



Praying With God Video Course

Session Eight: Different Types of Prayers in the Spirit

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'After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly' Acts 4: 31

Session Eight: Different Types of Prayers in the Spirit



*Ephesians 6:18-19: 'Pray at all times on every occasion in the Spirit **with all manner of prayer and entreaty**. To that end keep alert and watch with strong purpose and perseverance, interceding in behalf of all the saints God's consecrated people. And pray also for me that freedom of utterance is given me that I may open my mouth to boldly proclaim the mystery of the Good News*



As we partner with God in prayer we must allow Him to guide and direct us in the type of prayer He wants to pray in and for a particular situation. The above verse refers to 'all manner of prayer' – many different types of prayers. The Aramaic Bible in Plain English puts the above verse in this way: '*Pray with all prayers and with all desires always in The Spirit.*' The International Standard Version says, '*Pray in the Spirit at all times with every kind of prayer and request.*' The different translations clearly convey the idea that there are different types of prayers and that they must be prayed in the Spirit.

Some examples of the different types of prayers are demolishing strongholds or warfare, birthing prayers, entreaty or petition, the cry of the watchman, thanksgiving and praise. There are others, but we will consider some of the characteristics of these few.

As we learn the prayer patterns and rhythms of the Holy Spirit we start to recognize some of the types of prayer He is praying with and through us. We also recognize when He is changing the prayer and moving it into a different type of prayer. Our job, as we join ourselves with Him, is to discern the type of prayer He is praying so we can work with Him. We can learn to discern His mood, thoughts and feelings. God has all of these – feelings, moods, thoughts and plans. I Corinthians 2: 16: '*For who has known or understood the mind (the counsels and purposes) of the Lord so as to guide and instruct Him and give Him knowledge? But we have the mind of Christ (the Messiah) and do hold the thoughts (feelings and purposes) of His heart.*' So, when we are praying we try to pick up on these - how and what is He praying?

How do we discern the type of prayer? We must be sensitive to the 'rivers' coming from within us. Notice the type of language coming out of our mouths – notice its pace, force, volume, intensity, mood, and feeling. We may also 'see' pictures or visions – a battle, or an image associated with warfare, or fire to symbolize glory, or waters washing a situation to show that the Holy Spirit is bringing cleansing to the situation. We may not 'see' but instead 'know' what is being done in the prayer. In addition, our physical bodies will instinctively wish to express what the Holy Spirit is doing through us and what type of prayer He has chosen to use. Bodily expression may include stamping, clapping, kneeling, crying, shouting, quietness and so on and these will be an indication of what type of prayer the Holy Spirit is choosing. See Session 16 for more on interpretation.



'Demolishing' Prayers

'For we are not wrestling with flesh and blood [contending only with physical opponents], but against the despotisms, against the powers, against [the master spirits who are] the world rulers of this present darkness, against the spirit forces of wickedness in the heavenly (supernatural) sphere' Ephesians 6:12

According to Ephesians 6: 10, when we are joined to God and strong in His mighty power we are able to pray strong prayers that 'demolish strongholds'. The visual example is the Israelite army bringing down the walls of Jericho. The 'strongholds' we demolish are patterns of thinking, mind sets, curses, unbelief, doctrines of demons, addictions, wrong habits and so on. God is angry about the influence of the powers of darkness and He wants to release light into dark situations. God in us will work through us to do this. We can't do this in our own strength but as we yield to the Holy Spirit, He will pray through us.

As the Spirit is influencing us and working with us in this prayer, we can sense His mood and thoughts about what we are praying about. We will know we are praying these 'warfare' prayers by listening to the language that comes out of our mouths during these times. It may be violent, fast, loud or assertive. We may 'feel' the righteous anger of God for a person trapped in addiction, a sick person, a corrupt business or nation, a church without power or a multitude of other situations where there is bondage and no freedom of the Gospel. We may do actions like shouting, clapping, stamping or blowing of shofars.

Isaiah 59:19: He the Spirit comes like a rushing stream and comes like a flood. These are the rivers of God, flowing out of us, the Temple of God. So, when our prayers seem to be forceful, like a rush from our mouth, this helps us to identify this kind of prayer.

The result of these prayers is the release of spiritual forces that smash strongholds and scripture tells us where the Spirit is Lord, there is liberty and freedom. 2 Corinthians 3: 17.

Entreaty

Ephesians 1: 17-20: *'Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him'.*

An entreaty is 'an earnest and humble request'. Entreaty or petition prayers are requests made to God to do something, or for a specific need or desire to be met. They are intentional requests to God, usually for our personal needs, family needs and ministry or business needs. Their purpose is to appropriate the resources God has made available to us for our daily requirements to be met so we can accomplish His purpose for our lives. The

model example of this is in what we call the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:9-13, 'Give us this day our daily bread'.

On another level, in times of crisis, the Holy Spirit can prompt us to entreat the Father for our nation, as Esther did. She came before the king to plead for the salvation of Israel, she 'entreated' him, and he accepted her plea by extending his sceptre of grace and granted her request.

When we are praying in the spirit and 'entreating' God, our prayers will have qualities such as intense yearning and urgency, longing, quietness rather than being loud or violent.

Travailing and birthing prayers

Galatians 4:19: *'My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you', (KJV)*

'As it is in the natural, so it is in the spiritual. Travail is a form of intense intercession given by the Holy Spirit whereby an individual or group is gripped by something that grips God's heart. The individual or group labours with Him for an opening to be created so that the new life can come forth'. James Goll (1)

Prayer can be very hard work. This is referred to in the Bible as 'travail'. Dictionaries define travail as hard, often painful work requiring extra exertion. The term is also used in Bible translations such as the King James Version, the English Revised Version, and the American Standard Version, to refer to the toil and pain a woman experiences in giving birth (e.g., Genesis 38:27; Psalm 48:6; Jeremiah 22:23; John 16:21; 1 Thessalonians 5:3). Other translations use words such as toil, labour, anguish, or labour pains rather than travail. We will look at the birthing aspect of this in the next paragraph.

Travailing prayer is when the Holy Spirit prays through us to 'work' a situation. This requires effort. It may be in weeping and crying over something God is grieved about which 'breaks' something in the spirit realm so that deliverance and answers come. Or it could be waves of prayer to bring to change to a situation. It may take time, or several sessions of prayer.

Travailing prayer can vary in intensity but we will be able to discern what the Holy Spirit is doing through the pace, mood, language and bodily actions we instinctively do during this prayer. Some of the manifestations may be loud or soft cries, tears, moaning and groaning or a sense of heaviness or sadness. We may kneel, or lie prostrate, sigh deeply or weep. But whatever we do, we will experience the 'hard work' of prayer.

Biblical Examples of Travail

We need scripture to support our spiritual experiences and there are many biblical examples of this kind of prayer.

Daniel experienced travail and grieving of his spirit - see Daniel 7:15. In Daniel 8:27; 10:8 we see him feeling faint, sick, and weak during the time of prayer as God revealed to him some end time visions.

Hannah is another example of a travailing saint. We find her story in 1 Samuel 1:5-18. It shows her weeping and in such agony that the priest accuses her of being drunk. She was in great 'bitterness of soul' when she prayed and this 'travail' produced a son, Samuel, who became a great priest. Our travailing prayers will produce spiritual children. 1 Samuel 1: 5-18.

Elijah's travailing prayers on Mt Carmel gave birth to the will of God to send rain to Israel. James 5: 16.

Jesus experienced travail in John 11: 32-38 before He raised Lazarus from the dead. In verses 33-35 we see this: *'When Mary came to the place where Jesus was and saw Him, she dropped down at His feet, saying to Him, Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died. When Jesus saw her sobbing, and the Jews who came with her [also] sobbing, He was deeply moved in spirit and troubled. [He chafed in spirit and sighed and was **disturbed.**]* And He said, *Where have you laid him? They said to Him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept.'* (Amplified version)

Jesus was crying, groaning, 'chafing' in the Spirit (different translations use different words) and His prayers were breaking the bonds of Satan, so that this miracle would manifest. Look at verse 38, where Jesus was still in travail before the miracle manifest. *'Now Jesus, again **sighing repeatedly and deeply disquieted**, approached the tomb. It was a cave (a hole in the rock), and a boulder lay against [the entrance to close] it.'* (Amplified). The travailing prayer of Jesus brought a man back to life.

Perhaps the greatest travail of all time was when Jesus was when Jesus was in the garden of Gethsemane before his crucifixion. His prayer is described in Luke 22: 44 as extremely intense. He was 'in great agony of mind' and His travail was so agonizing and painful that His sweat was like blood. He knew what awaited Him and was praying for supernatural courage, strength and victory to face this trauma.

The book of Hebrews also refers to the travailing prayers of Jesus: *'During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission'* (Hebrews 5:7)

The apostle Paul knew about travailing prayer. In Galatians 4:19 we see him travailing for Christ to be formed in the Galatians. In the same manner, we see Epaphras labouring in

prayer for the saints - Colossians 4:12. *'Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God'*

What is the purpose of travail?

1. One purpose of this type of prayer is to make us more Christ like. An example of this is seen in Galatians 4: 19, where Paul describes his travailing prayer that causes Christ to be formed in us. That means we are spiritually developed and matured.
2. 'Birthing'. Another purpose of travail, is to 'bring forth' or 'birth' God's purposes. In the natural, new life comes from a process of birthing –so it is in the spiritual and as we travail, things are birthed in the spirit. In the natural there is always hard labour before the birth, so it is in the spiritual and THERE MUST BE THE TRAVAIL before there will be the spiritual birth. Just as the 'opening' of the natural womb is enlarged to bring forth the baby, so travail creates an 'opening' or 'way' whereas before the opening or way was closed. Travail opens the way for new life.

What may be birthed? Ministries, assignments, revelations, provision, national deliverance or revival. There are many ministers who relate the birth of their ministries to a season of travailing prayer.

Do any of you desire your children's conversions? You will see them saved when you agonize for them. Many a parent who has been privileged to see his children walking in the truth will tell you that before the blessing came, he or she had spent many hours in prayer, before seeing the result when the Lord visited his child and renewed his soul.

Who can travail?

All of us who believe! This is not reserved for the 'gifted few'. In Romans 8: 26, Paul speaks of a people who have first fruits of the Spirit, who are weak and don't know how to pray as they ought. But he says, the Spirit helps us by making the intercession Himself for us '*with groanings which cannot be uttered*'. This is accessible to all believers that are willing and available.



Key Points

1. There are different kinds of prayers in the Spirit
2. The Holy Spirit knows which one is relevant for the moment
3. Each prayer type has unique manifestations

Activities



Bible Study: Different types of prayers

Complete the following chart showing the different types of prayers in the spirit.

Type of prayer	Scripture	Purpose	Manifestation
Demolishing			
Entreaty			
Travail and Birthing			



Reflective Question

Have you experienced any of these types of prayer? Which ones?



Activation

Think of a situation or person needing God's intervention. Lift up this situation or person to God and begin to 'travail' or work hard in prayer for this. This may take time – hours, days or weeks but continue to hold up the situation to the Lord and expect His input as you 'work' or 'travail in prayer for the person or situation. Make a record of the prayer, date and answers from God.

Notable Quotes

I know of no better thermometer to your spiritual temperature than this, the measure of the intensity of your prayer. – Charles Spurgeon

In an old town in Ireland they'll show you with reverence a place where four young men met night after night after night praying for revival.

In Wales, there's a place in the hills where three or four young men only 18 or 19 years old met and prayed night after night. They wouldn't let God go; they would not take no for an answer. As far as humanly possible they prayed a revival into birth. – Leonard Ravenhill

The cycle of prayer moves in this wise: (1) God wants a thing done; (2) He moves the believer to pray that that thing might be done; (3) God does it in answer to that prayer....

There is a thought abroad in the church: "Oh! God works so slowly." He does not. HE WORKS ACCORDING TO THE PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH, and according as there is co-operation with Him. Did God work very slowly in Egypt in delivering the bound nation? He did not. He worked for a prolonged season in getting the instrument ready in the wilderness—forty years....God's work is rapidly done when prayer conditions are fulfilled. There must be conformity to the laws of God before God can work; and according to the absolute conformity to God's will and laws there is a fullness of operation. – Evan Roberts