
PRAYER
SECRETS
IN THE
TABERNACLE
SADHU SUNDAR SELVARAJ

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Preface

Almost all Christians admire Enoch, who walked with God and was translated alive into Heaven and of Moses who spoke with God face to face in the riches of His glories. But this privilege of walking with God and talking with Him face to face does not only belong to those two precious saints or a select few, but is for everyone.

One morning on 26 September 1991, while on a forty days fast in USA, by the mercies and grace of God, I had a supernatural visitation from the Lord Jesus. While waiting on God, I fell into a trance (Acts 10:9,10). I saw the similitude of the Ark of the Covenant (Rev. 11:19) before me and from its midst, a Voice spoke. It was very similar to the experience of Moses as written in Exodus 25:22, 'And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony...' From between the cherubim, the Voice of God spoke saying, *'Read Exodus chapter thirty.'*

Immediately I took my Bible and read that chapter. After reading, I asked, *'What about this chapter, Lord?'* The Lord God then said, ***'Every furniture in the Tabernacle speaks of a type of Prayer. As the High Priest moved from furniture to furniture and finally stood before Me in the holy of holies, so could every believer following these various types of Prayers, commune with Me face to face in the holy of holies.'*** I was astounded. For the next two and half hours, the Lord God through the Holy Spirit, taught me what each furniture represented in relation to Prayer.

The principle that which was burnt into my heart during this visitation was that ***God desires to commune with all His children face to face and that every child of God can come boldly before His Throne of Grace, beholding His Beauty and Glories face to face. They could put their heads on His laps and pour out their hearts, or lean against His bosom and talk sweetly with Him, or put their arms around His neck and tell Him, 'Daddy, I love you!' This privilege is for every child of God.***

What I have shared in this book, are the small crumbs that fell from the Master's table, when I was waiting on God. I do not claim them to be absolute and nothing beyond this can be revealed to anyone else. God would always show and reveal greater things, to those who sincerely seek Him, because God's knowledge is limitless. I trust in God that this teaching will help you to dwell and commune with God face to face in the riches of His glories.

Sundar Selvaraj
June 2004

Introduction

That was the profound statement I saw on a billboard infront of a church in Sydney, Australia. In this study, I have endeavored by the grace of God to put into writing that which it pleased God to reveal me concerning some secrets of Prayer on intimacy with God on a face to face relationship in the holy of holiest, as foreshadowed in the Tabernacle of the Old Testament.

As the entire study of this subject is focussed on Prayer, some of the types and figures explained and interpreted may not be the same as the usually accepted ones. For example, it is popularly taught and understood that silver speaks of ‘redemption.’ This interpretation applies to the study of the Lord Jesus Christ as foreshadowed in the furnitures of the Tabernacle. This may not be the same interpretation for the subject on Prayer. For the things of God are not limited to just one interpretation only. Just like the interpretation for the word ‘thief’. The Lord Jesus said in John 10:10 that, satan is a thief. In Revelation 16:15, He said that He was coming like a thief. So, there seems to be two interpretations for the one word, ‘thief’. Only the Holy Spirit can open the eyes of our understanding and illumine our mind to the meanings in the Word.

After having taught this teachings to a Women’s Prayer Fellowship of the Wesley Methodist Church, Singapore, I had two experiences that convinced me beyond a shadow of doubt of the practical reality of the principles of Prayer as forshadowed in the Tabernacle.

1. When I was in Ganzi, Tibet, one morning I experienced that it was easier to pray in the Spirit in tongues after a season of worshipping God. This was what God revealed me, of the Laver of Washing – Praise and Worship, before the Lampstand – Praying in the Spirit.

2. When I was in Chengdu, China one morning tried to intercede but found the mind wandering about various things concerning the ministry. So remembering the Tabernacle Prayer pattern, I spent some time meditating the Word. The mind became in oneness and I was able to intercede with one heart and mind thereafter. This was what God revealed me, of the Table of Showbread –

Meditation of the Word, before the Altar of Incense – Prayer of Intercession.

Nothing can be instantaneous or achieved overnight. Consider a bird that is about to lay eggs. It first labourously flies here and there, looking for twigs, sticks and straws, to skillfully create and fashion a nest. When the nest is readied and prepared, it then lays eggs for a new beginning to emerge. Likewise, if we diligently seek God (Heb. 11:6) surely He who formed and fashioned us wonderfully in our mother's womb (Ps. 139:13,14) will prepare our inner man for an habitation of God (Eph. 2:22). He will then meet with us as He met with Adam.

In this study too, I have made mention of many deep things of the Spirit and some of my spiritual experiences. It is not to boast of how great my spirituality is (2 Cor. 12:9,10). Whatever spiritual experiences a person could have, are only the result of God's abundant grace and none of man's goodness. These experiences are shared only to unveil the realities of heaven and the things of the Spirit realm.

Many a times, such deep things of the Spirit are brushed aside as *'unscriptural' or 'where is it written in the Bible?'*, by many believers. It is very difficult for the finite mind to comprehend the infinitismal realities of the Spirit realm in heaven. The apostle Paul had said, **'Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man, the things which God has prepared for those who love Him'** (Isa. 64:4; 1 Cor. 2:9). Paul goes on to say, **'but God has revealed them to us through His Spirit'** (v.10). The natural man's eyes has not seen the deep things of God. As such, could he say to a man who loves God and to whom the Spirit has revealed them, as 'those things are unscriptural?'

In John 21:25 it is written that**, "there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even, the world itself could not contain the books that could be written."** Suppose, a prayerful man of God in the Spirit sees some of the miraculous acts of the Lord Jesus, say He rose up a fourth man from the dead, could we say that it is not written in the Bible and as such a false vision? I once read a book, *'Paradise, the Holy City and the Glory of the Throne,'* published by Dr Gwen Shaw. The naratting author was taken up to heaven and was there for forty days. There he

saw a huge book in which was recorded every single act of the Lord Jesus from the day He was born. When he asked an angel as to why these revelations were not included in the Bible on earth? The angel answered him, thus that whatever that is recorded and preserved in the earthly Bible is all sufficient for the salvation of man. These extra details recorded in the books in heaven, are for the pleasure of the redeemed saints.

It is written that the secret things of God belongs to God alone (Deu. 29:29), but God reveals them to His friends who walk closely with him (Ps. 25:14, Isa. 45:3, Jn. 15:15). The Lord Jesus also had said that the Holy Spirit will reveal to us of things to come(Jn. 16:13). The realities of heaven and the Spirit realm is one of those things to come.

So, then, what is the *'check and balance'* system to try extra biblical sources? It is written so beautifully in the scriptures that, **'The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirits'** (Rom. 8:16). So, if we come before God in humility and with an open mind, the Holy Spirit will guide us into all truths (Jn. 16:13).

'Open my eyes, that I may see wondrous things
from Your law' - Ps. 119:18

Chapter 1- What Is Prayer?

> *The secret to a successful prayer life is to pray in the secret closet. The man who sins will stop praying while the man who prays will stop sinning.*
>
> *- Leonard Ravenhill*

Every believer has a general idea of what prayer is all about. But that general or perceived idea, I have found in my many years of ministering, is very vague and incorrect. Many dear believers do not know much about prayer and as such have not developed their prayer life much beyond mere mundane praying.

Among all of the teachings of the Lord Jesus as were written in the Word, the most important teaching He taught was on "What is Prayer" and "How to Pray." As breath is to life, so is prayer to the spiritual life of every believer.

Let us look at God's heart and see what His desire is concerning prayer.

> ***EXODUS 25:8***
> *8 And let them make Me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them.*

The primary reason for God asking Moses to build the Tabernacle was not to build the first "Church in the Wilderness" or a memorial building for God. Rather, it was built so that God could come and dwell among His people.

Why does God want to come and dwell among His people? In Exodus 25:22, it is written, "**And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel."** God commanded Moses to build the Tabernacle for the simple reason that He wanted to come and dwell among His people, so that He could meet, talk, and fellowship with them.

God does not want to shroud Himself within clouds of mystery, always seated only upon His throne. He is a very dear and personal God (Ps. 47:14) who is always very near to His children. I am reminded of an incident that took place many years ago to a simple housewife.

This woman was going through a lot of problems in her life and was very much heartbroken. Many people were praying for her, but it seemed that her problems would not go away. One day, with a very heavy and broken heart, she went to her closet, knelt down beside a chair. Reclining her head on the seat, she cried her heart out to the Lord Jesus.

As she was pouring out her woes to the Lord, she felt a very gentle Hand lovingly caressing her head. As the Hand caressed her, she felt waves of peace flooding her soul. When she lifted up her head, she saw the Lord Jesus seated on the chair and realized that she had actually laid her head on His laps. The Lord Jesus then told her, *"My daughter, weep not."* After saying those words, He disappeared. Soon after, the woman's problems were solved, one after another.

The Lord God is He who hears prayers (Ps. 65:2) and desires to commune and communicate with His people. Prayer should never be a "one-way traffic." The reason why many a believer does not delight in prayer is because instead of making prayer a dialogue between God and him, he turns it into a monologue– the believer himself doing all the talking. Soon enough, he quits praying, feeling bored with this monotony.

What then is prayer? I was once in Penang, Malaysia, preaching in a Church Camp. One morning, as I was deeply meditating on this subject, the Holy Spirit illumined my mind to a beautiful definition of prayer.

Prayer is the act of relating in a personal way to God, being intimately acquainted and yoked with Him in an effectual relationship. *In a simple layman's understanding, it is just like how a husband and a wife know each other intimately: in the oneness of their mind and flesh, they share all things. Likewise should a prayer life be between the believer and God. Prayer is not a religious exercise but a beautiful relationship between a son or a daughter with their father.*

When I was a Hindu, I used to go to temples and stand reverently with clasped hands before the idols. Many times, I did not know what to say to them except when I needed something or some favor. I petitioned them often but never received any answer. Do not the scriptures say that idols have eyes, but they see not; ears, but they hear not; hands, but they handle not; feet, but they walk not (Ps. 115:5-7)? Only the true living God speaks with His people.

Since God desires to commune with His people, we need to learn what prayer is all about. Prayer for most believers is asking things from God. God is made into a *Santa Claus.* We come to Him with a *shopping list.* Then there are some of us who treat prayer as an *SOS* message to God: Pray only when in danger or in need–when you are all right, why trouble God?

Let us analyze from scriptures what some of the principles concerning prayer are.

1. Presenting Ourselves to God

> ***EXODUS 34:2***
> *2 So be ready in the morning and come up in the morning to Mount Sinai and present yourself there to Me in the top of the mountain.*

To present oneself before the Lord is to come and stand before God's presence. I have often observed that when a nation sends her ambassador to another country, upon arrival, the ambassador will present himself, making himself known, to the Head of State of the host country.

I once read of a very moving story concerning a newly born again young man called Jim. Jim was very notorious, especially for always spewing foul language out of his mouth. One day, he got saved and his life changed dramatically.

Jim worked at the mine in the town and everyday on his way to the mine he used to pass by a church. After he got saved, he started to stop by the church everyday. As soon as he entered the church, he would kneel beside a pew and say, "*Jesus, this is Jim. I have come to present myself to You.*" Tears of

thankfulness and gratitude would then flow like rivers from Jim's eyes as he recalled the goodness of God in saving a wretched sinner like him. This act of grateful humility became a regular habit of his life.

One day, there was an accidental explosion in the mine. Jim was badly injured and had to be hospitalized. The next morning, when the clock struck eight, Jim began to cry like a child, for that was his usual time to stop by the church to present himself to Jesus. He was crying sorrowfully because he was not able to present himself before the Lord. Suddenly, there was a knock on the door. A benign-looking gentleman wearing a long white robe walked in. The man looked at Jim and said, *"Jim, this is Jesus. You could not present yourself to Me, so I have come to see you, son."* When you draw near to Him, He will draw near to you (Jas. 4:8).

Presenting yourself before God is also like how Esther presented herself before the king. It is written in Esther 5:1-2, **"Now it happened on the third day that Esther put on her royal robes and stood in the inner court of the king's palace, across from the king's house, while the king sat on his royal throne in the royal house. So it was, when the king saw Queen Esther standing in the court, that she found favor in his sight, and the king held out to Esther the golden scepter that was in his hand. Then Esther went near and touched the top of the scepter."**

Let's examine this scripture for its spiritual teaching. Esther represents the believer. The king represents the Lord Jesus. The king seated upon his royal throne represents the Lord Jesus seated upon His heavenly throne. Esther standing in the court represents a believer presenting himself before the presence of the Lord God. When you come and present yourself to Him, the first question that God would ask you is, "Child, what do you want?"

That was the manner in which the king asked Esther. In verse 3, it is written, **"Then the king said to her, what will you have, Queen Esther? What is your request?"** (Amplified). When the Lord God asks you that question, it means that whatever your request is, it is already granted. Hence did the king, as we are told, Esther: *"It shall be given to you"* (v.3).

On New Year Day of 1993, I was fasting and praying for all of our ministry's partners. As I was praying, in a vision I found myself in heaven standing before the throne of the Lord Jesus.

The throne of the Lord Jesus seemed to be made of something similar to ivory marble and there were some steps leading upwards to the throne. These steps seemed to be constructed of gold. The Lord Jesus was majestically seated on the throne like a king flanked by cherubim on His left and right. I was standing at the bottom of the steps, a little distance from the throne.

When the Lord saw me, He stood up and held out His Hand towards me, beckoning me to come up to Him. I saw a scepter in His Hand. Walking up the flight of steps, I came and stood before His Majesty. The first question that He asked me was "Son, what do you want?" I said, *"Lord, I want you to bless all our partners who had faithfully supported our ministry throughout 1992." He smiled and said, "I am blessing them as you had asked."*

So, when you present yourself to the Lord, He will ask you, **"What do you want?"** You can then make all your requests known to Him.

2. Bringing the Heart to God

> ***PSALM 36:9***
> *9 For with You is the fountain of life; in Your light we see light.*

After we have presented ourselves to the Lord, we have to bring our hearts to Him, who is the fountain of life. The Lord Jesus had said that He is the Water of Life (Jn. 4:14). So just like the servants who brought empty water pots to the Lord Jesus (Jn. 2:6,7), we ought to bring our hearts to the Lord Jesus for filling. An empty heart that is hungry and thirsty will be filled (Mt. 5:6). The Lord Jesus transformed water into wine (Jn. 2:9). Likewise He will transform your requests into delightful answered prayers.

When you bring your heart to the Lord, the Wellspring of Life will flow like living waters inside you, enriching you with His glorious and peaceful presence.

When little children come to a fountain, what do they do? Won't they get into the knee-deep waters and play? Like little children, we should delight ourselves in and before the Fountain of Life, the Lord Jesus (Ps. 37:4; Isa. 58:14).

I remember reading of a certain servant's experience of God. When he was eight years old, he had a spiritual visitation and he was taken up to heaven. The Lord Jesus led him by the River of Life. It was knee-deep and crystal clear. Both He and Jesus got into the river. As soon as they got into the water, the Lord Jesus dunked him in and splashed water all over him. The little boy too splashed water on the Lord Jesus and they both laughed and had a good time. This is what delighting in the Lord is. To forget yourself and just immerse yourself in Him.

When you bring your heart to the Lord and delight yourself before Him in praise, worship, and dance, the Lord Jesus will come to dwell and fellowship with you (Ps. 22:3; 148:14).

3. Opening the Window of the Heart

> ***DANIEL 6:10***
> *10 Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days.*

After you have brought your heart to the Lord Jesus, you must open the windows of your heart and let the wind blow through and sun shine in.

When a house is damp and dusty, people would open the windows to let the cool wind and warm sun in. Likewise, when you open the windows of your heart to God, His presence will come in like the wind to refresh (Jn. 3:8; Acts 3:19) and like the heat waves of the sun to purify the heart of any lustful or selfish motives in our prayers (Mal. 4:2; Jas. 4:3).

Many times, we just simply do not know what we need or want. So, we just ask of God things that we want which we do not or may not need.

About ten years ago, I was praying for a car. I had always admired and fancied the Rolls Royce, so I asked God for one. I named the color and model which I wanted. In all my innocence, day and night I was praying for this car. One day, I was walking by a shopping center, and there I saw in the parking lot the exact Rolls Royce which I was praying for. I told God, *"Lord, there is my car. This is the exact model that I wanted."* After returning home, as I was waiting on God in prayer, I heard the still small voice of the Holy Spirit asking me, *"Son, do you need a Rolls Royce or a car?"* I answered, *"Lord, I need a car which should be a Rolls-Royce."* Three times, the Holy Spirit asked the same question. Just as I was about to answer on the third time, it dawned on me what the Holy Spirit was really asking. He was in fact making me see my own heart: I was not simply asking a car for transportation but wanting something luxurious to show off. I immediately repented before God for my lustful desire.

This is how the fire of the Sun of Righteousness will burn off the veil of selfishness and expose the imperfect heart before the living God. The wind of the Holy Spirit will blow away all the dirt that has been preventing our conscience from being clear before God. This work takes place when we open the windows of our heart and allow God to examine the motives of our prayer.

4. Making Yourselves Known to God

> ***GENESIS 18:19***
> *19 "for I have known him, in order that he may command his children and his household after him, that they keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice, that the Lord may bring to Abraham what He has spoken to him."*
>
> ***DEUTERONOMY 34:10***
> *10 But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face.*

The keywords in these two scriptures are **"know"** and **"knew."** God knew Abraham. God knew Moses. The word **"know"** in Hebrew is *"yada,"* which has the following meanings: 1) ***to know by observing and reflecting (thinking);*** 2) **to know by experiencing. "To know,"** therefore, can be defined as ***having an***

intimate and personal experiential knowledge of someone.

Making yourself known to God is to allow God to know you very intimately on a deeply personal level, giving Him an experiential knowledge of you. No more *just knowing about you but knowing you.*

The Bible says that God knows all about everyone and nobody needs to tell Him about anyone (Jn. 2:25). It also says that even before you pray for anything, God already knows what your needs are (Mt. 6:8). With these two scriptures, a question can be asked: *Since God knows all about a person, what more can He know of them?*

When I was a teenager, a friend of mine was interested in a very beautiful young girl in our school. He found out her address, telephone number, date of birth, etc. After having known all that, he still wanted to know her more intimately: *What is she like? What kind of a person is she really?* Likewise, God desires to know us personally and intimately. The servant of God who played with the Lord Jesus in the river of life mentioned earlier tells of another similar experience. He and the Lord Jesus walked to a particular mansion and the Lord Jesus knocked on the door. He waited patiently until someone answered three minutes later. The Lord Jesus, being a perfect gentleman, respected the privacy of person living inside the mansion. The Lord Jesus is very sensitive towards each person's uniqueness and individuality. In His omniscience, He knows all about any person. But as a perfect gentleman, He waits on you to reveal yourself to Him (2 Chr. 32.31).

This truth is beautifully depicted of Solomon 3:4, "**Scarcely had I passed by them, when I found the one I love. I held him and would not let him go, until I had brought him to the house of my mother, and into the chamber of her who conceived me."**

Let's examine this scripture closely and spiritually. *"Into the chamber of her who conceived me"* speaks of the place where a husband and wife have their sexual intimacy: a very private, personal, and intimate place. Using this as our foundation, let's examine Genesis 4:1, "**And Adam knew Eve his wife; and she conceived, and bore Cain, and said, I have acquired a man from the Lord."**

Adam knew Eve. In the Old Testament language, the word **"knew"** was always used to convey the sexual relations between a couple.

What has this to do with prayer? When a man and woman enter into their bed chamber to have sexual union, both of them, being naked, will see each other as they really are on the inside and not of what they appear to be on the outside. Likewise is the act of making yourself known to God–by tearing the veil that is covering the heart and allowing God to see the naked heart of its deceitfulness (Jer. 17:9) and evilness (Mt. 15:19), and revealing your fears, weakness, likes, and dislikes. Just simply exposing all of yourself to God.

Making yourself known to God is to talk and share with Him all things, just as how you would talk for hours practically about everything under the sun with your bosom friend. There is a very saintly man of God in Madras, India, Dr DGS Dhinakaran. He has been specially graced by God to always see the Lord's glory. Dr Dhinakaran always begins his prayer by pouring out all his complaints to the Lord (Job 23:2-4; Ps. 142:2), just as how a husband or wife would complain to each other of the day's woes.

While I was in Western Tibet, one morning I was meditating on the scripture which said that the Lord Jesus spent all night in prayer (Lk. 6:12). While deeply musing over it, I asked the Holy Spirit how actually did the Lord spend all night in prayer so often and what He prayed about. Immediately the Holy Spirit answered me, *"Let Me now show you."* Instantly in a vision, I saw the Lord Jesus climbing a mountain (Mt. 14:23; Jn. 6:15). Feeling cold, He knelt down, wrapped Himself with the blanket which He was carrying and began to pray.

I heard Him talking and telling God about all the events that took place that day: how He was treated; how he was questioned by the Sadducees and Pharisees; and how he really felt. The Lord Jesus literally exposed His heart making Himself known to the Father God. As the Lord Jesus was talking, I saw the Father come down from above and stood in front of the Lord Jesus like a majestic pillar of cloud (Ex. 13:21). Every time, the Lord Jesus said or asked something, the Father answered Him with a Voice and communed with Him (Mt. 3.17; Jn. 12:27,28). Frequently in the course of their conversation, I heard the Father God saying to the Lord Jesus, "Son, I am well pleased with you" (Mt.

17:5; 2 Pe. 1:17).

It was because the Lord Jesus made himself known to God the Father that God always showed Him the things that He should do (Jn. 8:28,29). Likewise, when you commune with God by making yourself known to Him, He too will make Himself known to you in a very personal and intimate way (Ps. 25:14; Jn. 15:15). You can then enjoy a blissful intimate relationship with God like what Adam and Eve experienced in the garden of Eden before they sinned (Gen. 2:19).

When you make yourself known to God, the Lord would lovingly catch you away to shower upon you with His love (S.S. 2:10). In Songs of Solomon 2:4, it says, **"He brought me to the banqueting house and his banner over me was love."** What is the *"banqueting house"?* The Lord Jesus said that in His Father's house there are many mansions (John 14:2) and in them, the Lord would serve His faithful servants Himself (Luke 12:37). What then is the *"banner of love"?* It is the Mercy, Grace, Goodness and Compassion of God (Ex. 34:6,7). So, when you make yourself known, God lets Himself be known by bringing you into His secret place in heaven (Ps. 27:5; 31:20). There He allows you to feast on His love–mercy, grace, goodness and compassion.

There is a servant of God in Madras, India, who walks with God like Enoch. Once, he found himself in the midst of great difficulties in life. As he was making himself known to God regarding all his woes, he heard a voice saying, *"Come up here"* (Rev. 4:1). He felt that his spirit was taken out of his body (Ezek. 3:12; 8:3) and was soaring past the moon, sun, and the planets. He then came and stood before the presence of the Lord Jesus. As he stood by the Lord Jesus at His throne, he beheld all the different solar systems, stars, galaxies, going along perfectly in their predetermined paths.

Then with words of deep compassionate love, the Lord Jesus told him, *"My son, I created all the galaxies in the universe by the word of My mouth* (Col. 1:16) *and had ordered their course. I control and rule each one of them* (Col. 1:17; Rev. 4:11). *Is it not then possible for Me to take care of your life and guide it? Do not be discouraged."*

This is the banqueting house where His banner over us is full of love. When we make ourselves known to God, in love, the Lord Jesus Christ embraces us to be in oneness with Him (Jn. 14:23).

5. Taking Hold of God Himself

> ***JOB 13:3,18***
> *3 But I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God.*
> *18 See now, I have prepared my case, I know that I shall be vindicated.*

Most Christians know of prayer as one of just asking things from God. Most of the time, those things are only temporal, material things. It is not wrong to ask for things, since scripture itself admonishes us to ask (Mk. 11:24; Mt. 21:22; John 15:7). But there is something better.

There was once a man who had two sons who were only concerned about material things. They would often come to the father asking for money to buy this or that but would not do any work for a living. Neither were they concerned about the reality of things. One day, their aged father called them and said, *"Go and dig in our unused field and you will find a great buried treasure."* These two brothers were greatly excited and immediately set to dig for the hidden treasure. From morning till evening they were digging continuously. They became tired but their father encouraged them, *"Do not be discouraged, you will find treasures–pearls of great price."* Encouraged, they kept on digging. Days passed into weeks. They had dug a huge hole. But all the while, their thoughts were no more on the treasures but on water and food which seemed far more important because they needed them for strength to dig.

One day, as they were digging, a spring of water gushed out from below and a well was found. When the brothers saw that, their joy knew no bounds. Because by now they had realized that water was more precious than the gold or silver that they were looking for. Likewise, we are to take hold of Him who freely bestows good things on us (Mt. 7:11; Isa. 63:7; Rom. 8:32; Jas. 1:17).

There was once a very wealthy man who lived in a sprawling palace with many servants. Among the many servants, he had three special servants. One day, this man called all the servants, gave them hundreds of thousands of dollars in retirement benefits and dismissed them. He then called his three special servants and told them, *"My dear servants, you have been special and have faithfully served me all these years. Now, ask what you want and I will freely give them to you." The servants could not believe their ears.* The first servant said, *"Master, I will be satisfied with just one million dollars."* The master immediately wrote out a cheque and gave it him. The second servant said, *"Master, I'll be satisfied with just a hundred acres of your fertile land."* Since the wealthy man had his lawyer present too, he immediately made out a deed to that purpose. The third servant fell at the feet of the Master and cried. The master lifted him up and asked him why he was crying. The servant said, *"Master, all these years you had loved me dearly. Now where shall I go? I don't want gold or silver. I only want you. Please allow me to serve you till I die."* The master was pleased and granted the request. Day by day, the Master and servant became like father and son. Finally, on his death bed, this Master called his servant and said, *"My dearly beloved servant, you have faithfully served me all these years, not desiring gold and silver. I now adopt you as my legal son and bequeath all my wealth to you. As my son, you shall inherit everything that I own."*

Likewise, prayer is seeking the Giver and not the gifts. When we take hold of God, we present ourselves to Him. God then sees our heart. As we open the windows of our heart and make ourselves known to Him, God then freely bestows on us the things which we need (Mt. 6:32,33).

These are some of the principles of prayer. With these principles, we can build a strong foundation for an experiential and intimate relationship with God in prayer.

Chapter 2 - Why Do We Need To Pray?

> *God will do nothing on earth except in answer to believing prayer. - John Wesley*

There is a question in the hearts and minds of many believers around the world concerning the need to pray. Since God always already knows what we need, what is the point and importance of praying then?

Some years ago, when I was in USA for ministry, a dear sister asked me, *"Brother, how could I too have such a close and intimate walk with God of which you speak so familiarly as if it's second nature to you?"* I answered her, *"Sister, anyone can walk with God like Enoch did. You need to habitually have a disciplined prayer life and diligently seek God."* She then said, *"Since God knows that it is my heart's desire to walk closely with Him, why do I need to ask Him? He knows it."* My reply shocked her. I said, *"Sister, if that's the case, why bother to pray at all. You do not even have to say anything to God since He knows everything."*

The reason why questions like these arise results from an improper understanding of what prayer is. To most people, prayer is just like bringing a shopping list to God. This shopping list largely consists of material things like clothes to wear and food to eat. Since the Lord Jesus had said in Matthew 6:31,32 that God knows that we need all these things, the question comes back to square one. Why do we need to pray then?

The neighbourhood grocer knows that all families need basic things like rice, sugar, oil, milk, etc. So he has all these things stocked up in his shop. When someone goes to buy something, as soon as he enters the shop, the grocer would ask, "What do you want?" No person in their right mind would say, "Grocer, you know what I want. Just give me what I need." The grocer may end up giving his entire stock to you. But everyone would say, "Yes, give me this and that." You would specifically name the things that you need.

Likewise, the Bible says that God has blessed us with all kinds of spiritual

blessings in the heavenly places (Eph. 1:3). All we need to do is to come before God and specifically ask for that which we need.

The original concept of prayer before Adam's fall was not one of asking for things but of communion and fellowship with God. Since the fall, this dynamic has changed. Because the Spirit realm and the natural realm have now become distinct and separate. Prior to that, they co-existed as one. Like water in a cup, the natural co-existed in the Spirit realm. That was why Adam and Eve could walk and talk with God face to face without any inhibitions. After the fall, a clear line of demarcation was drawn between the Spirit and natural realms by God, who placed cherubim and a flaming sword at the garden and drove man away from it (Gen. 3:24). From then on, man could only come before his Creator through prayer, in the form of offering sacrifices, even in those early days (Gen. 4:3,4).

The reason then **why we need to pray** is because **prayer is the vehicle through which faith is conceived, which then results in the birthing of a miracle.**

Let us examine two biblical examples to analyze and illustrate this truth.

1.

> ***DANIEL 6:16-23***
> *16 So the king gave the command, and they brought Daniel and cast him into the den of lions. But the king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Your God whom you serve continually, He will deliver you."*
> *17 Then a stone was brought and laid on the mouth of the den, and the king sealed it with his own signet ring and with the signets of his lords, that the purpose concerning Daniel might not be changed.*
> *18 Now the king went to his palace and spent the night fasting; and no musicians were brought before him. Also his sleep went from him.*

19 Then the king arose very early in the morning and went in haste to the den of lions.
20 And when he came to the den, he cried out with a lamenting voice to Daniel. The king spoke, saying to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God, whom you serve continually, been able to deliver you from the lions?"
21 Then Daniel said to the king, "O king, live forever!
22 "My God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me, because I was found innocent before Him; and also, O king, I have done no wrong before you."
23 Now the king was exceedingly glad for him and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no injury whatever was found on him, because he believed in his God.

The key factor in Daniel receiving this miraculous deliverance was prayer. In verse 18 it says that the king ***"spent the night fasting" and "sleep went from him."*** When he could not sleep, he would have just been continuously thinking about Daniel. To think upon is a form of prayer and meditation (Neh. 5:19; Ps. 77:1,4,6; 119:55; 139:2), because God looks upon and knows our thoughts (Ps. 94:1l; Lk. 6:8; 1 Cor. 3:20). Therefore, it can be deduced that the king was indirectly fasting and praying for Daniel. When that sacrifice of fasting and prayer arose before God, it moved Him. What moved God? It was faith, which was conceived by prayer. When faith was activated, a miracle was given birth by the coming of an angel to bind the lions' mouths and thereby delivering Daniel from all harm.

2.

MATTHEW 15:22-28
22 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed."
23 But He answered her not a word. And His disciples came

and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us."
24 But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."
25 Then she came and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!"
26 But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs."
27 And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table."
28 Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

In this example, we too can see that the key factor for this woman to receive her miracle was prayer. The scriptures say that the woman **"cried out to Him"** (v.22) and **"worshipped Him"** (v.25), which is prayer. When she prayed, the Lord Jesus was moved. What moved the Lord Jesus? It was faith which was activated by prayer (v.28). It then gave birth to a miracle of deliverance from demonic possession.

Without prayer, it is difficult to grasp faith and neither could faith work without prayer. Jude 20 says, **"But you, beloved, build yourselves up [founded] on your most holy faith [make progress, rise like an edifice higher and higher], praying in the Holy Spirit"** (Amplified). The word **"build"** here in Greek is *"epoikodomeo,"* which means ***"to build upon."*** Thus, it can be clearly established that faith can be built upon by prayer.

Actually, the Word says that faith can come in two distinct ways: 1) through the hearing of the Word (Rom. 10:17) and 2) through praying in the Spirit (Jude 20). But the faith that comes through the hearing of God's Word needs to be built upon by prayer. Let's analyze this from the original Greek language.

The Greek word *"epoikodomeo"* derives from the word *"oikodomeo,"* which is used in 1 Corinthians 14:4 for the word **"edification."** This word means *"to*

build a house; to be a house-builder, i.e. to construct." The thought that is conveyed in this word is like this: A builder is constructing a house. For the purpose of construction, he needs bricks and cement. The bricks alone cannot be stacked up one on top of another. Only cement can hold them together, so that they can be built up, one upon another. Likewise, the hearing of the Word is like the many bricks. They can only be built upon by prayer, which is like the bonding cement.

God is a Spirit (Jn. 4:24) of the Spirit realm, unseen in the natural (Heb. 11:27) But He manifests Himself in the natural at times that we may behold His similitude (Num. 12:8). In order for us to communicate with and relate to God, we need to walk by faith, because it is written that without faith it is impossible to please God (Heb. 11:6).

Faith is a tangible and real substance existing in the Spirit realm. In Hebrews 11:1, it is written, **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."** What is substance? It is assurance, confirmation, and conviction. What is "things not seen"? That's the Spirit realm. Therefore, faith is a tangible substance existing in the Spirit realm, giving us the conviction of the reality of things not seen. Faith is activated by prayer.

Prayer opens up our spirit to conceive faith to touch God, who is in the Spirit realm. We cannot touch God in the natural because He is in the Spirit realm.

Man is a spirit being. The Bible says that God made man in His own image (Gen. 1:26). That image is the spirit of God's Being. The spirit realm is the real realm of existence, while the natural is only a reflection of it. What we see in the natural realm is just a reflection of the real and best things in heaven.

It was on 24 March 1984 when I experienced for the first time being caught up to heaven. It was a similar experience like the apostle Paul's (2 Cor. 12:2-4). I remember bowing down my head in prayer at 3 am and the next moment, in the twinkling of the eye, I lifted up my head to see before me a very beautiful large garden-like park. In 2 Corinthians 12:4, the apostle Paul speaks of being caught up to paradise. The word **"paradise"** in Greek is *"paradeisos,"* which means ***"park, garden ground."*** It looked quite similar to earthly parks. There were

chairs and benches under floral arches. I just knew in my spirit that I was in heaven and I saw two huge angels walking up towards me.

They came near me and smiled with a very warm welcoming smile. I could never forget those smiles. They were filled with such soft tender love. The glory of God was radiating all over their faces. They then beckoned me to follow them. I went with them and was shown around some houses in which angels lived. It seemed that their houses were carved out of one big huge white pearl. As I was walking in the park, I noticed the grasses. They looked like the ones on earth, but there were some differences. The colors appeared more vibrant and real. The grass seemed very alive, pulsating with vigor.

The things in heaven are the real things. The things on earth are just a replica of the real things. It's like the toys that children play with. Toy makers make toys modeled after real things for children. Because children do not know how to handle the real things. But when they come of age, they know that the toys which they played with were not the real things. Likewise, God created the things of this world to teach us of the reality of real things in heaven. The earth is the natural reflective manifestation of things up in heaven, just like a mirror which reflects the image of the real object in front of it.

The mirror is the intermediary thing between a real object and the reflected image. So, if the things in heaven are of the real object and the things on earth are only reflective object-images, then there must be a mirror in between these two realms. Yes, there is. That mirror is THE WORD, the Lord Jesus.

In John 1:1, it says that **"In the beginning was the Word."** Hebrews 11:3 says that "**the worlds were framed by the Word of God."** In John 14:6, the Lord Jesus said, **"I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me."** In Revelation 19:13, it is written, **"and His name is called The Word of God."** The Lord Jesus said in John 14:9 that **"He who has seen Me has seen the Father."** Like a mirror, He is the express image of the invisible God (Heb. 1:3).

Just like the Lord Jesus is the reflected image of the invisible God in the natural realm (Jn. 1:14; 1 Jn. 1:1,2), likewise a thing must first have to be a real

object of existence in the Spirit realm before it can be reflected or manifested in the natural realm. Before the Lord Jesus was manifested in the flesh in the natural realm, He had till then always been eternally existing in the Spirit realm. Prayer, therefore, gives birth first to some new reality in the Spirit realm, the answer to prayer then later manifests materially in the natural realm.

Anything that needs to happen in the natural must first happen in the Spirit realm. So, if we do not pray, nothing will be given birth to in the Spirit realm, which then cannot be manifested in the natural.

Let's consider a scripture. In Hebrews 8:5, it is written, "**who serve the copy and shadow of the heavenly things, as Moses was divinely instructed when he was about to make the tabernacle. For He said, 'See that you make all things according to the pattern shown you on the mountain.'"**

From this scripture, let us examine three things:

1) There were things up in heaven.

2) Moses saw those things in the Spirit realm.

3) God told him to make something exactly like the pattern in heaven.

The Bible records in Exodus 25-31 that Moses was with God on Mount Sinai for forty days and nights (Ex. 24:18). While he was with God, God showed him things in heaven and then commanded Moses to make those things exactly like the pattern he saw in the Spirit realm.

God told him to make the tabernacle with all the furniture. Moses was first shown and then instructed. These furniture already existed in the Spirit realm in heaven: for example, (1) *Brazen Altar* (Rev. 5:6; 13:8); (2) *Laver of Washing* (Rev. 22:1, typified of the river of life); (3) *Candlestick* (Rev. 1:12; 4:5); (4) *Table of Showbread* (Rev. 19:13; 20:12); (5) *Altar of Incense* (Rev. 8:3,4; 9:13); (6) *Ark of Covenant* (Rev. 11:19) and (7) *Shekinah Glory* (Rev. 4:2).

These are the heavenly things which existed in the Spirit realm shown to

Moses. Through prayer, Moses touched God in the Spirit realm. He was then instructed to translate into the natural, material realm those things which he had seen in the Spirit.

This is the same principle which the Lord Jesus taught in Mark 11:24, **“Therefore, I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”** Firstly, we need to pray. Then, faith is activated in our heart to believe in the reality of the heavenly blessings. Finally, we shall have, be in possession of, in the natural realm, of those things which we have asked for in prayer (Mt. 21:21,22; Mk. 11:23).

Chapter 3- Heart Attitude In Prayer

> ***ISAIAH 29:13***
> *13 Therefore the Lord said: Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths and honor Me with their lips, but have removed their hearts far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men.*

If our heart attitude is not right before God, no matter how eloquent our prayer may be, it would be useless. The key factor in our prayer relationship or walk with God is the attitude of our heart. This was the locus in all the teachings of the Lord Jesus–to focus our sight away from external emphases and on to the core attitudes of the heart.

The reason for God rejecting the sacrifices of Cain and accepting those of Abel's was not a matter of preferring flocks over fruits (Gen. 4:3-5) but rather because of the wrong heart attitude of Cain (Gen. 4:7; Heb. 11:4). Noah too offered burnt offerings unto God after the flood had subsided. It was Noah's right heart attitude, recognizing God's graciousness in delivering him and his family from the flood, that made him offer sacrifices to honor God. It was this heart attitude that God smelled as a sweet aroma before Him (Gen. 8:21).

When we come before God in prayer, our own heart is the first to be exposed before God. In 1 Samuel 16:7 it is written, **"But the Lord said to Samuel, 'Do not look at his appearance or at the physical statue, because I have refused him. For the Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the hearts.'"**

Let us examine from the scriptures four main heart attitudes which we must possess as we come before God.

1. The Fear of God

> ***HEBREWS 5:7***

> *7 Who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear.*

The Amplified Bible has beautifully translated this scripture as “He was heard because of His reverence toward God God always heard the prayers of the Lord Jesus because of the fear of God which He had.

Sadly, in present day Christianity, most believers tend to have a lackadaisical attitude towards God. This attitude is the result of an over-emphasis of God’s grace, to the extent that the Church now accepts homosexuality as a healthy lifestyle, claiming that God is love and does not condemn such people. God loves and came to save sinners, but He does not approve of ungodly lifestyles. God’s grace and forgiveness have been wrongly used to excuse sins.

There seems to be a great lack of the fear of God in the body of Christ. Consequently, another equally important side of God is seldom taught. Let’s examine from the scriptures some of the severe aspects of God’s nature.

a. *Consuming Fire* (Deu. 4:24; Heb. 12:29)

b. *Devouring Fire* (Ps. 50:3)

c. *Awesome or Terrible* (Deu. 10:17; Ex. 15:11)

d. *No Respector of persons* (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11)

The word, in Hebrew is *“yare”* meaning, i) ***stand in awe;*** ii) ***reverence, giving of proper honour and respect.*** It is mentioned 330 times in the Bible.

The can be defined as ***having a reverential awe of God, giving Him the proper honor and respect due to Him.***

2. Humility

2 CHRONICLES 7:14

14 If My people, who are called by My Name, will humble themselves, and pray, and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and heal their land.

When there is fear of God in our hearts, the first quality that will be produced is humility before God. The Lord Jesus gave a beautiful teaching on humility in Luke 18:10-14.

LUKE 18:10-14

10 Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.
11 The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank you that I am not like other men-extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector.
12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.
13 And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner!
14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.

Look at the heart attitude of the tax-collector in this parable. He had a reverential fear for God and dared not look up but humbled himself before his Creator. The Lord Jesus praised him saying that he was justified in the eyes of God. God will always exalt those who humble themselves (Jas. 4:6). God will not despise a broken and contrite heart (Ps. 51:17) but rather would come to dwell with those who are of a humble heart (Isa. 57:15).

It is written in Mark 14:3 that when the Lord Jesus was in Bethany, a woman with an alabaster box of very costly ointment came to see Him. She broke the box and poured the ointment over His head and soon the aroma filled the entire room.

There is a beautiful spiritual truth in this incident. The breaking of the alabaster box speaks of four things: i) *Humility*; ii) *Contrite Heart*; iii) *Meekness*; iv) *Submission*. Does not science say that the heart consist of four parts–right and left atriums, right and left ventricles? So, when the heart is humbled in brokenness before God, these four qualities like a sweet aroma will rise up before God, who will then look down and smell a sweet and soothing aroma (Gen. 8.21).

Therefore, when our heart is broken in humility with contrition, meekness and submission, the prayer that will flow out of such a heart, will be a sweet aroma before the presence of God.

3. Forgiveness

> ***MARK 11:25***
> *25 And whenever you stand praying, if you have anything against anyone, forgive him, that your Father in heaven may also forgive your trespasses.*

When there is humility in the heart, we will walk in love (Eph. 5.2). Forgiveness is the offspring of love. In 1 Peter 4:8 it is written, (also Prov. 10:12) unforgiveness is the breeding ground for bitterness, thereby sprouting revenge and hatred.

If we cannot forgive someone, we are then not walking and dwelling in love. God's presence that dwells within us is always flowing in love (Rom. 5:5). But unforgiveness stops the flow of love and blocks out the presence of God. When God sees our unforgiving heart, he sees a heart filled with darkness (1 Jn. 2:9-11).

God will not hear our prayer if we have no room for forgiveness in our heart (Mt. 6:15; 18:35; Mk. 11:26).

4. Not Self-Seeking

> ***MATTHEW 6:5,6***

5 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.
6 But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

Let us examine the spiritual applications in these scriptures.

Firstly, ***a self-seeking attitude will always be self-displaying*** (as in v.5). There are two forms of self-display: outward and inward. Let me illustrate these two types:

Outward:

I know of a certain minister who is truly anointed of God. On whomsoever he lays his hands upon, they would be slained in the Spirit. Sometimes, he would just blow on people and they would get slain. By and by he began to merchandise the anointing of God in self-display, seemingly to show that he was anointed. During church services, for no apparent reason, he would suddenly say midway while preaching, “Oh, the anointing is upon me.” To prove to the congregation that the anointing was upon him, he would ask someone to come forward and then throw the microphone at them. As soon as the person catches the microphone, he would get slain. For what purpose was that demonstration? Simply self-display. Showing off to every one that he was anointed.

Inward:

The other type of self-display is inwardly hidden in the heart. This type is more dangerous. The outward display is at least easily seen and can be dealt with. But the inward hidden type can only be exposed by the Holy Spirit. This hidden inward self-display is very dangerous because oftentimes it is camouflaged with humility.

In March of 1987, I was conducting a three-day evangelistic meeting at a tea-estate in Kerala, India. Everyday the Lord was confirming His Word with signs and wonders following, and five hundred Hindu families came to the Lord Jesus. Various kinds of healings and miracles took place: rain stopped instantly after prayer; cancers healed; lame legs straightened, etc. I was greatly overjoyed.

After returning back to my hometown, as I was offering the prayer of thanksgivings to the Lord for the success of the meetings, I had a visitation from the Lord Jesus. I beheld the similitude of the Lord before me and He said, *"I have come to talk to you about your Kerala meetings. There were some mistakes which you made."* I was astounded and asked Him, *"What are you saying, Lord?"* The Lord said, *"Because of a hidden self-display attitude in your heart, your name was highly lifted up."* In a vision the Lord showed me the whole meeting. Both the Lord Jesus and I were standing below the stage. I saw myself preaching and praying for the sick. The Lord then pointed out to me the junctures where I had lifted myself up and displayed self. I immediately humbled myself before the Lord, repenting at His feet for the self-display.

Secondly, go into your room or enter into your closet (as in v.6). The closet here speaks of being still before the presence of God (Hab. 2:20; Ps. 46:10). The more we practice being still in God's presence, the less we will talk and boast about ourselves. Greater then will be our ability to tame the tongue (Jas. 3:5-8).

Thirdly, ***we must shut the door*** (as in v.6). What does the shutting of the door speak of? It speaks of three kinds of doors that we need to shut.

1. ***Door of the Heart*** - the heart or the spirit of man must be subdued to be quite and submissive to the Holy Spirit (Prov. 16:32; 25:28).

2. ***Door of the Mind*** - most believers have a common complaint: a wandering mind. When trying to pray, the mind suddenly works like a super computer and remembers a 1001 things that you have forgotten. The mind must not be allowed to wander. You must refuse to think of other thoughts. It must be stayed on God (Isa. 26:3).

   I once read of an experience of Dr Peter Wagner. One morning, as he set

his heart to pray, he found his mind replaying the previous night's basketball game which he saw on television. His mind wandered off to something which he did not want.

There are three simple steps to prevent the mind from wandering like a meteor. Firstly, there must be a willingness in your mind not to allow wanderings (2 Cor. 8:12); secondly, put on a strong determination in the mind (1 Pe. 1:13); thirdly, cast down every other thought (2 Cor. 10:5).

3. ***Door of the flesh*** - the body must be brought under subjection so that it does not weary or cause restlessness to the spirit (Zech. 2:13). When the Lord Jesus took Peter, James, and John to pray, they were found sleeping instead of praying because of the flesh being weak (Lk. 9:32; Mt. 26:40,41).

The shutting of the door is again two-fold. One, shut-in, and two, shut-out. What must you shut-in and shut-out?

a. ***Shut-in*** : You must be shut-in with humility and lowliness of mind.

b. ***Shut-out*** : You must shut-out pride, self-glory, self-praise, and self-display.

Consider a fisherman who goes out to fish. After toiling in the sea and hauling in a big catch, he would head back to the shore. Upon reaching the shore, he would carefully unload all the fishes into a container. He would then hang up his fishing net on two poles and meticulously search the net for any dirt or foreign sea particles such as grasses or seaweeds. He would remove all these undesirable objects, making the net clean and ready for another catch. If he does not remove the dirt and unwanted particles, his net would lose its effectiveness and result in unnecessary and early wear and tear.

Likewise, we must always ask the Holy Spirit to search our heart, motives, and attitudes (Ps. 26:2; 139:23; Jer. 11:20). (Heb. 10:22). **"Let us draw near (unto God) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water"** (Heb. 10:22)

Chapter 4 - Why Prayers Are Unanswered?

> ***EXODUS 30:37***
> *37 But as for the incense which you shall make, you shall not make any for yourselves, according to its composition. It shall be to you holy for the Lord.*

The Bible says that God is a prayer-hearing God (Ps. 65:2). The Lord Jesus too has said that whatever we shall ask, it will be done by Him (Jn. 15:7). Yet it seems that sometimes our prayers are unanswered.

In our scripture above, there is a key which will answer our question as to why prayers are unanswered. Observe the phrase, *"you shall not make for yourselves."* **YOURSELVES-SELF.** Oftentimes Self is the root cause for prayers to be unanswered. The Lord Jesus once said that *"Many times people's prayers are not answered because they seek the gifts more than the Giver."*

The Israelites in the wilderness had a unique and blessed privilege of seeing the majesty and glory of God
(Ex. 20:18,19). Yet their hearts lusted and yearned after gifts of gold and silver, causing them to sin against the living God by making an idol while their leader Moses was up on the mountain meeting with God (Ex. 32:1-6). When we start seeking the gifts and centering our focus on them rather than on the Giver, we will soon become self-centered and "idol worshippers."

Reasons For Unanswered Prayers

Let us examine some of the scriptural reasons why prayers are unanswered.

1. Regarding of Iniquity

> ***PSALMS 66:18***
> *18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.*

In Genesis 4:4,5 it is written that God refused to accept Cain's offering because he had regarded sin in his heart against his brother (Gen. 4:7). Even in Matthew 5:21-24, the Lord Jesus taught that God would refuse the offerings brought by those who regard iniquity and sin in their hearts.

2. Workers of Unrighteousness

> ***ISAIAH 1:15***
> *15 When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.*

"Hands are full of blood" speaks of works of unrighteousness. In Isaiah 59:3 too is written that God will not hear the prayers of those whose hands are full of blood. After Cain had killed his brother, God told him that the blood of Abel was crying out to Him (Gen. 4:10). Years ago, I remember reading one of William Shakespeare's plays, Macbeth. In it, his wife kills the king of Scotland. Every night, in her dream, she would act out washing the king's blood off her hands. Likewise, when we lift up our hands in prayer unto God, the works of unrighteousness will be visible to God's eyes and He will turn His face away from it.

3. Pride and Arrogance

> ***PSALMS 101:5b***
> *5b The one who has a haughty look and a proud heart, Him I will not endure.*

In 1987, I went to Tamilnadu, India, to conduct a three-day meeting for the Lutheran Church.

One day a dignified-looking sister came to me for prayer. She told me that she had been praying for her husband to get saved for the last eleven years but her prayers were not being answered. As she was speaking, the Holy Spirit revealed her heart to me: *"The reason her prayers are not heard is because she*

is very prideful and arrogant towards her husband" (1 Pe. 3:1-5).

This woman was highly educated than her husband. Furthermore she was born-again and Spirit-filled while her husband was not. So, she used to denigrate her husband with great arrogance. Thus the Lord shut His ears from her prayers. These scriptures–Prov. 6:17; 16:5; 21:4 and Luke 18:10-14 also convey the truth that God's face is turned against the proud but He hears the cries of the humble (Ps. 9:12).

4. Lustful Desires

> ***JAMES 4:3***
> *3 You ask, and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on pleasures.*

This truth is amicably illustrated by my own folly of asking for a Rolls-Royce car, which I had described earlier.

5. Not Asking according to God's Will

> ***1 JOHN 5:14,15***
> *14 Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.*
> *15 And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.*

Two years ago, I was preaching at an Anglican Church. After the service, a young woman came to me for prayer. She was planning to serve the Lord and wanted me to pray for God's direction. As I was praying, the Holy Spirit revealed to me God's plan for her life and how she would be used in the ministry. When I told her that, she looked at me with a little displeasure and said, "I don't think that's from God." I was shocked as I thought that I had given a wrong word.

Later, in the course of conversation, this sister told me that the reason she felt

the Word I gave was not from God was because it did not tally with the desires in her heart. She had already made her own plans on how she wanted to serve God and had expected God to declare that her plans and will were in accordance with His plans and will. Does not the scripture say that our ways and thoughts are not like God's? (Isa. 55:8,9).

Many times, instead of seeking and praying according to God's will, we substitute His will with ours and expect God to put His seal of approval and blessing upon it. Our prayers will never go unanswered if we pray according to God's will. We can seek God's will through the written Word and the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:26).

6. Not Praying in Faith

> ***JAMES 1:6,7***
> *6 But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind.*
> *7 For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord.*

One evening, it was brought to the notice of the illustrious man of prayer George Muller that there was no food for the two thousand children in his orphanage for breakfast the next morning. So Mueller gathered three people to pray. After they had prayed in faith believing God, Mueller told them to praise and thank God for the answered prayer. The next morning, they found many boxes of food in front of their front door. When we pray with faith, God answers prayers.

But doubt paralyzes faith, rendering prayer useless. The Lord Jesus too had said that we should not doubt when we pray (Mt. 21:22; Mk. 11:23,24). The only way to pray with faith without wavering in doubt is to be full of the Word (Jn. 15:7; Col. 3:16; 1 Jn. 3:22).

7. Sin unto Death

1 JOHN 5:16

16 If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin which does not lead to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not leading to death. There is sin leading to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.

Sometimes, because of a certain sin in a person's life, God will prevent us from praying. Even if we did pray, He will not hear it, because there is a sin unto death.

Some years ago, I was invited to pray for a dying church elder. When I went to his house, all his relatives had gathered around his bed to see him breathing his last breath. With tears in her eyes, his wife pleaded, "Sadhuji, if you could pray and heal my husband, we would all be very happy."

This man's days had been numbered by the doctors and his face was covered by an oxygen mask. I knelt beside his bed and began to pray asking the Lord to touch and heal him. Every time I opened my mouth to say, *"Lord, please heal him,"* I found the sentence, *"Lord, please forgive him of his sins,"* coming out of my mouth. I found it strange and tried to pray again. Three times I found myself saying *"Lord, please forgive him of his sins"* instead of *"Lord, please heal him."* In fact, I literally felt the words "Lord, please forgive him of his sins" put in my mouth (Jer. 1:9; Ex. 4:15; Num. 22:38; Isa. 51:16).

Puzzled, I asked the Holy Spirit why I could not pray for his healing. The Holy Spirit showed me in a vision all about his life and how every organ in his body had been destroyed through excessive drinking and sin. The Holy Spirit then told me: *"Do not pray for his healing as this is a result of his sin which will lead to death. Rather, pray that his sins will be forgiven so that his soul may be saved"* (Jas. 5:15; 1 Cor. 5:5).

There were two other instances where again the Holy Spirit specifically told me not to pray as they involved the sin unto death.

Chapter 5 - Prayer of Sacrifice — The Brazen Altar

EXODUS 27:1-8

1 “You shall make an altar of acacia wood, five cubits long and five cubits wide - the altar shall be square - and its height shall be three cubits.

2 “You shall make its horns on its four corners, its horns shall be of one piece with it. And you shall overlay it with bronze.

3 “Also you shall make its pans to receive its ashes, and its shovels and its basins and its forks and its firepans, you shall make all its utensils of bronze.

4 “You shall make a grate for it, a network of bronze, and on the network you shall make four bronze rings at its four corners.

5 “You shall put it under the rim of the altar beneath, that the network may be midway up the altar.

6 “And you shall make poles for the altar, poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with bronze.

7 “Two poles shall be put in the rings, and the poles shall be on the two sides of the altar to bear it.

8 “You shall make it hollow with boards; as it was shown you on the mountains, so shall they make it.

ROMANS 12:1

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service

As you walk into the tabernacle, the first piece of furniture which you will see is the brazen altar. This altar was used for the offering of sacrifices.

The Brazen Altar speaks of the **.** The prayers of ***Repentence, Consecration, Dedication*** and ***Fasting*** are grouped under this category of sacrifice. When you repent of your sins, you are offering your nature as a burnt sacrifice. When you consecrate yourself, you are offering your own plans as a burnt sacrifice. When you dedicate yourself to God, you are offering your innermost life as a burnt sacrifice to God, and when you fast, you are offering your flesh as a burnt offering sacrifice.

Sacrifices in worshipping and fellowshipping with God are the ultimate expressions of a faithful Christian life. In every aspect of the Christian life, sacrifice is the underlining. Just as salt is important to seasoning food, likewise is sacrifice the flavour of the Christian life.

It was God who ordained sacrifices. After Adam had sinned, God made coats of skins for them (Gen. 3:21). After the flood, Noah was led to offer sacrifices to God (Gen. 8:20). Abraham too, had offered sacrifices often (Gen. 12:7,8). In both Noah's and Abraham's life, it can be observed that sacrifices were the means of their worship and fellowship with God. Likewise, in all of our relationship with God, sacrifice must always come first.

The Meaning

The brazen altar in Hebrew is *'mizbeach'* which means ***'slaughter place.'*** On this slaughter place of the brazen altar, two things take place. *Firstly*, an animal is killed and blood spilled. Likewise, the Lord Jesus too, was killed and His blood offered as a sacrifice (Eph. 1:7; Rev. 13:8). *Secondly*, the slained animal was then burnt and smoke arose from that burnt sacrifice.

When Noah offered sacrifices after the receding of the flood, God smelled a pleasing odour, which was a scent of satisfaction to His heart, from the smoke that arose up to heaven from the burnt offering (Gen. 8:21). It is written in Revelation 8:3,4, that our prayers rise up like smoke before God's presence.

Likewise, Consider the sun that shines on the waters. It evaporates the water into vapour, which then rises up to the sky to become clouds. Likewise, the Sun of Righteousness through the Holy Spirit will cause your prayer to rise up before

God's presence as a pleasing scent of satisfaction.

On the brazen altar, two types of sacrifices were offered:

1) the once-a-year sacrifice on the day of atonement (Lev. 23:27; Heb. 9:7);

2) the daily sacrifices (Num. 29:6; Heb. 10:11).

Likewise, the Lord Jesus offered Himself as a sacrifice to redeem us from sin (Heb. 9:12,26), like the once a year offering on the day of atonement. Since people do commit sins in their everyday life, God, like a faithful high priest, forgives our sins upon our repentence and confession given like the daily offerings (1 Jn. 1:9; 1 Jn. 2:1,2).

The Design

Let us examine the description of the design of the brazen altar, which would spiritually illustrate how we should approach God.

1. *The altar was four square with five cubits in length and three cubits in height = 5 x 4 x 3.*

a) **Five** speaks of the ***grace of God.*** This is what we need the most to come before God (Heb. 4:16).

b) **Four** speaks of the ***four natures*** of the Lord Jesus Christ.

i) Righteousness (Heb. 7:21,26);

ii) Mercy (Heb. 2:17);

iii) Compassion (Lam. 3:22; Heb. 4:15);

iv) Love (Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 4:8).

Just as there were four horns on the four corners of the altar, likewise, these four natures of the Lord flow out to anyone who comes nigh unto Him.

c) **Three** speaks of the ***Triune God*** - the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. All three were involved in the plan of salvation.

*i) God, the Father **reconciled** the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:19).*

*ii) The Lord Jesus came to **redeem** us from sin (Col. 1:14).*

*iii) The Holy Spirit washed and **regenerated** us (Ti. 3:5).*

In 1992, I was in Tsethang in South Tibet. While I was passing by a village one morning, I witnessed the Tibetans planting crops that summer. They were singing joyfully as they were planting. I went near them to observe how they planted. I noticed that they worked in a team of three persons. The first person, a Tibetan man, ploughed the hard ground with two yaks. Following behind him was a woman throwing precious seeds on the ploughed ground. Behind her, came another woman with a flat-bottomed stick, stamping the ground, real hard so that the seeds would sink under and the topsoil close up. As I was watching this incident, the Holy Spirit spoke within me saying, "*This was how, God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit were involved in the plan of salvation. In the Old Testament, God tested and ploughed the Israelites' hearts (Deu. 8:2). The Lord Jesus came as the Sower of the good news of salvation (Mt. 13:37) and the Holy Spirit seals with the promise of redemption (Eph. 1:13,14).*"

Therefore, ***when a person comes before God at the altar of sacrifice, pouring out his heart, the triune God meets the person with grace; then reaches out to clothe him with righteousness and with mercy embraces and hugs him close to their bosom, showering the person with kisses of love and compassion (cp. Lk. 15:20).***

2. *The altar was made of Shittim wood and strengthened by an overlay of brass.*

The shittim, or acacia wood, speaks of *humility* and *meekness*. Brass, or copper, speaks of the *strengthening by the Word of Faith*. Humility is an attitude

of the heart, while faith comes by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). Humility before God's presence, must be strengthened by the Word of God. It is the Word that will imbue you with boldness, though remaining meekful, to come boldly before the throne of God (Heb. 4:16).

I once saw myself in heaven in a vision. I was standing a little distance away from the Throne of God. I was afraid and did not want to go near for fear of being burnt to ashes. The Lord Jesus Christ then came towards me, inviting me to go near the throne. I hesitated out of fear. He then with great love and compassion, put His right arm around my shoulder and with His left hand invitingly said, *'Let us go boldly unto the Throne of Grace'* (Heb. 4.16).

Likewise, when we open our heart in humility and boldness to offer the prayer of sacrifice, the triune God meets us with open arms of grace and accepts our prayers on the basis of the four natures of the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Art Of The Prayer Of Sacrifice

On the brazen altar, sacrifices were offered for burnt offerings. Likewise, here are the spiritual sacrifices that we need to offer.

1. Offering of yourself as a broken vessel

> ***PSALMS 51:17***
> *17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart, these, O God, You will not despise.*

This is the most important offering a person can make unto God. To offer oneself as a broken vessel speaks of humbling oneself in contrition. It involves the offering of your flesh, desires, will, plans and your very life, at the altar.

Joel 2:12,13 also beautifully illustrates the broken and contrite spirit, **'Now, therefore,' says the Lord, 'Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and mourning.' So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God, For He is gracious and merciful.'** You should

rip your heart asunder of those things that are dearest to you, and put them on the brazen altar.

I once read of a certain very saintly man of God who resides in the USA. This person was constantly moving and walking with angels like Elijah (1 Kg. 19:5; 2 Kg. 1:3,15). Once, two angels visited him. One of the angels had a drawn sword on which was written, ***'Circumcision.'*** The other angel had a belt on which was written, ***'Enforcer.'*** The message that was brought to him was that God was going to circumcise the Church, i.e. to cut off all flesh in it (Gal. 5:19-21). If people would not yield to circumcision and put off the flesh, then, the other angel would enforce it.

When we offer ourselves as a burnt offering, we are offering our flesh and its lusts. The Circumcision (Deu. 10:16; Col. 2:11) and the Crucifying of the flesh (Gal. 2:20; 5:24) are the offering of ourselves as a living sacrifice (Rom. 12:1).

2. Twisted and plaited life

In the brazen altar, there was another equipment. It is the grate on the altar. The word in Hebrew is *'mikbar'* which means, ***'twisted or plaited.'*** This speaks of the hidden twisted, plaited and corrupted nature of man.

The Bible says that man's nature is corrupted before the living God (Deu. 32:5; Hos. 9:9; Eph. 4:2). In which way is the nature of man corrupted? Man is corrupted in his:

1. Mind (Ezek. 28:17; 2 Tim. 3:8).

2. Words (Dan. 2:9; Eph. 4:29).

3. Works (Zeph. 3:7).

4. Flesh (2 Pe. 2:10-12; Jude 8-10).

When you put on the altar of sacrifice your twisted, plaited and corrupted nature, God will make all crooked things straight in your life, for you to walk

right into the holy of holies (Isa. 40:4), and raise you up to walk in the newness of life without corruption, like the Lord Jesus (Acts 13:37;
Rom. 6:4).

3. Laying your heart bare for God to search

> ***PSALMS 139:23,24***
> *23 Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my anxieties.*
> *24 And see if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

Ask God to search your heart deeply. Ask the Holy Spirit to seek out the sins lying hidden in the innermost chamber of the heart (Ps. 19:13). God is the searcher of the hearts of men (1 Chr. 28:9; Jer. 17:10). Tell him very humbly to cleanse you from every hidden and unconscious faults (Ps. 19:12), that they may not have dominion over you (Ps. 119:133).

I once read of an incident in the life of a mighty man of God from China, John Sung. Towards the latter end of his life and ministry, he was praying one day when the Holy Spirit told him, *'John, you are a thief.'* He was stunned. He asked the Holy Spirit what he meant. The Holy Spirit then told him that many years ago, he had borrowed five cents from someone and did not return it. John Sung answered, *'But it was just five cents.'* The Holy Spirit said that, in the eyes of God, it was a sin lying deep in the innermost of his heart. This incident reinforces the command that they who bear the vessels of God must be clean (1 Thes. 4:4; 2 Tim. 2:21).

The Lord Jesus too, prayed this prayer of sacrifice at Gethsemane. He was exceeding sorrowful and deeply distressed about facing the Cross (Mt. 26:37,38). He prayed that He should be spared of those sufferings (Mk. 14:35,36). As He laid bare His heart for God to search, the Holy Spirit might have shown Him the covenant of redemption that is written deep in His heart. That He was sent only for that purpose of fulfilling the Will of God (Ps. 40:6-8; Heb. 10:5-7). When he had laid Himself thoroughly bare and the Holy Spirit had searched Him (Job 34:21; Prov. 5:21), the Lord Jesus then prayed,

‘Nevertheless, not My will, but Yours, be done’ (Lk. 22:42).

When you sincerely and honestly ask God to search your heart, God will search and know you (Ps. 44:21; 139:1).

4. Fasting

> ***PSALMS 69:10***
> *10 When I wept and chastened my soul with fasting, that became my reproach.*

Fasting is also a type of the prayer of sacrifice, for it is the offering of the flesh as a burnt sacrifice. To most believers, fasting means, an abstinence of food. The Greek words, *‘asitos’* and *‘nestis’* for fasting means ***‘without food’*** and ***‘not eating.’***

The affliction by fasting humbles our souls before the presence of God (Ps. 35:13; Isa. 58:3). Consider this: flesh is burnt on the brazen altar. Likewise, when we fast, the flesh of our body weakens and is burnt by the fires of the Holy Spirit (Ps. 109:24).

In India, cow dung is commonly used as fuel. Fresh dung has a terrible foul smell. This dung is collected, made into the size of pancakes and then dried in the sun for about forty days. During the forty days, the sun’s heat destroys all kinds of germs in it; then, the foul smell is replaced by an odourless smell and the solid mass of dung becomes like white ashes. These ashes are then used for religious purposes.

Likewise, when we fast before God, the germs of sins are destroyed by the fires of the Holy Spirit (Mal. 3:3). From such a fasted life of surrender, a pleasant aroma of offering will rise up to God (Mal. 3:4). On receiving such a burnt offering, God will then give beauty to those ashes (Isa. 61:3) and sanctify it (Num. 19:9; Heb. 9:13) to worship Him in the beauty of holiness (1 Chr. 16:29).

Chapter 6 - Prayer of Praise and Worship — Laver of Washing

> ***EXODUS 30:17-21***
> *17 Then the Lord spoke to Moses, saying:*
> *18 You shall also make a laver of bronze, with its base also of bronze, for washing. You shall put it between the tabernacle of meeting and the altar. And you shall put water in it,*
> *19 "for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet in water from it.*
> *20 "When they go into the tabernacle of meeting, or when they come near the altar to minister, to burn an offering made by fire to the Lord, they shall wash with water, lest they die.*
> *21 "So they shall wash their hands and their feet, lest they die. And it shall be a statute forever to them - to him and his descendants throughout their generations."*
> ***EXODUS 38:8***
> *8 He made the laver of bronze and its base of bronze, from the bronze mirrors of the serving women who assembled at the door of the tabernacle of meeting*

After offering sacrifices at the brazen altar, every priest must come before the laver of washing and wash their hands and feet before they could proceed on to the holy place.

This laver of washing is placed between the brazen altar and the holy place. We studied in the previous chapter that the brazen altar represents the prayer of sacrifice. What then will come out of a broken heart through the prayer of sacrifice? JOY! In Psalms 51:12a, it is written, **'Restore to me the joy of salvation.'** When we sin, condemnation robs us of the joy and peace of God. But as soon as sin is forgiven and the heart made right before God, there is much rejoicing in the heart. King David so joyfully says, **'You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have put off my sack cloth and clothed me**

with gladness, to the end that my glory (soul) may sing praise to You and not be silent, O Lord my God, I will give thanks to You forever'
(Ps. 30:11,12).

When our hearts are full of joy, the spontaneous reaction is to praise God. In Psalms 100:4 it is written, **'Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise. Be thankful to Him, and bless His Name.'** This scripture is the reason for the laver to be placed before the holy place. Because, with a heart full of joy and thanks, you should enter into the holy place with praise and worship.

The Meaning

The **Laver of Washing** represents the **Prayer of Praise and Worship**. By the multitude of God's mercies and grace, I have been allowed many times to see of how souls were received into heaven after death. As soon as they are brought to heaven, with joy and thanks, they give praise to the Lord Jesus for saving and bringing them into the land of living.

In May 1994, a very precious and close associate went home to be with the Lord. I was much heart-broken over this loss. Two weeks after his home-call, as I was praying at 4 am, I saw in a vision the heavens opened and I looked into heaven. I saw the Lord Jesus, very majestically seated on a throne, flanked by angels. This associate appeared before the Lord in all humility and meekness. He greeted the Lord Jesus in a true Indian fashion with clasped hands. His face radiated with heaven's glory and there was such an inexpressible joy on his face. The Lord looked at him and said, *'Well done My good and faithful servant. You served Me very faithfully on earth. Now enter into the joy of your Father'* (Mt. 25:21,23; Zeph. 3:17).

It is not only in earthly courts that we should enter with praise and thanksgiving but also into the heavenly courts too, where the redeemed ones of the Lord enter His gates with praise, joy and thanksgiving.

The Design

There is an interesting element used in the making and designing of this furniture. Mirrors were used for the making of the laver (Ex. 38:8). These mirrors were the looking-glasses of the women of Israel. Mirrors are reflectors. They reflect an image put in front of it.

Likewise, when we praise and worship God, it reflects God's glory, power, honour and wisdom on earth. In heaven, the redeemed saints and angelic beings are continuously praising and extolling God's glory, wisdom, honour, power and strength (Rev. 4:8,11; 5:12,13; 7:12). When the earthly saints praise and magnify the majesty of God, His glory, honour and strength are reflected on earth. When it is reflected on earth or in a congregation, God then builds His throne and inhabits the praises offered to Him (Ps. 22:3).

In our key text of Exodus 30:17-21, the phrase **'lest they die'** is being mentioned twice (v.20,21). It is mentioned twice, for two reasons:

1. No one can come before the awesome and most holy God without the covering of praise and worship. Just as Adam and Eve could not stand before God in their nakedness and needed the covering of the coats of skin (Gen. 3:21), likewise, praise and worship cover us like a shield as we approach the Almighty God.

2. It is written that the joy of the Lord is our strength (Neh. 8:10). As we praise and worship God, His joy undergirds and strengthens us to walk through any kind of fire or waters (Isa. 43:2). Consider Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail (Acts 16:25-26). In the midst of suffering and despair, Paul and Silas received strength from the joy of the Lord to receive a miracle. This joy came as a result of their praising and worshipping God. By constantly maintaining a life of praise and worship, we can avoid spiritual famine and death.

There is a spiritual mystery to explain how the joy of the Lord could come through praise and worship. In heaven, from the midst of the throne of God, there flows a pure river of the water of life (Rev. 22:1). This river of life speaks of the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:37-39). The Lord Jesus had said that God's kingdom is within us (Lk. 17:21). Just like the river of life flowing from the midst of God's throne, the Holy Spirit is always flowing like rivers of living water within you.

When you praise and worship God, the rivers flow all over from within you, carrying the strength of God. Does not the scripture say that ‘joy’ is a fruit of the spirit? (Gal. 5:22). So, the joy within causes you to be exultant and draw on strength from God, through a deeper depth of praise and worship.

The Art Of Praise And Worship

The laver of washing is used by the priests to wash and cleanse themselves before going into the holy place. How then does praise and worship wash and cleanse us?

I was in New York City, USA during the month of October 1991. One morning, as I was waiting on God on my knees, suddenly an overwhelming desire for worship came upon me. I just started worshipping God. I felt the Holy Spirit leading me deeper and deeper into the depths of worshipping God. As I was worshipping, I felt a wave of holiness flowing all over me. Like ocean waves that come rolling in on the beach, these waves of holiness came rolling in on me, cleansing and purifying me. The more I praised and worshipped, the more intense the cleansing, sanctifying and purifying power was increased. It made me holy and sanctified. After which I saw hundreds of angels coming down and filling the room. I then saw the Lord Jesus Himself, coming down in clouds before me. During that visitation, the Lord spoke of many things that were going to happen in America.

Praise and worship cleanse, sanctify and purify us to enter into the holy place of God.

The Three Elements of Praise and Worship

Praise and worship consists of three elements. *Firstly,* **Thanksgiving**, *secondly*, **Praise;** *thirdly*, **Worship**. When the priests come to the laver of washing, they wash their hands and feet. The washing of hands speaks of Praise, as they need to be clean when lifted up to bless God (Ps. 24:4; Ps. 63:4). Meanwhile, the washing of the feet speaks of Worship, as they need to be clean to dance before God (Ps. 99:5; Lk. 7:37,38; Ps. 149:3; 150:4).

So, where does thanksgiving fit in? Is not man created with two hands and feet? Therefore, the **two hands** speak of ***Praise with Thanksgiving*** (Neh. 12:24,26), while the **two feet** speak of ***Worship with Thanksgiving*** (Rev. 11:16,17). When we come before God's presence with thanksgiving (Ps. 95:2), God will then cause our face to shine with His glory (Num. 6:24).

Therefore, when we delight ourselves in the presence of the Lord God with thanksgiving, praise and worship, He will cause His face to shine upon us with His Glory and the joy of the Lord to strengthen us.

1. Thanksgiving

> ***PSALMS 50:14a***
> *14a Offer to God thanksgiving,*

The word, **'thanksgiving'** in Greek is *'eucharistia'* which means, ***'gratitude; thankfulness.'*** Therefore, thanksgiving can be simply defined as ***an act of the expression of thankfulness, acknowledging in gratitude the graciousness of God.*** Mere simple expressions of thanks can express your gratitude for the things that God has done in your life (Ps. 75:1; 97:12; 107:1; 119:62).

2. Praise

> ***PSALMS 50:23a***
> *23a Whoever offers praise glories Me;*

Praise is offered to God for His attributes and Personhood. The word, **'praise'** in Hebrew is *'halal'* which means, ***'to praise, celebrate, glory, boast.'*** Therefore, praise can be simply defined as ***an act of celebration in boasting the goodness of His Person.*** The Hebrew name for the Books of Psalms is simply, 'Book of Praises.' Studying the book of Psalms thoroughly will teach us how to praise God of His attributes and Personhood.

3. Worship

PSALMS 95:6

6 Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker

To worship God is to respond to His presence within and before us. Worship is a love communion with God. When we worship God, expressing the innermost love that we have for God, we then become one in Him (Jn. 17:21,23). For a deeper understanding of worship in a deeper depth, we must read the Book of Revelation.

In Revelation 4:10 it is written, **'the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne.'** This act of falling down at the Lord's Feet and casting of crowns is equivalent to the incident where an adulterous woman came to worship the Lord Jesus. She **'stood at His feet behind Him weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head; and kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil '** (Lk. 7:38). The falling down, casting of crowns, washing feet with tears and wiping it with hair, are all very high acts of deep reverential worship that flow out of the innermost heart.

Chapter 7 - Praying in the Spirit — Lampstand

EXODUS 25:31-40

31 “You shall also make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand shall be of hammered work. Its shaft, its branches, its bowls, its ornamental knobs, and flowers shall be of one piece.

32 “And six branches shall come out of its sides: three branches of the lampstand out of one side, and three branches of the lampstand out of the other side.

33 “Three bowls shall be made like almond blossoms on one branch, with an ornamental knob and a flower, and three bowls made like almond blossoms on the other branch, with an ornamental knob and a flower-and so for the six branches that come out of the lampstand.

34 “On the lampstand itself four bowls shall be made like almond blossoms, each with its ornamental knob and flower.

35 “And there shall be a knob under the first two branches of the same, a knob under the second two branches of the same and a knob under the third two branches of the same, according to the six branches that extend from the lampstand.

36 “Their knobs and their branches shall be of one piece; all of it shall be one hammered piece of pure gold.

37 “You shall make seven lamps for it, and they shall arrange its lamps so that they give light in front of it.

38 “And its wick-trimmers and their trays shall be of pure gold.

39 “It shall be made of a talent of pure gold, with all these utensils. 40 “And see to it that you make them according to the pattern which was shown you on the mountain.

JUDE 20

20 But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.

We have now passed the outer-court and come into the holy place. In the outer-court, all the furniture was made of brass, while in the holy place, all the furniture was made of gold.

The Meaning

The **Lampstand** represents the prayer of **Praying in the Spirit**. The lampstand was made of pure gold. Gold speaks of holiness. Once your sins are forgiven and cleansed, when you have repented and been redeemed, you are sanctified and made holy in Christ Jesus (1 Cor. 1:2; Col. 1:22). As we come before a holy God, we too must be holy (Lev. 20:7; l Pe. 1:15,16).

The Design

i*) Beaten of pure gold*

This furniture was made of one beaten work of pure gold. Using one piece of pure gold, craftsmen had to beat it into shape, to make the lampstand. It cannot be joined by several pieces together. **The one piece of pure gold represents the Holy Spirit.** Just as when Moses struck the rock and water flowed out (Ex. 17:6), likewise, out of the Holy Spirit flows utterances to pray in the Spirit. We need the unction of the Holy Spirit to pray in the spirit or else it will be in the flesh.

ii) Shaft

The shaft is a very important part of the lampstand. It is the base and central stand, from which all the other three branches on the left and right branch out. The word **'shaft'**, in Hebrew is *'yarek'* which means **'thigh.***'* There are two important spiritual applications in the shaft:

a. In Genesis 32:24,25, we read the story of Jacob wrestling with an angel.

The angel begged him to let go but Jacob would not. Finally, the angel then touched Jacob's thigh. Immediately his natural strength was gone and he had to limp on a staff. Likewise, our natural self must be broken and let loose, so that we may rely on the Holy Spirit to pray in the spirit.

b. In the Old Testament language, the thigh was always figuratively spoken of as giving birth to (Gen. 46:26; Ex. 1:5; Judg. 8:30). It is a figurative biblical language to say, *'out of the loins, thighs of Jacob, came forth twelve sons.'* This speaks of the birthing of Spirituals, or Spiritual Gifts, within us, when we pray in the Spirit. Like a bucket, which is used to draw water from the well, praying in the Spirit enables us, to draw power from the Holy Spirit, which gives birth to spiritual gifts within us.

Why Tongues Are Important?

The reason tongues is the most confused subject among Christians is because the natural mind does not understand nor is able to interpret it. How could the finite mind comprehend the conversation between two spirit beings? (1 Cor. 14:2). Let us examine why it is very important to pray in tongues.

In the Book of Acts 1:2 it is written, ***'until the day in which He was taken up, after <u>He through the Holy Spirit had given commandments</u> to the apostles whom He had chosen.'*** From the moment the Lord Jesus arose from death, He could no longer speak with the apostles as He did in the flesh. As the resurrected Lord Jesus is now a Spirit man, and since spiritual things are only spiritually discerned (1 Cor. 2:14), He could speak to his apostles only through the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is now like a middle man through whom God the Father and the Son speak to us and we to them. So, it is only through the Holy Spirit, that we can communicate with the triune God. If this is the case, how then is tongues related to the Holy Spirit?

Originally, everyone on earth was only speaking the same language (Gen. 11:1). Which is that one same language? The story of Babel tells us that since man had planned to exalt himself above God, the Lord God confounded the

language of man (Gen. 11:1-9). The thousands of languages that exist in the world today were born on that day. So, if all our known languages dated back to the day of confusion at Babel, which then was the one language that bound all men together and in which God spoke with Adam?

The answer to that question can be found in that which the Lord Jesus had said. The Lord Jesus came to restore that which Adam had lost. In Mark 16:17, the Lord Jesus said that the New Testament believers, the redeemed saints who inherited all things in Christ (Eph. 3:6; Rom. 8:17), **'will speak with new tongues.'** Furthermore, when the Holy Spirit came upon the people on the day of Pentecost, they all spoke in other tongues (Acts 2:4).

Thus, it can be assuredly stated that the language with which God spoke with Adam was the language of tongues. That was the language, which was confounded by God at Babel. It is this language which the Lord Jesus said will be restored. When the Holy Spirit came, He restored that original language to man.

This was the birth-right language that was lost and now restored through the Lord Jesus and by the Holy Spirit. Consider this. When a baby is born in a Chinese family, the baby will learn to speak the Chinese language because that is the baby's mother-tongue. If this baby was born in an Indian family, the baby will naturally speak the Indian language, which will be its mother-tongue. Likewise, when we are born of the Spirit (Jn. 3:5), we will speak our 'mother-tongue' which is the language of the Spirit-TONGUES. It is the language of God (Isa. 28:11).

The Art Of Praying In The Spirit

The Holy Spirit is symbolicly portrayed as a lampstand in heaven.

> ***REVELATION 4:5***
> *5 And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God.*

There are seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God and they are the seven Spirits of God (Rev. 1:4; 5:6). If the Holy Spirit is one (Eph. 4:4), how is it that there are seven Spirits in heaven? Let's examine the scripture.

> ***ISAIAH 11:2***
> *2 The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of Wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of Counsel and might, the Spirit of Knowledge and of the fear of the Lord.*

These then, are the seven Spirits of God:

1. Spirit of the Lord

2. Spirit of Wisdom

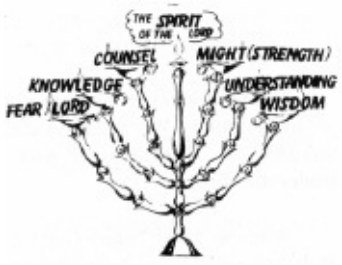
3. Spirit of Understanding

4. Spirit of Counsel

5. Spirit of Might

6. Spirit of Knowledge

7. Spirit of the Fear of God



If there are seven Spirits of God, how could the Holy Spirit be one? The Bible says that there is a rainbow around the throne of God, by which sides are the seven lamps of fire (Rev. 4:3,5). There is a beautiful relationship between the lamps and the rainbow. Science explains to us that a rainbow is an arc displaying the colours of the spectrum, which is a diffusion of light separated according to wavelengths. Each wavelength consists of a different colour. Therefore the rainbow appears as a band of colours, but light in itself is one. One light consisting of seven colours. Likewise, the seven lamps of fire are the seven

manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

There was a very saintly man of God in India, who was often caught up to heaven. On one such occassion, he saw waves of light and love coming out from the Person of the Lord Jesus. He was made to understand that these waves of light were the Holy Spirit. From the One Holy Spirit, many waves flowed out.

Recently, when I was in Kalimpong, India, there was a power-cut one night. So, as usual, I lit a candle and continued reading a book. As the light from the candle was glaring directly at my eyes, I just stretched out my hand to block it. I, then realised that through the gap between my fingers, a beam of light was flowing through. But, though light travels in a straight line, this light seemed five-sided because the beam of light was passing through the jagged features in my hand, giving a five-sided appearance. Likewise is the seven-fold manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

The lampstand in the holy place has seven lamps, which were always burning. When these lamps burn, light is shed. **Light speaks of illumination and enlightenment, which gives understanding.**

When we come before God's presence, praying in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will cause light from each of the seven Spirits to shine on us to receive illumination and enlightenment. Thus from the Spirit of Wisdom, we receive an impartation of wisdom; from the Spirit of Understanding, we receive an impartation of understanding; from the Spirit of Counsel, we receive an impartation of counsel; from the Spirit of Might, we receive an impartation of power; from the Spirit of Knowledge, we receive an impartation of knowledge; and from the Spirit of the Fear of God, we receive the impartation to walk fearfully and worthily before God.

Different Levels Of Tongues

A spiritual application can be drawn from the makings of the lampstand regarding the different levels of speaking in tongues.

If you examine the aspect of the lampstand as illustrated below, it can be observed that three branches branch out on each of the left and right side of the central main shaft.

Representations

1. **HS** represents the ***Holy Spirit***, who is the mediator between the natural and Spirit realms.

2. **E1,E2,E3** represents the human aspect of praying in the Spirit.

3. **S1,S2,S3** represents the heavenly aspect of tongues.

4. **E1** represents ***Stammering Tongues***.

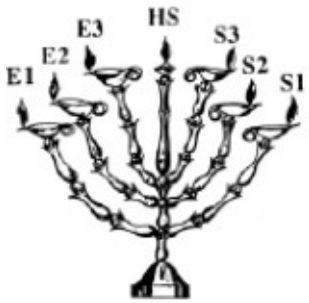
5. **E2** represents the ***Pure Language.***

6. **E3** represents ***Groanings in the Spirit.***

7. **S1** represents ***Tongues of Angels.***

8. **S2** represents ***Languages in Heaven.***

9. **S3** represents ***Language of God***.



1. Three levels of Tongues from Believers

There are three levels of praying in the Spirit by believers.

i Stammering Tongues

> ***ISAIAH 28:11***
> *11 For with stammering lips and another tongue, He will speak to this people.*

Some believers, after being baptized in the Holy Spirit, stammer in tongues. This is chiefly due to the lack of understanding in spiritual matters. Just like a baby who stammers with one or two syllables, likewise when there is an immature understanding in spiritual things and a lack of co-operation with the Holy Spirit, stammering occurs. As we yield more and more to the Holy Spirit, stammering ceases and a pure language flows (Isa. 32:4).

ii. Pure Language

> ***1 CORINTHIANS 14:2***
> *2 For he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him, however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries.*

Just as crystal clear water without any hindrance will flow through a clean and empty pipe, likewise, through a yielded and surrendered life will the Holy Spirit flow like crystal clear rivers of living waters. From within the innermost being of the believer will flow a pure language in tongues to commune divine secrets with God.

iii. Groanings in the Spirit

> ***ROMANS 8:26b***
> *26b but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Groanings in the Spirit is praying in tongues at a very high speed, just like

when you ‘fast-forward’ a cassette with the ‘play’ button down and the tape moves at high speed, producing a squeaky, screechy sound. Groaning is akin to praying in tongues at high speed. Words in tongues, whether in a stammer or pure language do not flow but instead just emerge as unutterable groanings and sighings.

These three levels progressively mature from stage to stage, as we yield and surrender our lives more and more to the Holy Spirit.

2. Three levels of Languages in Heaven

In the Spirit realm too, there are three levels of tongues or languages used in communion and communication in heaven.

i. Tongues of Angels

> ***1 CORINTHIANS 13:1a (Amp.)***
> *1a If I (can) speak in the tongues of men and [even] of angels.*

The angels in heaven have their own language to communicate with one another. I remember once reading about the experience of Pastor Roland Buck, in his book, *Angels on Assignment*. About 2 am one morning, he had a visitation of angels. He met with Gabriel, Michael and two other high-ranking angels. While Gabriel was speaking with Pastor Buck, he noticed the other three speaking with one another in different languages, all which he could not understand. During the many visitations, which he had with angels, he always observed them speaking in heavenly languages.

ii. Languages in Heaven

> ***2 CORINTHIANS 12:4***
> *4 how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

The King James translation uses the word *'unspeakable'* for the word 'inexpressible' as used in the New King James translation. The word **'unspeakable'** in Greek is *'arrhetos'* which means, ***'unspoken or unspeakable'***, suggesting ***'words too sacred to be uttered.'***

The things and activities in heaven are still a big mystery to us, because not many of the things are clearly spelled out in 'black and white' in the scriptures. But to those who walk intimately with God, to them He reveals His secrets (Ps. 25:14).

Let us consider some of the languages spoken or used in heaven from the scriptures.

a. Voice sounding like a Trumpet (Rev. 4:1).

b. Lightnings, Thunderings and Voices (Rev. 4:5; 8:5; 11:19).

c. Voice of Thunder (Rev. 6:1; 10:3).

d. Something like a Voice from the midst of the four living creatures (Rev. 6:6).

e. Voice from the Horns of the Incense Altar (Rev. 9:13).

f. Voices in Heaven (Rev. 11:15).

The word, ***'voice or voices'*** in Greek is *'phone'*, meaning, ***'saying or language:- noise, sound and voice.'*** These then are some of the languages used or spoken in heaven.

iii. Language of God

> ***ISAIAH 28:11***
> *11 For with stammering lips and another tongue, He will speak to this people.*

God, too, has His own language of communication with which He speaks with His people. God spoke to the Babylonians in a different language which even all the learned, wise men could not interpret until the prophet Daniel came with the interpretation from God (Dan. 6:5-28).

If God has His own language of communication, how is it that we could hear God speaking to us in our own language of understanding? During 1984, when I was just a novice in the things of the Spirit, I met with a saintly man of God in Tamilnadu, India. In the course of conversation, he asked me, *'Brother, in what language does God speak to you.'* I answered him, *'Sometimes I hear God speaking in English and sometimes in Tamil.'* He burst into a loud, robust laughter. I wondered why he was laughing like that.

After he was calm, he told me, *'I laughed not because I looked down on you. It's because God does not speak in English or Tamil.'* I was astounded. He continued saying, ***'God has His own language and speaks to us in that language. It is the Holy Spirit who interprets that heavenly language for us to understand in our own language.'***

It is the Holy Spirit, who is the ***'middle man'*** between the Spirit and natural realms, like the centre shaft in the lampstand. It is He who enabled the apostle John to understand in his native language of things he heard in heaven as recorded in the book of Revelation.

Secret Communication With God

> ***1 CORINTHIANS 14:2 (AMPLIFIED)***
> *2 For one who speaks in an [unknown] tongue speaks not to men but to God, for no one understands or catches his meaning, because in the [Holy] Spirit he utters secret truths and hidden things [not obvious to the understanding].*

Consider a foetus in a woman's womb. The foetus is connected to the mother through the umbilical cord. Through this cord, the foetus receives food and oxygen for survival and growth. Likewise, when we pray in tongues, a kind of

spiritual link is established between us and the throne room of God. That is why it is written that he who speaks in tongues does not speak to men but to God. Sometimes, we run out of words to think of and pray, while praying in tongues breaks the natural mental limitations and enables us to flow like a river in our communion with God.

In John 15:26, the Lord Jesus said, **'But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me'.** The Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father. The word, **'proceed'** in Greek is *'ekporeumai',* which means***, 'to go on out of or continuously flowing forth.'*** Like the river of life that flows continually from the midst of God's throne (Rev. 22:1), the Holy Spirit, who comes forth from the Father, causes or gives us utterances in tongues, that go on out of our heart, like a continuous flow of rivers of living waters (Jn. 7:38). We could then express ourselves limitlessly, from our innermost being to God our Father.

Praying in the Spirit in tongues is not a monologue but in actuality a dialogue. Because this aspect is least understood or unheard of, speaking in tongues is a 'bore', 'waste of time' and confusing to a large number of believers. The scriptures clearly say that the natural mind cannot understand its meaning. But through the Holy Spirit's interpretation we can understand with our natural mind whatever it is that we are praying or communing with God in unknown tongues (1 Cor. 14:13-15).

Many times, while praying in tongues, God speaks back to His people in tongues too (Isa. 28:11). Surprised? Let me clearly explain it. When we start praying in tongues, we begin with and continue speaking in our normal tone of voice. Sometimes, suddenly, the tone of the voice changes to something that is of fervency and authority. That is when God speaks like the roar of a lion (Amos 3:8).

In 1990, I was in Amdo in eastern Tibet. While there, I went to the reputed Kumbum monastery to witness to the monks. Around the monastery, there is a long mountain range, on which many meditational prayer rooms had been dug out. In them, Tibetan lamas spent weeks and years in solitary retreat. I had desired to visit those monks, but was told that, non-Tibetans were not allowed

near the cells. So I prayed asking God for an open door. I then saw two young novice monks walking pass and the Holy Spirit told me to go and talk to one particular young monk.

I just asked him, how he spoke in the Chinese language, when I felt a strong urge to speak in tongues. I spoke in tongues mildly and then, like the mighty rushing Niagara Falls, came utterances in the Tibetan language, with such a force and authority that the monk just stared at me, with wide eyes. Then he said, *'Give me those tracts, I'll give them to the monks in the caves.'* I asked my Chinese companion what the young monk meant. When questioned, he said, *'You just authoritatively told me, in my own language, to take all the tracts and give them to the monks in the caves. That is why, I am asking you to give them to me.'* Only then did I realize that the Almighty God Himself had commanded the young monk what he should do.

God speaks directly to our spirit. At times when that happens we may immediately understand what God is speaking to us through the Holy Spirit's interpretation. But at times, when we do not understand or receive any interpretation, the message which God communicated, is not lost. Because, our spirit is like a tape recorder, that records everything that God speaks. When you are meditating the Word or waiting on God, like an inspiration or through a still small voice, the Holy Spirit will bring to our natural understanding, the things of which God had spoken in tongues.

So, after a season of praying in tongues, we should wait on God and ask the Holy Spirit to give us the interpretation. He will then reveal all the things that God had communed with you (Jn. 14:26; 16:13). Praying in tongues is a powerful medium of direct and uninterrupted intimate communication with God.

Benefits Of Praying In Tongues

There are several benefits that will profit every believer who prays in tongues.

1. Personal Edification

1 CORINTHIANS 14:4

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

When we pray in tongues we are being edified. ***'Edified'*** means to be ***'built-up'*** or like a battery being charged. We are built-up in our inner man.

2. Indwelling Presence of God

JOHN 14:17
17 The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him, nor knows Him but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.

If the high priest, who goes into the Most Holy Place to offer blood sacrifice on the day of atonement, was unclean in some way, he would be struck dead (Ex. 30:20,21). For the people waiting outside to know if the priest was alive or dead, God told them to sew bells to the bottom of the priest's robes. When the bells sound, as the priest moves about, it indicates to the people that he is alive (Ex. 28:34,35). Likewise, the resurrected Lord Jesus sent down the Holy Spirit, after He had sat down at the right hand of God (Acts 2:33). When the Holy Spirit came, He gave utterances in tongues (Acts 2:4). How does that tie up with the high priest? In each bell, there is an iron tongue, whose beating against the side of the bell causes sound to be heard. Likewise, are the 'tongues' of the Holy Spirit. Each time when we speak in tongues, we become very conscious of God's presence dwelling in us through the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 2:22). The more we speak in tongues, the more we become conscious of His presence and could be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

3. God's Will

ROMANS 8:27
27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

When we pray in tongues, the Holy Spirit will enable us to pray according to the perfect will of God at all times. He also makes that will known to us, so that we can always walk and conduct ourselves perfectly before God.

4. Stimulates Faith

> ***JUDE 20***
> *20 But you beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.*

It stimulates and builds up our faith. It enriches and strengthens our faith to believe God for greater things. Our faith level will be greatly increased like a soaring skyscraper, by praying in tongues.

5. Spiritual Refreshing

> ***ISAIAH 28:11,12***
> *11 For with stammering lips and another tongue, He will speak to this people.*
> *12 To whom He said, 'This is the rest with which you may cause the weary to rest,' and, 'This is the refreshing'; yet they would not hear.*

On a typical hot day, a cool shower takes away all the dryness and fatigue, causing us to feel greatly refreshed and rested. Likewise, when we pray in unknown tongues, the Holy Spirit who is flowing like rivers of living waters in us, will cause 'rain' to fall on us, taking away the heat and giving us a rest in God, which will greatly refresh us (Isa. 18:4; Hos. 6:3; 10:12).

6. Subjection

> ***JAMES 3:8***
> *8 But no man can tame the tongue. It is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison.*

When praying in tongues, we surrender our tongue to the Holy Spirit's control. The unruly and untamable tongue, progressively comes under the subjection and submission to God.

Thus, when we/you pray in the Spirit, it transports us/you from the natural to the spiritual realm, to speak secret things with God.

Chapter 8 - Meditation of the Word — Table of Showbread

EXODUS 25:23-30

23 “You shall also make a table of acacia wood, two cubits shall be its length, a cubit its width, and a cubit and a half its height.

24 “And you shall overlay it with pure gold, and make a molding of gold all around.

25 “You shall make for it a frame of a handbreadth all around, and you shall make a gold molding for the frame all around.

26 “And you shall make for it four rings of gold, and put the rings on the four corners that are at its four legs.

27 “The rings shall be close to the frame, as holders for the poles to bear the table.

28 “And you shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold, that the table may be carried with them.

29 “You shall make its dishes, its pans, its pitchers, and its bowls for pouring. You shall make them of pure gold.

30 “And you shall set the showbread on the table before Me always.

LEVITICUS 24:5-9

5 “And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it. Two-tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake.

6 You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure gold table before the Lord.

7 “And you shall put pure frankincense on each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, an offering made by fire to the Lord.

8 "Every Sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting covenant.
9 "And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place; for it is most holy to him from the offerings of the Lord made by fire, by a perpetual statute."

The Meaning

The **Table of Showbread** represents the **Meditation of the Word**. The meditation of the Word of God is a very important part of a believer's prayer life. As food is to the body, so is meditation to the soul and spirit. Because of its importance, the Lord God specifically commanded Joshua that **'This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success'** (Josh. 1:8).

Interestingly, in the holy place of the tabernacle, the lampstand and table of showbread were kept side by side. This was for two reasons.

i. Without the Spirit, the Word has no life and without the Word, the Spirit has no balance. They agree in oneness and compliment one another (2 Cor. 3:6; 2 Pe. 1:20,21; 1 Jn. 5:7).

ii. In the making of the lampstand, we read that it consists of almonds, blossoms and flowers on each side of the three branches (Ex. 25:33). But there was one difference. The left branches had thirty-nine almonds, blossoms and knobs, while the right branches had only twenty-seven. Are there not thirty-nine books in the Old Testament and twenty-seven books in the New Testament? The Holy Spirit, who is foreshadowed as the centre shaft in the lampstand, is the Illuminator of both the Old and New Testaments. Just as the lampstand was the only source of light in the holy place of the tabernacle, likewise the Holy Spirit is the only Person who can illumine and enlighten the spiritual meaning and application of the Word of God for us (Jn. 14:26; 16:13; 1 Jn. 2:27).

The Design

Let us examine in detail, the description of the design of the table of showbread. There are many spiritual applications in it.

1. The table was two cubits in length, a cubit in width and one and one-half cubits in height = 2 x 1 x 1 1/2.

a) **2** speaks of ***us*** and the ***Holy Spirit***.

b) **1** speaks of the ***one Bible*** that God has given us.

c) In mathematical equations, sometimes whole numbers are converted into fractions, likewise I felt led to translate one and one-half as 3/2. **3** speaks of the ***Godhead***; Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, while ***2*** speaks of the ***Written and Spoken Word.***

Therefore, when we come before the table of showbread to meditate God's Word, our fellowship is with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit (1 Jn. 1:2,3; 2 Cor. 13:14). They speak and reveal to us, the written Word and give us a spoken word. Let me unveil a mystery contained in John 1:1, as it relates to this subject. That scripture says that**, 'the Word became flesh and dwelt among men'** – which signifies the spoken Word. So, when we meditate the written word, the Holy Spirit will quicken it in our spirit, causing it to spring forth as a spoken Word.

2. The table was made of shittim wood and overlaid with pure gold.

The ***shittim or acacia wood***, speaks of ***humility***, while ***pure gold*** speaks of ***holiness***. When we come before God to meditate His Word, we should not come with a puffed-up mind, or with a preset mind to explain everything in the bible with natural explanations.

I was told that in some Theological Seminaries, theological professors explain away the miracle of the parting of the Red Sea by Moses like this. That in those days, the Red Sea was only two feet deep and it was not difficult for the

Israelites to walk across. But they fail to explain how an entire Egyptian army could be drowned in two-foot deep water. Concerning the feeding of the five thousand men by the Lord Jesus, they explain that it was not a miracle either. When the Lord Jesus lifted up His hands to bless the bread and fishes, everyone took from their lunch baskets bread and fishes to eat.

When we meditate the Word of God, with a heart of humility, we should desire that the Holy Spirit open our eyes to see of the wondrous things in it (Ps. 119:18). Together with humility, we must handle the Word of Life with clean hands of holiness. Because every Word of God is pure (Prov. 30:5). Since, the Word is pure, the vessel (us) that bear the table of showbread (meditation) must be pure and holy too.

3. On top of the table, there were two crowns. It's purpose was to keep things in its respective places.

These **two crowns** speak of the ***Spiritness and Lifeness*** of the Word. The Lord Jesus had said that God's Word is both Spirit and Life (Jn. 6:63). The Lord Jesus explained this in a different way in John 10:10 as Life and more Abundant Life. The word, **'life'** in Greek is *'zoe'* which means ***'life – as God has it.'*** The *'zoe'* life is the God-kind eternal life. So, if we combine Spirit and Life with Life and Abundant Life, ***we have a life that livingly exists eternally and flows out abundantly, quickened by the Spirit.*** This is the resultant spiritual effect of meditation, as admonished by the Psalmist, **'But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper'** (Ps. 1:2,3).

4. There were four rings on the side of the table.

These **four rings** speak of the ***Four Dimensions in the Word,*** that contains the fullness of God. It is written in Ephesians 3:18,19, '**May you be able to comprehend with all saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.'**

In these scriptures, we can examine the four dimensions in the Word – width, length, depth and height. These, then speak of the following, as revealed in Ephesians 1:18:

i. **Width** = *Spiritual knowledge* ***- Eyes of Under standing Enlightened***

ii. **Length** = *Practical Applications* ***- Hope of His Calling***

iii. **Depth** = *Heavenly Depthness* ***- Riches of His Glory***

iv. **Height** = *Strength* ***- Exceeding Greatness of His Power***

Therefore, when we meditate the Word, *firstly*, ***the eyes of our understanding are enlightened to receive spiritual knowledge. Secondly, we can walk worthily of God's calling in all practical aspects of life. Thirdly, the Holy Spirit will reveal to us in depth the heavenly glories*** (Jn. 16:13). ***Fourthly, it causes our faith to grow from strength to strength in the exceeding greatness of God's power.***

The Art Of Meditating The Word

> ***PSALMS 119:97***
> *97 Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day***.**

This is another less practised spiritual discipline in the lives of most believers. We spend hundreds of dollars on good commentaries on the Bible. There is a great influx of different translations of bibles, dictionary, concordance and even study notes on computer softwares. Sincere believers wanting to equip themselves, will spend hours pouring over all these books in earnest study. They

are not bad or wrong. But studying, reading, researching and digging into the root words of the Word alone is not sufficient. We must meditate the Word. It's an art that needs to be practised with diligence and discipline.

The Making of Meditation

> ***LEVITICUS 24:5a,6,7a***
> *5a And you shall take fine flour and bake twelve cakes with it,*
> *6 You shall set them in two rows, six in a row, on the pure gold table before the Lord.*
> *7a And you shall put pure frankincense on each row.*

Let's examine these scriptures closely, to study its spiritual application.

1. **Fine flour, speaks** of the ***Word.***

2. **Bake,** speaks of ***Meditating the Word.***

3. **Pure frankincense**, speaks of the ***Holy Spirit.***

4. Twelve cakes, put in two rows of six each = 6x2
   6, speaks of ***Man,*** while ***2,*** speaks of the ***Hearing and Doing of God's Word.***

a) Consider the making of naan (a kind of an Indian bread, made of unleavened flour). Coals of fire are put on the bottom of a huge four feet high earthen urn. Dough made of unleavened flour is nicely rolled like a pancake and then stuck to the side of the urn. The heat from the fire heats the dough and becomes the delicious naan. Likewise, the earthen urn speaks of our heart. The dough of unleavened flour speaks of the Word of God. Coals of fire speak of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, when we meditate the Word of God, the fires of the Holy Spirit quickens the Word within our heart which then burns like an urn (Ps. 39:3; Jer. 20:9), to renew our mind and purify our life.

This fact is beautifully written in Luke 24:27,32. **“And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. And they said to one another, ‘Did not our heart burn within us while He talked with us on the road, and while He opened the Scriptures to us?’”** As they meditated on the Word being expounded by the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit’s fire was quickening inside their hearts.

b) When we (man, as signified symbolically in scriptures with the number six) meditate the Word, not only must we hear the Word but also practise the Word in our everyday life. The hearing of the Word produces faith (Rom. 10:17). As we walk by that faith, practicising the Word, it perfects us like the Lord Jesus.

What is Meditation?

There are two words in the Hebrew and one in the Greek language, used for the word, **‘meditate’** in the Bible.

1. Heb. *‘hagah’* means, ***‘to muse, think, consider, reflect deep thoughts.’***

2. Heb. *‘siyach’* means, ***‘to speak loudly to oneself.’***

3. Gr. *‘meletao’* means, ***‘take counsel in the mind.’***

Therefore, **Meditation,** is ***the reflection of deep thoughts by musing in the mind with the speaking loudly to oneself.*** Simply put, it means like this: when we have a deep problem, we would just simply sit and worry about it sorrowfully in deep serious thought. This is meditation, but the negative aspect of it. Whereas, the principle is the same. Just reverse the negative into positive by worrying not about problems which cause sorrow, but ‘worry’, i.e. meditate the Word.

Results Of Meditating The Word

1. Illumination and Understanding

When we meditate, the Word enters into our heart and comes in contact with our spirit. When the Word enters inside, it gives light (Ps. 119:130). The spirit of man is the lamp of God (Prov. 20:27). When the Word comes in contact with the spirit, light from the Word contacts light in the spirit. A fusion then takes place like nuclear particles colliding at very high speeds, producing a nuclear fusion.

When a nuclear bomb is dropped, the explosion sends smoke, like a mushroom high up into the sky. Likewise, when light from the Word meets the spirit, a laser type of light beam shoots up to the throne of God, from within the spirit of man. This light, then meets the Father of Lights (Jas. 1:17). From God then flows out light back to our spirit, unfolding God's wisdom and knowledge in the Word (Jas. 3:17). This then, enables us to have an understanding and comprehension of the Word.

2. Flow of Four Rivers

Let's study this a little deeper. Light flows from God back to our spirit. It is written, that a pure and crystal clear river of life flows out from God's throne (Rev. 22:1). In Genesis 2:10-14 it is written that a river flowed from the midst of Eden, splitting into four heads. Likewise, the light that flows from God, falls like the Niagara Falls, into our spirit. From within us flows out rivers of water (Jn. 7:38). The river of life speaks of the Holy Spirit. In our study of the lampstand, we saw that the One, Holy Spirit is manifested in seven, likewise this one river of life splits into four heads of rivers.

The four rivers, as based on Isaiah 11:2, are:

1. *Spirit of the Lord*

2. *Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding*

3. *Spirit of Counsel and Might*

4. *Spirit of Knowledge and the Fear of God*

The seven Spirits of God blend into four rivers and flow to illumine and

enlighten the spirit of man.

Flow in Four Levels

These four rivers flow at four levels. Just like in a reservoir where water is stored, water is released by the opening of the dam at smaller levels each time. If the dam were completely opened, the full rushing flow of the waters will cause destruction. Likewise, God releases His Rivers of Wisdom, Knowledge, and Might to flow at levels in accordance to the spiritual receptivity of each believer. Let us examine the scripture for these four levels.

> ***EZEKIEL 47:3-5***
> *3 And when the man went out to the east with the line in his hand, he measured one thousand cubits, and he brought me through the waters; the water came up to my ankles.*
> *4 Again he measured one thousand and brought me through the waters; the water came up to my knees. Again he measured one thousand and brought me through; the water came up to my waist.*
> *5 Again he measured one thousand, and it was a river that I could not cross; for the water was too deep, water in which one must swim, a river that could not be crossed.*

The four levels as outlined in this scripture are:

i. Ankle level

ii. Knee level

iii. Waist level

iv. Deep swim level

These four rivers of revelation of the Word of God that flow at four levels manifest differently and diversely at each level (1 Cor. 12:6). Let us examine

some of the manifestations that take place at each level.

i. Ankle level = Inspiration

> ***JOB 32:8***
> *8 But there is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty gives him understanding.*

This is the first and foremost manifestation at the ankle level. Since every Word of God has been given to man by inspiration (2 Tim. 3:16), even now that is how illumination from the Word comes to our mind. As we are reading or meditating the scriptures, suddenly like a flash of lightning, understanding just blossoms in our mind concerning the Word.

ii. Knee level = Holy Spirit teaches

> ***1 JOHN 2:27***
> *27 But the anointing which you have received from Him abides in you, and you do not need that anyone teach you; but as the same anointing teaches you concerning all things, and is true, and is not lie, and just as it has taught you, you will abide in Him*

When the river begins to flow at the knee level, the Holy Spirit Himself will teach us. Through His still small voice (1 Kg. 19:12) the Holy Spirit will teach us revelations from the Word (Jn. 14:26). It has been my experience too, that whenever I do not understand the meaning of any Word of God, I would just say, *'Dear Holy Spirit, I don't understand this scripture. Please teach and explain it to me.'* I would then hear the delicate whispering voice of the Holy Spirit, from deep within me, explaining in simple manner the richness in the scriptures. The apostle Paul, too, claims that he was taught the scriptures by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 2:13; Eph. 3:5).

iii. Waist level - Angels bring revelations

DANIEL 8:15,16

15 Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.
16 And I heard a man's voice between the banks of the Ulai, who called, and said, Gabriel, make this man understand the vision.

When we stand waist deep in a river, we can feel the pull and push of the currents in the waters. Likewise, when the river of revelation flows at waist level, the anointing of understanding flows at a higher level where angels may manifest, as permitted by God, to bring illumination, understanding and revelation on the Word.

The prophet Daniel received the Word of God in a vision, and as he was meditating and seeking the interpretation, an angel came to him, to explain the scriptures (Dan. 7:15,16). One morning in February, 1985, I was meditating the Word of God, in the Book of Revelation. To most Christians, the book of Revelation is a mind-boggling puzzle and I was no stranger to that state. I then prayed asking God to teach me. As I was still praying, I saw an angel standing in front of me and he said, *'I have been sent by God, to give you understanding and interpretation concerning the scripture of which you are reading'* (Dan. 9:21,22). He then very clearly gave me an interpretation that I could easily understand. Ever since then, occasionally, as God deems necessary, these angels have come to give me understanding in the Word.

The prophet Zechariah too, had often had visitations from angels, sent by God, to explain and interpret the scriptures (Zech. 1:9,19; 6:5). The apostle John too, received the Word of endtime revelations from angels who gave him the interpretations (Rev. 17:7-18).

iv. Deep swim level - the Lord Jesus teaches

LUKE 24:15,27

15 So it was, while they conversed and reasoned, that Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

> *27 And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, He expounded to them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself.*

When we go to swim, we are in the water and the waters surround and encompass us. Likewise at this very high and deep level, during meditation, we are allowing the Word of God to abide and dwell in us richly (Jn. 15:7; Col. 3:16). When we do that, then at times the Lord Himself manifests to teach (Jn. 14:21).

Once in June 1985, I was deeply meditating the scriptures, when I saw the Lord Jesus walk towards me. He came very near by my side, and asked. *'Do you understand what you are reading?'* When I answered him in the negative and humbly implored Him to teach me, like a loving father, with love and tenderness, the Lord Jesus taught the deep things in the Word in simple parables, for my mind to understand the scriptures (Lk. 24:45).

The apostle Paul too, with all meekness, claims that he was always taught by the Lord Jesus Himself (1 Cor. 11:23; 15:3; Gal. 1:12; Eph. 3:3). When we humble ourselves as a little child to seek knowledge from Him, He will come and teach us (Isa. 28:9; Mt. 11:25).

When we reach the river where we are swimming at a deep level, it cannot be assumed that the Lord Jesus will always manifest. Since, our whole body is now submerged in the water, from ankle to knee and to waist, as God wills in whatever manner, revelation and illumination from the Word will be manifested for our understanding. ***But it should never be ruled out that the Holy Spirit Himself is the source of all inspiration and manifestation because the waters represent the Holy Spirit (Jn. 7:38,39).*** The Holy Spirit is the centre shaft in the lampstand. It was for this reason that God commanded Moses to place the lampstand and the table of showbread side by side in the holy place (Ex. 26:35; Heb. 9:2).

3. Spiritual Nourishment

There was once an elderly couple who had no means of financial support

except a weekly gift of money from a certain man in their church. One Sunday, the church scheduled a special meeting in the afternoon. The couple's benefactor, who lived quite far away, wanted to remain for the afternoon service. So he said to the couple, *'Would you mind if I joined you for lunch after the morning service?'* Immediately the couple thought of the half loaf of stale bread, a bit of butter and some cheese that was the entire contents of their cupboard.

As they were wondering how this man could dine with them, he interrupted their worry-filled thoughts by saying, **'I have brought a basket of things with me and there will be plenty for the three of us.'** At the couple's cottage, he unpacked the basket and soon they had a feast of fried chicken, sliced ham, homemade bread and many other goodies. The man not only came to dine with them, but also brought all that was needed for a feast. Likewise, it is written that man should not live by bread alone but by every Word that comes forth from God (Mt. 4:4; Deu. 8:3). So, when we meditate the Word of God, the Lord Jesus manifests to dine with us, bringing with Him all the food necessary for a feast (Lk. 24:29,30; Jn. 20:9,12,13; Rev. 3:20; Ex. 24:10,11).

Let us examine the scriptures on this in John 6:51,53-56.

> ***JOHN 6:51,53-56 (Amplified)***
> *51 1 [Myself] am this Living Bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live forever; and also the Bread that I shall give for the life of the world is My flesh (body).*
> *53 And Jesus said to them, I assure you most solemnly I tell you, you cannot have any life in you unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood [unless you appropriate His life and the saving merit of His blood].*
> *54 He who feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood has (possesses now) eternal life, and I will raise him up [from the dead] on the last day.*
> *55 For My flesh is true and genuine food, and My blood is true and genuine drink.*
> *56 He who feeds on My flesh and drinks My blood dwells*

continually in Me, and I [in like manner dwell continually] in him.

The Lord Jesus said that if we partook of His flesh and blood, we are abiding in Him (v.56). This same concept is revealed in John 15:7, **'If you live in Me [abide vitally united to Me] and My Words remain in you and continue to live in your hearts, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you' (Amplified).** The partaking of the flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus is through the meditation of the Word of God. How is this possible? The Lord Jesus said in John 6:63 that, **'It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The Words that I speak to you are spirit and they are life.'** This is the mystery relationship between flesh and blood with spirit and life.

Let me unveil this beautiful truth which is enshrouded in mystery.

i) Spirit = Flesh

It is written that, the Lord God, is the God of the spirits of all flesh (Num. 16:22) and that God pours forth His Spirit upon all flesh (Joel 2:28). So, we can see a relationship here between the Spirit and flesh. When we meditate the Word, we are receiving the spiritness of the Word which becomes like flesh to our spirit-man.

ii) Life = Blood

The Lord Jesus said that if anyone partakes of His blood, that person dwells in Him (Jn. 6:56). The Bible says that life is in the blood (Lev. 17:11). Here too, we can see a relationship between life and blood.

We can therefore conclude that the Spirit and life that is in the Word is the flesh and blood that the Lord Jesus was referring to. Let us meditate a little deeper on this. It is written that, the Lord Jesus eternally existed as the Word - as Spirit and Life (Jn. l:1,2,4; Rom. 8:9; 1 Pe. 1:11). The Word, then became flesh and blood (Jn. 1:14; Lk. 24:39). Therefore when we meditate the Word, as we partake the Word, it becomes flesh and blood as spiritual nourishment to our spirit man.

The continuous partaking of the Word cleanses and purifies us (Ps. 119:9; 1 Jn. 1:7), which will then enable us to clearly see the similitude of the Lord Jesus (Jn. 14:21). The Lord Jesus said that **'He is the living bread** (Jn. 6:32-35,48). The word, **'bread'** in Greek is *'artos'* which means ***'loaf' (of wheat)'.*** In Leviticus 24:5, it is written that out of the fine flour, twelve cakes were to be made. Likewise, when in meditation of the Word, the Lord Jesus manifests, as He wills, to give us illumination, understanding and revelation, like twelve cakes, from Himself, the Living Bread.

Once during a time of meditation, the Word of the Lord came to me saying *'when a person meditates the Word of God, his spirit man becomes progressively transformed with glory like the garden in Eden. Just as God communed with Adam face to face, so will the Lord manifest to be clearly seen, making Himself real to he who meditates the Word and practises it'* (Jn. 14:21).

Chapter 9 - Prayer of Intercession — Altar of Incense

EXODUS 30:1-10, 34-38

1 “You shall make an altar to burn incense on; you shall make it of acacia wood.

2 “A cubit shall be its length and a cubit its width - it shall be square - and two cubits shall be its height. Its horns shall be of one piece with it.

3 “And you shall overlay its top its sides all around, and its horns with pure gold; and you shall make for it a molding of gold all around.

4 “Two gold rings you shall make for it, under the molding on both its sides. You shall place them on its two sides and they will be holders for the poles with which to bear it.

5 “You shall make the poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold.

6 “And you shall put it before the veil that is before the ark of the Testimony, before the mercy seat that is over the Testimony, where I will meet with you.

7 “Aaron shall burn on it sweet incense every morning; when he tends the lamps, he shall burn incense on it.

8 “And when Aaron lights the lamps at twilight, he shall burn incense on it, a perpetual incense before the Lord throughout your generations.

9 “You shall not offer strange incense on it, or a burnt offering, or a grain offering; nor shall you pour a drink offering on it.

10 “And Aaron shall make atonement upon its horns once a year with the blood of the sin offering of atonement; once a year he shall make atonement upon it throughout your generations. It is most holy to the Lord.”

34 And the Lord said to Moses: "Take sweet spices, stacte and onycha and galbanum, and pure frankincense with these sweet spices; there shall be equal amounts of each.
35 "You shall make of these an incense, a compound according to the art of the perfumer, salted, pure and holy.
36 "And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put some of it before the Testimony in the tab ernacle of meeting where I will meet with you. It shall be most holy to you.
37 "But as for the incense which you shall make, you shall not make any for yourselves, according to its composition. It shall be to you holy for the Lord.
38 "Whoever makes any like it, to smell it, he shall be cut off from his people."

The Meaning

The **Altar of Incense** represents the **Prayer of Intercession**. Among all the furnitures in the tabernacle, this is the smallest. Many times it is not how much we pray, but the reality of prayer that flows out of the heart that matters most. Not just vain repetitions (Mt. 6:7), but fervency that avails much (Jas. 5:16).

The **smallness** speaks of ***humility***. When we come before God's presence to intercede, there must be humility in our heart. The high and lofty God, dwells only with those who are lowly and humble in the heart (Isa. 57:15). The smallness also speaks of humbling oneself, in kneeling, or prostrating before God, to take hold of Him in intercession.

The Design

a. The altar was made of acacia wood and overlaid with pure gold.

In this furniture, **acacia wood** speaks of ***earthlines w***hile **pure gold** speaks of ***heavenliness.*** The Lord Jesus said in Matthew 18:18, ***'... whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.'*** Whatever we pray on earth, the Lord Jesus, who ever lives to make

intercessions for us (Heb. 7:25), takes it up and goes before the presence of the Father God to intercede for us in the heavenlies (Rom. 8:34).

Once in 1991, I was interceding for many people who had written to me for prayers. As I knelt down to pray, I noticed that someone was turning the door knob to come in. When the door opened, I beheld the similitude of the Lord Jesus coming towards me. The Lord Jesus came near, kneeling beside me, said, *'Son, let us pray together for all these needs.'*

Since I live among the Nepalese people in Kalimpong, India, most of the prayer requests are written in the Nepali language. Usually, my staff would translate the requests into English before I pray. That particular day, before my staff could translate them, I felt the inner nudging of the Holy Spirit to go and pray. So, I told the Lord, *'Lord, all these prayers are not translated yet and I do not know what the requests for prayer were.'*

The Lord Jesus, smiling at me said, '*Son, lay your hands on the prayer-requests and let's pray.'* I obeyed and laid my hands on it. The Lord Jesus then placed His hand on top of mine, looked up to heaven and began to pray. He prayed very fervently and tears were flowing from His eyes like rivers (Heb. 5:7). Since I did not know what those requests were, I just began to intercede in the Spirit.

As we were thus praying, suddenly in a vision, I found myself standing in heaven before the throne of God. The Lord Jesus was kneeling down before the altar of incense in heaven (Rev. 9:13). God's presence was manifested like a thick Cloud behind the altar. The Lord Jesus held the horns and interceded with much tears. He kept on praying until God answered. Then, God's voice thundered majestically, *'It is done. That prayer request is granted.'* The Lord Jesus then turned to me and told me to write to the person who wrote the request, that the prayer was heard and a few other things.

Whatever we intercede for on earth does not go wasted or is not heard. The Lord Jesus receives it in heaven and intercedes for us (Heb. 9:24).

b. It dimension is one cubit square and height is two cubits.

i. The **length and width** of one cubit square speaks of how ***anyone can come boldly before God's throne*** (Heb. 4:16), because He is not a respecter of persons (Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Col. 3:25).

ii. **Two,** speaks of the ***Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit.*** To reach the high and holy God, we can only come to the Father through the Lord Jesus (Jn. 14:6) with His blood (Heb. 10:19; 9:24) and by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:18).

c. Crown set to prevent fire from falling.

A rim-like crown was made of gold and put around the altar. This was to prevent the fire from the incense from falling on the ground. This rim keeps all the incense fires within and intact. ***This signifies that our prayers will not fall to the ground unheard or unanswered.*** There are two spiritual truths to the rim.

i. The Holy Spirit makes sure your prayers do not fall to the ground.

> ***ROMANS 8:26***
> *26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.*

Sometimes, believers feel that their prayers may not be heard because they do not know how or what to pray. It was for this reason that the Word says that the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness, by inspiring us with an unction to pray in the Spirit according to the will of God (Rom. 8:27; 1 Jn. 2:20).

I once heard the spiritual experience of a very saintly man of God in India. He was once taken up to heaven, like the apostle Paul (2 Cor. 12:2-4). He had been praying very ardently and fervently for the Gifts of the Spirit. So, when he was in heaven, standing before the presence of the Lord Jesus, he began to implore for the Gifts.

The Lord Jesus seated on His throne just patiently listened without saying a word. He went on asking, until he felt exhausted, not knowing what else to say.

Suddenly he heard a Voice from behind him, pleading with the Lord on his behalf. He turned around to see who it was, but found none. He then perceived in his spirit that it was the Holy Spirit who was standing behind him.

The Holy Spirit interceded for this man of God before the Lord by saying, *'Lord Jesus, you said in your Word, that the harvest is plenty but the labourers are few. This young man is willing to work for You. He is asking the Gifts only for Your work. So, why not use him.'* The Lord Jesus with a pleasing smile at the Holy Spirit's intercession, looked at him with great love. From that day onwards the Gifts of the Holy Spirit began to manifest mightily in his life.

The Holy Spirit makes sure our prayers do not fail.

ii. Angels make sure our prayers do not fall to the ground.

> ***REVELATION 8:3,4***
> *3 Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.*
> *4 And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel's hand.*

Angels, too, carry our prayers and present it before God's throne. Angels carry our prayers to God and bring down answers to prayers from God (Lk. 1:11-13; Acts 10:2-4). They are continually ascending and descending before God, waiting on our intercessions (Gen. 28:12).

I was in Johannesburg, South Africa in January 1995. During those days, I constantly had visitations from angels of God. At one particular time, a very strong and mighty angel visited me and said, *'I am the chief prince of South Africa'* (Dan. 10:13; 12:1). He then went on to tell me in vivid detail, the role that the angels of God played in the recent general election in South Africa, in answer to the prayers of the saints of God. He also said that, *'Angels are always waiting to bring the prayers of the saints of God and then bring them answers from God'* (Heb. 1:13,14).

When I shared this to the saints of Johannesburg that evening in a public meeting, the pastor who organised my meetings told me another interesting story. Some time before the election, a policeman had a visitation from an angel. The angel told him, *'Tell the people to pray for the elections.'* He was interviewed on radio and television about this angelic visitation. The whole nation prayed. Angels carried all their prayers before God's throne. The result was that God sent a mighty deliverance, preventing a bloodbath during the elections.

The angels and elders in heaven carefully place at the feet of the Lord Jesus, all of our prayers of intercessions, making absolutely sure that none of them fall to the ground unheard or unanswered (Rev. 5:8; 8:5).

d. Four Horns on the altar

The **four horns** on the altar of incense speak of two things:

i The ***four corners of the earth*** (Rev. 7:1). It simply signifies that there are no geographical boundaries in prayer. We can intercede for anyone from anywhere on earth because God is near and far (Jer. 23:23).

ii The ***four natures of God*** to which we must appeal in intercession.

> ***EXODUS 34:6***
> *6 And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abounding in goodness and truth.*

The Lord God in revealing His Name to Moses, had also unveiled His character of love (1 Jn. 4:8). The four natures of God are: *Merciful, Gracious, Long-Suffering and Abounding in Goodness and Truth.*

Whenever I intercede for others, I would always appeal to these four natures and plead with God. Nehemiah and David successfully interceded unto God by appealing to these four natures (Neh. 9:17; Ps. 86:15). When we intercede, appealing unto these four natures of God, the Lord's heart is touched and He will

melt like wax with compassion towards us (Ex. 32:11-14).

e. Four Rings on the side of the altar

There were four rings placed on the side of the altar. Two pole staves were inserted into the rings and the altar of incense was then carried from place to place. The **four rings** speak of ***the four attributes of God***: *Justice, Holiness, Grace and Truth.* The **two staves** speak of ***lifting and magnifying God in prayer*** (Ps. 141:2).

For example, in my intercessory prayers, I would intercede something like this: '*Lord, I lift up so-and-so before your presence. Lord he has this problem. Lord he unknowingly made a mistake. You are a God of Justice, and holiness is like a cloak around You. But, Lord, your Word says that you are full of compassion, slow to anger, very, very gracious and always abounding in goodness and truth. How can you not, Lord, bless this person? Lord, remember when you were so full of compassion, You did not destroy the Israelites. Likewise, now bless abundantly, Lord.'* The prophet Moses too, similarly prayed like that.

> ***NUMBERS 14:17-19***
> *17 'And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have spoken, saying*
> *18 The Lord is longsuffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.'*
> *19 'Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.'*

Therefore, when we intercede for others, we must lift up and magnify God's attributes and then plead by appealing to His natures, which then would certainly move God with compassion.

f. Incense

God had instructed Moses to take of equal weight, three ingredients of spices stacte, onycha, galbanum and mix them with pure frankincense, to make incense for the altar. Let's examine their spiritual application.

i. **Same Weight** speaks of the ***Oneness, of the spirit, soul, and body with the Holy Spirit.***

ii **Stacte** speaks of ***Compassion*** (Mt. 9:36).

Onycha speaks of ***Persistence*** (Lk. 18:1).

Galbanum speaks of ***Strong Crying with Tears*** (Heb. 5:7).

Pure Frankincense speaks of ***Groanings of the Holy Spirit*** (Rom. 8:26).

These ingredients are most vital for intercession, without which the prayer of intercession then becomes merely a prayer of supplications. It is only through the Holy Spirit that we can pray with compassion and persistently with tears.

The Art Of Intercession

The prayer of intercession is always for others, like friends, family members, city, nation etc. Sometimes, results seem slow because, when we intercede for others, it involves the sovereignty of their individual wills. God will never force Himself through, over-riding each individual's will. We cannot force others' wills through praying. That then becomes psychic and manipulative. But when we intercede for others, it will enable them to surrender their will to God, who will then convict them (Jn. 16:8-11).

Some years ago, a dear friend of mine fell in love with a non-Christian girl. I counselled my friend that this friendship with an unbeliever is unscriptural and against God's standards (2 Cor. 6:14). I advised him to end this friendship. Since he was madly in love with her, he told me that he would fast and pray for her.

While I was in Tibet, I was continually interceding for this friend. I did not pray that God would cut off the relationship. That would be psychic-manipulation because that's what I thought was best and wanted. Rather, I prayed that God would open the eyes of his understanding and that he would yield his will to God. Two weeks later, when I met him, he told me that he had broken off the friendship. He told me that he felt a deep conviction in his spirit that the relationship was wrong.

Prayer always works. As I continually interceded for him, his heart became sensitive towards the Holy Spirit's convictions.

What is Intercession?

The word 'intercession' is very loosely used by most believers today. Intercession is not just two or three believers gathering to pray for any particular need or person. It is something far deeper and more intense than ordinary praying.

Let us examine the original Greek and Hebrew words used in the Bible for the word, ***'intercession.'***

1. Hebrew, *'paga'* means, ***'to come and fall upon.'***

2. Greek, *'huperentugchano'* means, ***'to meet with in behalf of one.'***

Intercession, then is ***the act of meeting with God by falling upon Him, on behalf of another.*** We can see this act of intercession in the Bible by Moses and Aaron (Num. 16:45-48; 20:6) and Samuel (Jer. 15:1).

The English word **'intercession'** is derived from two Latin words. *'Inter'* meaning ***'between'*** and *'cedere'* meaning ***'to go'*** which would then ***mean to go between or to stand in the gap.*** It says in the scriptures, ***'So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall, and stand in the gap before Me on behalf of the land, that I should not destroy it; but I found no one'*** (Ezek. 22:30; 13:5).

Ingredients of Intercession

There are three ingredients that comprise the prayer of intercession.

1. Ability to Identify

> ***HEBREWS 4:15***
> *15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weak-nesses, but was in all points tempted as we are yet without sin.*

The many experiences that the Lord Jesus went through during His earthly life made Him perfectly identify with that which we go through. *An intercessor should be able to identify with another person's suffering as his own. The ability to identify with another person's sufferings as our own can come only through compassion.*

What is compassion? To grasp a good foundational knowledge of compassion, let us examine its originality in the Hebrew and Greek languages.

1. Hebrew, '*rachamim*' means ***'mercies, tender compassion, womb-feelings of pity.'***

2. Greek, '*eleeo'* means ***'to show mildness, kindness.'***

3. Greek, '*sumpatheo'* means ***'to suffer with another)' or 'to feel with.'***

4. Greek, '*splanchnizomai'* means, '***to have the bowels yearning.***' (The Webster dictionary defines 'bowels' as *'the innermost part of the body, regarded as the source of pity, tenderness-tender emotions).'*

Compassion can therefore be defined as ***a yearning from the innermost, feeling with the sufferings of another by showing acts of merciful kindness***. Compassion is also the sensory perception of love.

God has abundantly blessed India with a very saintly man of God, Dr DGS Dhinakaran. One day in 1962, he had a visitation from the Lord Jesus. He said that there was such a compassion emanating from the face of the Lord Jesus, similar to a mother looking at her beloved child with tender loving affection. Then the Lord told him that he was removing his stony heart and granting him His compassion. Ever since then, Dr Dhinakaran too is moved with compassion, and perfectly identifies with the suffering people for whom he intercedes.

A great change came upon my ministry and I in 1985 when the Lord Jesus filled me with His compassion. From then on, I was able to identify exactly with the sufferings, pains and sorrows of others, enabling me to pray for others with great compassion. When we are moved and pray with compassion, amazing answers to prayers result.

Once, I was ministering at a Youth Conference in India in 1990. Half-way while preaching, I felt the Spirit of compassion rise up in me like waves. It flowed out of me, like ocean waves towards a young girl seated on the first row. These waves hit her and came rolling back to me. When those waves of compassion came upon me, I felt exactly the same pain as her broken heart. It is only the compassion of our Lord Jesus that can enable us to perfectly identify with the pains, agony and sorrow of the one for whom we are interceding.

2. Persistency

> ***1 THESSALONIANS 5:17 (Amp)***
> *17 Be unceasing in prayer [praying perseveringly].*

Most of the times in intercession, the desired results do not manifest instantly or even within a short space of time. We must persistently persevere in intercession.

What is persistence? The Webster dictionary defines **'persistence'** as**, *'to refuse to give up', 'continue firmly or steadily, 'to prevail' 'stubborn or enduring continuance' and 'tenacity-holding firmly.'*** Let us examine an example in the scriptures for these definitions. It is written, **'Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume**

them. And I will make of you a great nation.' (Ex. 32:10). For God to say, ***'Let Me alone,'*** it must mean that Moses was holding on to God firmly and refusing to give up. He prevailed upon God firmly for Israel's forgiveness, until God **'relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people'** (Ex. 32:14).

It is this kind of persistence, that of not letting go of God until the prayer is answered. Consider a bull-dog. When it bites something or somebody, it will not let go, until the things come with its mouth. Likewise, we must have Spirit-anointed 'stubbornness' and not let go until results are manifested.

The Lord Jesus had greatly emphasized being persistent through two beautiful parables.

> ***LUKE 11:5-8***
> *5 And He said to them, "which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, `Friend, lend me three loaves;*
> *6 'for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and Î have nothing to set before him';*
> *7 "and he will answer from within and say, `Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'?*
> *8 "I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.*
>
> ***LUKE 18:2-5***
> *2 saying, "There was in a certain city a judge who did not fear God nor regard man.*
> *3 "Now there was a widow in that city; and she come to him, saying, `Get justice for me from my adversary.'*
> *4 "And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, `Though I do not fear God nor regard man,*
> *5 yet because this widow troubles me I will avenge her, lest*

by her continual coming she weary me.'

The two phrases in these parables, ***'yet because of his persistence' and 'this widow troubles me ... by her continual coming'*** convey graphically the concept of persistence. In the KJV Bible, the word **'importunity'** is used for 'persistence' (v.8). That word means *'shameless persistence'* or in modern language, *'thick-skinned.'* The nagging persistence of a widow and the shameless persistence of a friend, was the key that the Lord Jesus highlighted for prevailing in intercessory prayers.

3. Travailing or Groaning in the Spirit

> ***ROMANS 8:26b (AMPLIFIED)***
> *26b but the Spirit Himself goes to meet our supplication and pleads in our behalf with unspeakable yearnings and groanings too deep for utterance.*
>
> ***GALATIANS 4:19***
> *19 My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you.*

Travailing in intercession with groanings is similar to a woman going through her labour pains at child-birth. This is the same meaning conveyed in the original languages: Hebrew, *'yalad'* meaning ***'to bear, bring forth'*** and Greek, *'odino'* meaning ***'to be in pain'***.

During the month of October '86, I was conducting meetings in Kalimpong, India. Once I was fasting and praying for three days for a Youth Rally. On the third day, all of a sudden, I felt that God had left me and that I had lost my salvation. Perplexed, I began to pray in tongues. As I progressed praying, I found myself travailing uncontrollably and groaning with tears flowing like rivers. For about seven hours, I was travailing and groaning. After that I felt God's presence come back and the joy of salvation restored. I then perceived in my spirit that I had been interceding for somebody. During the Rally, every young unbeliever got saved and everyone who was not filled in the Spirit got gloriously baptised with the Holy Spirit.

Travailing and groaning also requires tremendous labour and great expenditure of energy. When the Israelites were warring against the Amalekites, it was the intercession of Moses, through the lifting of his hands that brought them victory. Because it required great expenditure of energy, Moses needed Aaron and Ur to uphold him (Ex. 17:12).

The greatest privilege in the ministry of intercession, is to carry the Lord Jesus' own burdens. As Simon, the Cyrene, was called to carry the personal cross of the Lord Jesus (Mt. 27:32; Mk. 15:21), likewise, the Lord Jesus will put His burdens on an intercessor's spirit to travail through on His behalf.

Once I saw a vision while interceding for Tibet. I saw a vast grassland. Nearby where I was standing was a tree and there some sheep were grazing. I saw the Lord Jesus walking up towards me. He had a shoulder-bag like the ones which most Indians carry. I saw the word, *'TIBET'* embroidered on the bag. After watching the sheep for some time, the Lord took the bag and gave it to me. Receiving it, I asked the Lord what it was. He answered, *'Son, I am giving to you, My own burden for Tibet.'* From that moment on, I sensed in me much compassion and a greater burden for the lost souls in Tibet.

Let me unveil a mystery in the life of the Lord Jesus that took place in Gethsemane, which speaks about the prayer of intercession.

> ***MATTHEW 26:37,38***
> *37 And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.*
> *38 Then He said to them, 'My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me.*
>
> ***MARK 14:35,36***
> *35 He went a little farther, and fell on the ground, and prayed that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him*
> *36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.*

MATTHEW 26:42,44

42 Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done."

44 So He left them, went away again and prayed the third time, saying the same words.

LUKE 22:43,44

43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him.

44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

In these scriptures, we see the Lord Jesus travailing and groaning in intercessory prayers. How can we know whether it was intercessory prayer and not just His own human cries? It is true that being the Son of Man, the Lord Jesus cried out His fears to the Father, but behold, I show you here a mystery that is related to intercessory prayer. Let us consider the following points.

i. The Lord Jesus was deeply distressed and exceeding sorrowful unto death and prayed to be spared from it.

For whose death was the Lord Jesus so sorrowful? His? No, for He had said that He is life (Jn. 5:26) and He has the power to lay it down and take it up (Jn. 10:18). It was for Man's death. He was tasting death for Man (Heb. 2:9). The Lord Jesus was perfectly identifying with the fears of death in Man. He was also identifying with the griefs and sorrows that Man carry (Isa. 53:3,4). It was compassion that compelled the Lord Jesus to identify with the sufferings of Man and plead, **'if it were possible the hour might pass.'**

ii. Again He prayed a second and third time.

He persisted in prayer and would not let God go. He was travailing, agonising

and groaning in prayer. He travailed in birth pains, as a woman in labour, to bring forth sons to glory (Isa. 53:11; Heb. 2:10; Jas. 1:18). The Lord Jesus was so deeply moved with sighings and yearning from the innermost of His being, with such a travailing that it released tremendous expenditure of energy, causing blood vessels to break resulting in sweat oozing out as great drops of blood.

iii. He carried the Father's burden.

The Lord Jesus did not come to this world on His own (Jn. 8:42) but because God so loved the world (Jn. 3:16) and was not willing that any should perish (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pe. 3:9), He carried the burden of the Father to reconcile the world to Himself (2 Cor. 5:18,19), by doing the will of the Father God (Heb. 10:7,9).

The Lord Jesus Christ was and is the perfect intercessor (Heb. 7:25) and through His life, has very beautifully and explicitly demonstrated the art of intercession.

Chapter 10 - Waiting On God — The Ark of The Covenant

EXODUS 25:10-22

10 And they shall make an ark of acacia wood; two and a half cubits shall be its length, a cubit and a half its width, and a cubit and a half its height.

11 “And you shall overlay it with pure gold, inside and out you shall overlay it, and shall make on it a molding of gold all around.

12 “You shall cast four rings of gold for it, and put them in its four corners: two rings shall be on one side, and two rings on the other side.

13 “And you shall make poles of acacia wood, and overlay them with gold.

14 “You shall put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark, that the ark may be carried by them.

15 “The poles shall be in the rings of the ark; they shall not be taken from it.

16 “And you shall put into the ark the Testimony which I will give you.

17 “You shall make a mercy seat of pure gold; two and a half cubits shall be its length and a cubit and a half its width.

18 “And you shall make two cherubim of gold; of hammered work you shall make them at the two ends of the mercy seat.

19 “Make one cherub at one end, and the other cherub at the other end; you shall make the cherubim at the two ends of it of one piece with the mercy seat,

20 “And the cherubim shall stretch out their wings above, covering the mercy seat with their wings, and they shall face one another; the faces of the cherubim shall be toward the mercy seat.

21 “You shall put the mercy seat on top of the ark, and in the ark you shall put the Testimony that I will give you.
22 “And there I will meet with you, and I will speak with you from above the mercy seat, from between the two cherubim which are on the ark of the Testimony, about everything which I will give you in commandment to the children of Israel.

The Meaning

The **Ark of Covenant** represents **Waiting on God**. God gave Moses the details of this furniture first before giving him the entire blueprint for the tabernacle. This signifies that whatever God does, He begins it from within first. When God speaks to us, He speaks to our spirit within and not to the mind. But, the mind later understands from the spirit that which God had spoken. When we stand before the ark of the covenant, waiting on God, we will experience an intimate face to face communion with God.

The Design

a. *The altar was made of acacia wood and over laid with pure gold.*

i. The ark was made of shittim, or acacia wood, which was commonly available in the wilderness. The **acacia wood** speaks of ***humility*.** Humility is the supreme character of the Christian life. Before the Lord Jesus was highly exalted and given a name above every other name, He humbled Himself like a servant (Phil. 2:6-11). Just as the acacia wood was commonly available, likewise, any ordinary believer, with a humble and meekful heart can come boldly and confidently before God’s throne (Heb. 4:16).

ii. The acacia wood was overlaid with pure gold within and without. **Pure gold** speaks of ***holiness.*** All the other five furnitures were overlaid with gold only on the outside. When we come and stand before God’s throne, there must be holiness within, in the spirit and cleanliness outside, in the flesh (2 Cor. 7:1; 1 Thes. 5:23). As we yield our life to the Holy Spirit, through His dwelling in and with us (Jn. 14:17), He sanctifies our spirit (Rom. 15:16) and cleanses every

filthiness of the flesh (Ti. 3:5).

b. *Let's examine the types and shadows in the size of the ark.*

1. The length of the ark was two and a half cubits, which when mathematically converted is 5/2.

5, speaks of the **Grace of God,** while ***2*** speaks of ***Heaven and Earth***. It is written that heaven and earth is full of the glory of God (Ps. 19:1; Isa. 6:3). God's grace is His Glory (Ex. 33:18,19; Ps. 84:11).

Consider the sunset. When the sun moves towards the western horizon, the sky is aflame with brilliant shades of pink, orange and red. Scientists tell us that sometimes, when the atmospheric conditions are just perfect, the last fading bit of the yellow-orange sun would suddenly change into a brilliant emerald green colour. The colour, yellow-orange signifies glory, while green signifies grace. How beautifully is this truth revealed in nature?

When the glory of God passed by Moses, it was His grace that preceded the announcement of God's Name (Ex. 34:5-8). Moses spoke of grace after seeing God's glory (Ex. 34:9). Likewise, ***when we wait on God, our spirit and body will be filled with the grace and glory of God.***

2. *It's breadth or width was a cubit and a half, which is 3/2.* Based on Ephesian 1:18,19:

> ***EPHESIANS 1:18,19***
> *18 the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,*
> *19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe according to the working of His mighty power*

i. **3** speaks of, ***Hope of your Calling, Riches of His Glory; Greatness of His Power*** (v.18,19).

ii. **2** speaks of, Spirit**,** eyes of understanding being enlightened; Soul**,** that you may know [mind's perception of spiritual things] (v.18).

Therefore, ***when we wait on God, the eyes of our understanding are enlightened for us to know, the hope to which God has called, of how rich is His glorious inheritance in the saints and of the greatness of His power which is unlimited.***

3. *It's height was a cubit and a half, which is 3/2.* Based on John 14:21,23:

> ***JOHN 14:21,23***
> *21 He who has My commamdments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.*
> *23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.*

i. **2** speaks of, ***God the Father and the Lord Jesus loving us intimately*** (v.21). It also speaks of a reciprocal flow of affectionate love between us and God.

ii. **3** speaks of, ***The Father and the Son through the Holy Spirit making an abode in us*** (v.23).

There was once a very saintly man of God, who lived in India, known as the Apostle of the Bleeding Feet. One day, he went to the forest in the Himalayas to pray, meditate and wait on God. He poured out his love for God in prayer. After a season, when he arose from crying out his heart in prayer, he beheld the Lord Jesus standing in front of him, in all splendour, majesty and glory.

Lighting - like rays of life-giving love poured from the Lord Jesus, with such power that they entered and bathed his soul. Then the Lord opened the inner chamber of his heart with the key of the Lord's love and filled it with His presence. From that instant, he could look at the Lord standing beside him and inside him at the same time. This is the experience of that mystery where the

Lord Jesus said that he was in heaven at the same time as when He was on earth (Jn. 3:13).

This experience is biblically written as, **'Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me'** (Rev. 3:20). I used to think that this scripture was meant for unbelievers, until the moment of this writing, when the Holy Spirit illumined me otherwise. The word **'come'** in this scripture in the Greek is, *'eiserchomai'* which means, ***'to come in or toward.'*** The Lord Jesus will come towards us that we may see His manifestation and abide in us.

Then the Lord Jesus and the Father will come to dwell and make their abode in us. The word, **'abode'** in Greek is *'mone'* which means, ***'home, mansion, permanent place'.*** The saint who had the above-mentioned experience said that, *'man's heart is the very throne and citadel of God, and when He enters there to abide, heaven begins.'* God only dwells in love (1 Jn. 4:12,16).

Therefore, ***when we wait on God, the Father and the Son will love us with an intimate-bonding love, which causes them to come and dwell with us, through the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:22).*** What a privilege for waiting on God!

c. *Gold Crown Border*

On the top of the ark, there was a gold crown, like a border around it. A king wears a gold crown, when seated on the throne of his majesty and power. He sits confidently by virtue of his power and authority. I know of a servant of God who was once taken up to heaven. In heaven, he stood before the Lord Jesus at His throne. He was made to understand that there was such an awesome power that flows from the throne, that all the Lord Jesus needed to do was just sit on it and reign. Likewise, **when we wait on God seated together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, *He would grant that we, out of the rich treasury of His glory, be strengthened and reinforced with His mighty power in our inner man*** (Eph. 3:16, Amplified; Isa. 30:15; Eph. 2:6; 1:20).

d. *Four Rings with Two Staves*

There were four rings made on the ark for carrying it around. These **four rings** speak of the ***comprehension of the love of God in the four realms - breadth, length, height and depth*** (Eph. 3:17-19). Man lives in three dimensions, but God is on the fourth - the Spirit realm. The comprehension of the things of God in the Spirit, cannot be freely expressed in writing. Many deep things of God are too sacred to write (Rev. 10:3,4).

But when any believer waits on God, through the Holy Spirit, God may reveal as He wills, of heavenly mysteries according to our spiritual maturity and level of comprehension.

The **staves** speak of ***the existence in two realms - Spirit and natural.*** When we wait on God, we are joined, united with the Lord and become one spirit with Him (1 Cor. 6:17). The scriptures also say that we are seated together with Christ in the heavenlies (Eph. 2:6). Though we are still alive in this world, yet IN CHRIST, are seated with Him in the heavenlies. Concerning the Lord Jesus too, it is written that, **'No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven'** (Jn. 3:13).

This is a deep mystery, of which I am very much hesitant to write, because while attempting to explain the deep things of God, it can be miscommunicated and a whole strand of wrong teaching can be brought forth. But I will briefly share of an experience that will explain the reality of the above fact.

At a prayer meeting conducted at Tirunelveli, South India in 1983, a very godly brother was taken in the Spirit to heaven. About half-an-hour later, he came back. When he stood up, he looked at another godly man and me and just stared at us. He then said, *'I saw both of you in heaven.'* That stunned me. I was fully conscious during the same time of prayer and knew that I was not caught up to heaven at the same time as when he was caught up. But because of his integrity, I could not doubt his statement. Nevertheless, I did not fully understand what it meant. Years later, once the Lord had taught and showed me the things in the Spirit, only then did I call to remembrance this incident and understood its meaning. When you live and walk close to God, the Spirit realm becomes like a *'second-home.'* He that is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with Him. This is the result of progressively waiting on God.

e. *The Mercy Seat*

Actually it is more of a lid than a seat. It's a lid that covers the ark which is like a box. It could not be a seat because the priestly sacrifices were an on-going activity (Heb. 10:11). But after the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus, the mercy seat became a real seat, because, after the offering of Himself, He forever sat down at the right Hand of God (Heb. 10:12). The **mercy seat**, then speaks of ***the finished work of the Lord Jesus.***

Jesus Christ is the propitiation for our sins (Rom. 3.25; 1 Jn. 2.2). The word, **'propitation'** in Greek is *'hilasmos'* meaning ***'atonement'*** and the word **'mercy'** (seat) in Hebrew is *'kaphar'* meaning ***'atonement.' The mercy seat then speaks of the Lord Jesus' finished work of propitiation for our sins*** (Rom. 3:25; 1 Jn. 4:10).

The high priest when he comes into the most holy place before the shekinah glory of God, could not come without the offering of blood sacrifice. Likewise only through the Lord Jesus can we be introduced or come before the Father God (Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22).

Vision of God the Father

If we stand beside a pool of water, our image will be reflected in the pool (Prov. 27:19). And if another person too comes and stands on the opposite side of this small pool, both of them can look at each other's image as is reflected in the pool. Likewise, when we are waiting on God, it is like coming before the throne of Grace, which is the throne of God the Father. Like the high priest with the blood in his hands, coming before the ark, we are coming before the holy of holiest of the throne of God the Father, by the blood of the Lord Jesus (Heb. 10:19).

Once while praying, in a vision I was privileged by the grace of God to look into heaven. I saw the Lord Jesus coming before the throne of the Father to present His blood as a sin-offering (Jn. 20:17; Heb. 9:12,24). The Lord Jesus' head was bowed in reverence and His hands full of blood was stretched over the mercy seat. As I looked at the blood in the Lord's hand, I perceived in a split

nanosecond, the image of the Father God which was reflected in the blood.

Likewise, when we are waiting on God, it is like coming before the holy of holiest of the throne of God. As we stretch out the hands of faith with the blood of the Lord Jesus, all that we need to do to behold the glory of God is to simply look at the blood of the Lord Jesus. The blood of the Lord Jesus will then reflect the Image of God the Father.

The prophet Moses, had a great desire to see the fullness of the glory of the Almighty God. But the Lord God told him, *'You cannot see Me and live. But stand on the rock. I will pass by. I will send My grace before Me which would prevent you from getting consumed. You will get a glimpse of Me and before you could see Me, you will only see My back'* (Ex. 33:18-23).

Though God's grace enabled Moses to see a little glimpse of just the back of God, it did not enable him to see God's face. But, the Lord Jesus, who is the personification of Grace (Jn. 1:16,17), had sealed the grace with His own blood (Heb. 9:16-23). He is there, before the Father's presence for us (Heb. 9:24). The Lord Jesus is the express image of the Person and the brightness of God's glory (2 Cor. 4:6; Heb. 1:3), which made Him to boldly claim that if anyone saw Him, that is equivalent to seeing the Father God (Jn. 12:45; 14:9). Therefore, coming before the throne of Grace, with our hands by faith holding the blood of the Lord Jesus, is as waiting on God beholding by faith the blood of Jesus. There is life in the blood (Lev. 17:11; Gen. 9:4). The Lord Jesus has frequently said that the Father is in Him and that He is in the Father (Jn. 10:30,38; 17:21; 1 Jn. 5:7).

Therefore, when the Lord Jesus stands before the ark with His blood, His image - which is the express image of God the Father (Heb. 1:3) is reflected in the blood. Thus, a person who waits on God abides in Christ and being in Christ, is then able to behold the Father God. When we abide in Christ and His Word abides in us (Jn. 15:7), the Word would shield us from the awesome unapproachable glory of the Father God, enabling us to behold the King in His beauty (Isa. 33:17).

I know of a precious friend in Chennai, India, who walks and talks with God like Enoch and Moses. Once, he was caught up in the Spirit to heaven (2 Cor.

12:2). He stood before the throne of the Lord Jesus. The Lord told him, *'Come, I will show you My Father'* (Lk. 10:22; Jn. 16:25). The Lord Jesus took him to a secluded place, which seemed to be like a snow-covered mountain. That whole mountain region seemed to be covered with a marvellous light, unto which nobody could approach (Dan. 2:22; 1 Tim. 6:16) in which midst the Father God dwelt (Dan. 7:9). The Lord Jesus then told him, *'I will show you the Glory of My Father. But you can only see Him for one split-second!'* At that word, that marvellous light faded for just one split second and He saw God face to face (Ex. 24:10,11). When he saw God, he comprehended in all its beauty the mystery of the scriptures, where it is written that, God is 'I AM THAT I AM – the Unsearchable' (Ex. 3:14), who inhabits eternity (Isa. 57:15).

Conditions for seeing God the Father

But there is a condition for the privilege to see God the Father. In March of 1993, I was fasting and praying in Kalimpong, India. One day, in a vision I saw into heaven. I saw a temple set in heaven (Rev. 15:5). It had ivory pillars. From inside, I saw lightning, thunder and loud noises coming out (Rev. 4:5). I was trembling with a godly fear of what was going to happen next. Then, the Lord Jesus came out smiling with some little children and walked pass by.

Even after the Lord Jesus had left the temple, the rumblings, lightning and thunderclaps still went on. Soon a bright and glorious cloud which was full of radiance emerged. The cloud seemed fiery. I saw a Hand stretched out from the midst of the cloud (Ezek. 8:2,3; Rev. 5:7). Fire was coming out of the Hand, like the solar flares of the sun, which looked like a consuming and devouring fire (Deu. 4:24; Ps. 50:3; Heb. 12:29). I realised then that I was seeing the Hand of the Father God. The whole scene was just like as it is written in Revelation 11:19, **'Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightning, noises, thunderings and earthquake and great hail.'**

As I was deeply pondering the vision and sought its meaning, the Holy Spirit graciously revealed to me the following conditions, under which a believer MAY (and NOT COULD) see God the Father.

i. *Solely as permitted and willed by the Lord Jesus* (Mt. 11:27; Lk. 10:22; Jn.16:25). *It is not a RIGHT or PRIVILEGE for being a child of God.*

ii. *Humility and meekness as belonging to little children* (Mt. 11:25; Num. 12:3,8).

iii. *Pure and holy life* (Ps. 24:3,4; Prov. 22:11; Mt. 5:8; Heb. 12:14).

f. *Cherubim*

There were two cherubim on the two ends of the mercy seat. Their wings were spread out above, covering the mercy seat. They were facing each other, looking down on the mercy seat.

The **two cherubim with their faces facing each other,** speak of ***the Oneness of the Father God and the Son, Lord Jesus*** (Jn. 10:30). **Eyes looking down,** speak of ***the Godhead looking upon him who waits on God with loving and kind compassion.*** The **spread out wings** speak of ***mercy, truth, righteousness and peace*** (Ps. 85:10). Interestingly, the scriptures say that the **cherubim were made of hammered gold** and this speaks of ***the suffering which both God the Father and the Son went through in the redemption of man*** (Isa. 53:10; Rom. 3:25; 2 Cor. 5:19).

Therefore, *when we wait on God, God the Father and the Lord, remembering the suffering of redemption, in oneness looks upon us with mercy and truth. Like a mother who, forgetting all the suffering of labour pains, embraces her baby with loving affection, God embraces and overshadows us with righteousness and peace.* This is the secret place of the Most High God (Ps. 91:1).

g. *Things in the Ark*

There were three things kept inside the ark:

i. The **Golden Pot of Manna**, speaks of the ***Spoken Word***, a ***'rhema'*** *word* from God. When we wait on God, He will speak to us (Isa. 30:21).

ii The **Tablets of Stone**, speak of ***God's Written Covenants***. Just as God wrote the ten commandments with fingers of fire (Ex. 31:18), when we wait on God, He will write the covenants that He makes with us on the flesh of our heart (Heb. 8:10).

In 1979, I faced severe persecution in my family for my faith. One day, with a broken heart, I was meditating the Word of God. As I was reading a certain portion of scripture, I tangibly felt a finger inscribing the promises which I was reading, on the flesh of my heart (Ex. 31:18; 2 Cor. 3:3; Heb. 8:10). From that day in 1979 till today in 1995, God has been true and faithful to that covenant.

iii. **Aaron's Rod that Budded,** speak of the ***Authority in the Name of the Lord Jesus*** (Mk. 16:17,18). As we wait on God, our spirit buds with the authority and power of God to believe and do exploits for Him (Dan. 11:32; Acts 4:31).

The Art Of Waiting On God

A healthy prayer life composes of three aspects: *Firstly,* ***Intercession;*** *secondly,* ***Meditation of the Word*** and *thirdly*, ***Waiting on God.*** 'Waiting on God' is a lost art in present day Christianity. Since we live in a fast-paced microwave society, we do not seem to have the time or some even consider it a waste of time to wait on God. Yet we all desire God's best and will for our life. We will never be able to know what the good, perfect and acceptable will of God for our life is, if we do not wait on God (Rom. 12:2).

I have a dear friend who once poured out his heart's woes to me. His woes were that he could neither feel God's presence, nor at least feel 'goose-bumps', nor hear His voice nor see a vision or dream. So he told me that since God speaks with me face to face, he asked me to plead his case the next time that I saw the Lord Jesus.

So, as usual, once, when I was interceding for many people, I beheld the similitude of the Lord Jesus. Before the Lord left, I presented my friend's problem to the Lord and asked Him as to why his desire was not granted. To my surprise the Lord answered, *'Son, the problem is not with Me but with him.'* Then the Lord showed me in a vision, a routine in his life. I saw him kneeling

down to pray before he went to work. He prayed for his pastor, church, ministers of God, friends and family. All the while, I saw the Lord Jesus standing beside him, listening to his prayer. At the close of his prayer, he said, *'Now, Lord please speak to me.'* At that moment, I saw the Lord Jesus opening His mouth to speak but this friend then concluded his prayer by saying *'In Jesus Name I pray. Amen.'* The Lord Jesus then told me, *'See, he has no time to wait. This is the common problem with most of My children. They have no time to wait on Me.'*

Therefore, the only way that we are going to hear His voice or discover God's perfect will for our life, is by practising the art of waiting on God.

What is Waiting on God?

There are several Hebrew words used in the Bible for the word, **'wait.'**

1. *Daman* means ***to stand still*** (Ps. 46:10)

2. *Dumiyyah* means ***to wait in silence*** (Ps. 62:1)

3. *Qavah* means ***gathered together*** (Gen. 1:9)

4. *Chakah* means ***to wait earnestly*** (Isa. 64:4)

Therefore, we can define, **Waiting on God** as ***to wait earnestly in silence and stillness in God's presence, seeking to be bound in a perfect union of intimate bonding together with the Lord***. In simple terms, it means, staying in God's presence and seeking to be bound in a perfect union of intimacy.

Many people come to God for external signs, wonders and needs and are satisfied with those things. But it is those who wait long enough, who will see the glory of God. In John 20:3-18, we have the record of the resurrection event. When Mary Magdalene reported that the Lord's body was missing, Peter and John ran to the sepulchre. At the sepulchre, they saw the linen clothes that were on the Lord Jesus, the external sign, believed and went away. They did not wait long enough in God's presence (v.10).

However, Mary waited and poured her heart out in tears (v.11). And because she waited long, she was privileged to be the first person to see the resurrected Lord Jesus. Likewise, when we wait on God, His presence comes first (v.14) and prepares us to see Him (v.16).

The prophet Moses too, had to patiently wait for six days on Mount Sinai, for the Glory of God to come and speak with him (Ex. 24:15,16).

How to Wait on God?

There is one simple method, diffused in three ways, on how we can learn to practise the art of waiting on God. The three ways are:

1. To be Still

> ***PSALMS 46:10a***
> *10a Be still, and know that I am God*

We must learn to be still in the presence of God. Learn to quit making all the noise and talking. Be still and your spirit will comprehend the Almighty God (Ps. 4:4; Isa. 23:2).

2. To keep Silent

> ***PSALMS 62:1***
> *1 Truly my soul silently waits for God; From Him comes my salvation.*

If we desire God to speak to us, we must learn to keep silent. If two people are talking together at the same time, who can understand who? When we are praying, God silently listens to our prayer (Mal. 3:16). Later, we should maintain silence in waiting on God. He will then speak to us (Hab. 2:20; Zeph. 1:7; Zech. 2:13).

3. Be Gathered and Bound

GENESIS 1:9

9 Then God said, 'Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so.

As the waters were all gathered together in one place, so must all that is within us be gathered and bound in oneness. The spirit, soul and body, must be in oneness.

So, in practising the art of waiting on God, all that is within you must be in stillness and silence before the Almighty God.

I first learnt to practise the art of waiting on God in July of 1983. I used to wake up at 2 am and would wash up to be fresh. I learned from the life of George Muller that he himself does that to prevent himself from going back to sleep. I would begin by praising and worshipping God for about an hour. Then, I would meditate the Word for about another hour. On the third hour, I would pray for others and my personal needs.

After I had done all the praying, I would then say to God, *'Lord, now speak to your servant, for I shall hear'* (1 Sam. 3:9,10). After saying that I would just wait in stillness and silence, expecting God to speak. I kept the mind quiet and never allowed it to wander; kept the heart quiet and never allowed it to ponder over other things; kept the body still and never allowed it to move to cause distraction. All that was within me was bound in oneness.

On the first day, my ability to be still lasted only five minutes. Day by day, I practised waiting. During those times, I did not even hear a whisper from the Lord. Nevertheless, patiently and diligently, I persevered. Soon my ability to concentrate in stillness improved. On the seventh day, as usual when I was waiting on God, I suddenly heard a loud and gigantic voice booming through my room. The sound of the voice was so loud, it was as if four very powerful speakers were put on the four corners of the room and its volume turned on full blast. The voice was sweet, yet melodious and sounded like running waters (Rev. 1:10,15; Ezek. 43:2). That was the first time I heard the audible voice of the Lord Jesus.

In waiting on God, our spirit is finely tuned to the wavelength of the Spirit realm where we are able to hear His Voice.

This same principle applies to seeing the similitude of the Lord Jesus. Consider this. When we stand by the edge of a pond, our image is reflected on it. But if a pebble was thrown into the pond, the stillness in the pond is disrupted causing ripples. We are then not able to see our own image. But when the pond becomes calm and still again, we are then able to see clearly our image. Likewise, when we wait on God in stillness and silence, we can see with our spiritual eyes, the Lord Jesus standing in front of us (Ps. 46:10). The reason why we could not see is not because God does not want to manifest or reveal Himself, but it is due to the constant ripples of distraction that is preventing us from beholding the similitude of the Lord.

Some years ago, we were having our family prayer one day. As we were praising God, I perceived in my spirit that there was no unity in the spirit amongst ourselves. So I stopped the worship and exhorted everyone gathered about to be united in oneness, which then would usher in the glory and power of God (2 Chr. 5:13,14; Acts 4:24,31).

We resumed praising and worshipping God and within two minutes, a sweet presence of the Lord came and filled us, followed by a stronger anointing. The Glory of God came down and some of the family members saw the similitude of the Lord Jesus in our midst, while others heard the voice of the Lord Jesus speaking to them.

Therefore, when we are still and silent in spirit, soul and body before God's presence, we are prepared to receive and see the Glory of God.

Results of Waiting on God

> ***ISAIAH 40:31***
> *31 But those who wait on the Lord, shall renew their strength; They shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*

Since an eagle is being mentioned in this scripture, let us consider an interesting characteristic of an eagle exemplifying this scripture.

When an eagle feels that it is losing strength and vigour, it will mount up to a very high mountain. At the top, the eagle will brush its wings against a sharp rock, causing the friction to tear the feathers. It will do this until all the feathers have dropped. It will lie in such a bloodied condition for about forty days. Towards the end of the forty days, its strength is renewed, new feathers are grown and its vigour is restored. It then mounts up its wings again to soar in the heavenlies.

There are four processes mentioned in this scripture that are involved when we wait on God.

1. Strength is Renewed. This speaks of a fresh anointing – **'I have been anointed with fresh oil'** (Ps. 92:10b). As Aaron's rod budded in the ark of the covenant, when we wait on God, our strength is renewed with a fresh anointing. I remember, when writing my first book, Women Are Special to God, in 1991, I was thoroughly drained physically. As I thought of lying down to sleep for rest, a thought struck me, 'why not wait on God, since it will renew my strength.' After about forty-five minutes of waiting, I felt a renewal in my physical strength as if I had never felt exhausted. Sometimes, even the anointing of the Holy Spirit, when not maintained can wane. So, a regular life of prayer, the Word and waiting on God constantly renews, anointing us with fresh oil.

2. Run and not be Weary. Like the golden pot of manna representing the 'spoken-rhema' word from God, when we wait on God, He gives a spoken word, which like a fresh vision will enable us to run the race set before and not be disobedient to the heavenly vision that God had given us (Acts 26:19; Phil. 2:16; 2 Tim. 4:8).

3. Walk and not Faint. Like the tablets of stone in the ark of covenant, when we wait on God, He inspires, encourages and writes His immutable word on our hearts. Clinging on to the written word of God will cause us not to faint (Ps. 24:10).

Once a dear friend was going through severe trials in his life. Tears became his food in reality. During those moments, he could not run anywhere. When he fellowships with God, a word will be quickened in his spirit and he would cling on to it. The Word kept him from fainting and he learnt to walk by faith. Because faith comes by the hearing of the Word (Rom. 10:17) and that faith will enable us to overcome the world (1 Jn. 5:4).

4. Wings like Eagles. This speaks of deep spiritual experiences. Let us examine from the scriptures some of the spiritual experiences we could have as willed by God.

i. Caught up to heaven (2 Cor. 12:2-4; Rev. 4:1,2).

ii. Angelic visitations (Mk. 1:13; Lk. 22:43; Acts 8:26; 27:23).

iii. Bodily transportation (1 Kg. 18:12; Jn. 6:21; Acts 8:39,40).

iv. Dreams and visions (Joel 2:28; Acts 9:10; 10:3).

v. Trance (Acts 10:10; 22:17).

These are some of the basic biblical spiritual experiences which are mentioned in the Bible. Let us examine a biblical example for these four processes.

> ***1 KINGS 19:4-12***
> *4 But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he prayed that he might die, and said, "It is enough! Now, Lord, take my life, for I am no better than my fathers!"*
> *5 Then as he lay and slept under a broom tree, suddenly an angel touched him, and said to him, "Arise and eat."*
> *6 Then he looked, and there by his head was a cake baked on coals, and a jar of water. So he ate and drank, and lay down again.*

7 And the angel of the Lord came back the second time, and touched him, and said, "Arise and eat, because the journey is too great for you."
8 So he arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God.
9 And there he went into a cave, and spent the night in that place; and behold, the word of the Lord came to him, and he said to him, "What are you doing here, Elijah?"
10 So he said, "I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts; for the children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left; and they seek to take my life."
11 Then he said, "Go out, and stand on the mountain before the Lord." And behold the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind tore into the mountains and broke the rocks in pieces before the Lord, but the Lord was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake, but the Lord was not in the earthquake.
12 and after the earthquake a fire, but the Lord was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small voice.

From these scriptures we can observe of four processes:

a. Waiting on God (v.4:5).

b. Run (angelic food) (v.6:7).

c. Walked, did not faint (v.8).

d. Eagles wings (spiritual experience) (v.9-12).

Therefore, when we wait on God, we could experience these four processes within us, which God may bless us with in accordance with His Supreme will.

5. Power and Anointing

> ***LUKE 5:16,17***
> *16 So He Himself often withdrew into the wilderness and prayed.*
> *17 Now it happened on a certain day, as He was teaching, that there were Pharisees and teachers of the law sitting by, who had come out of every town of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem. And the power of the Lord was present to heal them.*

The Lord Jesus said that we would be able to do greater works than He did (Jn. 14:12). The reason for the Lord Jesus to always be full of power, was the result of the constant quality time of prayer He spent waiting on God (Mt. 14:23; Mk. 6:46; Lk. 6:12).

Consider an electric power conductor. On a piece of conductor wires are wound around. When this power conductor is turned on with electricity, the wires too become carriers and transmitters of power, because they are wound around the conductor. Likewise, when we wait on God, we are gathered unto the Almighty God, from whom power flows into us, causing the anointing of the Holy Spirit to be made available to set people free.

6. Transformed like Jesus

Finally, when we wait on God, we are being transformed like the Lord Jesus. Being blessed with spiritual experiences are not as important as being transformed to look like the Lord Jesus.

Consider a hen. When the hen lays eggs, they are imageless and formless. The hen would then sit on the eggs for twenty-eight days to hatch them. During that period, heat energy from the hen transforms the egg yolk and white into the image and likeness of the hen. In like manner, when we wait on God, the Lord stretches out His wings over us (Ps. 91:4). The fire of the Holy Spirit then refines and purifies us to resemble and be transformed to be like the Lord Jesus

(1 Jn. 3:2; 4:17).

The Bible says in 2 Corinthians 3:18. **'But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord.'** The word **'transformed'** in Greek is *'metamorphoo'* which is also used for **'transfigured,'** as of the Lord Jesus' experience on the Mount of Transfiguration (Mt. 17:2). *'Metamorphoo'* means ***'to change into another form.'*** Whereas in Luke 9:29 it is written, **'And as He prayed the appearance of His face was altered and His robe became white and glistening.'** The phrase, '**was altered'** in Greek is *'egeneto heteron'* which literally is *'ginomai heterors'* meaning, ***'became different.'*** The Lord Jesus was totally changed to become something of a different kind, i.e. the unveiling of the flesh to reveal the different kind, the fullness of the Godhead (Col. 2:9) within Him.

Likewise, within the innermost of us is the seed of God (1 Jn. 3:9). This seed is God's nature abiding permanently within us. We received that seed when we were born-again (1Pe. 1:23). Just as a natural earthly seed germinates and grows into fullness, as we wait on God, God's presence surrounds us with light and fire and we **'are constantly being transfigured into His very own image in ever increasing splendor and from one degree of glory to another; [for this comes] from the Lord [Who is] the Spirit'** (2 Cor. 3:18, Amplified).

Chapter 11 - Shekinah Glory

> ***EXODUS 40:34 (Amplified)***
> *34 Then the cloud [the Shekinah, God's visible presence] covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle.*
>
> ***LEVITICUS 16:2b***
> *2b for I will appear in the cloud above the mercy seat.*

After Moses had finished making all the furnitures for the tabernacle, the Glory of God came down. This is the seventh thing in the tabernacle. There were six main pieces of furniture in the tabernacle. Six, being the number of man also speaks of incompleteness. Since, God is of perfection, He has manifested Himself as the seventh and complete One. This, signifies that without God, man can do nothing (Jn. 15:5).

The word, *'shekinah'* is a Hebrew word and does not appear in the Bible. The abstract noun, *'SH´KINAH'* literally means ***'indwelling'***. Though it does not appear in the Bible, its related verb, *'mishkan'* meaning ***'the dwelling'*** does. The word, **'shekinah'** was introduced in the first few centuries A.D. in the Aramic versions of the Old Testament as a reverent circumlocution for God. The word, **'cloud'** in Hebrew is *'anan'* meaning ***'cloud mass',*** that evidenced the special presence of God.

Let us examine two key words in the original language to have a deeper understanding of the Shekinah Glory of God.

1. There are several Greek and Hebrew words used for the word, ***'Presence.'***

a. Hebrew, *'panim'* meaning ***'face.'***

b. Greek, *'prosopon'* meaning ***'face: the countenance literally, the part towards the eyes.'***

c. Greek, *'enopion'* meaning ***'in the face of, in His presence (sight) before God.'***

d. Greek, *'katenopion'* meaning ***'in the very presence of God.'***

The Presence can then be defined as ***a face to face relationship with God*** (very similar to the relationship which Moses had with God – Deu. 34:10).

2. There is one Greek and Hebrew word used for the word, **'Glory.'**

a. Hebrew, *'kabod'*, meaning, ***'weight; splendor or copiously glorious.'***

b. Greek, *'doxa'* meaning, ***'brightness or splendor, the supernatural emanating from God'*** (as in the Shekinah glory in the pillar of cloud and in the holy of holies).

The Glory can then be defined as ***the supernatural brightness emanating from God possessing a weighty mass.***

Therefore the **Shekinah Glory of God** can be defined as ***the supernatural manifestation of God's brightness and light in a cloud mass resulting from the visible presence of God which then enables a believer to have an intimate face to face relationship with God.***

Simply, it means that the Shekinah Glory Cloud is the visible presence of God the Father dwelling in our midst (Ex. 19:9; 25:8; 2 Cor. 6:16).

God the Father in the Cloud

Who, of the Godhead was in the Cloud? The Lord Jesus was manifested in the New Testament. Bible scholars all agree that it was God the Father who dealt with the children of Israel in the Old Testament. Furthermore, God the Father always spoke to Moses from a thick cloud (Ex. 19:9,16). The Bible says that the Lord Jesus too, comes in a cloud (Mt. 24:30; Mk. 13:26; Lk. 21:27; Rev. 1:7). How then could the Person in the Cloud be distinguished as the Father God? Let's consider these scriptures:

1. LUKE 9:34,35

34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.
35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My Beloved Son. Hear Him!'

2. EXODUS 24:16,18a

16 Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.
18a So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain.

3. ACTS 7:55

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

Let us now analyse the facts in these scriptures.

i The incident recorded in Luke 9:34,35 is similar to Exodus 24:16,18a. In Luke's record of the Transfiguration, the Lord Jesus was seen standing with Peter, James and John. While the Lord was physically with them, a Cloud came down from heaven and a voice from within said, *'This is My Beloved Son.'* If the Lord Jesus was physically on earth, then the Person in the Cloud, who called the Lord Jesus as His beloved son, must be the Father God (Jn. 1:18; 3:16).

ii. In the account of Acts 7:55, Stephen sees two Persons in heaven, the Glory Cloud of God and the Lord Jesus. If the Lord Jesus was standing at the right hand of God, then, the Glory Cloud must be the Father God (Mk. 16:19; Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; 1 Pe. 3:22).

I once heard of a certain godly servant's experience in heaven. The Lord Jesus told him that He was going to show him the dwelling place of the Father. In heaven, the Lord took him to a far-away place. When they reached the

dwelling place of God, this minister said that there was absolute stillness and perfect peace. The Lord Jesus then pointed to the throne of God and said that, that was where the Father God is dwelling. When this man of God looked, he saw a bright glory cloud covering all over the throne. This man of God described his experience as similar to the vision which Daniel had, of seeing the Ancient of Days
(Dan. 7:9,10).

Therefore, **he who waits on God, will be ushered into the Glory Cloud of God.**

The Cloud is God's Holiness

Among all the natures and attributes of God, the most supreme nature that makes God, as the Almighty God is HOLINESS. It is this nature that sets the Lord God apart from all other gods (Ex. 15:11). Holiness is the essence and the very being of God Himself. It is this Holiness, that tangibly manifests and surrounds God as the Glory Cloud (Ps. 93:5; Isa. 63:15).

I was once waiting on God, when I felt a strong unction to worship. I just started worshipping in the Spirit. As I was thus worshipping and magnifying God, in a vision I saw angels singing. In the Spirit, I joined them in singing in an unknown language. Soon, the Holy Spirit gave me the interpretation of the song. It was a beautiful song about the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

As I was thus worshipping, I perceived a Cloud coming down from heaven. It came and began to flow all over me. I knew in my spirit that this was the Cloud of Holiness, which was cleansing, purifying and sanctifying me. After which, I was caught up in the Spirit and saw a door opened in heaven (Rev. 4:1). Within the door, I saw the awesome Glory of God like billows of radiant cloud. I was made to understand that, the Cloud was Holiness in its tangible form.

God spoke from the Cloud

Let us examine from the scriptures of how God spoke to His people from the Cloud.

a. With a Voice

> ***NUMBERS 7:89***
> *89 Now when Moses went into the tabernacle of meeting to speak with Him, he heard the voice of One speaking to him from above the mercy seat that was on the ark of the Testimony, from between the two cherubim; thus He spoke to him.*

> ***EXODUS 33:9***
> *9 And it came to pass, when Moses entered the tabernacle, that the pillar of the cloud descended and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and the Lord talked with Moses.*

God spoke from the Cloud. Even in the Transfiguration of the Lord Jesus, Peter, James and John, heard a voice speaking from the Cloud (Mk. 9:7). How does the voice of God the Father sound like?

It is written, **'Then a voice came from heaven, saying, 'I have both glorified it and will glorify it again. Therefore the people who stood by and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, 'An angel has spoken to Him'** (Jn. 12:28,29). The voice of the Father God sounds like thunder.

The Lord graced me with the privilege of hearing the voice of God the Father for the first time on 12 February 1984. As was my custom, I was waiting on God at about 2 am that day. All of a sudden, I heard the sound of a very loud thunder. Thinking that the rains were going to pour heavily, I got up to close the windows. To my surprise, I found the night to be still and calm. When I went back to prayer, again I heard the rumblings of thunder.

I thought that it must be a distant thunder and got up to close the windows. I bowed in prayer and for the third time, heard the sound of this thunder very distinctively. I perceived in my spirit that I should listen to it very carefully. As I did, I perceived in my spirit that it was coming all the way from heaven (Ex. 20:22; Acts 11:9; 2 Pe. 1:18). I suddenly realized that the Father God was

speaking to me. My whole being was trembling with a holy fear, when God spoke to me (2 Sam. 22:14). If a whole mountain can quake when God spoke, how much more me (Ex. 19:16-18; Heb. 12:18-21). The voice of God was so awesome, majestic and loud, like the peels of thunder (Ex. 20:18; 1 Sam. 7:10; Job 37:2-5; Ps. 18:13; Rev. 4:5).

b. Face to Face

> ***EXODUS 33:11a***
> *11a So the Lord spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.*

> ***NUMBERS 12:8a***
> *8a I speak with him face to face, even plainly, and not in dark saying; and he sees the form of the Lord.*

God spoke face to face with Moses (Deu. 34:10). The term *'face to face'* means *'to talk directly'* with one another, beholding each other's countenance. It's like two good friends, sitting beside each other, looking each other in the eye and talking. Our spiritual eyes are opened to behold the glory of God with the naked eyes. This is the desire of God. He does not want to hide Himself from us, but wants to show Himself to us, so that His children can commune with Him face to face (Num. 14:14; Deu. 5:4; Jn. 15:15).

How To Live In The Holy Of Holies?

Having studied all these aspects and types of prayer, how could we continuously live and dwell in the holy of holies? It is not enough for us to hear the voice of God just 'once-in-a-blue-moon' and then for the rest of the time run after every minister or prophet who comes into town, asking for a Word from the Lord.

A precious and beloved friend of mine, Dr Paul Ang, who is a highly anointed Prophet of God from Malaysia, once told of an incident. After ministering, as he was about to leave, a brother came to him and said, *'Brother Paul Ang, do you have a word for me.'* Dr Paul Ang looked him in the eye and

said, *'Yes, I do.'* Excitedly he got his tape-recorder near to Dr Ang's mouth. He then said, *'Thus saith the Lord: Go, pray everyday and read your Bible.'* God's Word cannot be bought cheaply like buying sweets from the candy shop.

We must desire and covert earnestly the best of all the gifts (1 Cor. 12:31), that is to dwell in the holy of holies at all times as Moses was privileged. Let us examine from the scriptures a few ways by which we could cultivate a habitual abiding in the holy of holies.

1. Oneness by Worship

> ***2 CHRONICLES 5:13,14***
> *13 Indeed it came to pass, when the trumpeters and singers were as one, to make one sound to be heard in praising and thanking the Lord, and when they lifted up their voice with the trumpets and cymbals and instruments of music, and praised the Lord, saying: 'For He is good, for His mercy endures forever,' that the house, the house of the Lord, was filled with a cloud,*
> *14 So that the priests could not continue ministering because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord filled the house of God.*

This is the most important key to entering into the holiest. Oneness in spirit, soul and body. Our entire being must be consumed with one burning passion, that is to behold the beauty of the Lord and minister unto Him in oneness of mind.

2. Pure and Holy Life

> ***DANIEL 1:8***
> *8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself*

It was because of Daniel's decision to live a pure, holy and clean life by not defiling himself with unclean foods, that God gave him light, understanding and superior wisdom (Dan. 5:14). He too, constantly beheld the glory of God (Dan. 7:9-14). The prophet Moses too, choosing to suffer reproaches with the children of Israel rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin (Heb. 11:25), was graced by God to dwell in the holy of holies at all times, beholding the glories of God (Lev. 16:2; Ex. 25:21,22).

3. Humility and Meekness

> ***ISAIAH 57:15***
> *15 For thus says the High and Lofty One who inhabits eternity, whose name is Holy: 'I dwell in the high and holy place, with him who has a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*

One of the reasons which endeared Moses to God and that enabled him to behold and dwell with the glory of God is his meekness (Num. 12:3). It is written in Isaiah 6:1-3 that, **'In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above it stood seraphim; each one had six wings: with two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one cried to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.'**

Before the prophet Isaiah could see the glory of God, it is written that, ***'King Uzziah died.'*** There is a spiritual mystery here. King Uzziah was a man who was full of pride (2 Chr. 26:16). Thus, when he died, the attitude of pride died in a person. The person who walks in humility and meekness, will be able to see the glories of God, just as Isaiah saw the glory.

4. Full of the Holy Spirit

> ***ACTS 7:55***

55 But he, being full of the Holy Spirit, gazed into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.

We must be filled with the Holy Spirit continually at all times, by always praying in the Spirit. as we are thus constantly being filled with the Holy Spirit, He will transform and transfigure our inner man from glory to glory to abide in the holiest (2 Cor. 3:18; 4:16).

5. ***Disciplined Prayer Life***

LUKE 9:29,34,35
29 And as He prayed, the appearance of His face was altered, and His robe became white and glistening.
34 While he was saying this, a cloud came and overshadowed them; and they were fearful as they entered the cloud.
35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, 'This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!'

The key factor for the Lord Jesus' Transfiguration was Prayer (v.29). A life of communion and fellowship with God will always usher us into His presence. It was because of Enoch's habitual fellowship and constant touch with God that transported him to heaven (Gen. 5:22,24; Heb. 11:5). The Word of the Lord once came unto me saying. *'If you will learn to walk with God, He will come and walk with you and make a way of holiness in your heart, that God may come and make His abode in you'.*

We are His Temple

The scriptures say that our body is the temple (a sanctuary dedicated and sacred to the presence of the Lord) of God (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19). I was once fasting and praying for three days in the Himalayas in 1990. On the third day, as I was waiting on God, my spiritual eyes were opened to look on the inside of my body. To my surprise, I could not see any of my internal organs, but only saw a bright glory light radiating within and without on the inside. As I was pondering this

vision, the Holy Spirit said, *'This is what the Word meant, when it said that you are the temple of God and God dwells in you through His Spirit.'*

As we fellowship and commune with God in intimacy through these six methods of prayer, the Glory of God will come to abide within us (Eph. 2:22) and we can behold the Lord God dwelling in and walking among us (2 Cor. 6:16; Ex. 25:8; Lev. 26:12; Ezek. 37:27).