

**SPECIAL  
WEBINAR EDITION**

"But the days will come,  
when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them,  
and then shall they fast in those days." - Jesus Christ

**A STRATEGIC SPIRITUAL WARFARE FOR OUR TIMES**

# **Unleashing the Power of Prayer & Fasting**

**The believer's guide *to*  
POWER AND VICTORY**

**Charles E. Smoot**

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The Believer's Guide to Power and Victory

By

Charles E. Smoot, M.Th

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Printed in the United States of America  
ISBN-13: 978-1501065194

Cover Design by Angie Zambrano  
[http://fiverr.com/pro\\_ebookcovers](http://fiverr.com/pro_ebookcovers)

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This book is dedicated to



**Bishop James B. Thornton, D.D.**

My Father in the Lord,  
who taught me how to pray and fast.

# Contents

<u>Forward</u>	<u>v</u>
<u>Preface</u>	<u>vi</u>
<u>Introduction</u>	<u>1</u>
Chapter	
1. <u>Fighting Fire with Fire</u>	<u>12</u>
2. <u>Prayer and Fasting</u>	<u>18</u>
3. <u>I Am Come for Thy Words</u>	<u>26</u>
4. <u>A Place Called “Yonder”</u>	<u>31</u>
5. <u>Beyond the Flesh Barrier</u>	<u>42</u>
6. <u>Go Back Again</u>	<u>52</u>
7. <u>Fasting and Prayer</u>	<u>68</u>
8. <u>When Thou Fastest</u>	<u>76</u>
9. <u>Cover me – I’m going In!</u>	<u>89</u>
<u>Afterward</u>	<u>98</u>
<u>About the Author</u>	<u>101</u>

# Forward

**W**e are living in a time of global uncertainty; fear has captured many as they face the unpredictability in this world.

People are concerned about the economy, the weather, international unrest, marital relationships, sickness and disease. Many are wondering where to turn and who to listen to.

Is there hope in these troubled times?

In this book, Charles Smoot lays out for us a strategy that can change our world and the people in it. If you are tired of the way things are in the world and would like to see a change, I encourage you to read this book.

This book addresses biblical practices that work, and have been neglected by the church for many years.

Every believer needs to read this book to recapture and revive the practice of prayer and fasting.

**Earl F. Wright,**

Pastor of The Church of God in the Word, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and a member of the Board of Elders of the Association of Charismatic Reformed Churches (ACRC).

# Preface

**W**elcome to *Unleashing the Power of Prayer and Fasting, the Believer's Guide to Power and Victory*. This book is designed to be used as a stand-a-lone guide, a workbook in small groups, or in conjunction with our interactive media and online webinar series.

If you are reading this book, it is a very good indication that you are not a *nominal* Christian (one in name only); you are the real-deal. You are a genuine born-again believer in Jesus Christ, the Son of God; who may be in need of such things as, direction in your life, healing in your body or intimacy in your walk with Christ.

Perhaps you struggle in your Christian walk and need victory in some area of your life. Maybe you need a special miracle. I cannot promise you this book will answer all your questions, or solve all your problems.

However, I can promise you; if you take action on what is presented herein, it will be a tremendous help in understanding what the saints of old have long realized. That is:

**There is power in prayer and victory in prayer with fasting.**

There has never been a more urgent time for God's people to pray and fast than today. It has been more than thirty years since I first read the book, **POWER THROUGH PRAYER** by E.M. Bounds. His works on prayer have impacted my prayer life more than any other.

This book, because of its subject matter will not appeal to the majority of today's Christians. Therefore, I suspect it will not be a bestseller by most standards. To the nominal Christian, this book may scarcely arouse anything more than curiosity, suspicion, or criticism.

Nevertheless, this book will raise the level of awareness among the ranks of all of God's people who are being gently but powerfully aroused by the Spirit to pray and fast. To be sure, the devil does not want us to pray. Furthermore, you can bet he does not want us to discover (or rediscover) the power of prayer and fasting.

We live in a very unstable and volatile time; the Earth is a tinderbox ready to erupt into one huge mass of flame. The world and the church cry out for deliverance. St Paul wrote: "the whole creation is inwardly groaning; waiting for *the manifestation of the sons of God*" (Rom. 8:19).

This book was birthed from a season of prayer and fasting that began three months ago. Since then, I produced this simple guide to prayer and fasting. I hope it kindles a fire that, when fanned by the Holy Spirit, will become a burning bush that cannot be consumed.

By His grace,

Charles E. Smoot, M.Th  
Founder—PRAY-FAST-AMERICA

# Introduction

*"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand." (Eph. 6:12-13 KJV)*

**E**very Christian should become fully acquainted with the strategic principles of spiritual warfare. The bible reveals we are in the midst of a great spiritual war. This invisible supernatural war rages in the dimensions of the spirit world, between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light (2 Kings 6:16-17).

This is not a new war; this war has existed for unknown eons of time. It is a war where fallen angels and demon spirits, the enemies of God) have become the rulers of the darkness of this world (age).

Satan, the *god* and *prince* of this world is the antagonist and instigator of this primeval conflict (Jn. 12:31; 2 Cor. 4:4). With his army of fallen angels and demon spirits, his purpose is to thwart the eternal plan and purposes of God in heaven and Earth. At the center of this conflict is God's prize creation, Man.

## ***The Invisible Enemy:***

Whether we realize it or not an unseen, evil enemy is all around us. Whether we wake or sleep, this spiritual warfare rages on.

Though most of us are unaware, unwitting, and unwilling participants, this war touches the everyday lives of every human being on Earth. There are no neutral parties in this war; there are no exceptions. No one is exempt.

Satan hates mankind. However, none are more hated by Satan than the servants of God and His Son, Jesus Christ. For those servants who do not understand this spiritual warfare, neither how to fight it, it is a war with real life-changing consequences.

Although we cannot see this warfare with our physical eyes, nor perceive it with our senses, the effects of this war are more real and more devastating than any natural warfare on Earth.

One thing is certain: This invisible war cannot be fought with guns, missiles, tanks, and bombs. It cannot be fought with threats, intimidation, diplomacy, or good intentions. It can only be fought with weapons wielded in the spirit. It is a deadly fight to the finish and there can be no peace treaty.

## ***What is Spiritual Warfare?***

The sad truth is many believers do not understand spiritual warfare and how to fight it. Being ignorant of Satan's devices, many believers are often brutally victimized and taken captive by him at his will (2 Cor. 2:10; 2 Tim. 2:26).

Spiritual warfare is more than just acknowledging the spiritual conflict between the armies of God and the armies of Satan.

Spiritual warfare is the believer's personal struggle against Satan and his campaign to deceive, hinder, frustrate, and bring to naught the purposes of God in the believer's life.

However, understanding this reality alone is not enough. The believer must also understand **there is a strategic basis from which all spiritual warfare must be prosecuted.** That is:

Spiritual warfare must begin with the believer's personal submission and obedience to Christ, and to his will and purposes in the believer's life.

Sadly, many believers do not take this invisible war seriously and are ill-equipped to do battle with the powers of darkness (Lk. 22:53; 22:53; Col. 1:13). Therefore, many believers are ineffective in their warfare against Satan because they have not first submitted themselves to God, and to His will and purposes for their own life. This gives Satan a strategic advantage over them (Jam. 4:7).

It is simply not enough to acknowledge this warfare exists. We must also join the battle daily and undermine the powerful enemy who desires to *steal, kill, and destroy* our very life from the Earth (Jn. 10:10).

## *Be Not Ignorant of His devices:*

Although the devil is a supernatural being with great power and intelligence, we must remember, **the devil's greatest power lies in his ability to deceive.** His ruthlessness, cunning, and craftiness are unequalled.

Still, it is alarming that many Christians do not believe there is a genuine malevolent spirit-being called "**the devil,**" and that he is personally involved in the affairs of man. These Christians falsely attribute his devious works to human nature, ignorance, or other native causes. This is undoubtedly the greatest deception of Satan, and many Christians fall prey to his deception.

Do not underestimate this ancient and sworn enemy, for he hates the children of God with an unequalled hatred and is relentless in his efforts to attack all that is holy.

Perhaps nowhere is this warfare more devastating than in the home. Regrettably, even among Christian households it is evident that **Satan is systematically unraveling the very fabric of moral society one household at a time.** Beloved, it is time to wake up!

## *Satan's Power is Limited:*

There are many ways the believer can be attacked by the powers of darkness. The book of *Job* reveals that Satan has the power to attack and afflict God's people. A spiritual attack can be in the person of Satan himself, or from the fallen angels and demons who serve him.

Satan will stop at nothing until he has neutralized your effectiveness in the Kingdom of God.

St. Peter writes that Satan is *as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour*. He can cause physical, mental, and emotional pain and sickness, natural disasters, wars, and in some instances death. He has the power to attack your loved ones, destroy your finances, bring division, persecution, and otherwise wreak havoc in other areas of your life where others are under his deception and influence (1 Pet: 5:8; Job 1, 2).

In spite of this, we must remember that **Satan is not omnipotent (all powerful)**. His power, though great, is limited, and his attack on the believer is only by divine permission and according to divine purpose. This means:

**God does not give Satan absolute power to do anything he pleases, whenever he pleases, to whomever he pleases.**

Let us take courage in knowing that God's sovereignty in a believer's life cannot be undermined by Satan. God is still ultimately in control of the affairs of your life. Nevertheless, you will be tested by Satan (with God's permission), but only up to a point (Job. 1:9-12; 2:4-6; 1 Cor. 10:13).

The believer must learn to arm himself or herself with the weapons of spiritual warfare and to *fight the good fight of faith* (1 Tim. 6:12).

## ***Spiritual Warfare or Spiritual discipline?***

Part of Satan's strategy is to provoke God's people and incite them to rebellion, disobedience, and sin against God and his will in their lives. However, **there is a twist to spiritual warfare that many believers are unaware of.**

- 1) Whenever we live or operate outside of God's Word or principles, we permit Satan legal access and right-of-way to bind, afflict, and oppress us.
- 2) Sin, rebellion, and disobedience can be the direct cause of our spiritual oppression from Satan.
- 3) God Himself will actually employ (make use of) Satan for the purposes of bringing corrective spiritual discipline to an erring believer.

When such is the case, Satan's role reverts from an antagonist and *accuser* to that of an agent of divine discipline and correction (1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Tim. 1:20). In some instances, this discipline can be terminal and result in premature physical death (Acts 5:1-11). This truth is borne out in Paul's letter to the Corinthians:

*"For I verily, as absent in body, but present in spirit, have judged already, as though I were present, concerning him that hath so done this deed,*

*In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ,*

*To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."* (1 cor. 5: 3-5)

Although the intent of Satan's attacks is to harm God's people, there exists the potential that (through God's

sovereignty) such attacks may actually serve a beneficial purpose.

That is, the purpose of such attacks is to administer corrective discipline designed to bring us to *repentance* (Heb. 12:6-11)

However, if a believer does not understand this phenomenon, they may actually confuse **spiritual discipline** with spiritual warfare and may wonder why they are under such attack to begin with. Although the symptoms of the attack and oppression are the same, they are for different reasons and purposes. What appears to be spiritual warfare may actually be spiritual discipline sent by God to help refine the character of the believer and make him or her more Christ-like.

Having this distinction in mind:

Whenever we are under attack by Satan, we should first seek to understand the reason or root causes of the attack.

Prayerfully ask; **why am I under spiritual attack?**

- 1) Is it because I am in God's will (in that case, I am experiencing spiritual warfare)?
- 2) Is it because I am out of God's will (in that case, I am experiencing spiritual discipline)?

The answer to this question will reveal the **reason** for the attack and provide additional insight into its purpose (See 2 Cor. 12: 1-10).

## ***Spiritual Oppression:***

Although a genuine Spirit-filled believer cannot be possessed by Satan or a demon spirit, a believer may indeed be **oppressed** by demon spirits. This oppression comes in many forms. Whenever we are experiencing an attack from Satan, it is deliberate and with an intended purpose. Except for purposes of spiritual discipline, such attacks are intended to:

- a) entrap us
- b) test our character
- c) challenge our faith
- d) weaken our resolve to live for Christ, and
- e) destroy our testimony

Satan's purpose is to undermine some area of our life so that we may be rendered ineffective for the purposes of God. He will seek to:

- a) exploit any area of weakness in our character
- b) undermine our credibility, and
- c) destroy trust in our relationships with others

We must not open a doorway permitting Satan access to areas of our lives that expose us to the influence and oppression of demon spirits.

You can be certain that Satan will challenge your spiritual authority and use doubt, fear and intimidation to nullify the power of God's Word in your life.

### ***Fighting Back:***

We will all be tested at different seasons of life. When you think you fought one battle, along comes another. Satan does not respond to threats; he is not moved by our tears or the desperate pleas we make in the flesh. He only responds to the authority of God.

One of the names given to Satan is "tempter." During his wilderness temptation, after fasting and prayer, Jesus overcame the devil with the written *Word of God*. When the devil ended the temptation, *he departed from Him for a season* (Lk. 4:1-13; Matt. 4:1-11).

This underscores the importance of prayer, fasting, and placing God's Word in the mouth of the believer in order to combat Satan. We are told in scripture that *the sword of the Spirit is the Word of God*. God's Word in your mouth will arm your heart and mind with truth, knowledge, and understanding (Eph. 6:17).

Although we should never underestimate the devil, as children of God, we have the power and authority to resist him. But how do we resist him? We resist the devil by being submitted to God and being steadfast in the faith (Jam. 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-9).

We have the assurance of God's Word: if we *resist the devil, he will flee* from us. Nevertheless, when the enemy advances, we must fight back with weapons that are not of this world (Eph. 6:13-18).

In my experience, intercessory prayer is a great weapon against Satan. Give yourself to a great deal of prayer, and during times of severe testing, sometimes it will be necessary to pray and fast (Dan. 9:3; Matt. 17:21; 1 Cor. 7:5).

As you engage in prayer, ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and reveal any unconfessed or unrepented sin in your life that may have opened a doorway for Satan (Psa. 139:24). Then, **take action** on what he reveals to you and bring your life into agreement with God's Word and His plan and purposes for your life.

Even the apostle Paul experienced intense spiritual warfare throughout his ministry. Although, Paul was in God's will, Satan was permitted to war against him. It was only after much prayer that the purpose of Satan's attacks was finally revealed to Paul.

Satan sought to overcome Paul in the area of **spiritual pride**. Although Paul's *thorn in the flesh* was not removed, this warfare produced **humility** in Paul's life and ensured his **total dependence** upon God. In spite of the warfare he experienced, God promised Paul, his grace was with him. In times of weakness, his power would rest upon him (2 Cor. 12:1-10).

**"B**ut the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and **then shall they fast** in those days."

**St. Luke 5:35**

# -1-

## Fighting Fire with Fire

*"In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.*

*In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.*

*Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words." (Daniel 10:1-3, 12)*

**H**ave you felt like you're getting pushed around by the devil lately? Well, it might be time to push back! Every Christian should understand we are in a relentless state of war against evil and wicked spirits that do nothing but harm.

Whether you can appreciate the gravity of the situation (or not) your adversary, Satan, will do everything within his power to keep you from fulfilling your God-given purpose and destiny. Furthermore, the closer you are to fulfilling your

destiny the harder he will wage war against you. This warfare is not a myth of fiction—it is real.

## ***THE WEAPONS OF OUR WARFARE***

Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ wrote:

*(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; (2 Cor. 10:4-5)*

When it comes to your destiny, there comes a time when you have to **"fight fire with fire."** The believer must get-down-to-business and fight against wicked spirits with powerful supernatural weapons that are not of this world, but are of the Spirit.

Prayer and fasting are such weapons. However, these are not just any kind of weapon, but **"mighty"** weapons that are able to demolish the fortresses of evil spirits seeking to destroy us and our way of life (Eph. 6:12).

Let there be no misunderstanding. Demon spirits of secularism and humanism lead a frontal attack on our sacred institutions of marriage and family. They seek to criminalize cherished and long held religious and moral convictions. They do so deceitfully in the name of anti-discrimination and sexual freedom. As a result:

One-by-one the States of this great Union are falling like dominoes under the weight of recent Supreme Court decisions,

as our nation teeters on the brink of a moral and economic collapse.

Moreover, one-by-one church denominations are caving-in to the pressure and influence of un-regenerate church leaders and members, who clamor for LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) "rights" that undermine every Judeo-Christian ethic and tradition of nearly four-thousand years.

Where will it end? More importantly, what can we now do about it?

At this juncture, I do not mean to be severely critical. However, the church of Jesus Christ has gone a long way backward in its understanding of how to fight against the principalities and powers that rule the darkness of this world. No wonder that many Christians, regrettably, are ineffective and are losing the battle against the **wiles** of the devil (Eph. 6:11).

Reading and writing books, preaching sermons, selling video cassettes and CD's are helpful to aid our understanding of this warfare, but these things are not in any degree weapons of this very personal and intense warfare. Clearly, we cannot defeat Satan by these means. It will take supernatural power.

However, very few are willing to confess; when we pray and fast, we are tapping directly into the source of supernatural power. It is a source more powerful than all the money of Wall-Street and all the church combined. It is more powerful than the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of our government, and it is more powerful than any amount of political capitol and influence.

## *Two Essential Goals:*

The two essential things that all Christians need in this warfare are **power** and **victory**. We must have:

- 1) **Power** over the devil, and
- 2) **Victory** over the flesh

There is power in "prayer and fasting" and there is victory in "fasting and prayer."

Mind you, this work is not intended to be a comprehensive treatment on the subject of either prayer or fasting. However, at the outset I want to share a nugget of truth that the Lord gave me many years ago. That is:

**There is a difference between prayer-and-fasting and fasting-and-prayer!**

The difference between the two (which is elaborated on in later chapters) can be found in defining the specific reasons or purpose for this degree of consecration.

When we speak of a degree of consecration, we are speaking of **a depth, level, or degree of dedication and devotion to God** that involves prayer and fasting. However, when prayer and fasting are undertaken together, one essentially has a **primary role**, while the other has a **secondary role**. When these roles are reversed there is a different spiritual dynamic at work.

The secondary role augments and makes the primary effort more effective (See figure 1). Remember, we are essentially talking about, how we obtain power and victory:

We obtain **power with God** through prayer and fasting; and we obtain **victory over self** through fasting and prayer. These are two essential goals of spiritual warfare.

You have a God-given purpose and destiny for your life. Do you know what that purpose and destiny is? Many believers do not.

**THE PRIMARY AND SECONDARY ROLES OF  
PRAYER & FASTING**

(One role is augmented by the other to make the other more effective)

<u>PRIMARY</u>	+	<u>SECONDARY</u>	=	<u>RESULT</u>
1) Prayer	and	Fasting		brings Power with God
2) Fasting	and	Prayer		brings Victory over Self

**(Figure 1)**

Prayer and fasting can help you to understand better the purpose and destiny God has for your life. Satan wants to frustrate that purpose and destiny. He must not succeed.

## After-thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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1) When was the last time you were on a fast?

## Prayer and Fasting

*"And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is lunatick, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him.*

*Then Jesus answered and said, O **faithless** and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour.*

*Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you.*

*Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."  
(Mat. 17:15-21)*

**N**ow that we have defined two essential goals of spiritual warfare, let's get a closer perspective of prayer and fasting.

First, whenever we need God to intervene directly (supernaturally) in a certain situation (either for ourselves or others), we can employ the spiritual weapons of prayer and fasting. As previously stated:

In prayer and fasting, our primary objective is to pray for God's power to be manifest supernaturally in a specific area of need.

### ***Consecration:***

In the Pentecostal and Holiness tradition, we called this experience of prayer with fasting a time or season of **consecration**. The word consecration means, *the separation or the setting apart of oneself to a high and holy purpose*.

During a time of consecration, our prayer becomes a targeted and focused effort with specific intent and purpose, in order to entreat the Lord for a particular thing.

Particularly, this is generally some area of need such as healing, deliverance, or other physical or material need. However, in prayer and fasting, our **secondary objective** is to abstain from food during our consecration. Why? **Fasting will make our praying more effectual**. We add fasting to our prayers in order to affect a better result.

Admittedly, the difference between "prayer and fasting" and "fasting and prayer" may seem subtle or even trivial to some. However, once you understand the difference, it will profoundly affect the way you approach spiritual warfare in

general, and how you approach prayer and fasting, specifically, as a way of achieving one of the essential goals outlined in chapter one (See figure 1).

### ***The Matthew 17:21 Formula:***

When Satan attacks (and he will), we must not cower. Rather than shrink back or lay on the ropes; like a trained fighter, we must actively engage him on the only level that he understands and respects. The Word of God teaches us, time-and-again, that Satan respects the spiritual authority of prayer and fasting (Mat. 17:21). How do we know this?

Because it is written:

*"And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by **prayer and fasting** (Mk. 9:29)."*

This verse alone teaches us more than a few things.

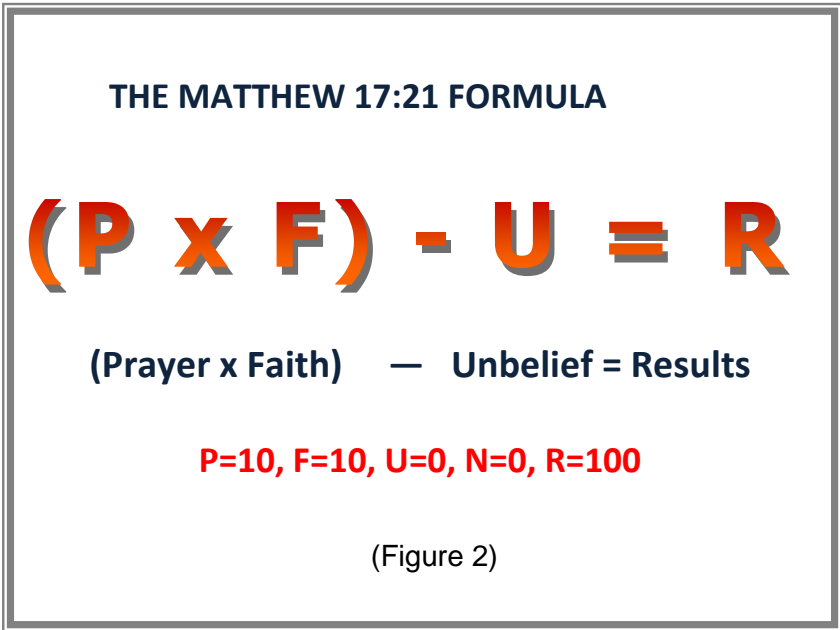
- 1) It boldly declares (and proves) there are some things that can only be accomplished through the Spirit.
- 2) It teaches this kind of result can only be accomplished through the agency of prayer and fasting.

Did you get that? Sometimes prayer alone is not enough!

There are some things that can only be accomplished through the Spirit and as a result of our prayer and fasting.

On this special-occasion Jesus revealed to his disciples an apparent **secret**, and clear strategy; a strategy through which

we may defeat the enemy when all else fails. I call this strategy, "**The Secret Formula to Power and Victory**" or "**The Matthew 17:21 Formula.**" In algebra, it might look something like this (See figure 2):



Essentially what Jesus is revealing to us is—**there is a direct correlation between prayer, fasting, and faith.**

- 1) Jesus is declaring that **unbelief (the absence of faith) cancels out prayer.**
- 2) Jesus is also declaring that **prayer and fasting cancels out unbelief.**

Brothers and sisters this is the secret-formula-weapon that Jesus says is the key to both power and victory.

The simple (but profound) explanation Jesus gave to his disciples was that **unbelief canceled out their power to operate in the supernatural.**

Therefore, because of their unbelief, they *could not* cast the demon out of the young boy. Now if the opposite of unbelief is faith, then **prayer and fasting must be what cancels out unbelief.** In other words:

### Prayer and Fasting Cultivates Faith

It could not be any clearer. The disciples had already tried everything they knew up to that point, but to no avail. Now, with Jesus' further teaching; they learned that some demons only respond to prayer and fasting.

Yes, beloved, the secret is out! It is time to unpack the "big guns." It is time to push back and "fight fire with fire." It is time to push-back from the table in order to push-back the devil who seeks to destroy us through our own **lack of [the] knowledge** of strategic spiritual warfare (Hos. 4:6).

### *The Purpose of Strategy:*

The words of Jesus resound with a loud-and-clear strategic truth: *"Howbeit this kind **goeth** not out but by prayer and fasting."* (Mat. 17:21)

In this verse, the word "*goeth*" is a Greek word that describes a continuous action. This word underscores the idea that prayer and fasting are a consistent action of warfare. It must then of necessity become a **habit** that afterward develops into a **lifestyle choice** for the believer.

Prayer and fasting, therefore, are an ongoing strategy of spiritual warfare.

However, what some Christians do not realize is, you cannot win a single battle and think you have conquered the war. Why? Our entire lifetime on this planet consists of a perpetual series of individual conflicts and battles.

For example, when General Robert E. Lee surrendered at the Appomattox Courthouse April 9<sup>th</sup> 1865, the Confederacy had already won more battles than did the Union; however, it was a superior military strategy that defeated Lee.

When Napoleon Bonaparte was defeated at Waterloo June 18, 1815, he had won most of the individual battles; however, it was a certain flanking strategy that finally defeated the over-confident emperor of France. Strategy wins wars, not numbers. Moreover, superior strategy overcomes the schemes and power of Satan (Eph. 6:11).

Strategically, we cannot see what takes place in the spirit realm with our natural eyes. Nevertheless, it is our strategic duty to devote ourselves to prayer and fasting, even as it is God's duty to answer our prayer and devotion in a manner befitting his over-all purpose in our lives.

It requires the added discipline and devotion of prayer and fasting in order to appreciate God's over-all purpose in our lives. Many believers simply do not know what God's purpose is in their lives because they do not take the business of prayer and fasting seriously.

In summary, "prayer and fasting" and "fasting and prayer" are genuine strategic weapons of spiritual warfare that we can rely on, and engage the enemy with on a continual basis. Nevertheless, many Christians do not truly appreciate this

proven strategy that scripture says is the most effective means of fighting spiritual warfare.

Again, I do not mean to be critical or judgmental; but how many Christians regularly and consistently employ this strategy in their lives?

**Why are pulpits in America silent; when it comes to teaching these important biblical principles of spiritual warfare?**

Some suggest those who occupy the sacred desk do not themselves practice a lifestyle or ministry of prayer and fasting—or perhaps they practice it too infrequently. In addition, how many seminary and bible school graduates are taught prayer and fasting in their seminaries and bible schools? I would guess very few.

## After-thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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1) If prayer and fasting are so important, why aren't more and more Christians availing themselves of the weapons of prayer and fasting?

2) How often does your church come together solely for the purpose of prayer?

3) Does your church practice fasting regularly?

4) Does your pastor preach and teach on fasting regularly?

## I Am Come for Thy Words

*"Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set **thine heart to understand**, and to **chasten thyself** before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.*

*But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.*

*Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days." (Dan. 10:12-14)*

**J**ust how important is prayer and fasting when it comes to understanding God's will? Let us ask Daniel the prophet who served Israel during the Babylonian captivity. He was a man who unleashed the power of prayer and fasting.

For twenty-one days (three weeks) Daniel was engaged in supernatural and invisible warfare, where the forces of light and darkness engaged in immortal combat. This combat occurred because of Daniel's prayer and fasting, in order that he might *understand* and to *chasten* (humble) himself before

God on behalf of his people. The manner of Daniel's fast is described to us here:

*"In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled." (Dan. 10:3)*

This scripture is the basis for what is known today as a **Daniel's fast** (See figure 7).

### ***An Invisible Struggle:***

Daniel's fast lasted three weeks; however, it could have lasted more or less time depending on what time the angel Gabriel could effectively have arrived to his prayers.

As it was with Daniel, so it is with you and me. In our spirit, we are able to perceive an invisible struggle that wages within as we give ourselves to the ministry of prayer and fasting. Notice, I said the **ministry** of prayer and fasting. It is because prayer and fasting can be more than just an occasional experience; it can indeed become a **lifestyle choice** for the believer.

Prayer and fasting are not just for preachers. Many believers have an anointing and a call to serve the Lord and his people as intercessors. You will often find the intercessor in prayer when you call them on the phone or when you drop by to visit.

It is the intercessors and the prayer-warriors that are responsible for much of the success of the local church and various other ministries in the Body of Christ. Prayer and

fasting is a specialized ministry of consecration and service to the Lord.

In the New Testament, we read of Anna the *prophetess*, who served God day and night in the temple through fasting and prayer.

*"And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, and had lived with an husband seven years from her virginity; And she was a widow of about fourscore and four years, which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day." (Lk. 36-37)*

Because she unleashed the power of prayer and fasting in her life, Anna is recognized in scripture for this special ministry. Only eternity will reveal the result of her consecration to the Lord and service in his temple (Lk. 2: 36-38).

*"I am come for thy words"...* said the angel Gabriel to Daniel after his twenty-one-day consecration of prayer and fasting to the Lord.

It was in answer to the *words* (or the prayer) of Daniel, that the angel Gabriel was dispatched from heaven and charged to *fly swiftly* in order to bring to Daniel an understanding that he would later write in the sacred scroll now bearing his name. The scroll (book) contains revelation concerning what would befall his people *in the latter days*. This indicates that the only thing that stands between you and your break-through of victory are; *thy words!*

This bears repeating:

The only thing that stands between you and your deliverance, your victory, and your being able to understand and facilitate God's purpose in your life are words. Your words spoken in prayer have the power to affect the course of history and your personal destiny. Daniel is a living example, that God will answer the prayers of men and women who would dare humble themselves and seek his face on behalf of His people.

We must, therefore, understand; everything in the kingdom of God is conceived and accomplished by the Spirit and in answer to prayer. Indeed, the Levites as priests must go before the people in this supernatural warfare (Josh. 3:3).

Where are the Daniels' of our day? Where are the men and women of God who understand *the times*, and will answer the sacred call to fast and pray, for a generation on the brink of certain moral devastation and destruction?

It is unlikely that Daniel would have received this special revelation and understanding of God's plan and purpose, had he not separated himself to seek God by prayer and fasting. Moreover, it is unlikely that you, nor I, will receive any supernatural benefit of this sort if we do not seek him through prayer and fasting.

### **God cannot answer the prayer that is not prayed!**

Therefore, we should be encouraged to pray and seek the Lord with fasting. Heaven is waiting to hear your words and will respond if you and I will fast and pray.

## After-thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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1) How do your words have the power to change the course of history?

2) Are you on a fast right now?

3) What type of fast are you on?

4) How long was your most recent fast?

# -4-

## A Place Called “Yonder”

*"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, **while I go and pray yonder.** And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. (Mat. 26: 36)*

**T**here are often difficult times and seasons in life when we must go above and beyond our normal devotional habits of prayer. This often requires we stretch ourselves until we come out of our comfort zones.

A comfort zone may be thought of as a no-risk zone or a safe zone.

However, during a consecration of prayer and fasting, we are challenged to go above and beyond our regular devotional effort. One of the best examples of this is the night Jesus went to Gethsemane to pray. St. Matthew continues:

*And he went a little further, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt. And he cometh unto the disciples, and findeth them asleep, and saith unto Peter, What, could ye not watch with me*

*one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: **the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.***

***He went away again the second time, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. And he came and found them asleep again: for their eyes were heavy.***

***And he left them, and went away again, and prayed the third time, saying the same words."** (Mat. 26: 37-44)*

## ***Are You Committed?***

If we could sum up the ministry of prayer and fasting with one word, that word would be—**commitment**. But what is commitment?

Commitment may be thought of as the determination and dedication that are required in order to bind oneself to a certain responsibility, obligation, or course of action.

Prayer and fasting are all about commitment. And there is much that these verses of Matthew's gospel can teach us about the kind of commitment needed during a time or season of consecration. However, few believers are willing to demonstrate the kind of commitment necessary in order to give themselves to a ministry of prayer and fasting.

Many years ago, as a young pastor, the Lord shared some insight with me regarding the ministry of prayer and fasting and of fasting and prayer. These insights became the basis for a message I share entitled, "**A place called Yonder.**"

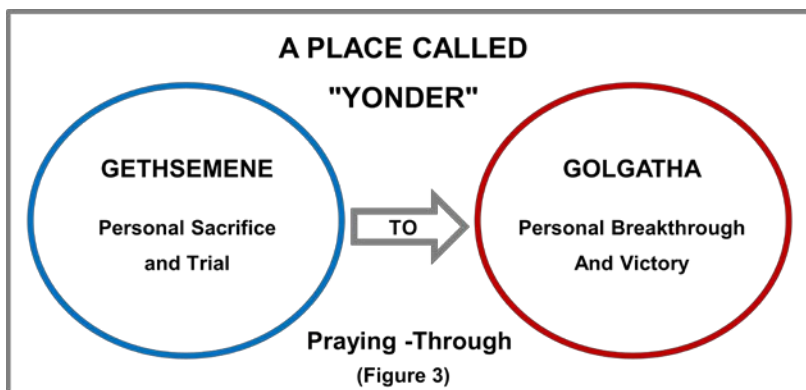
When we consider the context of what happened in the *Garden of Gethsemane* that fateful night, we are afforded a certain level of understanding. That is, as with Jesus, there are times when we must engage the enemy on a level of warfare that takes us outside of our comfort zone and into a place of great personal sacrifice and devotion. I call this place, "Yonder."

This brings us to the subject of what is referred to by some as, "**praying through.**" This is a well-known term among Pentecostal and holiness churches that teach—prayer and fasting are necessary in order to have power with God and victory over the flesh and the devil. This means they teach that:

Personal spiritual victory begins on our knees.

Jesus did not begin his victory over Satan at the cross of Golgotha. Jesus began his victory over Satan while **praying-through** at a place called "Yonder" at Gethsemane. It is only because of what Jesus accomplished at Gethsemane that prepared him for what he would finish at Golgotha (Calvary).

As with Christ, in the spirit, a place of personal sacrifice and trial (Gethsemane) always comes before a place of personal victory and break-through (Golgotha) (See figure 3).



But, what is this place called yonder?

"Yonder" represents the point during our prayer and fasting when we exceed the boundaries of our normal everyday expectations. We go beyond our comfort-zones until we experience a supernatural break-through in the Spirit.

Interestingly, in scripture it is written, "**Yonder**" is the place where Abraham offered his son Isaac, who is also a **type** (Old Testament figure or representation) of Christ. Genesis records:

*"And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go **yonder** and worship, and come again to you."* (Gen. 22:5)

### ***A Supernatural Result:***

Perhaps you are already beginning to see a bigger picture. Whether some see this as prophetic, coincidental, or not, "**yonder**" is the place where Jesus went to pray the night he was betrayed. However, he did not pray an ordinary prayer

that night. It says, "going *a little further*," he prayed with such an unusual intensity and fervor that it is written:

*"And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground."* (Lk. 22:44)

In other words, Jesus was committed. He was determined, dedicated, and bound to complete a course of action that required him to pray until he **prayed-through**.

In some circles, when someone is said to have prayed-through, it means that they have **completed a course** or cycle of prayer where **a spiritual break-through** of some kind has been achieved as a result of that praying.

That particular break-through may not yield the result they were expecting. Nevertheless, it is a break-through because it has affected them or their circumstances in a certain way. In any case, praying through yielded **a supernatural result**.

This underscores a premise found in scripture: Often something is done *thrice* (or three times). This signifies the end or completion of a series, cycle, or course of action. For instance, Paul gives his testimony of praying-through in 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians chapter twelve.

*"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, **the messenger of Satan to buffet me**, lest I should be exalted above measure.*

***For this thing I besought the Lord thrice**, that it might depart from me.*

*And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me." (2 cor. 12:7-9)*

Although we are not told that Paul's seeking the Lord included fasting and prayer; you can rest assured that it did. Paul was a man given to fasting and prayer throughout his ministry. Likewise, Jesus **prayed through** in Gethsemane on the way to Golgotha.

However, our Lord's experience of praying-through did not yield an expectation that he would no longer face death. Rather, it yielded **a consecrated and committed man** who was ready to die for the sins of the world; even as his God-given purpose and destiny had pre-determined and foreordained him to do.

For us, this means:

**When we as believers pray-through, it is to yield a consecrated and committed man or woman of God; who is now ready and willing to fulfill the will and purpose of God. No matter what that will and purpose may be.**

Moreover, like Jesus, we have not prayed-through unless and until we are ready to say, *"not my will, but thine be done."* Praying-through, therefore, has everything to do with God's will being done in our lives and circumstances. However, it also means that our will must be broken and must resign itself to the will of the Father.

In reality, it is only God's will that matters, not our own.

Prayer and fasting, therefore, must not become a passive form of manipulation in order for us to get God to fulfill our will. Rather, it must be a means by which God gets us to fulfill his will.

Whether we like it or not, there are some things in life that will take us to places that we do not want to go. We will be permitted to experience hardships and trials we cannot avoid. While standing at the foot of the cross, Jesus told St. John the following:

*"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldst: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldst not." (Jn. 21:18)*

In life, there are often many times of crisis. As a believer, any crisis in your life should be met with prayer and fasting. This means that we should not attempt to face these life-altering events without supernatural and divine assistance. As in the case of the apostle Paul, fasting and prayer will release the grace of God into your life in a manifold way.

*"And he said unto me, **My grace is sufficient for thee:** for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me (2 Cor. 12:9)."*

However, praying-through is not always easy (and if it were everybody would be doing it). Like Gethsemane, the place called **yonder** is a solitary place where few dare to go.

Additionally, like Peter, James, and John who were then fast asleep, there are those who simply choose not to participate, except to watch from afar. Some unfortunately will not understand why such sacrifice, effort, and commitment must be made in the first place.

Furthermore, like Gethsemane, this degree of devotion and sacrifice may come with many tears and great agony of soul and spirit. Nevertheless, it is the price we pay in order to prepare ourselves for what will inevitably come next.

Unfortunately, your spouse, children, other family, and friends may not understand why you have chosen to go *a little further* in your devotion to God and to his purpose in your life. Moreover, when we enter the place called *yonder*, we discover that it is a lonely place; where our very heart and soul are emotionally drawn out like water; and as an oblation (drink offering) it is poured upon the ground (1 Sam. 7:6). Indeed, it is a solitary place where our very spirit is pressed down until there is a release of fresh anointing oil that comes only by prayer and fasting (Psa. 92:10).

Interestingly, **Gethsemane** (which is located at the foot of the Mount of Olives) is so named because it was the place of the "oil-press" or "olive-oil press." It is therefore, no wonder that we find Jesus here during his greatest trial. This demonstrates the fact that even our Lord had to **pray-through** before he went to the cross.

### ***"If I Perish, I Perish"***

In her time of crisis, Queen Esther declared, ***"If I perish, I perish;"*** these words testify that prayer and fasting will help prepare our heart and soul for whatever result may occur in a crisis situation. Again, we underscore the fact that God's

grace is sufficient, especially during a time of severe trial and testing. Regardless of the outcome, prayer and fasting produces the humility and patience that we need to undergo adversity during difficult seasons of life.

We do not have any control over the outcome of any circumstance or situation. However, we can control our response to a crisis and how we prepare our souls for that outcome. It is always better to leave the results to God when we commit ourselves to fasting and prayer.

In summary, remember, **commitment is the key** ingredient whenever we begin to pray and fast. During your time of consecration; you must be determined to go the distance necessary to achieve your break-through. Dedicate yourself to the entire course of prayer and fasting, and allow God to prepare you for the outcome.

Prayer and fasting, like marriage, requires your utmost commitment, but there is always a price-tag that comes with commitment.

You may not like married life; it may be the hardest thing you will ever do in life. However, you must keep doing your best. When you fail you must not give up.

Why? Because you made a commitment to stay wedded. This commitment is an obligation and stipulates, *for better, or for worse, for richer, or for poorer, in sickness and in health; and until death do us part.*

Likewise, in order to have power and victory you must be committed to the ministry of prayer and fasting.

When Abraham went to Moriah to sacrifice Isaac on the altar, he was committed. He had everything he needed to make a sacrifice. When Abraham arrived at the place called *yonder*, he had the fire and the wood for a burnt offering, but he had no animal sacrifice to prepare. However, he had faith

that throughout this process, God was going to *provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering* (Gen. 22:8).

Likewise, victory only comes after we have reached the place called, *yonder*; and after the difficult process, we call praying-through. Victory is not handed to any of us without cost. Someone must pay a price; because victory is something that is fought for and won.

Victory is not obtained in a classroom or in the bleachers of those cheering the football game. Victory is obtained and won on the field of play; amidst the grunts, groans and the sweat falling upon the playing field.

Moreover, victory is not obtained in the garnished halls of Congress, or the manicured lawns and State rooms of the White House, but upon the bloody battle fields, amidst the smoke, and fire, and the hallowed cries of dying men.

No, victory begins and ends with the prayers of battles that are fought and won upon our knees.

## Afterthoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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- 1) What is the importance and purpose of praying through?
  
- 2) How long has it been since you had to pray through over something in your life?
  
- 3) Have you started a fast since beginning to read this book?

## Beyond the Flesh Barrier

*"By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through **the veil**, that is to say, **his flesh**;" (Heb. 10:20)*

*"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (Jn. 3:6)*

**I**n chapter one we introduced the two essential goals and components of prayer and fasting; along with their primary and secondary roles. We stated that prayer and fasting are intended to augment each other, so that we may have power with God and victory over the flesh and the devil. Now that we have a basic understanding of this idea, let's go a little farther into the experience of **praying-through**.

There is a supernatural and spiritual component to prayer with fasting. But when was the last time you saw a copy of "THE PRAYER & FASTING DRIVEN CHURCH" in your local Christian bookstore? Chances are it hasn't been written yet.

## *A Spiritual Heritage:*

Prayer and fasting are undoubtedly a vital part of our Christian heritage. However, this great supernatural and spiritual heritage is fast becoming lost to a generation of Christians, who have naively adopted the ways and wisdom of the world and its so-called post-modern, seeker-sensitive, and emergent church methodologies. So much, in fact, prayer and fasting are seldom preached, taught, or practiced today; even by those few who still know how.

Sadly, some believe prayer and fasting are merely superstitious relics of a bygone era and are not relevant today. Others suggest that although prayer is certainly appropriate; fasting, however, is not a New Testament church practice since we are no longer under the Old Testament Law of Moses. But, is fasting only relegated to the Old Testament saints?

Well, not according to scripture. In fact, with regard to prayer and fasting the New Testament supports the following. During the recorded history of the first-century church, we can find several references of examples of fasting in scripture that are outside of a Jewish religious setting.

For instance, the book of Acts gives the account of Cornelius, who in 36-38 A.D. became the first gentile convert who practiced fasting and prayer at the time of his conversion. St. Luke writes:

*"And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was **fasting** until this hour; and at the ninth hour I **prayed** in my house, and, behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing," (Acts 10:30)*

In addition, around 44-46 A.D., after the church in Antioch had been established; we still find prayer and fasting practiced together among the first-century believers. St. Luke continues:

*"As they ministered to the Lord, and **fasted**, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had **fasted and prayed**, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away" (Acts 13:2-3).*

Evidently, Paul, and those who accompanied him in ministry practiced fasting regularly as ministers of the New Testament. In defense of his apostleship, Paul also writes the following:

*"But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, **in watchings, in fastings;**" (2 Cor. 6:4-5).*

*"Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool ) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;*

*In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In*

*weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, **in fastings often**, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:23-27).*

The argument that fasting is not a New Testament church practice does not stand against the weight of the biblical evidence. Fasting as a spiritual heritage is and has always been a practice of believers of all generations.

### ***The Spirit is Willing; but the Flesh is Weak***

As you may recall, at Gethsemane Jesus said to Peter, James, and John, "the spirit indeed is willing" but it is **the flesh that is weak** (Mat. 26:41). It is as if he was saying, "See, here is your problem—it is your flesh." This is why we must return to the **old paths** of prayer and fasting, and fasting and prayer.

*"Thus saith the LORD, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein" (Jer. 6:16).*

You see, when it comes to making the commitment to pray and fast the flesh does not want to pay any price that will deprive it of its convenience and comfort. Moreover, in today's so-called modern and seeker-sensitive church, there is no lack of either convenience or comfort. However, scripture affirms; it is the flesh that needs to be subdued in order for the Spirit to produce in us the results we so desperately need in our lives, in our families, in our churches, and in our troubled world.

The writer to the Hebrews has this to say about the prayer life of Jesus:

*"Who in the days of his **flesh**, when he had **offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears** unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared;" (Heb. 5:7) And:*

*"By a new and living way, which he hath **consecrated** for us, through **the veil**, that is to say, **his flesh**;" (Heb. 10:20)*

Fasting and prayer require that we crucify the flesh. Moreover, "praying through" requires we go beyond and pierce what I call—**the flesh barrier**. The flesh barrier is not a modern super-spiritual myth—it is real.

A modern-day analogy of piercing the flesh barrier is the 1947 flight of Colonel Chuck Yeager in the aircraft known as the X1 (see figure 4). Colonel Yeager is a house-hold name that many Americans of my generation know. He became the first man to break the sound barrier and soar beyond the speed



of sound in sustained aerial flight.

This feat was a major milestone in aviation history. Prior to his historic flight aboard the X1, numerous attempts to achieve sustained aerial flight at speeds above Mach 1 (the speed of sound) failed due to the inferior design of the aircraft involved.

It appears, as these experimental planes approached the threshold of the speed of sound (the sound barrier); the aircraft would begin to break apart due to the tremendous physical forces challenging the aerodynamics affecting the plane in flight. These turbulent forces caused violent vibrations, shaking, and even disintegration of the aircraft, making the early pioneer flights unsuccessful.

However, once it was determined to achieve what man now believed was within the realm of possibility, nothing could stop Colonel Yeager from his life-time achievement, not even the two or three broken ribs he had received the night before. Likewise, praying-through while fasting is an uncomfortable experience (to say the least).

Satan will not at all be pleased that you have chosen to engage him on this level of warfare. Furthermore, like the test pilots, do not be surprised if you experience considerable resistance or feel like some things in your life are coming apart and disintegrating as a result of your consecration and commitment to get a break-through. This resistance can be in the form of many things such as:

- 1) **Sickness**
- 2) **Unknown and unexplained physical symptoms**
- 3) **Worsening financial situation, and**
- 4) **Interpersonal conflicts (to name a few)**

As a Christian, you are a soldier in the army of the Lord. Furthermore, as a soldier, when you pray and fast, you should anticipate some form of resistance from the enemy. However, **do not waiver** in your resolve to push-back. As with the prophet Daniel, help is on the way.

### ***No More Noise:***

Do not lose heart during your consecration; if you are committed your breakthrough will come. *"God is not a man that he should tell a lie"* (Num. 23:19). Jesus promised: *this kind will come forth by prayer and fasting*. Moreover, getting beyond the flesh barrier is just another way of describing the experience of **praying-through**.

In addition to crucifying the flesh, in order to hear God's voice clearly, we have to get beyond what I call the **noise** of prayer. However, what do we mean by "noise?"

"Noise" is a kind of spiritual static interference that we will experience in our soul (mind, will, and emotions) during our prayer and fast.

It is this spiritual **noise** that makes it difficult to discern what is happening in the spirit, and what the Holy Spirit communicates to our heart and mind (via our own spirit). During prayer and fasting, God imparts supernatural knowledge, wisdom, and discernment into our own spirit. From there it reaches our heart, and therefore, our understanding.

However, it is the "noise" or spiritual interference caused by the powers of darkness that makes it difficult for us to receive divine communication. Likewise, Daniel experienced

this *noise* and Satanic interference as he prayed and fasted for twenty-one days before he received wisdom and understanding from his heavenly visitation.

*"Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. **But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia"** (Dan. 10:12-13).*

Just as a radio knob is used to tune-in to a radio signal until the reception becomes clear enough to hear, we must get past the "noise" and static interference of prayer until we can hear the "**still small voice**" of the Spirit speak to our hearts (1Ki. 19:12). Furthermore, like the radio tuner, prayer and fasting allow us to separate the voice of God from all other voices seeking to infiltrate our thoughts and confuse us.

We must remove the static interference of prayer by tuning to the right frequency. However, why must we do this? Because prayer is not only about speaking to God; it is also about having the ability to **listen** and to hear clearly from him. Hearing from God, therefore, is vitally important if we expect to know his will and what we are supposed to do.

There is a difference between *noise* and what we might consider *turbulence* while praying and fasting. Noise has only to do with our ability to hear God's voice; while *turbulence* is a secondary effect of demonic activity designed to attack us.

This influence of **turbulence** is similar to what the B-29 fighter bombers of WWII experienced as they experienced the

flack and air-shock from ground artillery exploding all around them. In other words, during spiritual warfare you can hear the **noise**, but you actually feel the effects of **turbulence**.

If you are having difficulty in either hearing God's voice or being able to listen clearly, please take this information to heart. Going beyond the flesh-barrier is a necessary step during prayer and fasting. You must crucify the flesh through fasting in order to hear from God; and then get your life back on the right footing, so you can fulfill God's purpose for your life.

The mind is the main battleground that Satan seeks to attack, exploit, and defeat us. Therefore, we must understand the importance of obtaining the mind of Christ. Having the perspective of overcoming the noise and turbulence of spiritual warfare should offer the believer some additional insight into the scriptures found in 2 Cor. 10:4-5.

*"(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and **bringing into captivity every thought** to the obedience of Christ;" (2 cor. 10: 4-5)*

## Afterthoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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- 1) What sorts of resistance have you experienced while praying and fasting?
  
- 2) In what way does Satan try to influence our thought life while fasting?
  
- 3) During your last fast, what was the occasion, situation, or reason for your fast? (be specific)
  
- 4) Did you fast alone or with others?
  
- 5) Did (does) your situation appear hopeless to you?
  
- 6) What was the outcome of your prayer and fast?

## Go Back Again

*"And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink.*

*And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, **Go again seven times.***

*And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not." (1 Ki. 1:41-44)*

**W**e shared about commitment and the necessity of praying-through during a time of consecration. However, what happens when you are in a dry-season, and you just can't seem to get together enough strength to pray at all; let alone to pray-through. When these dry seasons of prayer come upon us, it is a perfect time to jump-start our prayer lives again through fasting and prayer.

## *Dry Seasons:*

Sometimes it simply isn't easy to pray, even when you do have the mind and intent to pray. You try to pray, but the words barely seem to come forth. Admittedly, sometimes it seems like our prayers are just not getting through. It is as if the heavens are closed, and our prayers do not travel any higher than the ceiling.

During a dry season:

- 1) It is very easy to get discouraged.
- 2) Discouragement can very quickly turn into depression; and
- 3) Depression can turn into a feeling of hopelessness.
- 4) Hopelessness then turns into despair.

As a believer, we are not immune to such things, and even great men and women of God can reach a point where they feel like giving up (1 Kngs. 19:4-5).

Regardless of how successful you have been in the past; there are times when life has a way of dealing you a very bitter hand. At such times, it seems like you simply cannot win; no matter how hard you try. Moreover, sometimes, we earnestly pray about a certain thing and there doesn't seem to be any evidence that anything in our situation will change.

When we reach this point, we must realize that we must fight back through means of fasting and prayer. When a dry season exists, do what Elijah told his servant. You have to go **back again**.

There is, however, an incorrect teaching out there that says: If you ask God for something you should only ask him once. Furthermore, if you ask him again for the same thing it

demonstrates a lack of faith, and therefore, you will not receive anything you continue to pray for.

However, this does not reflect the testimony of scripture. In fact, as we have seen in our earlier example of Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane, there are some things that may need to be prayed about over an extended period of time.

Our prayers are seldom answered instantly. Quite frankly, it could be days, weeks, months, or even years before we see the fruit of some of our prayers. As we read, the prophet Daniel once prayed twenty-one days before he received any confirmation that his prayers were heard.

There are of course different kinds of prayer revealed in scripture. This then suggests that all prayers are not created equal, nor do they serve the same purpose. For instance, there is a difference between prayers of supplication and prayers of intercession, etc.

Paul writes:

*"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, **supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks**, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (1 Tim. 2:1-2).*

## **All Prayer:**

In the very same chapter that Paul describes how to fight against the principalities, powers, and rulers of the darkness of this world, Paul writes:

*"Praying always with **all prayer** and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;" (Eph. 6:18).*

This of course would include every kind of prayer available to man (see figure 5). The problem we find today among many is—prayer has become an option, an accessory, rather than an essential component to daily Christian life and experience. Can one live without air, water, or food?

The answer of course is—No. Without these essential things our life here on this planet would cease to exist. Likewise, prayer, when correctly understood, is not an option or accessory, but an essential and vital component of our daily Christian life and experience. Like the fig tree that Jesus cursed because it had no fruit, our spiritual life will soon dry up from the roots if not sustained by prayer (Mk. 11:20).

Regardless of what green leaves may appear to remain on its branches, it will soon be evident that the flow of spiritual life, power, and victory has ceased. There is no other way to sustain spiritual life in power and victory than through a lifestyle habit of prayer. Therefore, the importance of safeguarding and protecting our own prayer life cannot be stressed enough.



**(Figure 5)**

Our families are our most valuable relationships on Earth. However, even your spouse and children are not to be served at the expense of your prayer life and intimate relationship with God. It is because your ministry to each one begins and ends with prayer.

In fact, prayer was so important to Christ's earthly ministry that before he taught his disciples and attended to his followers he began his day with prayer to the Father.

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

Whether we want to admit it or not, the church of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is impotent, anemic, and ineffectual because she does not take the business of prayer seriously. Each Sunday America's pulpits are filled with weak and defective preaching because preachers do not pray. In this day and time, the family that does not pray together will not stay together; even so, the Spirit's call to prayer often goes unanswered.

### ***The Next First Step:***

Prayer is the next first-step in any revival or great move of God. Even in America there is a tremendous need of revival and spiritual renewal. However, it will not happen until and unless there is a great shaking in the land; and this must be accompanied by the fervent prayers of the people of God.

Only prayer and fasting can lead America back to God. There is no sin that God will not forgive if a nation repents and turns to God in prayer and fasting. It is written of the ancient city Nineveh:

*"So the people of Nineveh believed God, and **proclaimed a fast**, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.*

*And he caused it to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, **Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:** But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and **cry mightily** unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands.*

*Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not." (Jonah 3:5-10)*

Ask yourself—is your prayer life weak, anemic, impotent, and ineffective? If the answer is yes, it may be high-time to give it a jump-start through fasting and prayer. Hear the words of the prophet David:

*"But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth: **I humbled my soul with fasting; and my prayer returned into mine own bosom.**" (Psa. 35:13)*

This memorable verse is often interpreted incorrectly as an indictment against King David and his prayer life. However, it is a most important testimony to his humility and commitment to prayer and fasting on behalf of his enemies, who were experiencing difficult times. When David interceded for others, his prayer life was afterward revived and strengthened.

David's prayer returning into his *own bosom* does not mean God did not hear him, as some commentators suggest. It

simply means that the effectual power and efficacy of David's prayer life returned to him as he prayed and fasted for others. In other words, his dry season ended.

There is no shame in experiencing a dry season of weakness, discouragement, or even depression; as long as you do not intend on staying that way.

Nevertheless, gone must be the days of week, impotent, and shallow praying. Preacher and Saint of God, it is high-time that we shake ourselves and rise up from the dust of prayerlessness, complacency, and mediocrity to become the Elijah's and Anna's of our day. Indeed, the fate of the world and of the church in this generation may very well rest in the uplifted hands and bended knees of a chosen people who understand the immortal words of the prophet, which read:

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and **pray**, and **seek my face**, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."* (2 Chron. 7:14)

## ***Importunity:***

Throughout scripture, we are taught about the "importunity" of prayer. The word importunity simply means to be **persistent** in our requests to God. St. James wrote:

*"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The **effectual fervent prayer** of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.*

*And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." (Jam. 5:16-18)*

The great prophet Elijah understood that even though God had promised rain; he is still expected to pray for it until it comes to pass. Furthermore, after praying once for rain with no evidence of rain for three and one-half years, Elijah commands his servant to go back "**again seven times.**"

*"And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, **Go again** seven times." (1 Ki. 18:43)*

One might wonder why *go again* seven times? It is because biblically the number seven (similar to the number three) is a prophetic number representing **an entire cycle or course of completion and perfection**. God is reminding us:

- 1) When we pray we should expect God's perfect will to be done in our lives, and prayer is the best means of achieving this (Mat. 6:10).
- 2) When we pray we should expect to have to pray-through until the answer comes, or until we see evidence that what he has promised he is also able to bring to pass (Rom. 4:21).

However, effectual and fervent prayer requires the faithfulness of a servant and the vigilance of a soldier standing his watch. We should "**watch and pray**" that we enter not into a time of temptation or testing being unprepared for the battle—and what is to come next.

My brother and sister, this is why it is important to get your praying done early; before the storm and trouble comes your way. Be persistent; be resilient; be faithful in prayer and God will cause the heavens to bring forth her rain and the earth her increase.

Prayer and fasting represent heaven and earth working together to bring about God's perfect will for your life.

Jesus spoke much about the **importunity** of prayer in parables such as the **unjust judge** and the **friend at midnight**. Concerning importunity in prayer Luke writes:

*"And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves; For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?"*

*And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee. I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.*

*And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Lk. 11:5-10)*

Jesus gave us such memorable examples to teach us that **prayer has the power to change things**. However, we must be both **consistent** and **persistent** in our praying if we expect to obtain the results that we seek.

### ***The Rock:***

True faith perseveres, even in the midst of no external evidence. Recently, a friend in Christ shared the “*Pray until Something Happens Story*” (author unknown) with me. It goes like this:

*A man was sleeping at night in his cabin when suddenly his room filled with bright light and the Savior appeared. The Lord told the man He had work for him to do, and showed him a large rock in front of his cabin. The Lord explained that the man was to push against the rock with all his might. This, the man did, day after day.*

*For many years he toiled from sun up to sun down with his shoulders set squarely against the cold, massive surface of the unmoving rock, pushing with all his might. Each night the man returned to his cabin sore, and worn out, feeling that his whole day had been spent in vain.*

*Seeing that the man was showing signs of discouragement, the Adversary decided to enter the picture by placing thoughts into the man’s weary mind: “You’ve been pushing against that rock for a long time, and it hasn’t budged. Why kill yourself over this? You’re never going to move it” —thus, giving the man the impression that the*

*task was impossible and that he was a failure. These thoughts discouraged and disheartened the man.*

*“Why kill myself over this?” he thought. “I’ll just put in my time, giving just the minimum effort and that’ll be good enough.” And that’s just what he planned to do— until one day he decided to make it a matter of prayer and take his troubled thoughts to the Lord. “Lord” he said, “I’ve labored long and hard in Your service, putting all my strength to do that which You’ve asked. Yet, after all this time, I haven’t even budged that rock by half a millimeter. What’s wrong? Why am I failing?”*

*The Lord responded compassionately,*

*“My friend, when I asked you to serve Me— you accepted. I told you that your task was to push against the rock with all your strength— which you’ve done. Never once did I mention to you that I expected you to move it. Your task was to push. And now you come to Me— with your strength spent, thinking that you’ve failed. But is that really so?”*

*“Look at yourself. Your arms are strong and muscular. Your back sinew is mighty. Your hands are callused from the constant pressure; and your legs have become massive and hard. Through opposition you’ve grown much and your abilities now surpass that which you used to have. Yet you haven’t moved the rock. But your calling was to be obedient and to push and to exercise your faith and trust in My wisdom. This you’ve done. I, my friend, will now move the rock.”*

Perhaps you are like the man in this story. You have been pushing and pushing, but now your strength is spent; you are exhausted and utterly on the verge of giving up. You only have the strength for one more prayer.

My friend, do not give up—ever. God expects us to pray and fast when it is necessary; however, he knows that we, ourselves, have no power to perform the miracle we are seeking. It is our responsibility to do in the natural what we can do; and it is His responsibility to do in the super-natural what only He can do. We can pray and fast, but the miracle and the glory always belong to God.

This inspiring story is a wonderful illustration of the commitment required to pray and fast regardless of the external evidence in view. God has promised to reward those that will trust and seek him during a time of prayer and fasting. No matter what the external evidence suggests, we are to keep asking, seeking, and knocking until heaven answers.

*"And I say unto you, **Ask**, and it shall be given you; **seek**, and ye shall find; **knock**, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." (Lk. 11:9-10)*

Anyone can experience a dry season. It is a normal occurrence of living the Christian life and of spiritual warfare. During Elijah's ministry, the entire nation of Israel experienced a drought that lasted three and one-half years.

However, if left unanswered, a dry season can lead to the death of a prayer life; and dry season or not, we must pray. Yet, too many believers' give-up and give-in too easily when

they pray. But, that is exactly what the devil wants; he wants you to give up on your marriage, your dreams, your friends, the church and anyone or anything else that matters to you.

Make no mistake, when we quit praying, we begin to die a slow death and quietly shut the windows of heaven. However, each time we pray it is an opportunity for divine intervention. In addition, each time we pray we confront the powers of darkness and oppose them.

God is a God of the supernatural and when we pray, we enter the realm of the supernatural. Prayer is coming to God in faith believing that what he has promised he is also able to perform (Rom. 4:21). The writer to the Hebrews says that God has promised to reward those who diligently seek him.

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

If we were to use Jesus and the apostles as a sampling of what percentage of the church practiced prayer and fasting, we could say that perhaps one-fourth (1/4) of the church (represented by Peter, James, and John) prays at all.

That means that only one-twelfth (1/13) of the church (represented by Jesus) practice's prayer and fasting. However, I suspect that the numbers could be even less than that. Moreover, if my guess is correct, those are not very good numbers at all.

It is time we take the responsibility of prayer and fasting seriously. Furthermore, whether you choose to accept it or not, nothing is more important than your prayer life. And that goes for your job and ministry.

Pastors and preachers who don't pray are doing a disservice to their congregations. Not only are they neglecting a most important aspect of their calling, they are setting a very poor example for others to follow. It is a sin not to pray and intercede for the flock over which the Holy Ghost has made one an overseer (Acts. 20:28).

*"Moreover as for me, **God forbid that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you:** but I will teach you the good and the right way:" (1 Sam. 12:23)*

## After-thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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1) What are the different types of prayer in scripture?

2) Why is so little emphasis placed on prayer in churches today?

3) Name one thing that you have prayed about again and again until it finally occurred.

## Fasting and Prayer

*"Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we **afflicted our soul**, and thou takest no knowledge? Behold, in the day of your fast ye find pleasure, and exact all your labours. Behold, ye fast for strife and debate, and to smite with the fist of wickedness: ye shall not fast as ye do this day, **to make your voice to be heard on high**.*

*Is it such a fast that I have chosen? a day for a man to afflict his soul? is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? wilt thou call this a fast, and an acceptable day to the LORD? Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?*

*Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy reward.*

*Then shalt thou **call**, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt **cry**, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:*

*And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not." (Isa. 58:3-11)*

**A**s you may recall, there is a functional difference between prayer and fasting and fasting and prayer. However, each may be joined with the other in either a primary or secondary role or function. The purpose of the secondary role is to augment and make the primary role more effective (see chapter one figure 1).

In other words, fasting makes prayer more effective; and likewise, prayer makes fasting more effective.

Most of what we have shared up to this point has been devoted to the role of fasting as a secondary role. Now, let us spend a little time on the role of fasting with the understanding that, the purpose of fasting is to give the believer **victory** over the flesh. However, what do we mean by the flesh?

The flesh is the carnal, unregenerate nature within man, that is incompatible, and at enmity with the spiritual, regenerate nature (also within man) that is compatible and in harmony with God.

St. Paul has this to say about the warfare and enmity that exist between the *flesh* and the *Spirit*:

*"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are **contrary** the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* (Gal. 5:17)

Moreover, with regard to prayer, it is the flesh that hinders the believer from experiencing intimacy with God; Jesus said it is because "the flesh is weak (Mat. 26:41)."

Fasting is effective against the flesh because it crucifies (puts to death) the power of the flesh and permits the spirit to experience more power and intimacy with God.

Thus we become more sensitive and yielded to the influence of the Holy Spirit.

There may be many good reasons you are contemplating fasting with prayer. Are you seeking direction, or wisdom, or struggling with temptation or sin in your life? These are excellent reasons why fasting and prayer may be in order.

With prayer and fasting the focus is on having power with God; however, with fasting and prayer, the focus is now shifted toward obtaining **victory** in some area of your personal life. There is an old Chinese proverb that says, "*Know thyself and know thy enemy.*" Thus, fasting and prayer can also be thought of as an important means of **self-discovery**.

Fasting and prayer cleanses the body, soul, and spirit. In addition, fasting and prayer can teach one **self-control** and **self-discipline** in other areas of life. Therefore, fasting and

prayer can be thought of as an inward journey toward **self-awareness** and **self-discovery**.

Sometimes we have to make an inward journey in order to further our progress on our outward journey. This demonstrates, through fasting and prayer, God will reveal things to us about ourselves. Furthermore, it is unlikely that we will often engage in fasting and prayer and not also at the same time learn some important things about oneself.

The ultimate result of this inward journey of self-discovery and self-awareness is that it can lead to **self-transformation**. Even Moses was different when he came down from Mount Sinai after a forty-day fast. The Bible says:

*"And it came to pass, when Moses came down from mount Sinai with the two tables of testimony in Moses' hand, when he came down from the mount, that Moses wist not that **the skin of his face shone** while he talked with him."*  
(Ex. 34:29)

Likewise, it is impossible to spend time alone in the presence of God for extended periods of time and not be transformed to some degree. On my journey, I have discovered that:

Fasting and prayer will allow God to take us to places in the Spirit that we have never been, so that we may do things in the Spirit that we have never done.

As with Moses, God will often separate to his service someone, whom he has called through the ministry of fasting and prayer. Another case in point is **Barnabas and Saul** (Paul). It was only after a time of consecration with fasting

and prayer that these men of God were sent out to begin their apostolic ministry. The book of Acts records:

*"Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon that was called Niger, and Lucius of Cyrene, and Manaen, which had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, **the Holy Ghost said**, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.*

*And when they had **fasted and prayed**, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away. So they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost, departed unto Seleucia; and from thence they sailed to Cyprus." (Acts 13:1-4)*

I wonder how different the landscape of ministry would appear today, if those who claim to be called were actually sent-forth after a time of fasting and prayer. I suspect there would be less confusion, corruption, and false teaching prevalent today if these had been sent out only upon hearing from God through fasting and prayer.

### ***Watch and Pray:***

During a time of fasting and prayer Satan will deliberately try to influence our thought life. Why? He knows that our thought-life affects our emotions and decision-making ability.

There will be times when our emotions are over-charged with anger, frustration, disappointment, depression, and even fear. When we find ourselves losing control over our emotions and contemplating actions that are irrational or self-

destructive, it then becomes necessary to take a step back so that we may regroup. The only decision we should make at such times is the decision to find a solitary place to be alone with ourselves and with the Lord.

Fasting and prayer helps us to sort out our thoughts and emotions so that we can make decisions that reflect the wisdom and purpose of God in our lives.

Jesus told his disciples at Gethsemane to "*watch and pray*" with him for "*one hour,*" lest they enter temptation. What troubles some could have avoided if they had only taken one solitary hour to collect themselves; to pray and to meditate, before making a decision, or choosing an action that has destructive and negative consequences, during a time of emotional dissonance.

How many marriages and families could have been saved, careers salvaged, suicides prevented, and tragic accidents involving drugs and alcohol averted? It cannot be stressed enough the importance of quiet alone-time with the Father during times of stress and testing. Fasting and prayer afford us quality alone-time with God; to help us sort out the issues of life, and to regain our composure, so we can re-engage life with a fresh perspective and grace.

During these one-hour periods of alone time, one does not need to plan anything special. Just prayerfully allow your mind and thoughts unwind like a rubber-band attached to a toy airplane propeller, until you feel a release from the tension and stress of the situation. It is during such times that the Holy Spirit will come beside us as a helper (Paraclete), to help sort out our options and work through them, until we have a course of action that is both positive and hopeful.

In conclusion, just as the kingdom of darkness is opposed to the kingdom of light the flesh is at war with the Spirit. It works against us and must be subdued and kept subordinate to the power of the Spirit. However, the flesh loses its power over us when we fast and pray.

Nevertheless, too frequent fasting may actually work against us and have a negative and nullifying effect, as it may become an empty ritual without any spiritual impetus.

We must be careful that we don't fast so frequently that it loses its impact and effectiveness. Yet we realize that the benefits are manifold when we experience the self-transformation that comes from a season of fasting. Not only will you be aware of the Spirit's working; your family and close friends will begin to comment on the changes that they see taking place in you as well.

## After Thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you, and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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1) Identify four (4) areas that you can impact through prayer and fasting?

a)

b)

c)

d)

## When Thou Fastest

*"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.*

*Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward." (Mat. 6:5; 16)*

**F**or many fasting will be a new experience. Nevertheless, once you begin to fast on a somewhat regular basis it will seem quite natural. You will get accustomed to doing it; especially when you experience the many positive results it brings. Here are some practical things about fasting that we should know.

**#1:** According to Matthew's gospel, when Jesus taught the disciples about fasting, he spoke of it as something that occurs regularly and in addition to prayer and giving. Notice, he used the words "*when ye fast,*" and not "*if ye fast.*" However,

fasting and prayer are spiritual disciplines that may be accomplished either individually or together. Each has its own separate purpose, function, and benefits.

Although Jesus gave an admonition with regard to prayer and fasting, he did not at any time prohibit or discourage the practice of either. Rather, Jesus warned against doing either as a pretense. He taught that prayer and fasting done pretentiously (for a show) would result in the praise of men, but would have no spiritual benefit whatsoever.

**#2:** We should realize that any occasion of prayer and fasting carries the risk of our being lifted up with a spirit of pride and self-righteousness. When you fast, Satan will use your sincerity to entice you to think more highly of yourself than you should. However, remember that you are no better or worse, deserving or undeserving than others, although you pray and fast.

We are all unworthy beneficiaries of divine favor, and everything we receive from heaven is through God's grace and mercy alone. Paul writes:

*"For I say, through the **grace** given unto me, to every man that is among you, **not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think**; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." (Rom. 12:2)*

**#3:** There is an individual and corporate fast found in scripture. Jesus' remarks about anonymity when fasting are meant to guide individuals who fast in private. Moreover, it would appear that the same remarks regarding anonymity are

also meant to be applied to both prayer and giving (Mat. 6:1-8).

Prayer and fasting should not lead one to spiritual pride and boasting, but should produce within us an attitude of humility. Neither is it a barometer to measure anyone's righteousness. Just because Jesus gave a warning concerning the hypocrisy of the Pharisees, does not mean that we should avoid or discourage prayer or fasting in our day and time.

**The potential for spiritual pride always exists whenever we think that by doing any act of devotion, we are somehow better than or more righteous than others who don't do these things.**

Whether we fast privately or corporately, humility should be the goal of our devotions. To protect us from the sin of pride and self-righteousness, Jesus taught the importance of anonymity in our devotions. This appears to be the best way to prevent one from seeking the praise of men, rather than the praise of God.

### ***But, what is a Bible Fast?***

All fasts are not of the same kind. Just as, there are levels of maturity in Christ, there are levels or degrees of which we may experience a fast. However, there is some difference of opinion as to what exactly constitutes a "bible fast."

So, what exactly is a bible fast?

- 1) Is it abstinence from food and water?
- 2) Is it abstinence from food but not from water?

- 3) Is it abstinence from certain kinds of food and certain kinds of drink?
- 4) Is it abstinence from things, which are neither food nor drink?

The answer to this question is not as simple as some would make it out to be; because in scripture, we find fasting presented in more than one manner. Therefore, it is not wise to be dogmatic or legalistic, one way or the other, about these things. Whatever mode or manner of fasting you choose, perhaps we should focus on the ends rather than the means.

The main thing to consider here is:

Regardless of the type of fast you choose, any mode of fasting is a spiritual sacrifice. In addition, God will respond to any sacrifice of prayer and fasting that is mixed with faith.

The important thing is to start somewhere. However, by definition fasting means: **to abstain from food**. The Hebrew word for *fast* is the noun *tsōm*. It means **to shut the mouth**; it is derived from a primitive root of the Hebrew word *tsūm* a verb translated *fasted*.

Contrary to modern thought and practice there is no such evidence in scripture as fasting described as anything that does not involve food and drink; such as fasting from television, movies, or Facebook. Abstaining from these other things may have certain positive benefits, but from a biblical perspective, it cannot be equated with fasting.

In 1975, I was a young seventeen-year-old Christian within a Pentecostal community where fasting was encouraged

regularly. We would usually fast monthly and during special meetings, such as revival meetings and during our annual Holy Convocation (conference). Our fasts lasted typically between one to three days and were **total fasts** of no food or water.

The small African-American church I attended did not believe any fast that permitted the drinking of water was a true "bible fast." During a fast, the drinking of water was prohibited. However, as I studied scripture I concluded there are fasts in scripture where water was prohibited; and there are those where abstaining from water is not mentioned or required.

### *Degrees of Fasting:*

There is abundant evidence in scripture of varying degrees of fasting. An argument can be made that fasting did not always mean abstaining from water, or even certain kinds of food. In scripture we find fasts lasting from part of a 24-hour day and extending to forty (40) days in length. Obviously, each fast was characterized by a different level of severity and difficulty (See figure 7).

Shorter durations of a fast can utilize a more rigorous degree of a fasting regimen; while the longer durations may utilize a less rigorous regimen. For example, a one (1) day fast lasting until the evening or a 24-hour fast may employ an **extreme** or **total fast** of no food or water. An extreme fast is a very effective short term fast and could last up to three (3) days.

Meanwhile, a **partial fast** of water, juice, and broth might be used during a five to seven (5-7) day fast. In addition, a fast extended beyond seven days might continue with a

**Daniel's fast** beginning on the eighth day. If the fast is scheduled to continue into a second or third full week of fasting, any variation of an extreme, partial, or Daniel's fast may conclude a twenty one (21) day fast regimen.

A word of caution is advised against abusing fasting to the detriment of one's physical well-being. For example, an extreme fast (without food and water) should not continue beyond three days, because the body must have water in order to experience the most positive benefit of fasting. **Water has no nutritive value** and is an important part of detoxifying the body during a fast.

There are some who have fasted on water for periods of ten (10) days or longer. This is possible; however, ill advised.

Unless the Holy Spirit directs one to fast beyond a normal fasting regimen, one should not do so simply for the sake of novelty or curiosity. Fasting and prayer should always be Spirit led and directed throughout the course of the fast.

I have heard or read about others who have fasted forty (40) days on water only. However, these kinds of fasts are very dangerous to the body and unless the Lord tells you to go on such a fast, you should not attempt one of this severity. Nevertheless, be very wary of anyone who calls for a corporate fast of this kind.

There are three persons that fasted forty-days in the Bible; they are **Moses, Elijah, and Jesus**. Biblically, **the number forty (40) is the prophetic number representing a period of probation, trial, testing, and preparation for service or ministry**. Each of these forty-day fasts occurred in the desert or wilderness and involved a high mountain top experience during a special season of testing and preparation.

Both Moses and Elijah went to the mountain of Sinai (also called Horeb), and although it cannot be confirmed, it is believed that Jesus was taken (transported) to Mount *Quarantania* near Jericho during his wilderness temptation. This perhaps suggests that fasting may be in order whenever the believer is facing a severe time of trial and testing. It may also suggest that before entering any kind of challenging ministry, one should also undergo a time of fasting and prayer in preparation for such ministry (Acts 13:2-4).

## *Some Questions about Fasting:*

### **#1** How will I know when it is time to fast?

The time to begin a fast may depend on the circumstances or the purpose of the fast to begin with. During a private fast, often you will simply know when it is time to fast. Sometimes, God will put a stirring within your spirit and heart, or you will be moved to do so because of your circumstances.

There may also be times when a corporate call to fast is initiated by someone in leadership such as a pastor, church, or even a political or government representative. In the bible, leaders such as kings, queens, prophets, and statesmen summoned the people to fast corporately. Others fasted according to custom or law.

### **#2** How long should I fast?

There is no hard and fast rule of how long one should fast. In my opinion, one should fast until the answer comes, or until you **pray-through** about whatever is leading you to fast in the first place. Ask yourself:

- a) **Am I better off after spending time on a prayer and fast?**
- b) **Are there changes in my circumstances? Or**
- c) **Is there a definite change in me?**

Sometimes I have planned to fast for a certain period of time; however, I chose to end my consecration early because I felt a release in my spirit. This indicated to me that my prayers were answered, or because I saw evidence that my circumstances had changed.

### **#3 How should I prepare for a fast?**

In preparing for a fast, one should have a plan of how long they intend to fast, and when to start and end the fast. Communicate to your spouse that you are planning a fast, so they can also make whatever preparations are required as far as grocery needs, cooking, and schedules. Beyond that make sure you will be able to fulfill whatever obligations you have during the fast, such as your job, etc.

Personally, I like to begin my fast in the morning, counting from the last meal I ate the night before. I simply wake up and begin my day fasting until it is time to break my fast. I usually break my fast at a scheduled meal time.

Sometimes, it helps to do what Jesus says in Matthew. Wash your face and anoint your head with oil (Mat. 6:17). Remember, you are consecrating your body as a holy temple during your fast and doing these things will give you the presence of mind to approach your fast with dignity and respect.

## #4 What should I do during my fast?

During your fast, you will want to spend as much time as you can in prayer, meditation, introspection, and reflection. Remember, this is an ideal time for God to speak to your spirit and communicate his will to you. Keep a journal with you during your fast and write down anything that the Lord impresses upon your heart.

The Lord may choose to speak to you at any time during your fast; including when you are working, at home resting, or even asleep. It is not uncommon for believers to have dreams, visions, or other spiritual experiences during a fast.

Maintain a list of things to pray for during your fast; this list may be of things important to you and your family, your church, or others. As you pray, be aware of any changes that are occurring around you or in your life and adjust your praying accordingly. You are now at a level of warfare that brings you into direct confrontation with the enemy.

Depending on the length of your fast, you will have to pace yourself so that you don't use up all of your energy reserves unwisely. Plan to read the Word, listen to anointed preaching and teaching, listen to songs of praise, and sing to help keep you in an attitude of worship and intercession. Moreover, keep your heart and mind focused on completing the task at hand.

These are not rules, but guidelines to help keep you on track, so that your fasting may be successful. Satan will know you are fasting and praying, because by doing so, you are challenging the powers of darkness.

There are many different examples of fasting in scripture. Fasting and prayer can give you the courage to make tough decisions and face difficult circumstances. When we fast and

pray, we experience God's grace in a very special and noticeable way.

Remember, prayer is simply a human request for divine assistance and intervention. Furthermore, fasting cultivates our faith. Thus, when we add fasting to our prayers, we affect a better and supernatural result.

## Levels of Difficulty in Degrees 1-4 from Partial to Total Fast



(Figure 7)

## Examples of Fasting in Scripture

In sorrow	2 Sam. 12:22	David
In repentance	1 Sam. 7:6	Israel
In affliction of soul	Isa. 58:3	Israel
In mourning	Neh. 1:4	Nehemiah
In temptation	Matt. 4:2	Jesus
In ministering to the Lord	Acts 13:2	Antioch
In sending forth workers	Acts 13:3	Antioch
Fasted unto even	Judg. 20:26	Israel
Fasted all night	2 Sam. 12:16	David
Fasted 3 days	Esth. 4:16	Esther/Modecai
Fasted seven days	1 Sam. 7:6	Jabesh-Gilead
Fasted 3 weeks	Dan. 10:3	Daniel
Fasted 40 days	Ex. 34:28;	Moses
	1 Kngs 19:8	Elijah
	Matt. 4:1 – 2	Jesus

(Figure 8)

## After Thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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## Cover me – I'm going In!

*"Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, and neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish."*  
(Esth. 4:16)

**A**s we near the end of our journey, it becomes apparent that the more we study about spiritual warfare the more we are forced to adopt a strategic military mindset. This mindset becomes necessary if we are to have strategic superiority over our enemy. The study of military strategy involves the science of how to win at war.

### *Teamwork and Unity of Purpose:*

As a young recruit at MCRD (Marine Corps Recruit Depot) PARRIS ISLAND, there was one thing that was constantly (and literally) drilled into us daily. It was the important concept of **teamwork** and **unity of purpose** in order to accomplish any mission or goal of any kind. For eleven weeks, day after day, we developed these essential

skills, primarily through the regimen of synchronized marching exercises called, close order drills.

What began as an undisciplined band of strapping youth would later become the chiseled and honed fighting machine we know today as the *U. S. Marine*. However, these important skills of modern warfare are not acquired overnight, but through many dedicated hours and months of training under the glaring hot sun and unforgiving eyes of the devoted Marine Corps drill instructor.

Yes, everything, no matter how difficult just seemed to be easier when each recruit did their part to ensure the success of the mission at hand. Likewise, the spiritual warfare strategy of fasting and prayer requires:

- a) Commitment
- b) Discipline
- c) Teamwork, and
- d) Unity of purpose

However, sadly, as modern Christians, we have not yet acquired this very basic, important concept of working together as a unified team, with one sense of purpose and responsibility. Moreover, without unity of purpose, the church will not succeed in her mission to repel the forces of darkness.

It should, therefore, be no wonder why the church is in such a sorry state of disunity and division. Nevertheless, how can we now come together as a unified people and turn the world of our day, right-side-up? In my opinion, there is only one way; we must begin by praying and fasting together!

I would also venture to say, if only one-half of all believers practiced the strategy of prayer and fasting regularly, we would begin to see tremendous change in the Body of Christ. Furthermore, this change would be evident not only in the areas of evangelism and discipleship of lost souls, but also

in making our families, churches, communities, and society stronger. However, prayer and fasting have become a lost and forgotten art in most churches across America.

Nevertheless, spiritual warfare is about having a superior strategy; it is about engaging the enemy from a vantage point of not only understanding how he works, but also understanding how he thinks. It is about being successful at confronting and defeating Satan through the power and wisdom of God. To the Corinthians, St. Paul writes:

*"Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." (2 Cor. 2:11)*

But what are Satan's devices? Paul reveals that Satan's **devices** (Gk. *noēma*) are his evil thoughts, purposes, and schemes. Moreover, in order to keep him from gaining *an advantage* of us in this warfare, we must understand his very thoughts; we must understand his schemes.

The concept of understanding your enemy's thoughts and schemes is brilliantly portrayed in the movie; WE WERE SOLDIERS, featuring the historic battle of *Ia Drang* in the Republic of South Vietnam in November 1965. Throughout an intense fire-fight, and while displaying great military acumen, the American Colonel and his Vietnamese counterpart attempted to anticipate, manipulate, and counter the battlefield strategy of each other.

Though badly outnumbered, the American Colonel survived because he had compiled a dossier that provided vital information about the enemy he was pitted against (See figure 9).

Likewise, when Paul says we are not ignorant of Satan's devices, he is reminding us that we know (from studying our bibles and from our spiritual battlefield experience) how the devil thinks. With this knowledge, we can keep Satan from gaining an advantage over us through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life (1 Jn. 2:16). The

weapons and strategy of fasting and prayer will help us to defeat him by keeping him pinned down, off guard, and distracted.



Ia Drang Valley, South Vietnam (public domain)  
(Figure 9)

### ***Who's Watching Your "Six?"***

In addition to understanding the tactics and devices of the enemy, as a young Marine, I also learned the importance of never engaging the enemy without first ensuring another Marine was watching your back (or as we would say, your "six").

This means, before any fire and maneuver, you should make sure that someone else is providing covering-fire in order to keep the enemy pinned down, off guard, and distracted. This cover fire allows other Marines to advance to

a better vantage point in order to close with, engage, and destroy the enemy. In other words:

As spiritual warriors, we need to learn how to keep one another covered when under direct fire from the enemy.

There is nothing wrong with asking for a prayer-covering of support from other believers when we are engaging the enemy at a time of intense warfare. For example, when Jesus went to Gethsemane, he did not go alone, but he took Peter, James, and John with him. Although they were not up to the task, he, nevertheless, invited them to go with him to pray.

This is what I refer to as the **three (3) points of agreement** in prayer and fasting. Essentially what this means is, whenever you are confronting and engaging the enemy, try to enlist two or three others to cover you during your fast. These will simply agree to pray for you and to watch your "six," so to speak, while you do the heavy lifting during your fasting and prayer.

Just knowing that you are not alone and that someone else is praying for you will encourage and strengthen you.

Jesus said this about the power of agreement in prayer:

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

*For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Mat. 18:19-20)*

### ***Close Prayer Support:***

Sometimes it seems like all of hell is breaking loose all around us, and we find ourselves in a spiritual fire-fight that is

way over our heads. That's when the Marines call for close-air-support.

Similarly, when you are fasting and engaged in a raging fire-fight with the enemy, using the concept of **three-points-of-agreement**, you too can call for **close-prayer-support** and ask two or three other prayer warriors to intercede for you. However, likewise, you should always be ready to offer the same prayer support and cover for them when they call upon you.

When Queen Esther realized the imminent mortal threat to herself and her people, she knew something had to be done in order to save her people the Jews. Although she realized she had to act alone, she did not hesitate to request immediate fasting and prayer support from her people. In short, facing extinction and the possibility of certain death, Queen Esther called for back-up and said, "**Cover me**" because **I'm going in to see the King!**

In this country, every police officer understands this concept. They are trained to call for back-up before entering any environment where they may have to come under hostile fire. How many times during our favorite TV shows have we heard the words, "Cover me—I'm going in." Likewise, as Christians, we must learn how to cover one another through prayer and fasting. The problem is:

**We live in a very selfish and self-centered Christian religious sub-culture where it is every-man-for-himself.**

In fact, we live so independent of each other that we often find ourselves engaging our own problems all alone, and without the effective cover and support, that prayer and fasting afford one another. We need to understand; it's ok to call for back-up during a time of spiritual testing and warfare! No matter what shape you think you are in, there is always someone who is going through a tougher time than you are.

God's Word reveals that we, in ourselves, are weak and not strong. The truth is—we must learn to work together in this warfare as a unit, as a team, and not as so many individuals trying to make it on our own. Moreover, we must learn to discern the cries of help coming from our brothers and sisters during their time of need. There is strength and wisdom in unity. Solomon writes:

*"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but **woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.** Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."* (Eccl. 4:9-12)

Furthermore, this is exactly why the devil has been so effective against the body of Christ. It is because we have not presented a united front against the powers of darkness. Instead, we often find ourselves incessantly engaged in bitter squabbling and pitted against each other as a *house divided against itself*. That house cannot stand. St. Matthew writes:

*"And Jesus knew their thoughts, and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; **and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand:**"* (Mat 12:25)

In contrast to this scenario, if everyone took this warfare seriously and embraced prayer and fasting as the way to come together to promote teamwork and unity of purpose, we would begin to see tremendous change within the Body of Christ. Satan would not stand a chance of defeating us. The eventual change that would come to the church would impact every

arena of our society. This would include our families, churches, communities, and society as a whole.

The question may be asked; if this is the answer, then why don't preachers teach their congregations to pray and fast today? In my opinion, it is because they have become too affluent, prosperous, and comfortable. There is not enough suffering, mourning, and repentance present in their daily lives.

Even so, mark my words—those days are coming to an end. Our freedoms and liberties that we have taken for granted are at this very moment in jeopardy; and like our counterparts in places like Iran, Syria, and parts of Africa, we will soon enough face severe persecution in this country—that my brothers and sisters will change everything.

Finally, I want to encourage those who are in the thick of the battle, and stress; you must learn to fast and pray for yourself. Moreover, if you lack the commitment to pray for yourself, then you must learn how to gain the victory by praying and fasting for others. Remember, when King David prayed for others, the power of his own prayer life returned to him.

This was also true in the life of Job.

*"And the LORD turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends: also the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before." (Job. 42:10)*

Nevertheless, in the end we must accept the fact that the battle is not ours—the battle is the Lord's. And there is no better affirmation of this than through fasting and prayer (2 Chron. 20:15).

## After Thoughts and Reflections

(In this section write down any impressions or thoughts the Lord gives to you and then reflect upon them in prayer)

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- 1) In a paragraph or two, state how this book has helped you to understand something important about prayer and fasting.

# -Afterward-

## There is a War Coming

**P**ray and fasting are ancient biblical disciplines dating back thousands of years. Long before God's people had the written Word, they practiced prayer and fasting as a gateway to repentance and spiritual renewal. In the Holy Scriptures, God has promised to heal and restore his people and their land if they would humble themselves, pray, seek his face, and turn from their sin.

*"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land." (2 Chron. 7:14)*

This promise still holds true today.

However, each day our complicated yet fragile world is falling apart right-before-our-eyes; and there seems to be no certain relief in sight. America the "home of the brave" is no longer the "land of the free." As our civil-liberties are eroded one-by-one, our sacred institutions of marriage, family, and church are in peril, and under a concerted attack from those aligned with the powers of hell.

The moral temperature in our country is rising, and soon it will reach a boiling-point and a state of critical mass from which there will be no return. As tensions between government and people increase so does the likelihood of impending civil unrest, civil disobedience, religious

persecution, and the imminent danger of martial law. All of this will undoubtedly lead to an un-avoidable outcome that no one, scarcely can imagine.

Meanwhile, it is quite painful to see too many Christians, passively sitting by as the foundations of this great land are disintegrating and crumbling in shame and dishonor. Why? It is because the professing church (like Peter, James, and John at the Mount of Olives) is sound asleep, at a time when they have been charged to watch and pray.

When I see these things happening right-before-my- eyes, I find that I cannot be silent. Alarm bells of urgency are ringing within my soul. Furthermore, now I ask without reservation, **what are we going to do about it?**

Satan is not playing games. It is high-time that we, who name the name of Christ, take this warfare and the responsibility of being a Christian seriously.

You can help take back America through the ministry of fasting and prayer. It is time for us to come together with purpose—as a people—as the “my people” of scripture. Yes, within America are a "people" who belong to God and are part of his holy nation in the Earth.

It is time for us to lay aside petty differences and begin to make-a-difference in the moral climate of this nation—before it is too late. Very soon, perhaps by the end of the New Year, this fragile society and all that we call normal may change. That is, unless there is a great awakening of the American consciousness.

I don't know how much time we have, but time is certainly running out. As America's moral temperature continues to rise, let us not be as those proverbial frogs sitting in a pot of water on a hot stove. Let us not deceive ourselves into thinking everything is alright; and not realize until it is too late that we are boiling to death.

As the prophets of old have forewarned the people of their day, even so, we have been forewarned in ours. Books such as *THE HARBINGER* by Jonathon Cahn have been written to

forewarn this nation of impending judgment; so that there is at present no excuse for not taking action to avert what is to come.

Make no mistake—there is a war coming! It is coming to America, and it is coming soon. As fellow Christian warriors, you and I are the last line of defense. However, there is so little time left to do anything, except to pray and fast for this great nation. It is written:

*"If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" (Psa. 11:13)*

Understand this; nothing will change if we do not change. Moreover, if we do not change, neither will our families, churches, communities; cities, society, or nation. It all begins with you and me.

- There is only **one power** on Earth that can turn America from the collision course of certain destruction.
- There are only **one people** on Earth that can bring about a change, the people who are called by the name of Jesus.
- There is only **one purpose** on Earth that can withstand the bitter winds of spiritual and moral declension.

This is America's Final Call—A Call to prayer and fasting.

[www.prayandfast.net](http://www.prayandfast.net)

**JOIN US NOW**

**One Power, One People, One Purpose**

## About the Author

Charles E. Smoot, M.Th is the founder of **Pray-Fast-America**, a national organization established to call America and the Church back to their spiritual heritage of faith and righteousness.



**Pray-Fast-America** (PFA) seeks to support local House of Prayer networks in every city and state across America through webinars, rallies, small-group studies, and local Prayer & Fast Workshops.

As a house-church planter, author, and President of **Grace Theology Institute** (GTI), Charles and his wife Helen, resides in Lancaster, PA with their dog Zoe.

For more information about joining the **National Prayer & Fast Network** and **Pray-Fast-America** visit their website at:

[www.prayandfast.net](http://www.prayandfast.net)



"But the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken away from them, and then shall they fast in those days." (Mk. 2:20)

**P** rayer and fasting are ancient biblical disciplines dating back thousands of years. Long before God's people had the written Word, they practiced prayer and fasting as a gateway to repentance and spiritual renewal.

The church has been over-run by a growing tide of worldliness, apathy, and lethargy. These conditions exist because the church has neglected her most important duty and source of power-Prayer and Fasting.

In the Holy Scripture, God has promised to heal and restore his people and their land if they will humble themselves, pray, seek his face, and turn from their sin.

Are you a Christian but your life seems to be one revolving endless cycle of defeat? Do you feel powerless? Do you try to pray, but it just seems like you can't get your prayers through? Are you struggling in your walk and lack victory? Does your current situation seem hopeless to you? Do you want a more powerful and anointed prayer-life?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, **"Unleashing the Power of Prayer & Fasting"** was written for you. Only prayer & fasting can produce the results that prayer alone cannot.

Charles Smoot is the founder of **Pray-Fast-America**, a national organization established to call America and the Church back to their spiritual heritage of faith and righteousness. **Pray-Fast-America** seeks to support local House-of-Prayer networks in every city and state across America, through webinars, rallies, small-group studies, and local prayer & fast workshops.

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