

# GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



## GIG131 – Your Prayer and War in Heaven

Welcome to this podcast. It is a delight to have you with me on this, and I am believing for something really important today. This time is born from our intercession. We have a small group that prays on Saturday morning for the Sabbath, and we got into a discussion about the effectiveness of our prayer. Are our prayers really effective? How effective are they? And, really, how does our intercession work? What do we need to be doing in these days that we are living in? Because, obviously, people are aware that things have changed over the last years, and we are facing things that seem to be very different from the way they were in the past. So I want to read a Scripture out of Ephesians the sixth chapter in order to get into this, and see if we can really reach into the Holy Spirit for some direction and for some teaching that will assist us in our prayer and our understanding of what is actually transpiring through our times of intercession.

Starting with Ephesians 6:10-13, it says, “Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God.”

I want to stop here for a moment, because a lot of times people are very confused over this idea that there is still a war that is going on surrounding the Kingdom of God and its manifestation on the earth. But what we have to realize is that when Christ said, “It is finished,” He was talking about the sacrifice that was necessary to bring our salvation – and that is different than the manifestation of God’s Kingdom coming to the earth. We all do understand, from our Christian faith and from our reading of the Scriptures, that Christ is to return; He is to appear once again to establish and set up the Kingdom of God and its throne on this earth. So when we hear these words, “It is finished,” it is not talking about the whole battle that surrounds the establishment of the Kingdom of God. Therefore, when we really understand these Scriptures, we also understand that for us as believers, though our salvation is won for us, and though Satan is a defeated foe, there is still a war going on. Just because he is defeated, it does not mean that he knows he is defeated, nor does it mean that his final judgment has been executed. It does not mean that the final judgment against the spirits, against the principalities and the powers, that have rebelled against God and war against Him to usurp His place as God and try to thwart His Kingdom being established on the earth – it does not mean all that is finished. It means, instead, that our salvation is won, and now as believers we find ourselves thrown into the midst of this battle that is taking place.

We know the Scripture says that every enemy must be made the footstool of His feet, and so that is our reality. It is from Hebrews 10, verses 12 and 13: “But He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time onward until His enemies be made a footstool for His feet.” So we see that even though He died on the cross and He provided the one sacrifice for sin for all time, and He has ascended to the right hand of the Father and is at the right hand of the Father even now, it does not mean that this conflict of spirit that took place many thousands of years ago is

over. We do not even necessarily know the timeframe of Satan's rebellion against God, nor of the rebellion of those spirits that followed him when that transpired. We do know, however, that we see him in the Garden as an adversary and as someone who is already in a place of attempting to thwart God's plan, especially for the earth and for mankind. So there is this war that rages, there are enemies that are coming against you and coming against me, and coming against God and His plan, and coming against Christ. Even though He has all authority in heaven and in earth, that authority must be executed until every enemy is defeated, and also, at some point, brought into a complete judgment. This is necessary for us as believers to really understand, if we are going to understand prayer and our part of prayer, and in prayer, and how it affects the Kingdom of God.

Remember, Christ taught us to pray. How are we to pray? Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on this earth as it is in heaven – as it is being done and as it is established, then we are to see the same manifest in this earth. So we as believers have become a part, then, of this whole plan of God. In our salvation, He has included us in the process of manifesting His Kingdom into the earth and bringing it forth to the earth. What are we battling? Well, that is very clear in these Scriptures in Ephesians. It says that our struggle is not against flesh and blood. And that is very difficult for us on a human level really to grasp, because it seems to us like everything happens on a natural level. We, as humans, relate to the natural level. We live in a natural level. We think along lines that deal with the natural plane, and not necessarily the spiritual plane. This is something that we are to reach more into and have a greater understanding of; however, that is not always easy for us, and we are not always able to really do it and live in that place. But Ephesians is giving us this understanding – and it really needs to be an understanding.

Number one, we are in a struggle. Look at the world around us; look at what is happening right now. Good is being called evil, evil is being called good. The world seems to be being turned upside down. Righteousness seems to be being swallowed up. We see it almost looking as though and appearing as though, on a natural level at this time, that the forces of wickedness are winning out. But we can't be deceived by that. Instead, we must understand how our battle is to be fought, and how it is to be won. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood. It is not against leaders; it is not against political parties; it is not against wicked people who are possessed by these spirits, driven by these powers and principalities. It is not a battle of flesh and blood. It is directly "against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places." Here we have named several different aspects of the demonic kingdom or the powers of darkness that are at war against God, against His Kingdom, against Christ as His King, against us as His people; and ultimately, against the ability for God to establish His Kingdom on this earth. These are the things that we find ourselves fighting against – these rulers, these powers, these world forces.

There is a lot happening right now with world forces of darkness that is taking place. One of the things that has been so real to me, personally, is seeing how what is transpiring around us in this day and age literally is global. Why is it global at this time? Because we are directly up against world forces of this darkness, and they are working throughout the world and over-compassing the world in their fight against the plan of God. So we see the reality of these world forces coming against us, coming against the Kingdom to thwart it. We see these spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places transpiring. And there is – there is so much wickedness seeming to surround us in this day and age. And we have deal with, and learn to deal with, these spiritual forces of wickedness.

That brings up the question, and this was part of the discussion we were having in our group of intercession: How do we find an effectiveness? Is our prayer effective in these things? If we are not

dealing with flesh and blood, if we are not dealing with human elements, what are we dealing with? We are dealing with all of these spiritual aspects. Yet we, being human and in the flesh, and more focused on the flesh, and having difficulty relating in a realm of spirit, how are we then to be effective in our prayer? Is our prayer effective? The answer to that is, “Yes.” So let’s talk about it some, to see, “What are we doing, and how is it being effective?”

Going on in Ephesians 6:14, it says, “Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness.” We are to gird ourselves. We are to appropriate in our own lives these elements of God’s personality, and what He has provided for us in this warfare. Number one is truth. Truth is almost lost in this age – what people are calling truth is absolutely ridiculous. Things are being said, things are being taught in our schools, that are just ridiculous lies that ten years ago, if you would have said these things, you would have been laughed off the planet. Now people are actually believing they are true. Sometimes I listen to what people are saying, even in being questioned before Congress about what is the truth of certain aspects of biology in this day and age, and the ability to choose your own gender on a daily basis, or talking about men being able to have babies – and you know, let’s face it, I haven’t seen one yet. And it is easy for people to say that, but it is ridiculous, and it has no proof in biology. And yet, when you switch over into something like what is going on with the warming of the planet, everybody is screaming, “Oh, we must follow the science! Follow the science!” Well, you know, they say it on one hand, and then don’t say it on another hand, or they don’t do it. How can you be following science when you are talking about all of these other aspects? See, the truth is gone in this generation. It has been swallowed up by these spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places, and that is taking over. But as for us, we are to know the truth. The truth sets us free, and we are to retain the truth and not be deceived and sucked into the lies of this age and its woke mentality. I’m sorry, this woke mentality is the most unawake and unaware thing that I have ever heard of. So, how do we do this? We put on the breastplate of righteousness. We live in righteousness. What is righteousness? It is what God says to do. It is what He says to think. It is what the Scriptures teach us. Those are the things that bring us to righteousness, and into a life of righteousness.

It goes on in verses 15-17 to say, “Having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” See, we do have salvation, but we are still in the midst of this battle. “In addition to all, take up the shield of faith with which you are able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the wickedness.” Don’t lose your faith in this generation. It will be easy to lose your faith, and many will lose faith; but there is a shield of faith that God has given us that extinguishes the lies and the flaming arrows of the wicked one. “Take up the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.” We must be so given in this generation to knowing and rehearsing and memorizing and living by the Word of God – that is the truth. That is the plumb line. That is what holds us in our positioning with God and His plan.

The last verse I will read is verse 18: “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints.” So he ends this whole teaching, talking about all of these spiritual things and how we protect ourselves from what is coming through against us, but it is interesting that he ends up telling us to pray – telling us to petition the Father, to pray in the Spirit, which we should do. We should spend a definite period of time daily praying in the Spirit, in the Holy Spirit, praying in tongues – if you want to call it your spiritual prayer language, however you term it, it is prayer in the Holy Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit praying in us and through us, and we must allow these prayers and petitions to come at all times in the Spirit. And with this in view, we are to be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints. So not only do we pray in the Spirit, but we are to be on the alert – we are to be watching what is going on around us, we are to be

seeing what is happening, and then we are to also pray with our understanding with real perseverance in our petition, especially for all of the saints. So he ends all of this idea about the spiritual warfare that is taking place around us and in the heavenly places by telling us to pray.

This goes back to the discussion that we were having in our prayer group – “Is prayer effective in the world that we are facing now, in the things that are coming against us in this age, in what we see transpiring to destroy the Kingdom of God, to destroy mankind?” Remember, the purpose of satan is that no flesh be saved alive, and that is what he is after in this age; and he is doing those things which will destroy all flesh through these spirits of wickedness in the heavenly places, the rulers – all of this is being thrown at us. What are these things? They are different levels in the hierarchy of the heavenly authority. Some of them are different creations – different beings, if you will. Some are different spirits, different spirit levels of authority or moving or commission in the heavenly places. And again, it is difficult for us at times to understand how to deal with this. So what I want to do is go to the book of Daniel and start at chapter 10, and talk about this a little bit; because I want to tie in the reality that our prayer *is* effective, even though maybe sometimes we do not understand all of this, or how it works, or what is really going on around us, because we tend to look at things on a natural level. And when we do, we tend to react and respond on a natural level – and that is exactly what Ephesians is telling us not to do. Our battle is not flesh and blood. It is not on a natural level. It will get to a natural level at some time. But how do we affect the natural level and what is transpiring around us? by seeing the spirit realm dealt with, because first the spirit, then the natural. And that is what will happen – first, all the heavenly hosts will become the footstool of His feet. Every rebellious and disobedient spirit will be brought under Christ’s rule and authority and made His footstool, and be set in the judgment at a point later. We understand that the spirit world will be brought to order, then He will return to this earth to set it into order – but it will first transpire on a spiritual realm. So again, you can ask the question, “Well, then, how effective are we when we seem to be praying on a natural realm? We are using natural words.” Yes, we are praying in the Holy Spirit, and so we are using spiritual words in that prayer. But it seems difficult in our minds to grasp this idea that prayer and moving on a natural level can have this counterpart into the realm of spirit. But it reaches into the world of spirit, and it works within the world of spirit to accomplish the will of God and to bring forth His Kingdom.

So in Daniel 10, we will see somewhat how this works. I am starting with verse 12, but there is a lot of the story before this. Daniel had set his heart. He had been reading the prophecies about the timeframe in which Israel was to be in captivity within Babylon. As he was reading the prophecies, they were really disturbing to him, and he was wanting to know, “How long, Lord? When is our captivity going to be over and removed, and how are we going to break out of this?” And so he was fasting and praying and seeking God, crying out to God over what he was reading in the prophecies.

I am not going to read all of that. I am going to jump to verse 12 to pick the story up there, because in his prayer, then, this angel appears to him. “Then he said to me, ‘Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.’” So Daniel is in this time of praying and fasting, and he is very specific about what he is doing. He is saying, in a sense, what the Lord said: “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Let this prophecy be fulfilled that says that our captivity is going to end, and we are going to return to the land of Israel.” He is seeking God, “When is this going to happen?”

We are still, in a sense, having that type of prayer, and should be. “Lord, when? When is Your return? We believe in Your return, we see the prophecies about Your return, and so, when is this going to transpire?” We should be driven to say, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done. We want it now, Lord. Bring it forth, on this earth, as it is in heaven.” So he was praying that kind of a prayer, and this angel appears to him and says, “Hey, Daniel, don’t be afraid.” Number one, Daniel was terrified by the appearance of this being to him. And he says, “From the very first day that you set your heart to understand, and you humbled yourself before God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words.” Now, we may not always understand this; certainly it is not something we see. But when we pray and we enter into prayer, especially seeking God over things which are prophetically declared to happen in the Word of God – which is why Christ taught us that prayer, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven” – it is directly asking God to fulfill His will and His Word on this earth. Okay, so how do you get the answer to your prayer? Well, first it has to come from God, through the spirit realm, to the earth. And in that process, God sent this angelic being, this spiritual being, to Daniel to bring the answer: “I have come in response to your words.” So God answers prayers. He sends messengers to accomplish it, to accomplish those prayers, to answer us, to bring wisdom. Whatever the need is of that answer, God sends that answer to us, many times, through spiritual beings. But look at what takes place.

We go to verse 13, and it says, “But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.” So this angel is bringing the answer to Daniel, and he is thwarted by this prince. Now remember what Ephesians is talking about, the principalities and powers that we are up against. Here is a direct understanding of how that works. This principality from the kingdom of Persia, and it says the kings of Persia that he was left with, were coming to thwart, to stop that angel from getting through; even though from the first day Daniel prayed, God answered the prayer. God answered the prayer, but the answer to the prayer was not getting to Daniel because it was being thwarted by the principalities and powers that were set against Daniel.

Remember where he was – he was in Babylon. So what is fighting the answer to his prayer getting to him in Babylon, on the earth where he dwells? Well, it is the prince of Persia, the kings of Persia are trying to stop that. Why? Because, basically, it is those principalities and powers of Persia that are the source of the bondage of Israel in Babylon. So, of course, they are trying to thwart it – they don’t want Israel to go free. Daniel is asking, “When do we get free, Lord? You said we would be free. What is the time? How does this work with our freedom?” And these spirit beings, these principalities, these powers, these angelic forces, are stopping that answer from getting to Daniel, so that he won’t know what to do or how to live or what to pray for further; or what to talk to the people about to encourage them in faith about the release from Babylon. So, the answer is being stopped. That is interesting – how many answers to your prayers right now are caught up in a place of spiritual warfare?

He continues, “Then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia.” So here is this angelic being that is in this battle against the kings of Persia and all of this, and finally, Michael, the archangel – we know he is the protector of Israel – comes and enjoins the battle. So literally, we’ve got a war going here in heaven. A war in heaven, initiated how? It wasn’t going on before Daniel prayed. It is a result, a direct result, of Daniel’s prayer, of Daniel asking for answers, asking for God to help him. And those requests, those petitions – remember how Ephesians ended: it said we should be constantly, every day, in petitions and asking in our prayer. Why? Because our prayer is the source of the warfare in heaven. As God is answering the prayers and sending

the answers through, and moving to manifest His Kingdom on the earth, then everything that is blocking it manifests itself, because it is drawn out against what God is trying to do. And the very rebellion of those spiritual forces is revealed and manifested, and they are able to be fought and abolished by God's spiritual warriors, the archangels, and those that are not the fallen. Remember, when satan fell, he took a third of the angels; and we can assume that those are not just the angels, but also other principalities and powers, and every form of being that exists. There are myriads of creations that sit around the throne of God that God created. He didn't just create the earth and create man, Adam and Eve, down here. He created a myriad. People wonder, "Is there other life?" There is so much other life that God created, and that life in the spirit realm is with Him; and it is also in a war against those that are in rebellion, disobedience, and determined to destroy and hinder the Kingdom of God from coming forth. So we see this. And Christ, being the One given all authority and ascending to the right hand of God, offset the balance of power in the realm of spirit. Now those that are in the forces of God have that authority behind them in what they are doing. But it is important for us to realize that as we pray, our prayers literally are initiating at times warfare in the spirit; and that warfare is being used to bring every enemy under the footstool of Christ's feet, until every enemy is abolished and He returns to establish His Kingdom on this earth. So I encourage us: our prayer is effective. We should continue to pray and seek Him, and reach in for all that He has.

In verses 14-17, he says, "Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet future.' When he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face toward the ground and became speechless." See, he is facing these beings that are just beyond human comprehension to stare at or to be in the presence of. "And behold, one who resembled a human being was touching my lips." Isn't that interesting? In the presence of all these other beings that are there and involved with this, here is one that actually resembles a human being. What does that mean? It means that these others did not resemble human beings. We cannot even imagine what these principalities and these powers, and the Seraphim and Cherubim, look like. We get certain ideas out of Ezekiel of some appearances that exist. But it's amazing, when it talks about God, it calls Him the Lord of hosts – because He literally is the leader of hosts upon hosts, myriads upon myriads, thousands upon thousands, that attend Him and are a part of this spiritual warfare and life that is in the process now of bringing His Kingdom to earth. But that will be a final stage in all that is taking place.

So here comes this one who resembled a human being, who touched his lips; "then I opened my mouth and spoke and said to him who was standing before me, 'O my Lord, as a result of the vision anguish has come upon me, and I have retained no strength. For how can such a servant of my lord talk with such as my lord?'" These beings were so brilliant in their appearance that he could not even imagine them conversing with him. "As for me, there remains just now no strength in me, nor has any breath been left in me." Think about this: Daniel motivated the actions of these spirits that were so wondrous that he could not even gaze upon them; and he did it through his prayer, his fasting, his humbling himself before God to seek the answers. And the messenger that was sent said to him, "I have come to give you understanding." Many times that is what we receive, spiritual understanding and wisdom, and it seems like it is imparted to us from the invisible. And yet, there are those spirits who are, yes, invisible, but they are delivering the messages, the understanding, the force, and the answers of our prayers to us.

Verses 18-20: "Then this one with human appearance touched me again and strengthened me. He said, 'O man of high esteem, do not be afraid. Peace be with you; take courage and be courageous!' Now as soon as he spoke to me, I received strength and said, 'May my Lord speak, for you have strengthened

me.' Then he said, 'Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come.'" Boy, not only is he in a battle with the prince of Persia and the kings of Persia, now here comes this prince of Greece to strengthen the evil forces in the battle, because they are being overcome by Michael's appearing in it. So this messenger delivers the strength to Daniel. He strengthens him in his fast, in his prayer, and he gives him the understanding, and then he returns to the battle that, again, was started by Daniel in his prayer. It says, verse 21, "However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these forces except Michael your prince."

We have to understand that our prayer is more than just words, and it has the potential and the possibility of actually releasing the war in heaven that will bring about the judgment of the spirits of rebellion, the principalities and powers. It is said that we are not fighting against flesh and blood, but we are fighting against rulers and powers, against world forces of darkness, against spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Those things we are fighting. You say, "How can I fight those kinds of forces when I am just a man, a human, a woman? I have no ability to engage with those kinds of beings and forces." Well, that is true, we don't. But we have prayer. And we have in that prayer the ability to turn loose the war in spirit that will bring about their demise. So we must remember what Ephesians is telling us: "With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."

I hope this blesses you, and I want us to remember a few key points. We must understand the power of prayer. Sometimes we question its effectiveness in our lives, or we question the effectiveness of just our prayers to God. But we need to understand that the power of prayer is something that has to be discerned many times in the spirit to see what is transpiring as a result of our prayers, and the answer to those prayers being delivered to us. For Christ to return, every enemy must be made the footstool of His feet; and our prayer in our intercession plays a major role towards the fulfillment of those Scriptures, and towards the fulfillment of His authority over every entity, every being, every principality, every power, every force of wickedness. They will be brought down, they will be brought under His feet, and He will return with the Father who is the leader of the hosts of heaven. They will come with Him to then bring obedience and His purpose and Kingdom onto this earth.

Lord, we ask for it in our day. Amen.