

Prayer and Fasting Part 3: Intercession (4/27/2019)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8RKu97BAD9Q&feature=youtu.be>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

We are going to get into part 3 today in our study of prayer and fasting. If you remember from our previous message, we were talking about what we call the LORD's Prayer. The prayer itself was a response to a question Yeshua's disciples had for Him. That question was actually a request; teach us how to pray. They wanted to know how to pray just as John the Baptist taught his Apostles how to pray.

Think about that for a moment in a historical context, because in a historic context it is peculiar. I say this because Judaism was not deficient in prayers by any means. They had prayers that are still prayed even to this day. You can go to Israel and Jews read out loud from the Siddur, these prayer books. They are praying the prayers their fathers prayed, and their father's fathers before them, and their rabbis. These prayers have been prayed down through the centuries. In Yeshua's day, Judaism had prayers that are still being prayed today. Therefore, it is peculiar that Yeshua's Apostles would ask Him to teach them how to pray.

The beauty of it though is He does just that. He teaches them how to pray. He gives them the LORD's Prayer, which really is a template for success. It's a key to unlocking unlimited power giving them access into the throne room of God. This is not just to be heard, but to be answered and to receive answers to things that are impossible for men to do.

When you look at the blessing Yeshua gave His disciples, you need to understand this wasn't just something for them; it is something for us today. The very same effect we read about, when the Apostles got together and prayed and miraculous things took place, is the same power we have access to. We have access to the same power to receive the same results. However, as I mentioned before, a lot of Christians will not access that power. They confess Yeshua as LORD, but they don't value it. They don't get it. This is terrifying.

It is amazing some of the conversations I've had with Christians. We wonder why nothing changes in our lives. We wonder why we are struggling with depression. Why am I struggling with these things and overwhelming anxieties and fears that are controlling me? There are things inside me I don't really understand. I am experiencing a disconnect and an emptiness. These are Christian believers in Yeshua, and they're telling me they have emptiness in their heart. There's something missing. There's a void there.

I'm telling you something is dramatically wrong. If you're a believer in Yeshua, and you are experiencing these things to the point they are controlling you, I'm going to tell you the root of it is your prayer life. Praying is about spending time and getting in relationship with Yeshua in order to know Him intimately. It is about no longer spending the time with all those idols you set up in your heart. You no longer give the world your time, but you start giving the LORD your time. When you do that, watch what happens. You will have joy and peace in your heart because you have embraced prayer; because you've embraced the LORD. You're seeking Him with all your heart.

Show me a man who says he feels disconnected from God, and I will show you a man who doesn't know how to pray. Show me a man who once had a fire and passion in his heart, but now he's become complacent, and I will show you a man who's forgotten how to pray. For these problems, every single time, I will take you to prayer.

Leonard Ravenhill assessed it this way—[A sinning man stops praying; a praying man stops sinning](#). You have no idea how true this statement is. This is what I'm trying to tell you. The more you pray, the more you will shed the skin of idolatry, of covetousness, of lust, the garbage of addictions, and all the tastes you have acquired for the world. All these will go away when you commune with a Holy God. It is when you have that beautiful anointed time of prayer where you're pouring out your heart, and all you want is Him.

This is true—a [praying man stops sinning](#). This is why I'm telling you that you can boil your relationship with the LORD and all these other things down to where you are at in your prayer life. Ravenhill's statement is absolutely at true statement.

With that said, today we are actually going to circle back to the LORD's Prayer because there is one particular thing that needs to be uncovered. It is something absolutely vital to prayer that Yeshua gave instruction to. It is something that often times goes missed, so we want to look at this.

To really set the stage, I want to take you back to the Didache. For those of you who have been with us in our Hebrew series, we've been tapping into the Didache a little bit. If you don't know what it is, it's one of the most important documents we have for the historicity of Christianity. It dates back to the late first century to maybe the early turn of the second century. It is critical to be able to see how Christians, and the world, were embracing the gospel and how the gospel was being taught the generation after the Apostles. This is a vital piece of history for us.

I want to take you to chapter 8 in the Didache because it actually dedicates an entire portion to the LORD's Prayer. It is actually a manual of instructions for believers of that day. Look at what it says—² [Neither pray as the hypocrites; but as the LORD commanded in His Gospel, thus pray: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth. Give us today our daily bread, and forgive us our debt as we also forgive our debtors. And bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one; for Thine is the power and the glory forever.](#) ³ [Thrice in the day thus pray](#) (emphasis added, Didache 8:2-3).

I am showing you this so you can see how the early church actually viewed the LORD's Prayer. They made it their life. They were commanding other Christians that this prayer was to inhabit your entire day; morning, noon, and night. They valued this prayer above all else. This was foundational for the early church. That is why we need to feel the weight and importance of this prayer. Amen?

With that said, let's go back to Matthew 6:6 and take a second look at Yeshua's instructions regarding how to pray. We're going to look at this a little differently today. In Matthew 6:6—**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.**

Now, let's be clear. There's nothing ambiguous about this statement. Yeshua is asking for private prayer where no one can see you. You're praying in secret. Are we clear on this? This is important because what He says next gets really interesting in light of this.

Moving to Matthew 6:9—**In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name** (emphasis added). Yeshua uses the plural pronoun, our. Isn't this peculiar?

Let me continue in the prayer in Matthew 6:11-13—**Give us this day our daily bread.¹² And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.¹³ And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen** (emphasis added).

Are you picking up on this? There are a lot of Christians who have picked up on what just happened here. When you go back to verse six, Yeshua tells them they are to be praying privately so no one else sees them. Then He gets into the prayer, and He starts using all these plural pronouns. Why?

There have been some interesting conversations that swirl about in regard to what is happening in these verses. Some people will tell you Yeshua is using these plural pronouns simply because He's addressing the Apostles in the plural. That, however, doesn't work. It's an interesting thought, and you maybe could get there if you didn't put the whole thing together, but when you go back to verse six, Yeshua uses the singular—**go into your room**. He doesn't say—your rooms. He doesn't use the plural.

So if that were the case where He's simply addressing the Apostles in the plural, He would have done so in verse six, but He doesn't do that. So that tells us there's something else being said here.

Other Christians have looked at this and said, "This is proof that we are to actually say this prayer corporately. This is what Yeshua is really communicating." Again, that doesn't work because you go back to verse six and find it is very specific—**when you pray, go into your room**. Room is singular not plural. It doesn't work.

There is something Yeshua is communicating here that is so vital to prayer. There is something He is requiring of us who call upon Him to do. Do you know what that is? It is intercession. He is instructing us right in the LORD's Prayer for us to intercede on behalf of one another. What Yeshua is telling His disciples? It's not all about you. It is about us together. We are connected.

Paul talks about this in 1 Corinthians 12:12—**For as the body is one and has many members**. We are never supposed to forget the other members we are tied to. We are to weep with those who weep and mourn with those who mourn. We are to rejoice with those who rejoice. This is what we're supposed to do. We are intimately connected. There is no other place greater we should realize that than when we are in our time of prayer? This is total intercession

To prove this point this is in the plural, and this is exactly what Yeshua is communicating, I am going to take you to the Tanakh. In the Tanakh, the Hebrew Bible, we have a precedent for intercession. We find

righteous men of God praying individually and privately, and they're praying exactly like the form in Matthew 6 using these plural pronouns. Why? Because they're interceding.

I'm going to give you an example today. I could give you others, but I'm going to give you one profound example. I chose this example because the prayer itself is so powerful, and we can glean so much from it in regard to understanding prayer on another level. Let's go to chapter 9 and look at Daniel's prayer. This is absolutely profound, and you're going to see a real intercessor. You will see what Yeshua is commanding His Apostles to do is what Daniel does. You are going to see the effects of what happens when we pray according to what the LORD has commanded us to pray.

Going to Daniel 9:3—**Then I set my face toward the LORD God to make request by prayer and supplications, with fasting** (emphasis added). Now we really haven't touched on fasting yet. We have simply been talking mostly about prayer, but we're going to get into the topic of fasting a little bit today.

You need to understand Daniel is praying and fasting, and do you know what that means? That means this is war. It means this is urgent. This is defcon 3, as they say in the military. Daniel has pulled out the heavy artillery.

There is something I want you to understand about prayer. You can absolutely and legitimately pray without fasting. However, you cannot fast without praying. The whole point of fasting is that you're entering into travailing prayer?

So here Daniel has compiled these two things, prayer with fasting. Continuing the verse in Daniel 9:3-4— **with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes. ⁴ And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, "O LORD, great and awesome God** (emphasis added). Now you go back and compare to the LORD's Prayer—**Our Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be your name.** In other words, you enter into prayer bringing glory and exalting the Most High God. By comparison, how does Daniel enter into this prayer? He exalts the Most High God speaking of His greatness and awesomeness.

Daniel continues in verses 4-5 by saying something that is absolutely brilliant—**who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments.** Daniel actually quotes God's own word back to Him by quoting the Torah. Daniel is taking this out of the Ten Commandments.

Why is Daniel doing this? He is glorifying God and reminding Him, "You are the one who keeps Covenant. God, you are true." As it says in Scripture—**let God be true but every man a liar** (Romans 3:4). When the LORD speaks, it will come to pass. He is a God of Honor; He is a God of His word. So Daniel reminds us, "God is an honorable Father. This is who He is."

Then Daniel continues in 9:5—**we have sinned and committed iniquity** (emphasis added). Remember that Daniel is praying privately, and here we have these plural pronouns being used. This is interesting because this is exactly what we see in the LORD's Prayer.

Continuing in 9:5-7—**we have done wickedly and rebelled, even by departing from Your precepts and Your judgments. ⁶ Neither have we heeded Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings and our princes, to our fathers and all the people of the land. ⁷ O LORD, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face** (emphasis added).

Isn't that fascinating! We have all these plural pronouns being used pouring out of Daniel. Keep in mind he is the only there; he is the only one praying. He's interceding. He's petitioning.

Now notice what he does there in verse seven, because this is profound! **Oh LORD, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face.** Does Daniel approach the LORD by justifying himself and saying, "LORD, you should hear me because look at all the things that I have done. Look at how good I've been. Look at the sacrifices I have made on your behalf. You should hear me." Daniel doesn't do that. He justifies God alone, and he condemns himself.

Now think about this for a second. I bring this up because I've had some very disturbing conversations with people who are not even confessing to me. They're simply sharing their heart and how angry they are at God. They are mad at God because of what they are going through. In their minds, "This shouldn't be happening to me. Why is God doing this to me? Why would God put me through this if He loves me? Why would this happen?"

I'm going to tell you right now; if you want to be locked out of the throne room, with the LORD turning a deaf ear, go before Him with anger, accusing Him, blaming Him, and justifying yourself, you will be a dead man. That is absolutely a worthless prayer. Don't bother going to prayer because you have the wrong heart. Besides, who are we to condemn a holy and righteous God or to question His will? You do not want to approach Him like this.

Keep in mind Daniel was a righteous, God-fearing man, whom God favored, and not for a second did Daniel justify himself in the sight of the Father. He humbled himself and justified God alone. It is a display of absolute, pure humility. Remember this was one of the principles if you want to have successful prayer. Humility; you need to employ this.

Think about the parable in Luke 18:9-14. Two men came before the LORD. One was a tax collector, and the other is a Pharisee. He was religious; he was the one who was respected for knowing God, for teaching about God, and for dedicating his life to God. The Pharisee rises up and says something like, "Man, I'm glad I'm not like this pile of filth next to me. I fast twice a week. I give tithes of all that I possess." This is his prayer before the LORD. He is justifying himself. The tax collector, who is often scourging, who is considered a traitor to Jewish people and completely hated, is the one who is broken before the LORD. He's on his knees beating his chest saying—**God, be merciful to me a sinner!** At the end of this, Yeshua declared it was the tax collector who went away justified rather than the Pharisee.

That is a huge component of how we enter into prayer. It is our heart. It is to come from pureness, holiness, and humility recognizing God's infinite power and that we are but dust. That's how we approach the King.

We don't even approach men in authority here on earth like that. We see people who are angry with God, yet these are the same people who go to fleshly bosses who don't even know the LORD and submit themselves to them. They will not even speak against them. At least not openly. This is just a display of demented thinking and perverse minds and hearts?

Returning to the beginning of Daniel 9:7-10. Again, notice the plural pronouns—⁷ **O LORD, righteousness belongs to You, but to us shame of face, as it is this day--to the men of Judah, to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those near and those far off in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of the unfaithfulness which they have committed against You.** ⁸ **O LORD, to us belongs shame of**

face, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because **we** have sinned against You. ⁹ To the LORD our God belong mercy and forgiveness, though **we** have rebelled against Him. ¹⁰ **We** have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God, to walk in His Laws, which He set before us by His servants the prophets (emphasis added).

When you look at Daniel's prayer, you find complete brokenness. When you read Psalm 34, it is such a powerful thing—**The LORD is near to those who have a broken heart. Here you see Daniel's brokenness. He's completely broken.**

Daniel 9:11—¹¹ **Yes, all Israel has transgressed Your Law, and has departed so as not to obey Your voice; therefore the curse and the oath written in the Law of Moses the servant of God have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against Him.**

This is an amazing thing. Daniel continues to justify the LORD. Look at Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 27- 28 and remember all those curses the LORD promised. God tells the people at Mount Sinai if they do such and such a thing, here will be the consequence. To do good will result in blessing. Go against God's instructions and it will result in a curse. In Deuteronomy 11:26-28 it says—²⁶ **Behold, I set before you today a blessing and a curse: ²⁷ the blessing, if you obey the commandments of the LORD your God which I command you today; ²⁸ and the curse, if you do not.**

Daniel is recognizing, "LORD, we're guilty. We have not kept Your Law, and You are justified in this." God is completely justified. Think about all these passages we have in Scripture like Proverbs 3:12—**For whom the LORD loves He corrects.** Psalm 119:67—**Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now I keep Your word.** Psalm 119:71—**It is good for me that I have been afflicted, That I may learn Your statutes.**

It is through affliction and discipline we learn righteousness. When you discipline your children, they learn righteousness. By the unfortunate experience they learn they don't want to do that again. They learn to make it right so they do not experience the discipline again. It is the same between God and us.

Moving to Daniel 9:12—¹² **And He has confirmed His words, which He spoke against us and against our judges who judged us, by bringing upon us a great disaster; for under the whole heaven such has never been done as what has been done to Jerusalem. ¹³ As it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come upon us; **yet we have not made our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities and understand Your truth** (emphasis added).**

Daniel recognizes the problem and why they are not restored. It is because Israel has not gone to Him in prayer. They have not turned from their wicked ways. Go back and look at 2 Chronicles 7:14—**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.** Daniel is laying out truth upon truth upon truth. This is an example of true success in prayer and true intercession.

Continuing in Daniel 9:14—¹⁴ **Therefore the LORD has kept the disaster in mind, and brought it upon us; for the LORD our God is righteous in all the works which He does, though we have not obeyed His voice.** Again, God is justified. No matter what we're going through, we deserve it. God is justified and is holy. This is an example of how you want to pray. You want to pray with power. If you want God to receive you, this is how we need to pray.

Think about Paul in his epistle 2 Timothy 2:11 where Paul says— *This is a faithful saying*: He drops down to verse 13— *If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.*

What a powerful statement and it fits perfectly with what Daniel is doing in this prayer. Daniel understood that concept— *If we are faithless, He remains faithful.* He's God. He is perfect. He is Holy. He never fails.

Remember what it says in Isaiah 59:1. *Surely the arm of the LORD is not too short to save.* The problem is us. Our sins have separated us from God; therefore, we need to remind the LORD we understand this in confession. Confession equals healing.

Daniel 9:15—*and now O LORD Our God who brought your people out of the land of Egypt with a mighty hand and made yourself a name as it is this day? Oh we have sinned we have done wickedly* (emphasis added). Again, we see this presented in the plural just like in the LORD's Prayer—*Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors* (emphasis added). What Daniel is laying out is exactly what is in the LORD's Prayer.

Moving on verse Daniel 9:16—*O LORD, according to all Your righteousness, I pray* (emphasis added). Does Daniel come to the LORD and say, "LORD, you really have to look and see what an amazing guy I've been. Look at the sacrifices I have made for You. You really need to be in awe of what I have done, and You should really be starting to hear the words I'm speaking to you just because of what I've done for You." He does not approach the LORD like that. Instead—*according to Your righteousness.* This is all he is petitioning. It is all based upon the LORD's righteousness.

I love what David says in Psalm 31:1—*deliver me in Your righteousness.* David knew how to pray. He didn't say, "Deliver me because of my own righteousness." He asks to be delivered in God's righteousness. In fact, you can go to Psalm 71:16 where David says—*I will make mention of Your righteousness, of Yours only.*

Again in Psalm 16:2 we read David saying—*My goodness is nothing apart from You.* In Deuteronomy 9, Moses is telling the children of Israel, "Don't think for a moment you're entering into the land of Israel because of your own righteousness." He specifically says, "It is not because of your righteousness. It is actually because of the wickedness of these nations." So this is this is how we pray. This is a key aspect.

Returning to Daniel 9:16—*O LORD, according to all Your righteousness, I pray, let Your anger and Your fury be turned away from Your city Jerusalem, Your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and Your people are a reproach to all those around us.*

That's interesting. Look at what it says in Psalm 122:6—*שְׁאַלוּ שְׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם יְשֻׁלְיֵי אֶהְבֵּנָהּ*. It says—*Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: "May they prosper who love you."*

This is intercession, and what is Daniel praying for? He's interceding. He's praying for Jerusalem. That is really a synecdoche [a figure of speech] for the Jewish people as a whole. Jerusalem is a synecdoche for the whole body of Messiah. Daniel is interceding on behalf of the whole nation.

This is Daniel's concern. He is mourning what has happened. The destruction of Jerusalem was merely the physical manifestation of the spiritual reality that Israel, the Jewish people, had been destroyed through sin.

Moving on Daniel 9:17-8—¹⁷ **Now therefore, our God, hear the prayer of Your servant** (emphasis added). Notice, he doesn't say servants because it's not plural. This is not corporate. This is private intercession and his supplications for the LORD's sake. **And his supplications, and for the LORD's sake cause Your face to shine on Your sanctuary, which is desolate.** ¹⁸ **O my God, incline Your ear and hear; open Your eyes and see our desolations, and the city which is called by Your name; for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies** (emphasis added).

That is how we approach Yeshua in prayer. When we come to Him in prayer, we recognize there is nothing we have to boast about in this life, but we approached Him because of His mercy. It is solely because of Who He is. **The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth** (Exodus 34:6). This is how the LORD introduces Himself in Exodus 34, and we read it every week, and Daniel reminds Him of what he is hanging on. Daniel trusts God's mercy.

Daniel 9:19—**O LORD, hear! O LORD, forgive! O LORD, listen and act!** That's fascinating. You cannot help but draw a parallel to that of the Aaronic benediction. Do you know that in the Aaronic benediction the name of the LORD is spoken three times. This is clearly very intentional because it is on the testimony of two or three all things are established. So it goes:

The LORD bless you
and keep you;
the LORD make His face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the LORD lift up His countenance upon you
and give you peace.

This is an awesome blessing. Isn't it fascinating Daniel comes out and say— **O LORD, hear! O LORD, forgive! O LORD, listen and act!** Daniel is asking, "Oh, please God. Help us; bless us."

Continuing in Daniel 9:19-20—**Do not delay for Your own sake, my God, for Your city and Your people are called by Your name.** ²⁰ **Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel** (emphasis added).

I want you to understand the context here is not, "My stupid brothers are a bunch of idiots. You need to forgive them. I'm not being like them." It is vastly different, having an attitude of judgment against your brothers, versus the heart that Daniel has, "Please God, have mercy on them. Save them. They know not what they do. Have mercy O God." Daniel's heart is with those two greatest commandments—**You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind** (Deuteronomy 6:5), **and You shall love your neighbor as yourself** (Leviticus 19:18). Daniel is displaying love for his neighbor. This is a true, sincere hope; a concern and care for them.

Continuing in Daniel 9:20-23—**and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God,** ²¹ **yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.** ²² **And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. [Listen to this. This is the crescendo of this prayer.]** ²³ **At the beginning of your supplications**

the command went out (emphasis added). Think about that for a second. The moment Daniel's knees hit the floor, and he opened his mouth in prayer, with a total heart of humility, and faith believing and persevering in prayer, and justifying God, was the moment he was in the throne room. He was in the throne room of God, and God heard him. What does the King of glory, the King of the universe, do? He immediately gives the command. The heavens probably quaked when He spoke and gave the command, and Gabriel rushed to meet a man of flesh who alone kneeled down before the LORD and prayed. Now you tell me there's no power in prayer.

He was a man of flesh just like we are. He has fallen. Yes, he had sinned. But this man when he prayed properly, when he interceded on behalf of his brothers not making it just about him, when he was that intercessor, look what happened. The heavens quake and this Angel is sent to him.

Continuing in Daniel 9:23—**and I have come to tell you, for you are greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision.** This is an incredible example of how to pray. This is an incredible example of why you should value prayer and why we should be literally dedicating ourselves to prayer not just for ourselves but as intercessors.

James says this in James 5:16—**Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed** (emphasis added). We're commanded to be intercessors, and look at the power. When we pray for one another, the expectation is there's going to be miraculous things that take place. There will be healings. There will be bondages broken. These things will happen. The more you look at this, I don't know how we can become complacent in prayer. This is where the power is. This is where we need to be.

How many of you heard about the recent story where a man literally threw a little boy off the third story of the mall? The man was attempting to kill someone and tried to kill this child. The child fell three stories and hit concrete.

The most amazing thing is the doctors say this is miraculous. It looks more like he fell off a bike instead of a three story fall. This kid should be dead, but he is alive. The most amazing thing out of all of it is the second it happened the first thing they said came out of his mother's mouth was, pray for my son. Immediately, she herself went into prayer.

I'm going to tell you right now; the only reason that little boy is alive is because of her faith. She did not doubt. She went to prayer. Most people would tell you to call 911 and get the ambulance out here. She, however, knew to go to prayer. Talk about a person of faith! There's no question. Yeshua spared that little boy. That's the power of prayer.

I want us to be an entire community of these kinds of people that believe, and when something happens we instinctively know to pray. I can even remember about six months ago something happened and one of my daughter's response was, "We need to pray." I was shocked because I didn't expect that, and I was going someplace different in my mind. That, however was her response, we need to pray.

This is who we need to be. How embarrassing for a person to profess Christ, to profess the name of Yeshua, and have no understanding of how to pray or to access that power. You know, we are powerless if we are not prayer warriors; if we are not intercessors on behalf of one another.

Go to Philippians 1:19 to show you how much emphasis Paul put on prayer. **For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ** (emphasis added). The background is Paul is in prison. Most men at this point might say, "What did I do to deserve this? This is horrible." They might start to carry a bad attitude and their faith might start to deteriorate. Paul, however, with rejoicing, knows there are people praying for him, and he holds so much power and confidence in it and says, "Because of them, I'm going to be set free."

That is unbelievable. This is where we need to be. This is who we need to be in this age. We are coming to the time of the coming of the Messiah. Yeshua is upon us, and wickedness has no measure.

This is who we need to be right now. We need to be in prayer. We need to focus on it.

Going to Acts 12:5 we find this—**Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church** (emphasis added). May the LORD God surround me with people like this, and I actually pray for that. I want to be surrounded by people that give up constant prayer.

Do you know what happened in Peter's situation as he was in prison? Because of their prayers, God commanded an angel to come down and set him free. Peter was bound in chains and under guard by soldiers. The Angel comes into Peter's cell, the chains fall off, and Peter walks out. It's so surreal. Peter doesn't think it is real until he gets out through the gates and he starts walking. Only then does he come to his right mind and recognizes this has actually happened. That's the power of prayer.

How many stories do we have to read before we're convinced and set our idols down? How long before you walk away from those idols in your heart. What has to happen to convince us to become men and women of prayer?

Philippians 1:3-4—**³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy** (emphasis added). Every prayer Paul prayed was intercessory prayer. He never forgot the church and his brothers. He was constantly offering prayer for them.

When Yeshua prayed—**Our Father**—He was praying an intercessory prayer. So when you read that prayer, you understand how this works. When he said—forgive us our debts, lead us not into temptation, and deliver us from the evil one—that is what a spiritual warrior looks like. This is the mentality they carry. They are men of prayer.

1 Thessalonians 5:25—**Brethren, pray for us**. You have to understand we are again talking about the Apostle Paul who has an anointing that is so powerful that rags and towels are being brought from him and demons are flying out of people. He has this anointing, and he's asking for prayer. That tells me he knows something about prayer that is absolutely critical and vital for the faith. It also tells me he understands there is a war, and the ultimate weapon in this war is prayer. This is where we go.

Do you remember that amazing Christian movie, War Room? It was all about prayer. What a fantastic picture.

Going to 2 Chronicles 30:18-20—**¹⁸ For a multitude of the people, many from Ephraim, Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet they ate the Passover contrary to what was written. But Hezekiah prayed for them, saying, "May the good LORD provide atonement for everyone ¹⁹ who prepares his heart to seek God, the LORD God of his fathers, though he is not cleansed according to**

the purification of the sanctuary." ²⁰ **And the LORD listened to Hezekiah and healed the people** (emphasis added).

They actually came into Passover and acted inappropriately. They had not cleansed themselves; therefore, they were not to keep the Passover because they were defiled. What they did was abominable because God is a holy God. So one man drops to his knees, praises to the LORD, and asks the LORD to have mercy on them because they were really doing it with the right heart. Hezekiah was basically saying, "LORD, have mercy on them. They're not doing it out of rebellion."

There's a difference. These men were doing it out of the pureness of their own hearts; however, they were not cleansed. So Hezekiah prays this prayer, and God spares them. They're healed. That is awesome. Another example of intercessory prayer.

Matthew 9:2—**Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith...** (emphasis added). Now keep something in mind. This is not the faith of the paralytic man himself. It's the four men who had literally lifted him up and brought him to Yeshua. He couldn't do it. He would have never ever been able to get there.

There are going to be times when we have people we need to lift up in prayer. These people will be in a weakened state. They may need healing; they may need deliverance. That's where our job comes in as intercessors. This is what we are called to do. We are called to intercede on their behalf.

Let me take this to a whole other level. Psalm 35:11-14—¹¹ **Fierce witnesses rise up; they ask me things that I do not know.** ¹² **They reward me evil for good, to the sorrow of my soul.** ¹³ **But as for me, when they were sick, My clothing was sackcloth; I humbled myself with fasting; and my prayer would return to my own heart.** ¹⁴ **I paced about as though he were my friend or brother; I bowed down heavily, as one who mourns for his mother** (emphasis added).

This is a man of God and what it looks like to be a true intercessor. Even when people are mistreating you and something befalls them, we need to notice David's heart. He was a man after the LORD's own heart. He started to pray and fast for these people. My goodness! We can't even fast today even if someone were to tell you that you were going to get a car. We can't get people to fast even if you tell them they will get some physical pleasure out of it, let alone spiritual reasons. If this is the case, how are you going to get people to fast for you when you've been personally wronged?

Do you understand how far away from home we are? When I say home, I'm talking about the first century Church, the apostles, and how they displayed the faith and walked in love and holiness. They were willing to sacrifice even for people who were mistreating them.

It really is an amazing thought Ravenhill came across. He really immersed himself in prayer and in analyzing the character of man. He said something to the effect of, "Have you ever noticed how the people you gossip about are never the people you pray for, and the people you pray for you never gossip about?"

Think about that. It's true. The people you are gossiping about you don't pray for; however, the people you're praying for you never gossip about. You want to kill gossip, start praying for everyone. Think about it.

All right. Moving to Matthew 5:44 where we are going to see Yeshua says the same thing—**But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you** (emphasis added). That is exactly how David did it. We are to do as David did. This is what Yeshua taught. We are to pray for them.

That's when supernatural bondages are broken. I can tell you that you as a believer in Yeshua are literally walking in liberty and freedom when you're able to, with integrity, make this prayer. However, how sad it is when we recognize we're not able to make that prayer and pray for these kinds of people. It tells you, you're not in control; you're in bondage.

We don't want to believe that because we believe we are justified being angry. This, however, is not what the LORD has called us to do. He's called us to set us free and to walk in that liberty and freedom.

With that said, I want to take you back to Matthew 6 where we are going to take these two things, prayer and fasting, and we're going to bring them together. It's interesting because when you go to Matthew 6 you see how the LORD teaches us how to pray. He goes through the LORD's Prayer and teaches them to pray. Do you know what the very next thing is that He teaches His Apostles to do? He teaches them how to fast. He gives them instructions on fasting. Do you think that's a coincidence? No! That is because you can't fast without praying. You can pray without fasting, but you can't fast without praying.

This is what we read in Matthew 6:16-18—¹⁶ **Moreover, when you fast, do not be like the hypocrites, [This is exactly how he opened up in prayer instructing the disciple not to pray like the hypocrites.] with a sad countenance. For they disfigure their faces that they may appear to men to be fasting. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.** ¹⁷ **But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face,** [this is important] ¹⁸ **so that you do not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly** (emphasis added).

That is interesting. Prayer is to be done ultimately in secret. Not that we can't corporately pray. Fasting is to be done the same way where we're not to let on or tell other people we're actually fasting because we're not supposed to be seeking glory or sympathy from men. We're supposed to be seeking the glory of God and the praise of God.

Yeshua also tells us to prepare yourself by washing your face and anointing your head. Now what you need to understand is, in this command, Yeshua is going directly against the rabbi's teaching. The rabbi's have taught the exact opposite. I will take you to the Mishnah and show you a passage specific to fasting. **And they are forbidden [when they fast] to work, bathe, anoint, put on a sandal, and have sexual relations** (The Mishnah, Taanit).

There are five things that the rabbis have forbidden to be done while you fast. Notice two of them, bathing and anointing. Yeshua, however, told us we are to anoint our head and wash our face. We are to do the exact opposite of what the rabbis tell us. So this is His instruction in regard to fasting.

Now, there are others facets we need to cover. We're not going to cover them all today, but I'm going to give you a couple here. To do this, I want to take you to Matthew 9:14-15 where we find an interesting discourse—¹⁴ **Then the disciples of John came to Him, saying, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often, but Your disciples do not fast?"** ¹⁵ **And Jesus said to them, "Can the friends of the bridegroom**

mourn as long as the bridegroom is with them? But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them, **and then they will fast** (emphasis added).

Why I'm showing you this is because this is absolutely critical. Here you have John's disciples, they're confused. They come to Yeshua and say, "The Pharisees fast often. We're John's disciples and we're fasting often, but we're looking at your disciples, and they're not fasting at all."

So the first thing to recognize is first century Judaism was immersed in fasting. It was a way of life for them, but they're upset because Yeshua's disciples are not fasting. Yeshua tells them there's a time coming, make no mistake, when He would be killed, resurrected, and taken from them. He tells them—**then they will fast.**

You need to pick up on that. Yeshua's expectation for His disciples, which includes us today, is you will be fasting. This is the expectation.

Again, I tell you to look at the early church. We are a long way from home. The church today does not fast. It's not even a part of church culture, as they would say. They have nothing to do with it, yet this was a way of life for the first-century church.

The Apostle Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:27 tells us—**in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often** (emphasis added). Paul is talking about all these travails and fleshly tribulations he goes through, and he shares he is in fasting often. Again, I tell you this is a man who has an anointing like no other. This is an incredible anointing, and he still saw a need to fast often.

We go back to the Didache 8:1 and read this—**But let not your fasts be with the hypocrites** [the Pharisees]; **for they fast on the second and fifth day of the week** [Monday and Thursday]; **but do ye fast on the fourth day** [Wednesday] **and the Preparation (Friday)** (emphasis added).

So here we see the early church was commanding the church to fast two days a week. Now, I don't want you to get hung up on this whole Wednesday and Friday thing. I definitely would give another teaching on that. I don't necessarily even agree with that, but what I want you to focus on is they saw the necessity to fast multiple times a week.

People, it's hilarious to watch you come in on Yom Kippur while fasting. This is one day out of the year, and you barely make it out of here. It is like you're dying. People dread Yom Kippur because of the fastening. It is one day a year, and they absolutely dread it. Can you imagine twice a week? Can you even imagine once a week? I would blow all the wind out of your sails if I told you we were mandating a fast at Corner Fringe once a month. We are a long way from home. We are in trouble.

Well, again, if we want the things to happen to us that we read about in the book of Acts, then you are going to have to do the things they did. That is all there is to it.

I'm going to close with this letter from Polycarp to the Philippians—**let us be self-controlled with respect to prayer and persevere in fasting**, earnestly asking the all-seeing God "to lead us not into temptation," because, as the LORD said, "the spirit is indeed willing, **but the flesh is weak**" (emphasis added).

I show you Polycarp because he's from the early church. He is from somewhere around the early second century. It is said he was actually taught by the Apostle John, so he's the next generation.

So what is his focus? He is teaching the Philippians they need to go back. He tells them they need to be fasting. Why? [Because the flesh is weak.](#)

Do you want to crucify your flesh? Try fasting. Do you want to know how in control your flesh is over you? There are a lot of delusional Christians out there who actually believe they have their flesh under control. Do you want to know if you really have it under control? Try fasting.

I'm going to tell you right now if you say to yourself, "On Monday I'm going too fast." I'm going to tell you Sunday, all through the day, your flesh is going to tell you, "I forgot I was doing this on Monday. You know what? I'll do it on Tuesday." If you think I am kidding, I am not. I am dead serious. Your flesh will give you 15 reasons why you can't or shouldn't fast on Monday. That is when we will find out who you really are.

You see, I never found out who I really was until I was challenged with fasting on a continuous basis. That's when the rubber hits the road.

This is it, and this is what we need to do. So next week we're going to dig into fasting. We will look at how to fast; the way to fast. We will continue talking about why we should fast and the power of fasting itself.