Judge:

“And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; ² Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: ³ And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. ⁴ And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; ⁵ Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. ⁶ And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. ⁷ And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? ⁸ I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” **Luke 18:1-8**

It is obvious that Yahweh expects us to never give up on any matter we bring to Him that does not contradict His will and nature.

“¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: ¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him”. **1 John 5:14-15**

He who called us commends prayer in and with faith on a pedestal of righteousness as the principal means of receiving all that pertains to life and godliness which is part of our rich inheritance in Christ Jesus!

Pray what you believe and mean; and believe and mean what you pray!

In this regard, we need to grasp an essential core of true prayers: Pray what you believe and believe what you pray! In other words, pray what you truly mean and mean what you truly pray! Hang in there, as long as it is in the will of Yahweh and leave the issue of manifestation to Him because His sense of timing is not the same as ours!

“²² And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.²³ For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith.²⁴ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them”. **Mark 11:22-24**

Surveying the uniform testimony of scripture, we should never take this as a license to bring our wish lists to God and expect Him to be stampeded to rubber stamp them.

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? ² Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. ³ Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. ⁴ Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God”. **James 4:1-4**

Saints, we have no excuse to spend our productive hours in unproductive activities which weary soul and body – social Face booking, chatting, texting, speaking on phone, complaining, gossiping, office and church politics, stoking tension in the home, watching TV, video games, reading newspapers for disproportionate periods of time daily while there are issues that confront us which need to move. Yahweh expressly invites us to cast all our cares on Him 1 Peter 5:7.

“⁷ Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you” **1 Peter 5:7** .

Dare to remove clutter from your life and make your time with Abba the central spindle or hub around which everything else rotates. Give Abba our heavenly Father

quality time to cultivate an intimate relationship with Him in prayer, study of the Word, meditation, petition and intercession and see how great changes will come!

Build your prayer life on your constitution. If you are an early bird, don't change that nature. By all means go to bed early and wake up early like Jesus did. Mark 1:35.

³⁵ And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed". **Mark 1:35**

If you are one who stays up late, free yourself of unproductive activities by 9.00pm and spend quality time thanking Yahweh for the day as well as possessing the incoming one. If you are able to possess the gate of 12 midnight, by all means do so, provided you will not be knocked out in the morning. Yahweh receives your prayers according to how He made you!

We have examined four components so far. Let us continue to press forward and receive the full measure of the mind of Yahweh which He wants to release to us as members of His family on earth and Ambassadors of His eternal Kingdom. The ministry of prayer, when executed in understanding and by Faith, equips us with the spiritual capacity to fulfil destiny on earth in intimacy with our Father and arms us for effective wars that Satan will challenge us to at periodic intervals. As no one knows when he will strike next, it makes sense to heed the admonition given by Peter and be ever ready!

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

⁹ Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" **1 Peter 5:8-9**

5. Express Gratitude to Yahweh even as you pray in faith, trusting Him to deliver.

Because we walk by faith and not by sight, we are able to receive things in the Spirit, knowing assuredly that manifestation is coming in due season. 2 Corinthians 5:7. For this reason, as we pray, according to His will, assurance of answers received should move us from requesting to thanksgiving mode.

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. ⁷ And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" **Philippians 4:6-7.**

Practice of this principle will take our faith to a whole new level. Whenever we make the transition in our hearts from desiring to receive what we asked for in the spirit, we have the sure evidence of faith Hebrews 11:1. As Mark 11: 22 – 24 declares, this is an extremely important factor in drawing down the blessings!

6. Receiving Answers.

Prayer is incomplete until the answers are manifest. It may be immediate or it may take time. However, one thing is clear: one day, what we asked for will be made manifest! Praying without expecting answers is engagement in dead religious works! Come off religion and get into the Kingdom life where our prayers are powerful and effectual as were those of saints of old who walked with Yahweh. Consider the prayer life of Elijah, a man of like passions. James 5:17-18. For this reason, the true Church must come into its own heritage which is the manifestation of the Kingdom of God in all situations.

“¹³ Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms.¹⁴ Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: ¹⁵ And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him” James 5:13-15”.

One may ask, what happens to prayers that seem unanswered? The answer is simple: such prayers are gathered like incense in the vials that are before the Throne of Grace awaiting the maturation of time!

“And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one **of** them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the **prayers of saints” Revelation 5:8.**

See also Revelation 8:3-4.

7. Ascribing all the glory to Yahweh.

No matter how much we pray, it is essential that we do not touch the glory of Yahweh by claiming credit for the miracle. Ultimately, it is the Lord who is the author and finisher of all the miracles we desire and receive! Let us therefore learn to give Him unrestrained praise out of grateful hearts.

“Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name.² Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits.³ Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases ⁴ Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender

mercies;⁵ Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's. ⁶ The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed” Psalm 103:1-6.

Many times, prayer warriors and intercessors inadvertently claim credit for the miracles they prayed for. The result is that they heap up a reputation for being men and women of prayer on themselves with weaker brethren looking up to them, rather than Yahweh for blessings. The reality is that such reputation is enough reward and will cause Yahweh to back off.

“⁵ And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. ⁶ But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly” Matthew 6:5-6.

Even five fold leaders and ministers generally must go out of the way to train the people they lead to cultivate an independent prayer life rather than make them their hope.

John the Baptist knew that Yeshua, rather than himself was the Bridegroom to whom the Church is betrothed. He therefore gladly pointed his disciples to Yeshua and gladly took the back seat!

“²⁶ And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.²⁷ John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.²⁸ Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.²⁹ He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.³⁰ He must increase, but I must decrease.³¹ He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all. ³² And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.³³ He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. ³⁴ For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. ³⁵ The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. ³⁶ He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him” John 3:26-36.

May we do likewise or else idolatry will set in when the people we lead see us and our prayers as the solution to their problems.

Testimonies of answered prayers should be profusely shared for four main reasons:

1. That all glory may go to the Most High who intervened on our behalf.
2. Remembrance of His Mighty acts strengthens the faith of saints and increases their confidence in Him and themselves.
3. Testimonies of divine intervention shame the Devil and beat back the frontiers of fear, darkness and doubt!
4. Testimonies are also great tools Yahweh uses to soften the hearts of sinners and make them ready to receive His saving grace by faith.

Chapter Two

INQUIRY PRAYER AND PRAYING IN THE SPIRIT

As we continue to mine the depths of this critical topic, it is needful that we take a little time to be challenged on two dimensions of prayer which will change us for good and equip us with the capacity to pray with certainty. If we grasp the concepts to be discussed in this Chapter and practice them to excellence, there will be no more wearing out of ourselves in praying in a 'hit and miss' fashion. We will rather hit the mark always and enjoy our times of encounter with the Supreme Ruler of the universe who wants to exercise His Authority through and with us as Ambassadors of the Kingdom of heaven in the earth realm!

Inquiry Prayer

Where we do not have an idea of what the will of Yahweh is, the right thing to do is to go into inquiry mode. In inquiry prayer, we desist from clutching at any position or opinion. Rather, we come before our heavenly Father in a childlike manner to ask what His will is. If we cultivate the habit of hearing and knowing His voice, He will speak expressly and we will hear it. David was a man who Yahweh approved greatly.

Part of the reason He found favour with Yahweh is, we believe, his constant tendency to inquire of Him whenever he was between two directions, thus avoiding presumption and supposition which could be deadly. The life of David teaches us an important principle of enquiry prayers: never take His will for granted and never rely on an old pattern for a fresh challenge or assignment. Let us examine a passage where David faced two problems and in each case was saved because He inquired from Yahweh and did not trust his own judgement or intuition. In these last days when Satan would let loose the full arsenal of evil at his disposal, we must learn the great safety in being in the centre of the will of our heavenly Father in all things, including prayer!

"Then they told David, saying, Behold, the Philistines fight against Keilah, and they rob the threshingfloors. ² Therefore David enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go and smite these Philistines? And the LORD said unto David, Go, and smite the Philistines, and save Keilah. ³ And David's men said unto him, Behold, we be afraid here in Judah: how much more then if we come to Keilah against the armies of the Philistines?⁴ Then David enquired of the LORD yet again. And the LORD answered him and said, Arise, go down to Keilah; for I will deliver the

Philistines into thine hand.⁵ So David and his men went to Keilah, and fought with the Philistines, and brought away their cattle, and smote them with a great slaughter. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah” 1 Samuel 23:1-5

David did not just proceed presumptuously to fight the Philistines. He needed a word from Yahweh. Once He heard the word of Yahweh, he acted promptly and gained victory. It is also interesting as we shall see in verses 7-13 of the same passage that when Saul came to besiege the same city of Keilah that was saved by his intervention, David did not assume their loyalty. He inquired of Yahweh if he would be betrayed by the same people he saved. Once Yahweh signalled the truth, David immediately fled, thus saving himself unnecessary trouble.

“⁶ And it came to pass, when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David to Keilah, that he came down with an ephod in his hand.⁷ And it was told Saul that David was come to Keilah. And Saul said, God hath delivered him into mine hand; for he is shut in, by entering into a town that hath gates and bars. ⁸ And Saul called all the people together to war, to go down to Keilah, to besiege David and his men. ⁹ And David knew that Saul secretly practised mischief against him; and he said to Abiathar the priest, Bring hither the ephod.¹⁰ Then said David, O LORD God of Israel, thy servant hath certainly heard that Saul seeketh to come to Keilah, to destroy the city for my sake.¹¹ Will the men of Keilah deliver me up into his hand? will Saul come down, as thy servant hath heard? O LORD God of Israel, I beseech thee, tell thy servant. And the LORD said, He will come down. ¹² Then said David, Will the men of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul? And the LORD said, They will deliver thee up.¹³ Then David and his men, which were about six hundred, arose and departed out of Keilah, and went whithersoever they could go. And it was told Saul that David was escaped from Keilah; and he forbore to go forth”. 1 Samuel 23:6-13

Let us also read another account of how one of the most accomplished military Commanders to walk on earth responded to an emergency situation which involved the carrying away into captivity of his own household. Ego and anger could have driven David to act rashly but he had the presence of mind to inquire from Yahweh which way to go.

“And it came to pass, when David and his men were come to Ziklag on the third day, that the Amalekites had invaded the south, and Ziklag, and smitten Ziklag, and burned it with fire; ² And had taken the women captives, that were therein: they slew not any, either great or small, but carried them away, and went on their way. ³ So David and his men came to the city, and, behold, it was burned with fire; and their wives, and their sons, and their daughters, were taken captives. ⁴ Then David and the people that were with him lifted up their voice and wept, until they had no more power to weep. ⁵ And David's two wives were taken captives, Ahinoam the Jezreelitess, and Abigail the wife of

*Nabal the Carmelite. ⁶ And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God. ⁷ And David said to Abiathar the priest, Ahimelech's son, I pray thee, bring me hither the ephod. And Abiathar brought thither the ephod to David. ⁸ And David enquired at the LORD, saying, Shall I pursue after this troop? shall I overtake them? And he answered him, Pursue: for thou shalt surely overtake them, and without fail recover all. ⁹ So David went, he and the six hundred men that were with him, and came to the brook Besor, where those that were left behind stayed" **1 Samuel 30:1-9.***

To pray inquiry prayers sincerely, our heart disposition must first be that of willingness to obey, no matter what Yahweh says. You cannot pray inquiry prayer with an existing idol of your preferred answer in the heart, otherwise, Yahweh will answer you according to what you want! In other words, He will not say anything but allow you to be deceived by your own deceptive heart!

*"²⁵ With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; ²⁶ With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward" **Psalm 18:25-26.***

This principle is further amplified in an encounter Prophet Ezekiel had with elders of Israel who came to him, supposedly to inquire of Yahweh but had their hearts and minds stuffed with their own agendas. Yahweh is very emphatic that He would allow such people to be deceived and caught in their own craftiness.

*"Then came certain of the elders of Israel unto me, and sat before me. ² And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, ³ Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: should I be enquired of at all by them?⁴ Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;⁵ That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart, because they are all estranged from me through their idols" **Ezekiel 14:1-5**".*

In this matter of inquiry prayer, our best example again is our King and Savior, Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah! He clearly divested Himself of the ability to think independently of the Father and by doing so, learnt obedience by the things He suffered. Hebrews 5:8. A classic example of this lifestyle was the issue of Calvary when the time was due. At Gethsemane, we see Yeshua in His humanity commit the ultimate decision of whether to go forward or not to the Father. Matthew 26:36-46

It is important that those who form the habit of reading and applying instructions on prayer and spiritual warfare based on the experience of mere human beings, no matter how mightily used of God they may seem with prayers that are documented as prayer books or manuals, to realize that they can be easily led astray. It is far better to understand the Scriptures and have them made flesh in us so that when we are faced with peculiar challenges, no matter how similar to our past, the Holy Spirit alone becomes a reliable compass to interpret the whole counsel of Yahweh already deposited in our spirit and soul to chart the way forward. Let us therefore build our faith on the Word and the Holy Spirit rather than on the opinions of mere mortals! John 14: 15 – 18, 26; John 16: 12,13

Praying in the Spirit

Far more significant than inquiry prayer is the sweet practice of praying in the Spirit. This is not necessarily the effusion of fleshly display found in many Pentecostal and Charismatic circles where people try to show off their skills by publicly speaking in tongues, drawing gaping admiration and ignorant applause from those who are not mature in the faith!

If we are willing, the Holy Spirit undertakes the serious assignment, when we yield completely to Him, to take over the exercise of praying from us! This is what is referred to as praying in the Spirit. Here, the Holy Spirit – who knows the mind of the Father on the Throne of Grace –comes upon the yielded saint in earnest prayer mode, borrows the vocal cord and brings forth prayer in unlearned tongues which ascends with express speed to Yahweh and receives His speedy response. That is the point made in these two scriptures.

“² For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the spirit he speaketh mysteries.⁴ He that speaketh in an unknown tongue edifieth himself; but he that prophesieth edifieth the church.¹⁴ For if I pray in an unknown tongue, my spirit prayeth, but my understanding is unfruitful” 1 Corinthians 14: 2,4,14.

“²⁶ Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God”. **Romans 8:26-27**

This is why we must reject the praying in tongues that proceeds from the human memory which is marked by repetition of certain syllables and words every time

saints purport to flow in this blessed experience. True praying in tongues is an original and creative release of prayers inspired by the Holy Spirit who cannot be monotonous. The Holy Spirit may also choose to bring forth the words of prayer in deep groaning that cannot be uttered.

Major Benefits of Praying in the Spirit

1. In this dimension of prayer, we are able to bypass satanic opposition because he and his agents have no idea what we are praying since the Holy Spirit is the one involved in the act!

2. Our spirit-man is greatly built up when we truly pray in the Spirit

"²⁰ But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost" Jude 20

Oh, that we may learn to give way to the Holy Spirit! Then He will simply bypass our minds, the seat of reasoning and simply speak through our tongues. No wonder there is such a refreshing, peace and joy whenever we truly pray in the Spirit. There is no tiredness because the prayer is not done by might or by the power of the flesh (exertion of the mind and will which is engaged when forming words and logic in natural prayer).

We also pray in the Spirit when we forgo our agendas, let go and surrender our entire wills to the Holy Spirit to lead us on as to what to ask for. In this state, we are so sensitive to His promptings that we do not exceed the circumference of the prayers He charts for us! He thus ministers to us what we need to ask for in prayer.

Chapter Three

THE BIG 5 OF PRAYER

Five core factors cohere to make prayers effective. They work together to create the synergy we need to produce desired outcomes:

1. Right Relationship with Yahweh and fellow humans. This is the basis on which we are able to approach Him in the first place. In His mercy, Yahweh can respond and does respond to the needs of people in distress, including sinners. In real terms however, the very first need of those outside His family and Kingdom is to come into right relationship with Him which is offered freely through the blood Shed by Yeshua, Jesus at the Cross of Calvary.

When people claim to be in His family and kingdom, the basic expectation is that conversion and the supply of His grace makes them averse to sin and willing to grow in righteousness. To claim to be saved and still indulge in sin as a habit and lifestyle is to make the grace of God of no effect. Romans 6:1-16. For those who are part of the family of Yahweh, here is what His word says about coming to Him presumptuously:

“¹⁸ If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me” Psalm 66:18

“¹³ He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy”. Proverbs 28:13

Coming to Yahweh to ask for any blessing that is not based on a right relationship with Him or fellow humans will only produce a religious ritual. This is why Hebrews 12:14 urges us to follow peace with all men and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord. We may not be able to dictate how fellow human beings will act towards us but the Word enjoins us to do as much as lies within us to live peaceably with all men.

If they pursue the path of enmity with us, we should diligently guard our hearts and ensure that no root of bitterness takes hold, so that we are not defiled.

“¹⁴ Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:¹⁵ 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

“Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? who shall dwell in thy holy hill?² He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.³ He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.⁴ In whose eyes a vile person is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the LORD. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.⁵ He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved” **Psalm 15:1-5**

³ Who shall ascend into the hill of the LORD? or who shall stand in his holy place?⁴ He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.⁵ He shall receive the blessing from the LORD, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.⁶ This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah”. **Psalm 24:3-6**

“⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”. **Matthew 5:8**

“¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors”. **Matthew 6:12**

“³² And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you”. **Ephesians 4:32**

“¹⁵ See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men” **1 Thessalonians 5:15** .

2. Knowledge of the Will of Yahweh. The will of Yahweh is crucial in prayer because asking outside His will is merely wearying of our souls, tasking our bodies and vexing of our spirits. Yahweh has a personality and will. Therefore, it makes great sense to know His will concerning all that we should ask.

“¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” **1 John 5:14-15.**

Prayer is an instrument of relationship with Yahweh

3. Knowledge of the Word. The Word of Yahweh is a reliable storehouse of His will. The Scriptures are essentially a documentation of His will for mankind generally and the redeemed in particular. Studying and meditating on the Word is an extraordinarily healthy spiritual exercise that provides grounds on which to walk in tandem with Yahweh.

“¹⁶ All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness¹⁷ That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works”. **2 Timothy 3:16-17**

“¹⁵ Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” **2 Timothy 2:15.**

4. Faith. Faith is active reliance on the Word of Yahweh. It is the grasping on His Word as true and certain, even when there is nothing physically manifested. The attitude of faith is this “If it is in the Word, then I receive it”. The heroes of faith all had one central thread which ran through their lives: they lived by faith in Yahweh and His word regardless of what their senses suggested. In this, they fulfilled a vital law of the Spirit expressed in this short but powerful passage:

“⁷ (For we walk by faith, not by sight:)” **2 Corinthians 5:7**

“Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

² For by it the elders obtained a good report.

³ Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.

⁴ By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh.

⁵ By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death; and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God.

⁶ But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” **Hebrews 11:1-6.**

Paul the apostle was to clarify this factor as a vital fulcrum on which his incredible ministry was based and for which he suffered incredible opposition and pain:

“¹⁶ For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day.

¹⁷ For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal". **2 Corinthians 4:16-18**

Interestingly, our faith is increased with hearing and studying of the will of Yahweh in His Word.

"17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" **Romans 10:17**

Faith is not the exercise of mere positive confession. It is rather standing on the sure promises of God as true and reliable.

5. Prayer. Prayer brings all the four factors above together. In prayer therefore, we come with a penitent heart to Yahweh by the way of the Blood, receiving mercy and grace to rely on His sure Word. Standing on His received will, we ask in faith and hang in there before Him in importunity until we receive that which He says is ours!

"19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,

20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

21 And having an high priest over the house of God;

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)" **Hebrews 10:19-23**

"7 Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

8 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened" **Matthew 7:7-8.**

"22 And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God.

²³ For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith²⁴ Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”.

Mark 11:22-24

What do you do when you do not know what to do? Just pray, seeking to know what Yahweh is saying in the situation and His will in and through it. This is a very healthy lifestyle which cannot fail as King Jehoshaphat found in 2 Chronicles chapter 20: 1-30! If we allow the principle in Colossians 3:1-3 to be real in us and get lost in Yahweh, He takes over all our battles and we rest in His divine providence!

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.

² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

*³ For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God” **Colossians 3:1-3***

¹⁵ And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the LORD unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude; for the battle is not yours, but God's.

¹⁶ To morrow go ye down against them: behold, they come up by the cliff of Ziz; and ye shall find them at the end of the brook, before the wilderness of Jeruel.

*¹⁷ Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them: for the LORD will be with you”. **2 Chronicles 20:15-17***

Chapter

THE MODEL PATTERN OF PRAYER – INSIDE THE YESHUA, JESUS SCHOOL OF PRAYER

In the book of Luke 11: 1, the disciples pleaded with Yeshua, Jesus, to teach them how to pray just as John taught His own disciples. Knowing that what they desired of Him was right and proper, He proceeded to lay out a frame work of how saints should pray. He was by no means telling them a ritual to recite or a religious box to be trapped in. The focus of Jesus rather was to show His disciples, by practical illustration, that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of goods accumulated nor should man live by bread alone.

Thus, it is needful to examine what is now called the **Lord's Prayer** in detail to see the point He was making and the way He wanted His saints to think outside the box of cares of this life. To do justice to this prayer, we shall break down and examine all the constituent parts therein from the lenses of the man who was the assigned biographer, Matthew the ex-customs officer.

A Pattern to follow: Let us take note of this vital key that unlocks what Yeshua was saying in Matthew 6: 9: ***"In this manner therefore pray"*** –In contemporary language, He was saying 'Let this be a model or pattern of what to cover in prayer.'

1. Our Father in Father in Heaven – This speaks of relationship. He who comes to Yahweh must understand that we are called to a life of relationship with Him. We are not called into a dead religious system which relates with a cold, distant uncaring 'God'. Though The Supreme Being, we have a personal relationship with Yahweh based on the blood that was shed by Jesus. In Him, divinity became humanity so that sinful mankind can be restored back to the glory lost when Adam and Eve lost their first estate in Eden.

If you are redeemed by the blood therefore, your Father beckons you to come boldly to His Throne by the way of the Blood. Hebrews 2: 10-18. You are not just invited to come. It is also significant to note that the model is not to say 'my Father' but 'our Father'. This introduces the concept of Family! We are part of one Family of Yahweh on earth! When we approach Him, selfishness must give way to the overall interest of the collective good! As a member of His family, Abba asks you to come in faith and trust. God says if earthly fathers know how to give good gifts to their

children, how much more would He who is the Father of lights bless His own?

Matthew 7: 7 – 11

2. Hallowed be Your Name – We commence prayer in reverence of God. That we have the privilege of having Him as Father should in no way detract from our approaching Him with an attitude of worship and humility. Furthermore, we need to develop the holy habit of learning how to exalt His Holy name before asking for any needs.

3. Your Kingdom come – Here Yeshua, Jesus is asking us to align ourselves with the ultimate purpose of Yahweh which is to finally consummate His Kingdom on earth one day. The Kingdom at this present time is in the realm of the hearts of the redeemed. One day and at an hour which no one knows, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords will return to finally establish the fullness of the Kingdom. We must constantly live in remembrance of the fact that this event needs to happen. Our attitude should, like John, ‘Lord Jesus, come quickly’! Revelation 22:20, 21. Of the fullness of that blessed Kingdom which will take over from the kingdoms of this world at their expiration as noted in Revelation 11:15 and Daniel Chapter 2, let us note that it will be personally ruled by King Yeshua, Jesus with no room for Satan and powers of evil – Revelation 20:1-6.

4. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. This is the heart of this model prayer. The highest ideal of the redeemed is to see a shifting that will cause every authority and person to be wholly submitted to the will and purpose of Yahweh. The will of Yahweh is thus the dwelling place of the saints! If it is so, saints who pray must deliver themselves of the error that we are to impose our wills on Yahweh and expect His acquiescence. If that is so, saints in effect enthrone their self nature as ‘god’!

To pray this prayer in good conscience is to simply posture our hearts and minds in such a way that Yeshua, Jesus reigns as Sovereign, determining by the Holy Spirit and the Word, what we desire or ask of Abba. In effect, our attitude in prayer is that of spiritual ‘mid-wives’ who are set to align with Abba for the birthing of His will in all circumstances of life, no matter what the five senses suggest to them. It is in this posture of abiding in Yeshua and allowing Him to abide in us that real mountain moving prayers of faith can truly take place because we are then one with the Almighty concerning any matter! See John 15:1-7; 1 John 5:14-15.

5. Give us this day, our daily bread. Deep down in the body of the model prayer, only one verse and line is focused on our daily needs. Interestingly, the pattern is to

ask for the needs as they come daily. There is no room in the Kingdom for covetousness or for piling up goods for a rainy day. The wisdom of the Kingdom is that of absolute trust in Yahweh as a loving, caring Father.

The economic principle was first enunciated in the wilderness when Moses commanded Israel to fetch enough manna and quail for the day. Those who had much more than they needed invariably gave to those who had less so that there was equality. The lesson here is this: In the Kingdom, Yahweh has enough for all our needs but not enough for our greed! He is calling on His own to get into the Kingdom economic model which requires us to focus on the Kingdom and its righteousness, trusting our heavenly Father to provide all that we need. The redeemed were not designed to chase after things. Things are rather ordained to chase after us. 1Timothy 6:6-10

It is strange therefore that 'so called' poster men of the Kingdom message in the Western world are simply men and women who have craftily used the sneak peek they claim to receive into the Kingdom to pile up ungodly wealth for generations unborn; men and women who charge exorbitant fees for highly condensed superstar appearances called Kingdom conferences and price their so called revelations of the Kingdom in books and tapes out of the reach of ordinary saints! Yahweh, have mercy!

6. Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Here is a simple two edged sword. We normally need to have any debts and sins we incur forgiven. In the same measure, Yahweh requires us to have a heart which freely forgives any offence inflicted by other people. You cannot approach Him for mercy when you refuse to show mercy to people. Ephesians 4: 28-32.

Even in matters of finances and other debts owed us, we are called upon to release people from yokes of debts which they cannot repay. The principle of Jubilee is not just an Old Testament construct. Leviticus 25: 1 – 38; Deuteronomy 15: 1-6. The hardness of heart with which believers pursue their debtors is amazing! We ought to give some people the jubilee treatment! Let us let them off the hook and write off those debts. As they breathe the air of freedom, so shall the joy of the Lord flood our hearts. In every situation where we obeyed God and did this, there were amazing visitations of financial breakthrough and more importantly, a great peace and joy in our hearts! Try it saints, it works!

7. Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. Here Jesus wants us to realize that Satan is a present threat to the earthly pilgrimage of the

redeemed. To deny the reality, power and craftiness of Satan is to walk in denial. If Satan could tempt Jesus sorely and dogged His steps till He hung on the old rugged cross, so shall he seek to tempt us out of the will of Yahweh.

Jesus wants us also to walk in the understanding that Abba has all the power to order the affairs of His creation. On the basis of this, He wants us to recognize that though temptation can be very devastating, the best defence is to proactively ask Yahweh to deliver us from situations that may lead to falling away from Him. In 2 Thessalonians 3:2 we are also asked to pray for deliverance from wicked and ungodly human beings who have no faith.

8. For yours is the Kingdom and the Power and Glory, amen. Yeshua wants us to recognize that Yahweh is not a hard task master who will save us and leave us to our own devices. He has established the present dimension of the Kingdom in our hearts. The Kingdom will be fully manifest as global governance by Yeshua, Jesus Christ from His Throne in Jerusalem in due course of time and we must yearn for it and pray about the time of full manifestation. All the power and glory is ascribable unto Him. Saints should walk in a 24/7 consciousness of this reality. It is interesting that Yeshua began the model prayer with exalting the name of our heavenly Father and ends it with a similar theme. We need to emulate Him.

Chapter

HINDRANCES TO PRAYER AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

One thing that should be obvious to many saints is that getting into a consistent prayer life often seems to be quite a struggle. The reason is that various forces work together to create all manner of hindrances and blockages. Knowledge of and rejecting these hindrances will make us effective in the ministry of prayer and spiritual warfare. Let us examine 17 hindrances out of the lot.

1. Satanic Opposition. We have a cunning adversary who knows that prayer is the vital tool with which saints can unleash the authority of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus and Power of the Blood against Him (Revelation 12:10-11; Philippians 2:5-11). He also knows that it is through prayer that what was purchased for saints at Calvary is possessed, in spite of his antics. If he can get saints busy with a thousand and one seemingly justifiable activities and they end up not praying, he sits tight in the corner of the world assigned to them to occupy for Jesus! He often dispatches his wicked hosts to hinder the prayers of saints. We need to know what we are up against in the unseen realm of the spirit so that we can persist in prayer until breakthroughs are achieved, in spite of Satanic opposition as Daniel modelled in Daniel 10:1-13. Satanic powers are real! Ephesians 6: 12

2. The flesh of man – which is the combination of his soul and body – has a natural tendency to love what is easy and convenient. The soul is the realm of the mind, the will and the emotions. This is an active realm of life which often gets in the way of faith and prayer. It is the realm where thoughts wander, where inconvenient desires and even vivid solicitations of sin can flash when a weak believer is in prayer. It is the realm that wants to gather its thoughts and frame the prayer requests in beautiful language which ends up causing more weariness. It is also the realm where ought against fellow saints and other people are stored.

The soul is the realm of expression of our humanity, preferences, likes and dislikes. It is the engine room which when cluttered by so many non essentials, causes little foxes to roam the unguarded vineyard! The flesh then becomes weak when it comes to the holy estate of prayer. Even Jesus in His humanity acknowledged this truth as He wrestled with the unpleasant cup of death at the Garden of Gethsemane. See Matthew 26:36 – 45, especially verse 41.

3. Sin. Any day, any time, unconfessed and unrepented sin will hinder prayers. If you live in sin, the truth is that the heavens above will be closed. Whoever can pray freely in spite of sin unrepented of, is a hypocrite, unfortunately deceiving none else but him or herself. A saint who falls into sin of any type is expected to run towards and not away from Yahweh in penitence and receive His abundant mercy. 1 John chapter 1 and 1 John 2: 1,2 . Psalm 66:18, Proverbs 28:9,13, Isaiah 1:15, Isaiah 59: 1,2, Psalm 24:3 – 6, Hebrews 12:14

4. Unforgiving Spirit. Yahweh loves equity. He who forgives sins and debts we owe requires us to willingly do likewise to fellow men. Whoever hardens his heart and refuses to forgive fellow humans denies him or herself the privilege of access to the Throne of Grace and Mercy. It is therefore in our best interests to forgive those who offend us and to guard our hearts from becoming evil due to bitterness, spirit of vengeance and all sorts of negativity. Matthew 5: 23, 43 – 48, Matthew 6:12, 14, 15, Mark 11:25, 26, Colossians 3:12,13.

5. Disobedience of the Word of Yahweh or His revealed will. Going to Yahweh to ask afresh when you are living in active disobedience to His word or His expressly revealed will is abominable in His sight. Yahweh requires you to do the first works, obey what He has already spoken so that you will have access to His throne. Whoever will hear and refuse to do the will of Yahweh is in an active state of rebellion. 1 Samuel 15: 22-23; John 15: 10-14; 1 John 3:22; Yahweh is inclined to those who obey Him - 1 Peter 3:12.

6. Family dysfunction. There is a divine order in marriage which when maintained by the saints, causes the home to be an oasis of love and care. When a woman pursues a life of rebellion against the authority of her husband, the heavens above the couple close. In the same vein, where a man oppresses and treats his wife despicably, he releases a negative force which closes up the heavens. The result is that the couple struggles and cannot find favour with Yahweh. 1 Peter 3:7. It is in our best interests as saints to ask Yahweh to heal our marriages to reflect the picture of Yeshua and His Church which is graphically outlined in Ephesians 5: 21 – 33, Colossians 3:18-25, Ephesians 6:1-4, Malachi 2: 13 – 17.

7. Misuse of Authority and rebellion of workers in the Market Place. It is wrong for saints in the Market Place to mistreat those who work for them like depriving them of their wages or delaying their just and timely salaries. Their cries close the heavens above their employers! James 5: 1 – 6. On the other hand, Christian employees who do wrong, steal or do not put in their best into their work are actually raising spiritual forces which will hinder their prayers. 1 Timothy 6: 1 – 5; 1 Peter 2: 18 – 21.8.

Covetousness and Idolatry. A covetous heart will not hear from Yahweh because it is a terrible form of idolatry. Covetousness includes the love of money or possessions. A lusting after things will block our ability to hear and know the real will of Yahweh, Colossians 3:5, 1 Timothy 6: 6 – 10, Ezekiel 14: 1 – 3.

9. Impure Motives. This includes asking for things out of pride, spirit of strife, competition with others or plain love of the world. James 4: 1 – 3; 1 John 2:15-17.

10. Unbelief. This hinders prayers to a great degree. Unbelief is lack of trust in Yahweh and His goodness and therefore a Satan inspired accusation against Him. James 1: 5 – 7

11. Confusion. This is a state of not knowing what one really wants from Yahweh. If one is tender hearted and tells Yahweh sincerely of the confusion, the Holy Spirit can take over and intercede according to the perfect will of the Father. Romans 8: 26

12. Wrong Priority. When saints are filled with the cares of this life and subjugate the Kingdom to same, they develop a wrong perspective which manifests as wrong priorities. This grieves Yahweh because it runs contrary to the elementary principles of the Kingdom enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew 6: 19 – 34

13. Bypassing the Authority of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus, our only valid legal ground of praying effectively. John 16:23-24. Praying in the Name of Yeshua, Jesus puts Him squarely in the picture and activates His Heavenly intercession. Hebrews 2:14-18; Hebrews 4:14-16.

14. Self Righteousness, Pride, Hypocrisy. Prayer emanating from this lifestyle or attitude stinks in the nostrils of God. Matthew 6:5; Luke 18: 10 – 14.

15. Refusal to abide in Yeshua and in the Word. It is by abiding in Him that there is surety that we are in the Faith! We are not to switch off Him even for a moment or to look away to other 'gods' including self-strength! John 15:7

16. A Stingy spirit and absence of compassion for the needy. Saints who are hard hearted, unloving and uncaring contradict the very nature of Yahweh who is love! Because Yahweh is in heaven, He desires to meet the needs of poor brethren through caring saints here on earth. In a real sense, we all are called to be channels through which He blesses others! We are to be His River of living water, not brackish ponds that have no outlets and become filthy! Deuteronomy 15: 7 – 11, Proverbs 31:13, Isaiah 58, Matthew 25: 31 – 46, Luke 6:38, 2 Corinthians 9: 6-7.

17. A Wrong concept of Yahweh due to Culture or religion. In many cultures, the operating concept of Fatherhood is an angry, fierce man who bellows threats and curses his children constantly. Any saint who has this fixed image may not be able to see and approach Yahweh as a loving, caring Father. To compound this situation, many Christian religious sects foster this strange picture of a distant, impersonal 'god' who is ever angry at humans. Consequently, their members may not be able to approach Yahweh with the right perspective of who He is. This can hinder prayers because it is an unfair accusation against Yahweh and also makes of none effect the Blood that was shed at the Cross!

18. Disregard of Holy Spirit. All saints are indwelt by Holy Spirit who is the seal of our redemption! Due to religious concepts that are not true, some Christians deny Holy Spirit a place in running of their lives. This affects their ability to pray. They labour in the flesh when they refuse to accept the ministry of the Helper from heaven! John 7:38-39, John 14:26, John 16:13-15, Romans 8:15, 26-27, 1 Corinthians 2: 10-12 Ephesians 2:18, Jude verse 20.

As children of Yahweh, we need to cooperate with the Holy Spirit who will show us the particular hindrances at work in our lives. Laying hold of the promises of Yahweh, especially the power of repentance, we can rend our hearts and obtain His mercy.

As saints we must learn the concept of justification. Any time a sin is genuinely repented of, Yahweh forgives and wipes the slate clean with the blood of the Lamb! Micah 7:18-20. When this happens, we are justified and stand before Him as one who never sinned because He no longer has record of what the Blood of Yeshua, Jesus, blotted away! To refuse to repent of any sin, no matter how 'tiny' is to inflict the worst wound on oneself!

This is why Yahweh calls us to let go and allow Him to take over our prayer life. The greatest antidote to prayerlessness is to walk in the fullness and overflow of the Holy Spirit who knows the mind of The Father and knows when He can use our weak vessels to pray great prayers!

Chapter Eight

DEEPER DIMENSIONS OF PRAYER AND INTERCESSION

Before we proceed into the realm of Spiritual Warfare where our Father will unfold deep mysteries that will equip us for the time that now is, it is needful that we conclude the section on Prayer with some reflections.

The first is the fact that our King and model, Yeshua Ha Mashiach taught us to pray 'Hallowed be Your Name'. This raises the very critical issue that the Name of our Father is to be 'hallowed' or made 'sacred' and 'honourable'! Is it then not implied that He has a Name and is not just a generic 'God'? In this, we who live in these last days must discern the extraordinary damage Babylon tried to do to our esteem of our Father in Heaven when it took away His Holy Name and replaced it with a generic title which the gods of the nations and religions of this world can appropriate!

It certainly was not an accident that in seeking to foster a new religion that was designed to replace Judaism, everything Hebraic was tossed down the drain. A case of throwing away the proverbial baby with the bath water. The degree of anti-Semitism with which Babylon promoted its brand of 'Christian Religion' shows how 'effective' it has been, enfolding nearly over 1.8 billion people on earth who are supposedly named by the Name not of Yeshua Ha Mashiach but of Jesus Christ yet lack the power of the New Creation in Him and clear translation from the kingdom of darkness to the Blessed Kingdom of Yahweh in Him!

Unfortunately for humanity which has embraced this mysterious religious construct of men with its opiate properties, no one on earth can successfully wish away the Election of Abraham and his progeny through Isaac and Jacob as the blood line Yahweh chose, first to be His appointed Kingdom of Priests to nations of the world and secondly, to manifest the Incarnate Yeshua in due season through whom the universal family on earth will be birthed – neither Jew nor Gentile! Romans chapters 9,10 and 11 need to be read, understood and believed so that we can escape the snare of anti-Semitism. Yahweh has not cast away Israel permanently! The next agenda of His dealing with humanity will focus intensely on Hebrews and their spiritual and physical redemption!

Of all the things that became victims of this invidious 'replacement theology' the greatest was the taking out of the Holy Name of YHWH which is spelled Yahweh and the compound name of the Creator, Elohim! The second is the taking away of the name which He who was incarnated as the Lamb was called when He walked this earth: Yehoshua or Yeshua.

Look at it this way: Yeshua taught us to start our prayers by hallowing the name of Yahweh. In so doing, He wanted saints to be conscious of His Fatherhood, thus invoking a relationship which should be the basis of all else we are to say. By failing in this simple rule, saints, no matter how well intentioned, have been led onto a path which 'potentially' (mark the phrase) alienates our God to whom we are supposed to come. Is this possibly one of the reasons many saints burn out in the soul and body, not experiencing answered prayers or the transformation of character, attitude and perspectives you expect from those who purport to have intimacy which derives from constant access to the Throne of Grace?

Ultimately, no one can or should decide for us how to respond to this revelation of what Matthew 6:9 says. But as for this vessel of clay, the decision is fixed: we will call Yahweh by His name and pray that it will be hallowed in the heart and mind of the redeemed! Let the earth also hallow His Holy Name as the events of the end times unfold as clearly stated in the Holy Scriptures!

Seek His Heart and Face, not His Hands!

The Father beckons on His Sons to emulate the man who became known as His friend, even Moses. Of this man, the Scriptures bear this eloquent testimony:

"7 He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel".
Psalm 103:7

What was it about Moses that moved the heart of Yahweh to reveal His ways to him? As you all know, the ways of Yahweh are far higher than His Acts. His acts are His miracles, His provisions, those things He does to encourage people to know He is at work for them. But Yahweh expects those who will receive the holy ministry of intercession to go beyond seeking proof that He is 'there' to celebrating the reality of His Presence. Hebrew 11:1,6.

Intercession and the state of Sonship

True intercessors graduate through a process. This starts with being just servants of Yahweh. From there they proceed through seeking passionate intimacy with Yeshua to become His friends to whom He bares His heart. John 15:14-15. The next step is the transition to sons of Yahweh, in the image of Yeshua. Incidentally, Yeshua did not come to start a religion. He did not come to start a sect. His coming was essentially to bring forth sons in the earth realm who would continue the assignment of the Father!

“¹⁰ For it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings” Hebrews 2:10.

When saints come to this realm of life, they become worthy vessels that Yahweh can entrust with the mysteries and good pleasure of His will. Knowing His determinate counsel becomes the motivating principle of their life on earth! The highest dimension of prayer is the holy practice of inclining our hearts to seek, know, do and then rise up as partners to enforce the heart of Yahweh in the earth realm. This is Kingdom praying at its best level! To do this, Yahweh calls on us to switch from seeking His hands to seeking His heart and His face!

Elohim is a Living Being who has a will. He has emotions which are variously described in the Holy Scriptures. He derives great joy from pure worship which is bereft of idolatry in any form, including our self needs. When our minds, will, heart and emotions are fixated on His Person without intrusion of what we think we need from Him, we in effect elevate our trust in Him and His providential care to levels which can move heaven without our even asking for anything! John 4:23-24.

The mature son in the ministry of intercession is therefore one who manifests these qualities of His grace:

1. Is absolutely grateful for redemption received as a gift through the sacrifice of Yeshua.
2. Counts membership of the family of Yahweh and citizenship of His Kingdom of such great importance that even if, for the sake of argument, he or she does not receive any tangible ‘blessing’ as people count such from the Yahweh in this life, will not directly or indirectly accuse Him of being a bad Father.
3. Sees his/her life as a vessel for receiving, holding and expressing the will of Yahweh.
4. While the vast majority of saints lay hold of the Ask, Seek, Knock promise to literally ‘bombard’ heaven with their wish list, this kind of intercessor takes the posture of a ‘spiritual mid-wife’ to birth His will in the earth realm generally and the sphere of influence assigned to him/her specifically.
5. This kind of life is therefore lost in Yeshua and totally liberated from the clutches of Satan, Sin, the world, poverty or any other thing which keeps average Christians under water. Colossians 3:1-3. Satan is scared of this quality of life!

Because of these qualities, Yahweh is more than willing to reveal to these vessels information of things to come! Amos 3:7. The truth is that saints who live this way

can be trusted with true Kingdom resources both in the now and in the age to come!
Matthew 6:25-34; Psalm 37: 3-7; Proverbs 3:5-7; Isaiah 65:24

Chapter

Fasting: What, Why, When & How!

As we continue this epic and intensely practical discourse on Prayer, Fasting and Spiritual Warfare, prayer goes forth that you, the reader may through studying, understanding, prayer and faith receive the impartation therein and become the sons of Yahweh that He has ordained you to be in your sphere of Kingdom influence, amen! Speaking of the Kingdom of Yahweh, our singular model is Yeshua in His days in the flesh. Whatever Kingdom Culture we desire to see manifested in us today has been displayed before in Him. Let us therefore take this segment on Fasting from a New Covenant perspective as modelled and taught by Him as Matthew 17:5 and Hebrews 1:1-2 recommend.

After 30 years in obscurity, the time came for Yeshua to proceed into public ministry. The first thing He did was to be affirmed by John the Baptist who was already established as the voice of Yahweh and national Prophet of Israel after about 400 years of heavenly silence. As Yeshua was baptized by John, the heavens opened and the Father and Holy Spirit affirmed His identity as the Mashiach (Messiah) Israel had waited for. You would expect that after 30 years of learning obedience by the things which He suffered, Yeshua would blaze forth and take over Israel. Scriptures paint a different picture of what He did first:

“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil.² And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred” **Matthew 4:1-2.**

The One who was incarnated to redeem humanity began His public ministry with a 40 day fast! Even though He received the Holy Spirit without measure and had the full endorsement of Yahweh as affirmed in John 3:34-35, Yeshua undertook a lengthy fast. The first fruit of that exercise strengthened him for victory against the Devil during the temptation that followed as Matthew 4:3-11 reveal. It is also obvious that the three and half years He lived thereafter culminating in the epic victory over Satan at the Cross were largely settled here! If the Father has called you to service, the least we owe ourselves is to emulate the Ultimate Son!

A Critical Introduction

To understand the subject, let us first remember that humans are three dimensional beings. A human first and foremost is an eternal spirit being having a soul which is the realm of self-expression housed in a physical body. The spirit-man was designed to rule our beings. At the fall of Eve and Adam, a dislocation took place and the soul

began to rule humans, making fleshly decisions in cahoots with the physical body in response to external stimuli. This is why many people easily fall short of 1 John 2;15-17 though Spirit filled. The Holy Spirit resides in our spirit-man and from there enables us to live right. Unfortunately, the soul does not often give the spirit-man right of way to lead. This is the reason why many end up with works of the flesh which are simple products of soul driven lives as Galatians 5:15-21 shows. Let us take note that through the ministry of the Word, this re-alignment of spirit, soul and body can take place as saints tap into the mercy of Yahweh through grace and are sanctified.

“¹² For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” **Hebrews 4:12.**

“²³ And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.²⁴ Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it” **1 Thessalonians 5:23-24.**

What then is Fasting?

Fasting is the dimension of Prayer where we willingly deny our physical body food and drink and our soul the pleasures which make them get in the way of our spirit-man which is ordained to dominate our beings. It is the time when our flesh (soul and body) is brought under subjection so that our spirit man can rise in the dimension of sonship to apprehend the voice of our Father and be strengthened in the inner man (the spirit) by the indwelling Holy Spirit! It is the act of abstaining from even legitimate needs in order to make our vessels better available to Yahweh for His holy use.

How are we not to fast? Are there things to avoid?

1. Not as hypocrites! We are not to seek to impress any human or fast for show off! Whoever does such has already been rewarded with the adulation of fellow humans and should not expect divine intervention.

“¹⁶ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward” **Matthew 6:16**

2. We should not fast as a religious exercise. This happens when fasting is by rote. How do you know fasting is by rote? When it is determined by a fixed Church calendar (monthly, quarterly or annual fixed days to fast) even when there is no heart connection in repentance or change of lives. This is also so when saints in the same local assembly have ought, unforgiveness, do not truly interact or even hate each other yet they 'fast because there is a fast' and continue to live thereafter with no change of heart!

“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.² Yet they seek me daily, and delight to know my ways, as a nation that did righteousness, and forsook not the ordinance of their God: they ask of me the ordinances of justice; they take delight in approaching to God.³ Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours.⁴ Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high.⁵ Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD?”
Isaiah 58:1-5

How do we fast?

Our King whose voice is to be heard, understood, accepted and obeyed gave us a very clear command on how to fast:

“¹⁶ Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. ¹⁷ But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face;¹⁸ That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly” **Matthew 6:16-18.**

Our King says our fasting should be done in such a way that it is only our Father in heaven who knows what we are going through! This approach is supported by the principle articulated in the Book of Joel where the emphasis is that we rend our hearts, not our garments.

“¹² Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning:¹³ And rend your

heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil” Joel 2:12-13.

Repentance when truly made with fasting produces great results of changed behaviour! These days, people ‘repent’ without any changes in behaviour or attitudes. Paul recommended that repentance needs to be backed up with godly sorrow. 2 Corinthians 7:8-12.

Isaiah 58:6-14 shows a list of things which make a fast have great value before Yahweh. Let us study Isaiah 58 in full and by the Spirit, see the practical applications in our lives today.

When do we fast?

Here again, we need to take our bearings from our King. One day, the disciples who He was training for ministry were confronted with a demonic possessed boy and could not deliver him. Yeshua used the occasion to teach us a vital principle: Fasting is occasioned by spiritual need!

“¹⁴ And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, ¹⁵ Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. ¹⁶ And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. ¹⁷ Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. ¹⁸ And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. ¹⁹ Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? ²⁰ And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. ²¹ Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting” Matthew 17:14-21 .

In order words, saints will encounter situations where prayer and faith may not seem to produce the required effect. In that case, there is need for a reality check. Could it be that the physical body which houses the inner man is weary, unfocussed or simply too heavy with food and drink? Is it possible that the soul (mind, will and emotions) is so satiated with pleasure that it presses down on the spirit-man (where Holy Spirit resides)? Is it possible that the soul is filled with negative thoughts, is fearful, unbelieving; is unloving and caring or simply seeking vain glory which touches on the glory of Yahweh? In this case fasting will cause the soul to be still and the body rested to give way for the spirit-man to be activated and energized by Holy Spirit as fasting takes place. Victory is thus secured as Yahweh intervenes.

Lesson: Fasting can be applied to back up Prayer and Faith to unleash the potent power of the indwelling Holy Spirit! Saints, never accept any abnormality which runs contrary to what Yeshua purchased at the Cross! Whether demonic oppression, sickness or whatever the abnormality is, do not be like Job and in ignorance accuse Yahweh of inflicting it on you or your loved ones! King Yeshua told us in John 10:10 that it is the enemy who comes to steal, kill and destroy! We can tap into the realm of abundant life by seeking His face and where necessary, backed up with Fasting.

When the End Times occasion it.

Our King also periscoped the generation we are in when he was confronted by the disciples of John who invested considerable time with their master in prayer and fasting.

“¹⁴ Then came to him the disciples of John, saying, Why do we and the Pharisees fast oft, but thy disciples fast not?¹⁵ And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bridechamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast” **Matthew 9:14-15.**

Our King is saying that in these last days, let us fast, as prompted by Holy Spirit, on issues concerning the End Times. This could be to obtain clarity concerning the mind of the Father. It could also be to pray into certain developments or some specific causes such as Revival. Here fasting can also be to precede or back up evangelism projects or world evangelization. Saints should feel free to seek the hands of Yahweh or His divine intervention where necessary! In the days of Esther, she sought divine intervention through a fast. In the days of King Jehoshaphat (2 Chronicles 20), he proclaimed a fast when great evil came against the nation. In the days of Daniel, it was through persistent fast that he broke through (Daniel 10). Even the King of Nineveh obtained mercy through a fast he proclaimed Jonah 3:1-10.

When we need to deal with works of the Flesh and manifest fruit of the Spirit

Fasting, when properly done, leads to an inward re-alignment that makes our spirit-man soar outside the stifling bondage it was previously subjected to by the flesh (soul and body). Through fasting as we are sincere before our Father, there will be revelation of attitudes, affections and actions which when dealt with by the Holy Spirit and the Blood, lead us to manifest fruit of the Spirit rather than works of the Flesh. Galatians 5:15-23.

Fasting should be Spirit-directed and led and not religious.

Fasting is not necessarily confined to absence of food. There could be food fasts as well as fasts from anything which gives us pleasure or feeds our ego or soul desires. These could include things like the non-alcoholic wines or beverages which give us much pleasure. They could include abstaining from popular TV programs or shows. The most important principle is 'abstinence' or abstaining from whatever it is that we normally enjoy or need when our intention is to free our spirit-man from human or satanic restrictions. The length of fasting should be determined by the Holy Spirit as we are sensitive to His voice. If He prompts us to do a dry fast (no food, no liquid), He will sustain us. He could prompt us to fast from 6 am to 6pm or from 6pm to 6am. He could also prompt us to fast for a single hour of not taking anything or a particular number of hours (like 6am – 9am or 6am to 12 noon or 6am to 3pm). Be open to hear His voice of direction!

Exclusion clause. Do not fast presumptuously or according to a religious tradition even when your body is weak or unable to carry through a length of fast. Those who are sick, recuperating or convalescing should not fast as well as those who are pregnant, nursing babies, old or too young. To engage in long fast in isolated locations in search of 'power' can open people up to satanic powers!

Chapter

Spiritual Warfare –Part 1

Definition

Spiritual warfare is the act of standing on the finished work of Calvary to war, in the Name of Yeshua and at the prompting Holy Spirit against the devil and his evil forces and by doing so enforce the ordinances and purposes of Yahweh on planet earth (land, waters, first and second heavens). Take note that it is not against human beings, even when they are his willing or unconscious human agents.

“¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” Ephesians 6:12

Distortions of Spiritual Warfare by two opposing camps

Denominations divide the Body of Yeshua by clinging to limited insights they receive in the word and making dogma out of them. The problem with dogma is that it may not necessarily reflect the whole truth but can deceive by shutting off other truths. For this reason, those who cling to dogma do great damage to their souls as they lack the full counsel of Yahweh. Half knowledge can indeed be dangerous! Nowhere is this danger more evident than in the two major camps that dominate discussions on Spiritual Warfare. For sake of clarity, let us call them the ‘First World’ and ‘Third World’ camps.

The First World Camp

These are ministers from the advanced economies. After years of prosperity with all basic provisions generally met, they seem to have come to the conclusion that the issue of Satan and evil spirits is a kind of fable reserved for ‘jungle’ societies. Consequently, they do not seem to experience direct encounters with the powers of darkness (or so they believe). They are not able to make a connection between the massive break down of the moral compass of Judeo Christian values and the attendant deviant behaviour at all levels in their countries with the war of attrition Satan and his assigned cohorts are waging.

These brethren love Yeshua, read and teach from the Bible but are clearly blind, leading blind followers who adore them into ditches. By not believing or teaching certain realities because they seem to have it all, they expose saints to the worst of

spiritual and social sins: ignorance which leads to destruction as Hosea 4:6 says. Scripture is to be taught in fidelity to what Yahweh says, not subject to our personal opinions or experiences.

The Third Word Camp

These are ministers who have experienced the activities of Satan and his demons first hand or know many who have suffered uncountable torment, pain and even destruction of lives and properties. For them, this is no academic exercise: Satan and evil spirits are real. Consequently, they invest considerable time and effort to study the subject matter of Spiritual warfare, pray more about it, teach it often and conduct deliverance services both inside congregational settings, on special days, in homes and offices. While this camp knows about the subject matter, the attendant risk and danger is that they inadvertently promote Satan and Satan consciousness.

In some ministries, many saints have been 'programmed' to utter the name of Satan and evil spirits more than they pronounce the Name that is above all names, Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah. This anomaly has bred a degree of Satan-consciousness which brings through the back door, a new form of spiritual and mental enslavement to religion of works! In so doing, saints are led down the path of danger as they bring railing accusations against Satan concerning difficulties they face even when he is not even present! As they work themselves into a frenzy to 'attack' Satan and hang on him their burdens, such saints may pause to consider this word of caution:

*"⁸ Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities.⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.¹⁰ But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves" **Jude 1:8-10.***

Saints have been conditioned to forget that Yahweh is the fountain of Grace and Mercy. People become so legalistic that they attribute some of their present problems to what they did as children and unsaved youth though these may be things that have repented of and renounced!

To compound this reality, they literarily worship the deliverance ministers and gladly pay outrageous fees to receive 'deliverance' that never really happens. Some are

enslaved to several bouts of fasting (7, 21, 40, 50, 70, 100 days) that are continuous with 'goal posts' of deliverance continually shifted. They are extorted of huge sums of money from their preachers who feed fat by pumping fear into their hearts. Poorly printed 'prayer books' and 'anointing oil' are sold at outrageous prices and people have no choice than to buy.

Every one they know is supposed to be an enemy responsible for their woes. In such assemblies, people do not allow others (same congregants) to touch their children neither do they eat and drink together. This situation is not the intent of our King. This is legalism in disguise and cannot make their practitioners perfect in Yeshua. The palpable spirit of fear and apprehension that is self-evident in such ministries prove without doubt that bondage, rather than liberty is their defining feature.

"¹⁸ Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind,¹⁹ And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God.²⁰ Wherefore if ye be dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, why, as though living in the world, are ye subject to ordinances,²¹ (Touch not; taste not; handle not;²² Which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men?"

Colossians 2:18-22

The balanced approach

There is a third way which has a balanced approach to the subject matter. It is that of systematic exposition of the Holy Scriptures under the guidance of Holy Spirit who was given to teach us all truth. It is also an approach which is hinged on the Words of King Yeshua and His apostles as well as their practical demonstration of Spiritual Warfare. To understand this subject in its fuller dimension, we need to also grasp the realities of another book we will offer titled 'Critical Adversaries'.

Basic realities in the subject matter of Spiritual Warfare.

Let us take note of these basic realities that are grounded in the Holy Scriptures:

1. Knowledge of who Satan is. Satan is a created being who once as Lucifer the archangel worked very close to God as worship leader that served at the centre of the Throne of Grace. Filled with wisdom and beauty, he was wired to produce music. Pride and vaulting ambition caused him to err and seek to seize the throne of God, leading to his transmutation from Lucifer to the Devil. Because he was an arch angel, he had access to much of the mysteries of life and in his fallen state has twisted them

for dark purposes to make men switch loyalty from God to himself. Isaiah 14: 12- 17 tells us the origin of the fall of Lucifer while Ezekiel 28: 11 – 19 goes further to describe how Lucifer was when he was created and assigned as Chief worship leader of the heavenly choir.

Satan tries to suggest otherwise but he does not have the immutable attributes of God. He is not Omni Potent, Omnipresent or Omniscient . However, because he is the master of deception and lies, he has organised his dark kingdom in such a way that his agents represent him at all strata of life so effectively that the unwary are led to believe that he is everywhere. It is critically important to Satan that the saints have a distorted view of who he actually is and the true extent of his power and operations. Once you underestimate Satan, you are set up for him to deal with you. If you over rate him to the degree of ascribing to him qualities that belong to God alone, you open a door of oppression for yourself.

For this reason, we must pray for revelation to have a proper understanding of this enemy of God and of our souls. The truth is that Satan is not everywhere at the same time, a quality ascribable to God alone! He rather wanders throughout the whole earth. Job 2: 1-2. He also walks about like a roaring Lion seeking who to devour. 1 Peter 5:8. Like a thief, he is constantly seeking who and what to steal, kill and destroy. John 10:10

2. Understand how Satan seems to be every where wrecking havoc. Satan achieves his seeming ubiquity of presence with the presence of his vast army of cohorts spread across the world.

“¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” Ephesians 6:12.

On the day of his fall, Satan was able to deceive multitude of angels to follow him in his rebellion. It is estimated that as much as one third of the angels were part of that rebellion. Revelations 12: 3,4. Satan has organized them into a powerful, well knit kingdom of darkness with each disciplined officer holding down a specific territory and representing him as his agent. Some demons(name of fallen angels) have specific assignment over individuals while others are assigned to families, communities as well as specific cultural heights s of society (Family, Schools, Arts/Literature, Culture, Media, Government/Politics, Business/the Professions, The Military) to supervise their activities and lead them to flow according to his pattern and will. We will examine his evil hierarchy in detail further on in this book.

3. Saints need to hide in Yeshua! To live in victory, saints need to walk in full understanding that we have an enemy and a host of evil forces intent on undoing what God has done for us. Saints should desire discernment to understand the nature and mode of operation of demonic spirits functioning in their spheres of influence and know that those who are redeemed by the Blood that Yeshua shed, who abide in Him and allow His word to abide in them have passed from death to life; are transited from victims to victors as long as they set their affections on things above and seek first the Kingdom of Yahweh. This gives them double protection insurance that Satan cannot touch!

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.² Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.³ For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.⁴ When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory” Colossians 3:1-4.

Understanding the basics of the evil kingdom of Satan

Of the things Abba shared with us so far, the following can be deduced:

1. Satan is real as are demons who are fallen angels subject to him in a total sense.
2. To ignore the reality of the existence of Satan is to live in denial. Since ignorance is not a virtue, the one who denies this reality is, from a spiritual point of view, blind.
3. On the other hand, exaggerating the person and powers of Satan to the degree of counting him to be equal and opposite of Elohim, his creator is to succumb to his lies. This can open up the saint who believes the lie to greater realms of oppression and possible possession!

The first thing we need to understand is that from the day of his fall, Satan the Devil did not just go to fold his hands in hell which became his headquarters, living an inactive life. Some scriptures show us how he and his agents spend time.

Kingdom of darkness: Levels of authority and circumference of operation.

We now proceed to learn a little more about satan, his companions and agents and how they are structured to give the impression of ubiquity. In other words, some of the things saints glibly attribute to Satan are in fact direct activities of these officers in the kingdom where he is chief. Discernment of spirits will enable us to know

exactly what we are up against so that instead of praying generally, we can deal with the hindering or opposing spirits by name, just as Yeshua and his disciples did.

In one single verse, the hierarchical structure of the Kingdom of darkness is outlined for our benefit.

“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places” Ephesians 6:12

We learn that while Satan is at the Apex of the Kingdom of darkness, there are other levels of authorities who work with him to steal, kill and destroy. Let us gain more insight into what those spirit beings are.

Principalities: These are ruling territorial demons which have charge over large areas and vast number of people. Principalities are assigned to enforce the ordinances and plans of Satan in their spheres of influence. They are also assigned to ensure that people in those areas have a distorted view of God and to see no need for Him in their affairs. Just as there was a Prince of Persia trying to hinder the prayers of Daniel, there are Princes of nations and territories today. Daniel 10: 1-21. It is interesting that the Prince of Greece was also mentioned in that scripture (Daniel 10 Verse 20).

Powers: These are ruling demons that exercise influence over all thrones from which human ruler ship is exercised. Assigned to every throne on planet earth is a demon which seeks to cause the human rulers to forget that they are ministers of God. With this deception, such human rulers go into delusions of grandeur and forget that they are created beings, until it is too late when sickness, rebellion, overthrow by coup, loss of elections or death cuts them down. Have you not known some people closely and could vouch for them but within a few months or years of being in political office, you can hardly approach, counsel or vouch for them again? Now you know what is at work! Rather than complain and moan, deal with this demonic power and you can recover the affection of your friend or relative.

Rulers of the darkness of this world. These are demons whose principal assignments are to inflict all manner of pain, suffering and crises upon mankind. The idea is to make people, in the heat of intense pain, to “curse God and die” as the wife of Job

suggested in Job 2:9. There are such demons which instigate wars, release and spread diseases, Cause people to forget important appointments, occasion wrong speech, occasion misunderstanding of intent, rouse people into stubbornness and insubordination, make children headstrong, self willed and wild, cause people to tend to criminality and indeed all kinds of evil. The natural is engineered from the spiritual. For this reason, virtually every imaginable evil that can come upon mankind have their roots in the infernal hearts of Satan and his agents.

Spiritual wickedness in high places. 2 Corinthians 4: 3,4. These are religious demons whose chief assignments are to cause humans to worship false gods and to draw their hearts away from the only true Creator. They promote the myriads of false religions that litter the universe. They appear as angels of light to cause men to receive extraordinary “light” from above which draw multitudes towards hell while believing they are serving Yahweh . Even within the Christian faith, these demons are responsible for all the falling always that have occurred since the days of Yeshua, Jesus when out of 500 that saw Him ascend bodily into heaven, only 120 heeded His instruction not to go forth until the Church was officially birthed at Pentecost.

Every false doctrine including that which in the name of ‘Grace’ causes Christians to live carelessly, oblivious of the imminence of the return of King Yeshua and tendencies to eat and drink and forget the Great Commission are instigated by spiritual wickedness in high places. These demons twisted divine prosperity out of context to promote covetousness as prosperity message with saints piling up treasure for generations to come while the Kingdom needs within their localities and other parts of the world went unmet.

Today, these demons have penetrated the Kingdom message movement to promote a false and toxic gospel which depreciates the person of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah to be a mere (undefined) King and not Divine. At the same time, these demons have twisted scripture out of context to tell saints that they are of equal rank with Yeshua, Jesus since He is only our senior brother so that they will no longer have awe for give Him the glory that is due. The demons on assignment study the Scriptures and turn their essential meanings upside down in order blind the eyes of those they deceive. The most outstanding assignment of these demons is to cause men to walk in ignorance of who Yeshua Ha Maschiach, Jesus the Messiah is. As the pivot of the salvation of man, inability to grasp the reality of His Divinity implies rejection of the plan of salvation.

“Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” **1 Corinthians 12:3.**

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. By denying the only King that bought them, some of these folks have embraced a reprobate state” **2 Corinthians 4:3-4.**

Human agents. In addition to these spirit beings, there are humans who are inclined to evil and thus lend their vessels to Satan to possess and use to think, say and do evil.

“And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men: for all men have not faith” **2 Thessalonians 3:2.**

They do not have to plan evil. Their imaginations and actions are evil continually! In this, they simply demonstrate the reality of what is in control of their lives. That is why we are not to focus on the vessels but on their ‘bosses’. If we focus rightly, we can have compassion on the vessels and deal with the spirits at work through them. Better still, as Paul instructs, we can hand over the battle to Yahweh whose Spirit possesses us! He generally does a better job in Spiritual warfare!

These include:

- People who inter mingle with the occult in various forms.
- Those who consult with mediums and operate with magical powers.
- People who accept the spirit of witchcraft with capacity to cast spells on fellow human beings and lead them into evil as Witches (Feminine) and Wizards (Masculine).
- Preachers who are drained of the Holy Spirit but recourse to satanic powers with which to manipulate their followers to do their bidding.

The Statute of Limitation is the limitation placed upon Satan, as a created being whose activities will ultimately work together to manifestation of the Supreme will of Elohim. The Supreme Ruler of the Universe on whose buck all things stop is Elohim!

*¹⁰ That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:¹¹ In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:¹² That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ” **Ephesians 1:10-12.***

When Yeshua paid the Supreme Price for the redemption of humanity, He proclaimed ‘It is finished’. By that decree, the legal power of Satan to smite and torment saints at will was taken away as they were translated from his grip into the Kingdom of Yahweh! By doing this, Yeshua was not founding a religious organisation but rather opening the life gate for those who would to become members of the Family of Yahweh on earth.

*“¹² Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:¹³ Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:¹⁴ In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:¹⁵ Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: ¹⁶ For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: ¹⁷ And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.¹⁸ And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. ¹⁹ For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;²⁰ And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. ²¹ And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled ²² In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreproveable in his sight: ²³ If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;²⁴ Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church” **Colossians 1:12-24***

Even in the Old covenant, let us see the Statute of Limitation at work. Satan had to take permission from Yahweh before he could oppress Job! Even in granting that permission, Yahweh set a limit to what Satan could do: he was not permitted to kill Job (See Job 1 verse 12).

⁶ Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. ⁷ And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. ⁸ And the LORD said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil? ⁹ Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, Doth Job fear God for nought? ¹⁰ Hast not thou made an hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. ¹¹ But put forth thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.

¹² And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD.

¹³ And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

¹⁴ And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them:

¹⁵ And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

¹⁶ While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

¹⁷ While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

¹⁸ While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house:

19 And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

20 Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped,

21 And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.

22 In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly” Job 1:6-22

At the same time, no matter what Satan and his agents do to saints whose lives are hidden in Yeshua, it will ultimately work together for their good, though there may be some pain along the line.

Subsequent permission sought led him to inflict more pain but at the end of the day, here was the testimony of Job:

“10 And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before.

11 Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaintance before, and did eat bread with him in his house: and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the LORD had brought upon him: every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold.

12 So the LORD blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses.

13 He had also seven sons and three daughters.

14 And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch.

15 And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren.

16 After this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, even four generations.

17 So Job died, being old and full of days” Job 42:10-17

Saints, it is not over until Yahweh says so! In our days,

Chapter

OFFENSIVE AND DEFENSIVE SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Spiritual warfare can be defensive or offensive.

Offensive Spiritual Warfare

Offensive spiritual warfare is when we are proactive in taking the battle to the gates of the enemy. Here, we lay hold of our redemptive inheritance as the spiritual seed of Abraham. Genesis 22:17. Matthew 16:18 implies that Satan will definitely attempt to snuff life out of His Church but victory is already assured when the saints rise up in the dimension of spiritual warfare to dismantle all his plans and dislodge all his strongholds.

Features of Offensive Spiritual Warfare

1. Necessity of constant vigilance. Here the watch word is to “watch and pray”. Many saints do one level of praying or the other. Very few however live in a state of watchfulness or vigilance. Vigilance implies being on the look out or on the watch tower to see what kind of cloud is forming in the horizon. It involves spotting things when they are in the formative stages before they develop into problems. We do not wait for those things to mature, but rather dismantle and dislodge them before they threaten our peace and joy.

Waging Spiritual War

The basis of spiritual warfare is this: all things in the natural are engineered in the spiritual realm. Whoever has mastery of the spiritual realm therefore will have mastery of the natural realm. This applies to virtually anything on planet earth. It is instructive to note that human beings are first and foremost, spirits, having souls as means of self expression(The Mind; the will and the emotion) housed in a body.

The essential parts of man are therefore his spirit and his soul. While the body is confined to one location at a time, the spirit and soul can apprehend in real terms, people, activities and objects that are in far flung locations. Humans can, by the force of imagination, see what is several miles and even years ahead (the basis of innovation and inventions). In other words, in the realm of the spirit, humans are able to see, hear and perceive what is said about them even when they are not present). When we are alert in the spirit and watchful, we can pick up signals that are positive or negative concerning plans of the enemy and his natural and human agents.

This is why Jesus commanded us to watch and pray. By watching, we are able to pick up strains of Satanic activity so that we can address them appropriately in prayer and spiritual warfare.

It is important to distinguish between these two spiritual activities: Prayer & Spiritual Warfare

- In prayer, you are dealing with God - petitioning Him for some blessings or to intervene in some ways.
- In Spiritual warfare however, you are enforcing the ordinances of God. You already know or have discerned the will of God and armed with the sword that is His will, you launch out to resist the devil and to snatch from him anything he stole from you or the saints!

It is important however to ensure that you are in right alignment with God and any authority He placed over you, if you are to wage successful spiritual warfare. Furthermore, it is imperative that you who would wage spiritual warfare have first also successfully dealt with all strong holds in your mind so that you can see clearly and according to the mind of God. 2 Corinthians 10: 3 – 6. Philippians 4:8.

Spiritual warfare can take many forms. These include:

1. **Binding and Loosing.** Matthew 16:19. Luke 11: 21 – 22. Here, we receive the assign of Jesus Christ to bind every demonic spirit at work in every circumstance before us. In the same way, we loose people and situations from demonic oppression which may manifest as sicknesses or other forms of disorder. We do not engage in this spiritual war on our own merit and ability. We do so in the name of Jesus Christ at which every knee shall bow in all realms of existence. Matthew 18:19, 20; Mark 16:17; Philippians 2:9, 10; Revelation 3:7. Note that Satan is not yet due for binding. He has license to roam around at this present time. You can successfully resist and overthrow his devices but have no legal ground to bind him! Binding Satan therefore is a meaningless activity. You can however bind his works and effect of his presence, in the name of Jesus Christ. A day is coming in the future when just one angel will bind Satan and lock him away for 1000 years – Revelation 20:1-6. Many saints there are whose present problems are neglecting this truth and railing against Satan or lying against him by attributing their carelessness or even discipline of the Father to him! We are warned that even Michael the Archangel did not rail against Satan when two of them were contending for the body of Moses. Michael rather

invoked the authority of Yahweh who sent him on that assignment! Please read Jude verses 8-10.

2. Casting out evil spirits – Luke 11: 14 – 24. We have the authority to discern, bind and cast out evil spirits that are the root causes of problems. Jesus most of the time identified the nature of the demons at work and addressed them by name. By the gift of discernment of spirits, we too can know and bind them by name – 1 Corinthians 12:10.

3. Resisting the devil from every negative activity with steadfast or unwavering faith so that he has no option than to flee as we submit ourselves to God. James 4:7; 1 Peter 5: 8, 9. We need to do this also in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

4. Overthrowing the works of Satan by the Blood of the Lamb backed by the testimony of our lives as witnesses of Christ. Revelations 12:11. Do not ever try to deal with Satan when there are unconfessed and unrepentant sins in your life. You can end up as the seven sons of Sceva.

5. Passing decrees that are prompted by the Holy Spirit or derived from the Word of God against any situation or the demonic powers that are behind them. Job 22: 27,28. John 14: 12 - 14. These decrees are not to be issued lightly but as inspired by the Holy Spirit. That is why it is wrong to use prayer books on spiritual warfare. Every activity and circumstance is different. At the grave of Lazarus, Jesus passed a decree for him to come forth, after worshipping the Father. John 11: 38 – 44.

6. Angels of God can be called forth, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, to fight unseen spiritual wars, when you exhaust your capacity. Daniel chapter 10 offers an interesting account of angelic intervention. Angels are spirit beings assigned by God to wait on us and enable us fulfil our divine assignment. Hebrews 1:14.

Take note that the Word of God is a critical resource in spiritual warfare Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 11: 27 - 28

Defensive Spiritual Warfare

Spiritual Warfare is defensive when we lay hold of the right spiritual equipment to hold what belongs to God and His Kingdom which is assigned to us, individually or severally to keep. Jesus gave express assurance to the Church, which is us, rather than an organisation, that the gates of hell cannot prevail over His Church. Matthew 16:18.

A careful examination of Ephesians 6:10-18 reveals that all the weapons but one: The Sword of The Spirit - The Word of God, are for defensive purposes.

¹⁰ Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

¹¹ Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

¹² For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

¹³ Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

¹⁴ Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

¹⁵ And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

¹⁶ Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

*¹⁸ Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints” **Ephesians 6:10-18***

Saints, let us give heed to the instructions issued through the mouth of Paul and ensure that not one piece of our spiritual body armour as listed above is missing! No saint has any excuse to take this clear description of what our armour should be lightly! Do not let any insecure Pastor or leader by any name called make you dependent upon their 'anointing' for safety otherwise they become idols! Neither should you allow your denomination to take your armour away. Check up yourself right now by inquiring of Holy Spirit if there is any chink in your armour!

Examples of defensive spiritual warfare.

1. Battling for the destiny God has unfolded for us which the enemy and his agents seek to plunder or deflect.

2. Fighting to prevent Satanic attempts to take over the hearts and minds of children through worldly amusements, drug and substance addictions.
3. Fighting to safeguard such core institutions as the marriage, family and the church from the onslaught of the enemy.
4. Fighting to defend by faith the health, finances and general well being of saints of God from onslaughts of the wicked one. This is where saints know what was purchased for them by Yeshua, Jesus at the Cross of Calvary and stand their ground in faith to receive them. Having received them, saints refuse to allow the enemy to take them away.

*"¹⁰ The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" **John 10:10.***

*"² Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth" **3 John 1:2***

*"But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a **rewarder** of them that diligently seek him" **Hebrews 11:6.***

*"Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompence of **reward**" **Hebrews 10:35.***

Saints, please diligently search out the Holy Scriptures to understand all the promises of God for saints generally and for you in particular. Believe God for them, meditate and confess them to yourself, at the enemy and his agents when they rear their heads! Stand your ground with the shield of faith and absolute trust in God! Let Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1:1-3 and Colossians 3:16 propel you on!

*"⁸ This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" **Joshua 1:8.***

A matter of Narrative

Three general narratives have sought attention from saints regarding the issue of Spiritual Warfare.

1. Satanic narrative. Here, there is a subtle attempt to perpetuate the myth that as 'god' of this world since the day he deceived Adam and Eve, Satan can do and undo, inflicting whatever he desires on any human on earth at any time of his choosing. This narrative is false. His sphere of influence is the kingdom of darkness and all those who have refused the salvation that is in Yeshua, Jesus! Paul the Apostle made this point eloquently clear in 2 Corinthians 4:3-4. To this agrees the testimony of John in 1 John 5:19-21. This is one of the main reasons Yahweh wants us to be separate unto Himself-2 Corinthians 6:14-18. This also explains why He wants us to walk in the Spirit and cease to love the world and all that is therein summed up as Lust of the Flesh, Lust of the eyes and Pride of Life 1 John 2:15-17.

2. The humanistic narrative. This is the narrative that has two perspectives. One is the atheistic. Here, it is believed that neither Yahweh nor Satan exists. Man is the author and finisher of his own destiny. Therefore people just have to accept things as they see it. The other humanistic perspective is religious. Here, those who purport to know 'God' believe that man has no responsibility over anything. Since 'what will be will be', the best approach to life is to just live until death comes.

3. The Biblical narrative. What we are studying in this book is the Biblical narrative. It is a narrative which recognises the power of Satan and his limits. It is also a narrative which recognises the unsurpassable power of the Most High Elohim who created heaven and earth and all that is therein, including the beings that are now Satan and demons. This narrative makes it clear that the will of Elohim is Supreme and cannot be altered by Satan. It also makes clear the awesome authority which saints have in Yeshua that they can exercise at the prompting of the Holy Spirit to clear their assigned domains of satanic opposition.

Another Case study: Joseph, son of Jacob!

If only saints will study the Bible diligently and allow it to be made flesh in them, they will stop promoting Satan, as it were! Joseph the son of Jacob was a man of like passion. He lived in an era when there was no coded law of Yahweh. Yet because he knew his maker and trusted him, the statute of limitation which is an immutable law of the universe worked for him! From the day his star appeared in the form of a dream, Satan and all the family were up in arms. Every single case of rejection, abandonment and betrayal he experienced was converted by the unseen hand of His Maker into opportunity for advancement into the very destiny that was pre-

determined before the foundation of the world! At the end of the day, before his brethren who shivered and cowered, here were the immortal words he uttered:

“4 And Joseph said unto his brethren, Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt.5 Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life.6 For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest.7 And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.8 So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt”. **Genesis 45:4-8**

As it was with Joseph, so shall it be with all of saints who are begotten by the precious blood of Yeshua! Our lives are not ‘happenstances’, affected by external circumstances. Our lives and destinies have been packaged before the foundation of this world, sealed by the Blood of the Lamb for manifestation in due season!

Within the context of what Yahweh had in mind and the day of manifestation, no matter what Satan or humans do, as long as we abide in Yeshua and allow His words to abide in us, we will in due season experience Divine intervention that will bring tears of joy! Running from pillar to post exalting Satan or enthroning fellow humans as if they have the power to undo what Yeshua finished at Calvary only feeds the narrative of Satan.

Trials of Faith are in the Mix!

As saints, our faith will be tried at various times. Here is how Peter puts the act and outcome of such trials:

*“That the **trial of your faith**, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ”* **1 Peter 1:7**

What shall we say of Paul the apostle? According to his own testimony which was bespoke, look at what he ‘suffered’ as part of the marks of his apostleship:

“I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in

deaths oft. 24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. 25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; 26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not? 30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities. **2 Corinthians 11:21-30**

In spite of the intense pains he endured, Paul made a distinction between part of his appointed process and the attacks of Satan. He thus knew when to submit to process and when to war. Because he walked in discernment and elevated His redeemer above Satan, he knew when a seemingly 'closed door' was evidence of satanic activity or when it simply meant Yeshua his Master had not yet opened that particular door. In this, Paul penned by the Spirit, these immortal lines which seal the deal for the Statute of Limitation:

*" And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" **Romans 8:28-39***

Let it be that somebody reading this today will have an Epiphany! Let the heavens open and speak reassuringly to someone: 'Yeshua prevailed on your behalf'. May

someone know that he/she knows that that situation is not unto death and destruction and that there is a silver lining in the clouds. That silver lining is nothing more than this: Yahweh, your maker is in charge! And if He says it is not over, Satan cannot say otherwise!

The trouble may not be Satan but universal laws that are broken!

The final word on this section is this: since the day Adam and Eve fell, this earth and the world thereon has been out of sync with the original purpose. After thousands of years, the earth which has drank so much blood and the atmosphere which has witnessed so much evil on earth are groaning, yearning for ultimate day when all things will be new and when sons of Yahweh will walk on earth under the Sovereign rule of Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah as King.

Until that day comes, many things on earth may not work perfectly as you may want all the time. Majority of women will still have hard labor, though redeemed by the Blood. Many men will still work full time jobs to earn a living, though born again. Many deceivers will still appear at various times. Many people will make promises and not keep them, though Spirit-filled. Great ministers will still give room to sin and the flesh and fall, shaking the faith of many. Though born again and Spirit-filled, saints will still age and transit via death to the other side of eternity. The sum is this: the world will remain generally imperfect until King Yeshua returns to restore all things! When you face some of these life situations, the right response is not to run from pillar to post seeking 'deliverance' but to understand what is at work in your particular circumstance!

If you need to change your lifestyle, diet, and attitude, take responsibility and do so. If you need to release and let go of something or someone for example, in a simple act of forgiveness, in order to sleep well and take out the toxins which hate releases that sparked a health situation, be brave and do it expeditiously! If you need to eat humble pie and go and apologise to the spiritual authority who Yahweh used to bless you but who you repaid with gossip and evil speech which may have occasioned a seeming closing of your heavens, be diligent to do so.

If you have not blessed your natural parents or any vessel Yahweh uses to invest in your spiritual development and consequently your finances are permanently in the red, be smart enough to reverse the situation by blessing them and see both Ephesians 6:1-3 and Galatians 6:6-9 work for you. Some scriptures reveal adjustments we need to make in lifestyle in order to enjoy divine providence. 1 Peter 2:11-25.

All that has been written so far on Spiritual Warfare was designed for the renewal of the mind! The revelations challenge some cultural and religious strongholds that create perspectives of life that were not ordained by the Father. Having the right mindset which comes from effective renewing of the mind through the word leads us to have the mind of Yeshua which is the starting point of victory in and with Him!

“And be renewed in the spirit of your mind” Ephesians 4:23

“And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God”. Romans 12:2

Why do we need to discern rightly what is against us? the answer is simple: that is the easiest way to do effective spiritual warfare. In other words, the first and most critical battle is in our minds! If we win the battle here and successfully pull down strongholds therein, we will see and think clearly and therefore be better equipped to deal with external threats posed by Satan and his agents:

“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)⁵ Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;⁶ And having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled” 2 Corinthians 10:3-6

The reason why we need to have the right mindset is that it is the only way we can think right and be able to properly discern who and what we are up against as we press on with our life assignments. Knowing the enemy and the way he functions and how his kingdom is structured is the first step to true victory.

In the same way, generally attributing all things to ‘Satan’ – whether he is responsible or not bloats his ego and at the same time exposes the saint involved to the greater danger of bringing against him a railing accusation which is not permitted by Yahweh! In this regard, the experience of Michael an arch angel when face to face with Satan during their mutual quest for the body of Moses on Mount Nebo is instructive. Here is how Jude, the half brother of Yeshua after the flesh (one of the other sons born by Mary who lived a normal life as wife of with Joseph after the Incarnation) recorded the incident and in the process, warns saints to desist from ‘abusing Satan’ over all things they encounter!

“Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. ⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said,

The Lord rebuke thee.¹⁰ But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves” **Jude 1:8-10.**

Chapter

THE MANDATE, POWER, AND AUTHORITY TO 'GO YE'

It appears that some religious leaders who oppose the understanding of spiritual warfare by their 'sheep' do so on two faulty grounds:

1. "Jesus defeated Satan at Calvary and all that Christians are called to do is enjoy eternal life"
2. "It is dangerous to dabble into this 'dark' subject, less a can of worms be opened which may activate danger that Christians cannot handle."

The danger of these two lines of argument is that they are spiritually dangerous and socially illogical to the extent that they cause Christians to live in blissful ignorance of both the reality of life all around them and the extensive authority and power granted them. This makes them sitting ducks for the enemy to plunder at will! He is still the Father of lies. He and his cohorts are engaged every moment in plots and actions to 'steal, kill and destroy'.

Our King is two things to us in the arena of Spiritual Warfare:

1. Our Model and 2. Our Source of Power and Provider of Authority!

Let us discuss these two concepts briefly.

#.1. Our Model of Spiritual Warrior

From cradle to the grave, the life of Yeshua was one continuum of spiritual warfare. Long before He was born, the enemy took the pronouncement of Elohim in Eden that a Seed of the Woman would crush his head very seriously. He tracked the lineage that was to produce Yeshua and unleashed lethal attacks to corrupt it through immorality! Check out the circumstances of birth of Pharez by Judah (incest with his daughter-in-law Tamar), the insertion of Rahab (prostitute of Jericho) and Ruth (a Moabitess, whose nation was the product of an incestuous relationship between Lot and his daughters when drunk) into the lineage of the Messiah. Consider the moral failure of David with Bathsheba and the worse of it all, the unbridled promiscuity of Solomon. The list is endless. Satan thought that by 'polluting' the lineage he could negate the purpose of Elohim!

From birth, Herod sought to kill Yeshua. After His Baptism as we saw earlier, Satan tried to tempt Him out of His assignment. The Authority and Power with which Yeshua functioned was the only saving grace. With that, Yeshua healed the sick, cast out demons and delivered the oppressed, routing Satan and his agents off lives of people in effective spiritual warfare! It was thus with war that Yeshua literarily pronounced the nature and power of the Kingdom as a conquering one.

“But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you. 21 When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:22 But when a stronger than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils”. **Luke 11:20-22**

Even the Cross was a triumph of effective spiritual warfare where the limited knowledge of Satan as a created being crumbled under the weight of the Supreme will of Yeshua. When Satan propelled Jewish religious leaders to demand the death of Yeshua with acquiescence of Roman leaders, he thought that was end of the matter! Unknown to him, by death, Yeshua was to seal the deal of redemption, take away the legal power of Satan over those who would believe and, on resurrection and ascension, take captive the hindering powers in the first and second heavens!

“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;15 And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage”. **Hebrews 2:14**

“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men” Ephesians 4:8

2: Our King gave us unlimited Power and Authority in His Name to finish the assignment until He returns!

No saint should live in any doubt about the fact that by the Law of Process Yahweh set in motion, King Yeshua, Jesus, came on earth not to do all the work but to accomplish the part only Him as a Divine Personality could do. That was to pay the price for the Sin of Adam and take away from Satan the legal right to be king of this earth! By that process, those who believe on Him were not to have a free pass to live without responsibility as many who skim the surface of scriptures try to suggest! Luke 19:10-27 which provides us with the mandate to 'Occupy', till He comes, puts the responsibility of saints in every generation into context! We have the responsibility of being vessels Yahweh has chosen through whom the Kingdom of heaven will manifest in the earth realm!

The Great Commission as we now call it, is the very purpose for which the redeemed are left on earth after their salvation (Please see 2 Corinthians 5:17-21). It is through it that the Mandate of Heaven is manifested on earth on an ongoing, continuous basis until the very Day of Days when King Yeshua would return to set up the literal, physical phase of the Kingdom here on earth! In other words, the fulness of time is also the day when the full population of the Kingdom to come becomes complete through preaching of the gospel and the attendant transition of people from darkness into His marvellous light!

“And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come” **Matthew 24:14.**

To the disciples He once sent on a practical assignment who reported their success in spiritual warfare, look at what King Yeshua said so that saints can put all things about this subject in their right context:

“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. 18 And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven”. **Luke 10:17-20**

The Great Commission is backed by the Authority and Power of our King! No one can, by any stretch of the imagination fulfil The Great Commission in natural strength or wisdom!

“And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover. 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. 20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following”. **Mark 16:15-20**

This is why Yeshua told an eager group of believers not to proceed with going forth to preach until they received their Ambassadorial Credentials: the Person and Power of the Holy Spirit!

“But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto

the uttermost part of the earth". Acts 1:8

For the 120 who obeyed, what happened in the Upper Room changed their lives completely! Wimps became men. They bearded the lion in his den by healing the sick, casting out demons, delivering the oppressed and in so doing, announced the Kingdom and turned their world upside down! in places like Ephesus, the ruling Power, Diana(Artemis) was decisively dealt with by Paul and his companions, paving the way for a thriving City Church!

When true spiritual warfare is exercised, the Gospel receives the imprimatur of heaven and accelerated speed!

"And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. 19 Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. 20 Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven". Luke 10:18-20

This is a season in which you need to ensure an alignment of your will with that of the Omniscient, Omnipresent and Omnipotent Elohim, our great Father and God! Prayer must rise to new dimensions and our Faith must be let loose!

Saints, let us press into a new realm of fervency in prayer based on Faith that breaks loose of human reasoning! Abba Father wants to bring forth the Radiant Church that we are – well decorated with the Glory of Yeshua, Jesus, exercising Dominion over the natural realm, subduing sense knowledge!

It has been noted that in sending us forth as Lambs in the midst of wolves (Satan, his spiritual and natural cohorts) our Redeemer and King vested us with His Authority and Power to represent Him personally and demonstrate the reality of the Kingdom wherever we are. It is obvious therefore that whether acknowledged or denied, Spiritual warfare is a living reality.

Chapter

3 REALMS OF SPIRITUAL AUTHORITY FOR EFFECTIVE SPIRITUAL WARFARE

The subject of Spiritual Warfare is one where mis-information by Satan meets a warm embrace by soulish ministers who allow the needs of their bellies (money) to make them prefer to see saints wallow in ignorance. Of those who blight the nominal Church with the enslavement of blood washed saints as they make obeisance to Mammon, Paul had this scathing report in Philippians 2:17-21. Let no one be in any doubt that ignorance means big business for such ministers who have given deliverance a bad name as saints rely on them for even minor challenges of life.

Our King, Yeshua Ha Mashiach, Jesus the Messiah stated plainly in John 8:32 that the knowledge of truth brings freedom. For added effect, He proclaimed that those He sets free are free indeed (John 8:36). Today, let us be open for Holy Spirit to tell us the full truth about three realms of spiritual authority that will clear all confusion on this vital subject.

1. Realm of Spiritual Authority: Inheritance of Individual Saints

Every saint, no matter how young in the Kingdom or lacking in spiritual growth has an inherent inheritance in King Yeshua which guarantees the capacity to confront and overcome Satan and powers of darkness by whatever name they may be called! This is a redemptive blessing saints receive from Yeshua, Jesus Who is head of His Body.

It includes these indisputable rights:

1.1. Right to use the Authority of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus, in faith, to command every adversary or adverse situation to bow - Philippians 2:9-11

This is different from praying to the Father in the Name of Yeshua, Jesus! Here, the saint is releasing a spiritual force to repel whatever evil that rears its head(s) in his/her circumstances.

1.2. Right to overthrow Satan himself, by faith, with the Blood that Yeshua, Jesus shed at the Cross of Calvary! This right is released with bold faith in He who shed His Blood and the efficacy of that action for all generations. Satan cannot dispute the potency of the shed blood because that was the divine means by which his legal right as 'god' of this world was permanently taken away by Yeshua on behalf of the

redeemed!

“¹¹ And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death” **Revelation 12:11**

These two legal tools (The name and Blood of Yeshua, Jesus) are what gives us the right to resist Satan who will flee (1 Peter 5:8-9) and bind his spiritual agents who will comply!

Caution: know when to embrace Divine dealings and when to war!

Let it be said that discernment and wisdom is vital to know when one is undergoing a general process of life through challenges (in which case understanding of Romans 8:28-39 brings great comfort that ultimately, things will work out for good).

On the other hand, if a saint is outside the will of Yahweh or has sinned, His divine discipline may take effect any way He chooses and one needs to embrace it and come out better, not bitter as Hebrews 12:4-11 states.

In the same way, wisdom and discernment will reveal when Satan or his agents are at work which require the right response of spiritual warfare, using the Authority of the Name and Power of the Blood of Yeshua, Jesus!

In doing the above, saints are treading upon serpents and scorpions; pushing back the frontiers of darkness! It is not about them and their spiritual, intellectual or physical ability! Whenever they exercise the authority of the Name of Yeshua, Jesus and Power of His shed Blood, the Holy Spirit takes over to enforce the moving of the 'mountain' involved! Zechariah 4:6

For this reason, it is advised that saints should not use the Name or Blood of Yeshua, Jesus, in vain! They are not religious totems or amulets to be bandied about in fear or as acts of superstition! What some deliverance ministries have done in this regard cheapens these two powerful instruments of divine victory graciously made available to saints as an inheritance from King Yeshua.

The question somebody may ask is this: can a saint therefore get deliverance from a Satanic attack all by himself/herself? The answer is Yes, absolutely! The principles stated in this book are truths that set free for those who will receive in meekness and exercise faith in Yahweh and His Word! But we cannot stop at the individual because there is more to life in the Spirit!

2. Realm of Spiritual Authority: Corporate Inheritance

One of the most underestimated power centres on earth is the Body of Yeshua, Jesus! Satan knows it so and works over time to sow seeds of discord which prevent saints from becoming as united as Yeshua prayed for in John 17.

He also works over time to make saints neglect the divine concept of Church as a living, loving organism of various Body parts united in the Spirit to manifest Yeshua, their head. He does this by making leaders focus on an organisational construct which emphasises hierarchy, stiff systems such as committees that provide ambitious people pathways to 'climb' and achieve their humanistic ambitions, passing them off as the will of Yahweh.

Satan and his agents know that The Church, functioning rightly as The Body of its head, Yeshua, Jesus, will automatically be of same substance as Him, enjoying His unlimited authority and power on earth. This scripture needs to be understood and appreciated. Colossians 2: 9-10

One of the greatest and most untapped realities is the fact that once two or more saints are gathered in His Name, Yeshua, Jesus is automatically present! Matthew 18:20

We need to take Him at His Word and begin to consciously invest in walking in unity with saints that Yahweh aligns us with spiritually! Alignment is what releases the potency of our corporate strength as these scriptures show:

*"¹⁹ Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven"***Matthew 18:19**

*"¹⁰ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment"***1 Corinthians 1:10**

Saints, it is time to restore the invaluable ministry of prayer partners who meet to intercede, pray' war and not gossip! Joel 2:73.

3. Realm of Spiritual Warfare: Specialised Anointing

In His wisdom, Yahweh has ordered His Kingdom on earth in a way that beyond the individual and collective realms of authority for spiritual warfare, some of those called to ministry are vested with extra grace and gifting so that their core

contribution to building up the Body is to be used by Him to heal the sick, deliver the oppressed, cast out demons and conduct deliverance whenever the Holy Spirit prompts them.

Not all preachers, including five fold leaders are called into this realm of ministry. Majority of Pastors, Teachers, even some Apostles, Prophets and Evangelists are not gifted to function as deliverance ministers or workers of miracles. All ministers should eat humble pie and stay within the remit of their callings and gifting! We lose nothing but rather gain all when we accept who Yeshua has made us to be in the Spirit and give room to others who are gifted differently to make input into the well being of saints.

In the same way, those who are called to function with gifts of healing, working of miracles or ability to discern spirits that oppress saints and conduct deliverance are not in any way superior to other ministers. It is immaturity gone berserk when deliverance ministers boast of their 'powers' and try to use such to control lives of saints by constantly creating negative scenarios or diagnosing their problems in such a way that inspire fear and consequent faith in them, rather than Yeshua who is head!

⁴ Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

⁵ And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

⁶ And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

*⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal” 1
Corinthians 12: 4-7.*

¹¹ But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

*¹² For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ” 1 **Corinthians 12:11-12.***

²⁸ And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues”.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?" 1
Corinthians 12: 28-29

Deliverance ministers cannot and should not rely on the charismatic nature of their gifting to speak down on those who are not called. Their best comes forth when they walk in alignment with other five fold ministers so that the brethren in the ministry/network or City Church can tap into the collective pool of spiritual strength embedded in corporate leadership as Ephesians 4:11-16 reveal.

A real problem arises when people called 'deliverance ministers' to isolate themselves from the Body to run exclusive or predominant 'Deliverance Ministries' where their 'members' are starved of the full counsel of Yahweh as they are rather fed very limited, narrow dogma which validate their 'founders' personal doctrine.

By such isolation, both the ministers and their 'members' are not built up on a regular basis by what other joints of the Body supply. They become proud and before long turn aside into vain jangling, creating dogmas and inventing points of contact by their soulish realms. Before long, they gravitate towards enjoying control over the lives of other saints who become 'soul tied' to their 'anointing'. As people buy all their 'books', specially 'anointed' anointing oil (Olive oil), ministry becomes big business whose bottom line is money made and crowds gathered, not the glory or honour of the King! This breeds idolatry of the worst order.

Is it not ironic that in running such deliverance ministries, saints who fall victim are ensnared further, losing the ability to make decisions on even minor issues of life like marriage, career, education, where to live or when to travel! Have you ever wondered why the goal posts of fasting for deliverance are shifted with impunity?

There are cases where it appears some saints are asked to fast for, say, 7 days which is later shifted to 21 days; then 30 days, then 40 and 50 days and at times 100days with countless vigils and loud prayers that shift nothing! In some so called 'African Churches deliverance 'candidates' are even asked to make pilgrimages to their headquarters on the continent for 'topping up' where even more 'seed' is sown. Unfortunately and sadly, few have testimonies of being 'delivered'. In further dishonour to the King, saints passing through spiritual or emotional oppression are video-taped/filmed for promotional purposes, without their consent or the 'consents' are blackmailed off them and broadcast to draw more crowds in. In some cases, testimonies of healings and deliverance are 'staged' and found to be false! Those who are making a show of blood washed saints in this way are in for trouble with their King on the Last Day!

Final word: those who will not invest in educating saints to know who they are in

Yeshua and who He is in them and their awesome inheritance in Him just to create victim-conscious clients through series of psychological operations are guilty of mind control and witchcraft! They are not engaged in the gospel of the Kingdom but a dangerous subversion of it!

If they do not repent on this side of eternity, rejection by the King, as pronounced in Matthew 7:15-23 may be sure on the Last Day! Those who have ears to hear cannot claim that Yeshua did not tell them! Whatever confines fellow saints to permanent spiritual yokes of serf-dom does not have the Imprimatur of He who came to give His own abundant life and Liberty. Deliverance ministers who are truly called will invest in the empowerment of saints with truth that sets free, even if that means reducing the number of those who flock to them as sheep without shepherd. This will be the acid test for knowing those who are called, chosen and sent and those who sent themselves into ministry!

Down the wire: Epilogue

As we go down the wire in this intensely practical and liberating book, it is hoped that those who have committed themselves to diligent study of each chapter will also combine the same with some basic Kingdom virtues and disciplines in order to achieve holistic success as outcomes of practical application. These include living by faith; a liberated lifestyle of grace which refuses the bondage of religion, false approaches to the issue which lead saints into bondage, holiness of life that is totally consecrated to Yahweh and primal pursuit of His Kingdom.

Ultimately, those whose lives are hidden with Yeshua, Jesus who set their affections on things above by truly seeking first the Kingdom operate with a renewed mind and constantly wear the whole armour of Yahweh procure for themselves a full insurance against the enemy and all his wiles. Read these scriptures diligently to see how they connect into a whole: Colossians 3:1-3; Matthew 6:19-34; Philippians 4:8; Ephesians 6:10-18.

First Things First!

All saints should endeavour to give the Word right of way to renew their minds so that they will think with divine, not fleshly perspectives. Ephesians 4:23; Romans 12:2; Philippians 4:8. It is the divine mindset that is one of the greatest instruments for rightly assessing situations. The presence of the right mindset will enable saints who are not gifted with the discernment of spirits to make the right assessments of what they are up against. It is also important to observe that saints who have the gift of discernment but have unrenewed minds may make a mess of the blessings that are sovereignly endowed on them!

For instance, somebody who is suspicious or prone to negative thinking about other people may easily fall victim to suggestions of Satan that a particular person is responsible for their woes. Once this lie is received as truth and acted upon, the saint concerned is in the bag of Satan big time! Once a saint begins to fight flesh and blood (fellow humans) in the name of spiritual warfare, these things will manifest: an unforgiving spirit, offence, ought, animosity/hatred and invariably, utterance of 'dangerous prayers' directed at that person in retaliation!

Once you begin to feel, speak and act in this way, you have failed a fundamental law of the Kingdom which is to love others as you love yourself! This is a non negotiable Law of the Kingdom as these scriptures amply testify to: Matthew 5:38-39, 43-48; John 13:34-35; John 15:12; 1 Corinthians 13:1-13; Ephesians 5:1-2; 1 John 3:11-24; 1 John 4:7-12; Revelation 2:1-5.

Who to fight

It is Satan and his fallen angels on assignment we are to fight! We have absolutely no grounds to fight fellow saints or unbelievers! We are to war against the spirits which possess the vessels of humans to perpetrate evil against us, not the humans they used! We are to make sure that we do not give room to the enemy to plant a seed of evil which can morph into a root of bitterness that will defile the offended party as Hebrews 12:14-15 states. If a root of bitterness springs up, grace jumps out! When grace is expelled in this way, the saint has basically backslidden though he/she quotes a thousand and one scriptures, praying down so called 'Holy Ghost fire' upon his/her enemies! Speaking of the unrestrained incantations of 'Holy Ghost fire' upon enemies, saints are warned of the sin of Blasphemy and profanity. Let us not drag the Name and the Person of Holy Spirit into petty, fleshly battles which clearly dishonour Him!

When to fight

Listed below are some issues and circumstances which may indicate attacks of Satan or assignments of his demons. The incidence of these issues does not automatically indicate spiritual attacks which occasion warfare. Their causes may be 'natural' or 'accidental'. But if by discernment or systematic assessment, you come to the conclusion that the source is spiritual, it is best to begin to pray. Where necessary, fasting may be added to prayers. Thereafter, there may be necessity to wage spiritual warfare. At times, all three responses need to be simultaneously activated, if the Holy Spirit prompts in that direction. If the issue persists, humble yourself, no matter how 'great' or 'big' you are to seek deliverance or support from a vessel that is anointed for that purpose. Ensure that such a person lives right. There are cases where many so called 'deliverance ministers end up imparting their own spiritual baggage into the souls and bodies of those they lay hands on!

1. Generational curses. This is when there are proven cases of evil spells upon your lineage which limits ability of those born therein to enjoy the abundant life Yeshua promised in John 10:10(b). This may include pre-mature deaths and conditions of real limitation that most people in a family seem to experience as 'normal life'. If you are truly part of the Kingdom of Yahweh, you can enforce separation of yourself because you are translated from the kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of Yahweh by the Blood that was shed by Yeshua on the Cross! Enforce it by faith in the Name and Power of the Blood and count it a done deal! Never confess association with that evil influence in the bloodline again. Colossians 1:12-14; Hebrews 10:23.

Be sincere with yourself and Yahweh however when you seek deliverance from generational curses. If you are enjoying the 'Assets' such as houses or other inheritance passed down the line from a progenitor who amassed wealth through

evil and say blood guiltiness, you may also have given the spirits that worked in him/her or those sent on 'vengeance' missions from victims room to attack or oppress you! You cannot just enjoy assets and refuse consequent liability. What needs to be done in such cases is to redeem those assets with the Blood of the Lamb by faith. However, do not clutch at them, no matter how valuable, if Holy Spirit expressly instructs you to give them up!

2. Systemic Poverty. Poverty can be a function of bad national economy or laziness. It can also be an attack of demons assigned for that purpose. Deal with it on all fronts, including Spiritual warfare.

3. Medical Cases. Some medical conditions are a function of careless intake of food or drinks that are not suited for your body. Some are a result of normal wear and tear. Some sicknesses are also of demonic origin as the case of Job revealed. Do not relax or give the enemy room to take you out! Resist him and his agents by faith! Yeshua often went to the root of medical conditions to detect, bind and cast out the evil spirits responsible. The maniac of Gergesens was assumed to be a lost mental case until the demons were cast out and he became whole. Deliverance produced clear normality Matthew 8:28-32. When deaf and dumb spirits were cast out, their former victims began to hear and speak!

4. Lack of favour with people which leads to closed doors and unnecessary labours.

5. Near success syndrome. When things you seek and seem close to breakthrough slip off your hands.

6. Inability to connect with a suitor in marriage

7. Physical barrenness or infertility – miscarriages can be induced by attacks of demons

8. Being involved in many cases of inexplicable accidents

9. When there are strong hindrances to growth of your ministry, in spite of doing all that you are led to do and are not living in sin.

10. When children are given to rebellion or resistance to authority. Satan may be on standby to try to accuse you with the Bible that you are not fit to preach and minister. Beware of whose report you listen to at moments like this.

11. When brethren in congregations you lead do not seem to 'get it' in spite of repeated attempts to teach and preach the truth.

12. When those you bless pay you back with evil speech, attitudes and actions.

Note: This list is not exhaustive. By discernment, you are able to know what is at work in your peculiar circumstance! You have known the truth that sets free. Do not walk in bondage again as John 8:32, 36 says.