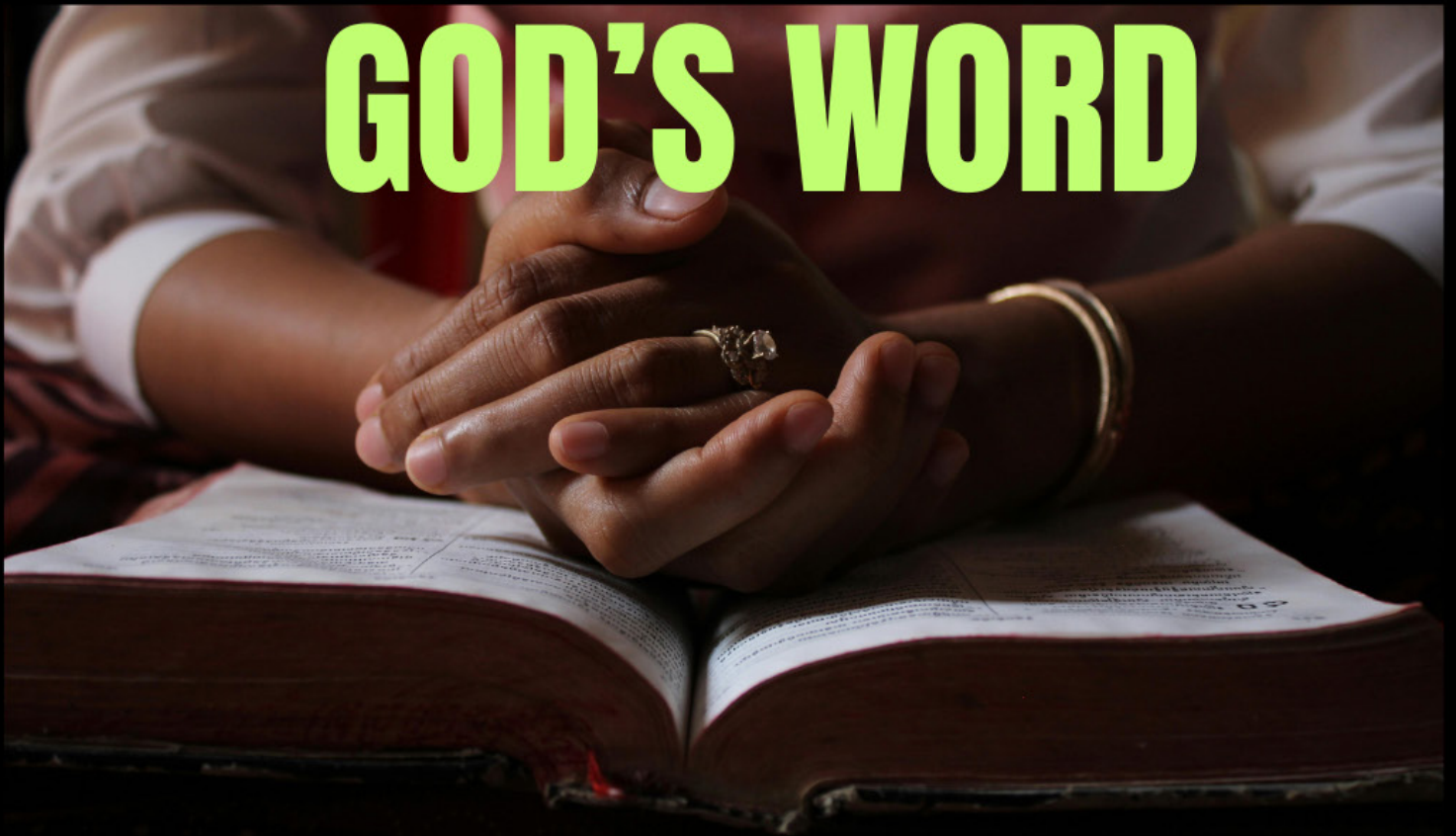


DEVOTE YOURSELF TO PRAYER AND TO

GOD'S WORD



GARY HARGRAVE



Revelation That Comes From the Father

In Matthew the sixteenth chapter, Yeshua (Jesus) asked the disciples,

“Who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. I also say to you that you are Peter [*pétros*: a little stone], and upon this rock [*pétra*: boulder or cliff] I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” (Matthew 16:15–19)

A lot is happening in these verses. The first part of course is that Simon Peter is getting a revelation from God about who Yeshua really is. And Yeshua says, “It is this revelation that you’re getting directly from the Father that I will build My Church on.” The Lord’s true Church will be born out of revelation, and it is going to be built upon a revelation from God. We must be led by the Spirit of God (Romans 8:14). This Spirit of revelation must direct what we are doing and how we are building on the foundation of a revelation from the Father: what He is speaking, what He is wanting, and what He is doing. So we build upon this bedrock of revelation.

If you are devoted to prayer and learn to pray in the Spirit, I guarantee that it will be the door through which the Father will speak to you. We have nothing and know nothing in ourselves. But if you know how to walk in the Spirit, then the Father will speak to you. It is always

the Father speaking, which is mostly expressed in this intercession of praying in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:18). And out of this intercession will come revelation. Peter must have known how to exercise this intercession in the Spirit because Yeshua made every effort to proclaim publicly that Peter was not just talking out of his head. Peter was speaking by the revelation he had received in his spirit from the Father through his connection with the Holy Spirit. That is what all believers should be able to do.

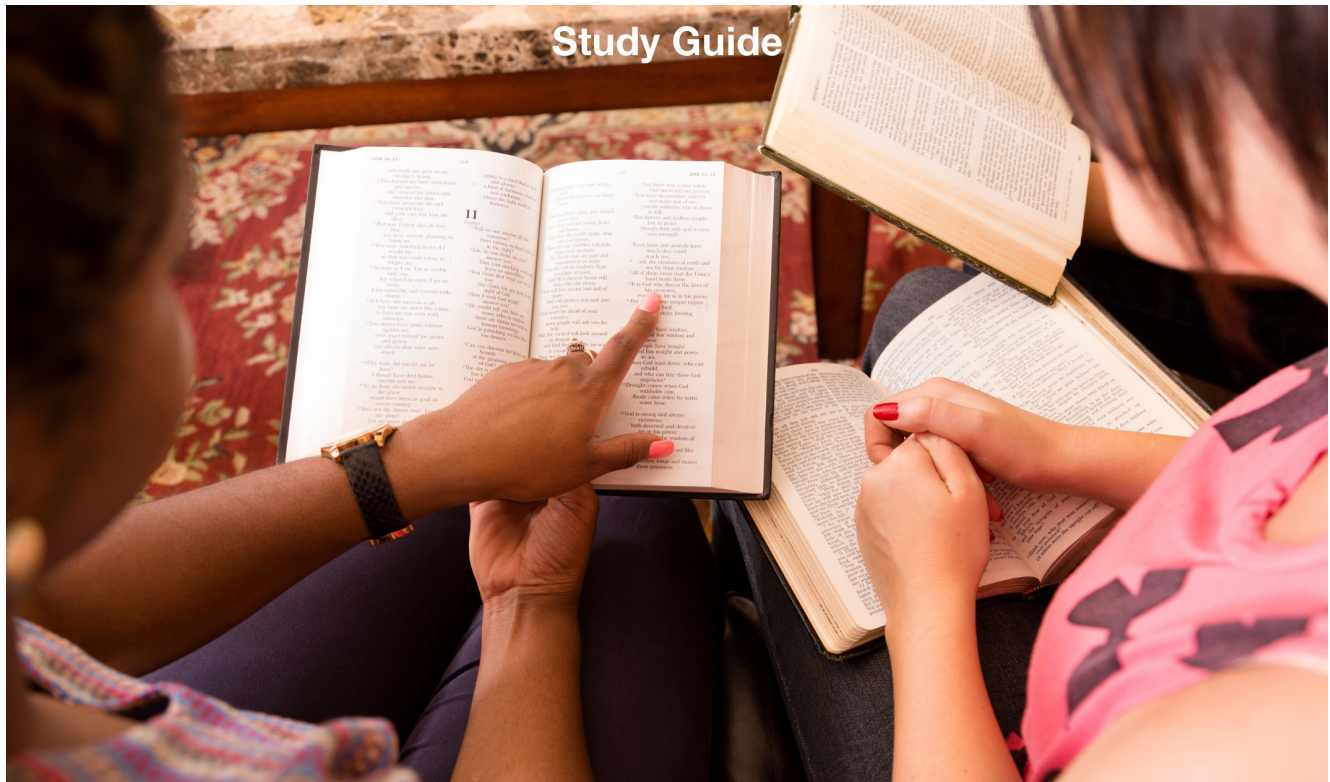


Hades Will Never Overpower the True Church

God is building His Church on revelation, and Yeshua says to us that the gates of Hades will never overpower His Church. It is true that there are those men and women who are determined to see division and try to block the oneness. But God comes in and circumvents that division with an answer—and that answer is His Word. The miracle of oneness in the Body of Christ is only going to happen by virtue of this infusion of God Himself through His Word; Christ is the Word made flesh (John 1:14).

So we have revelation born of the Father that builds the Church, and we have the Word of Christ as the guarantee that the Church will never be overpowered by Satan's demonic forces. I want to emphasize this point: the true Church cannot be overpowered. It does not matter how much people are plotting and planning against it and are committed to its division. I know the Scripture says a house divided cannot stand; that is a spiritual principle (Luke 11:17). But then Yeshua said, "And the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

One minute the Bible says that it is impossible for the Church to stand if there is division in it. But then Yeshua comes along and gives us a direct Word: “The gates of hell will never prevail against My Church.” This Word of prevailing is greater to me than the principle about division. The principle of division is correct, and it will always function. It is just like gravity. But there is something greater in the power of a living Word from God that can preempt the principle of division even while it is in motion (Hebrews 4:12). We may be living in a time when, according to the principles of the Spirit, the divided Church is set for destruction. But I want you to understand that a Word from God can preempt even the spiritual principles of God Himself.



The Word of God Triumphs Over Everything Else

The Church will overcome and prevail. So we know that at some point the Body of Christ must come into oneness. And the only way that oneness will ever happen is by a Word from God that triumphs over every other principle. The Word of God prevails over every person, over every thought and imagination, over every satanic force, and over every spiritual force of God set in motion by a principle—even the principles of physics that govern the world (Joshua 10:12–13). So somehow, we must find those Scriptures and apply them.

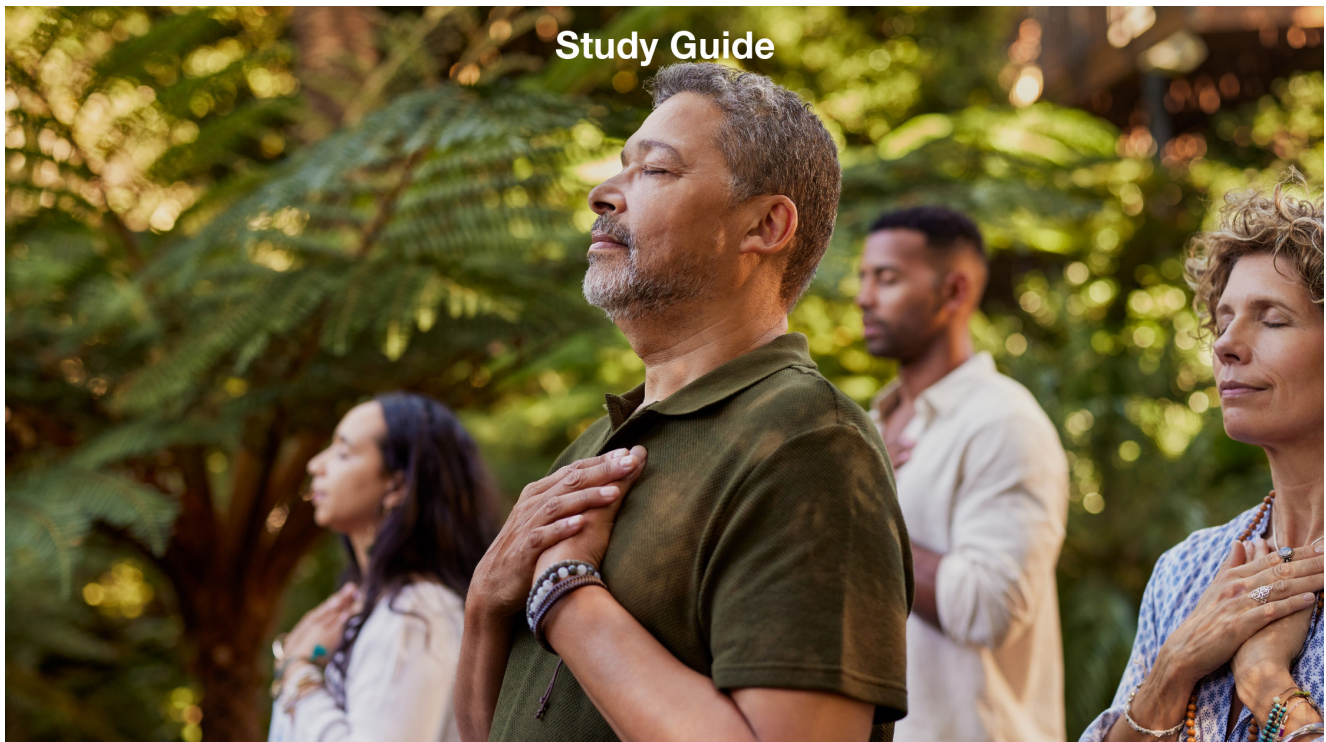
Let me paint a picture of what I am talking about. In Acts the sixth chapter, we see where division entered the early Church. This is not an insignificant thing.

Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. (Acts 6:1)

I know this Scripture is about serving soup, and it seems like it would be easy to solve the problem. But it is more than that. Whenever division happens, we know there is a spirit behind it. The apostles were aware of that, and I am sure that the church community was aware of it. So in verse two it says,

The twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, “It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task.” (Acts 2:2–3)

The apostles knew they were dealing with a spirit of division that was coming to divide the Body of Christ. So they delegated the serving of soup to seven men full of the Spirit of wisdom who could take care of this problem. Verse 4 tells us why: “But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.” The Greek word used here for ministry is really interesting. It means “waiting at a table.” The apostles were talking about solving the problem of serving the tables, and they used the same secular Greek word. It is almost a play on words here: “We’re not going to deal with serving the soup on the tables; we’re going to work at serving the Word on the table for the Body of Christ.” I think that is fascinating. That is why it is fun to study the original biblical languages.



Devoted to the Service of the Word

Faced with this problem of division at the food tables, the apostles made an important decision: “We are going to be devoted to prayer and to the Word of God.” We must understand how dire the circumstances were with this spirit of division. Yet still the apostles

said, “The most important thing we must do is to devote ourselves to prayer.” As Christians that must be our number one focus as well. But we will have to practice and learn; we will have to grow and become more powerful in our prayer through the Holy Spirit. So first and foremost, we are devoted to prayer.

The second focus is to be devoted to the Word of God. Although Christ laid out the reality that if the Church was divided it would not stand, He also circumvented the problem with this other Word: “My church will never be overpowered by the gates of hell or by the plans of satan.” Being committed to the Word has two phases to it. First you have to find these specific Scriptures where God Himself says, “This event will certainly happen no matter what.” Then you must proclaim these Scriptures with real faith.

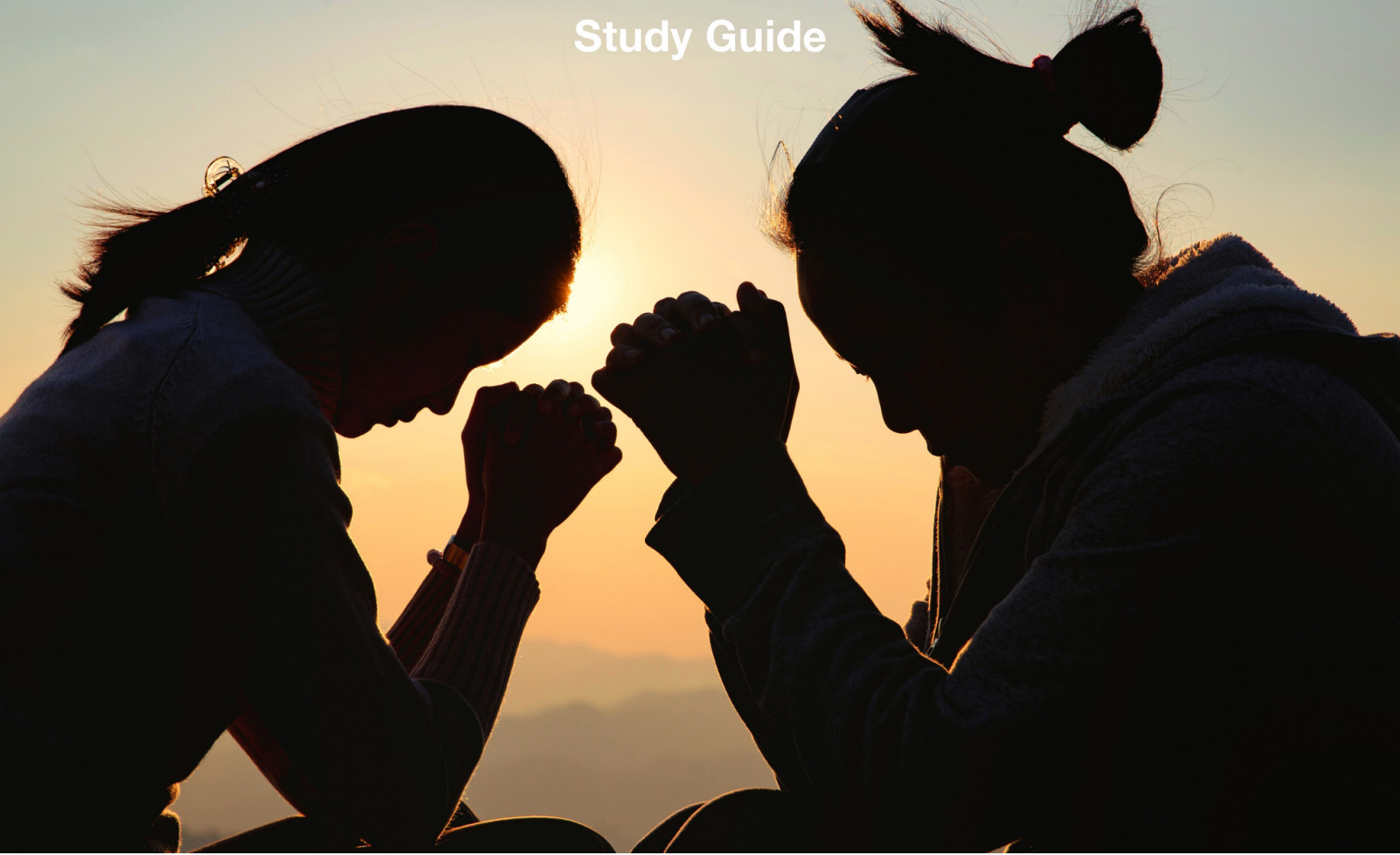
An illustration of this is when the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, saying,

“Thus says the LORD, ‘If you can break My covenant for the day and My covenant for the night, so that day and night will not be at their appointed time, then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant so that he will not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levitical priests, My ministers.’”
(Jeremiah 33:19–21)

When you find those Scriptures in the Bible, then you have found the Word of God that has the power to circumvent even His other principles that may be in motion. Next you must believe this Word in your own heart and start speaking it and speaking it until you see it manifested. When you do that, it will take your prayer and intercession to the level that Samuel and the early prophets moved in (1 Samuel 19:20).

The spirit of division in the early Church was circumvented by a Word from God. And in the same way, if we move in what Yeshua said and proclaim it, we will prevail. Otherwise, God’s principles are already set in motion, and gravity will function. End-time events and judgments are set in motion, and they are moving down this track according to scriptural principles. But we have the Word of God that tells us other things can happen; “mercy triumphs over judgment” (James 2:13).

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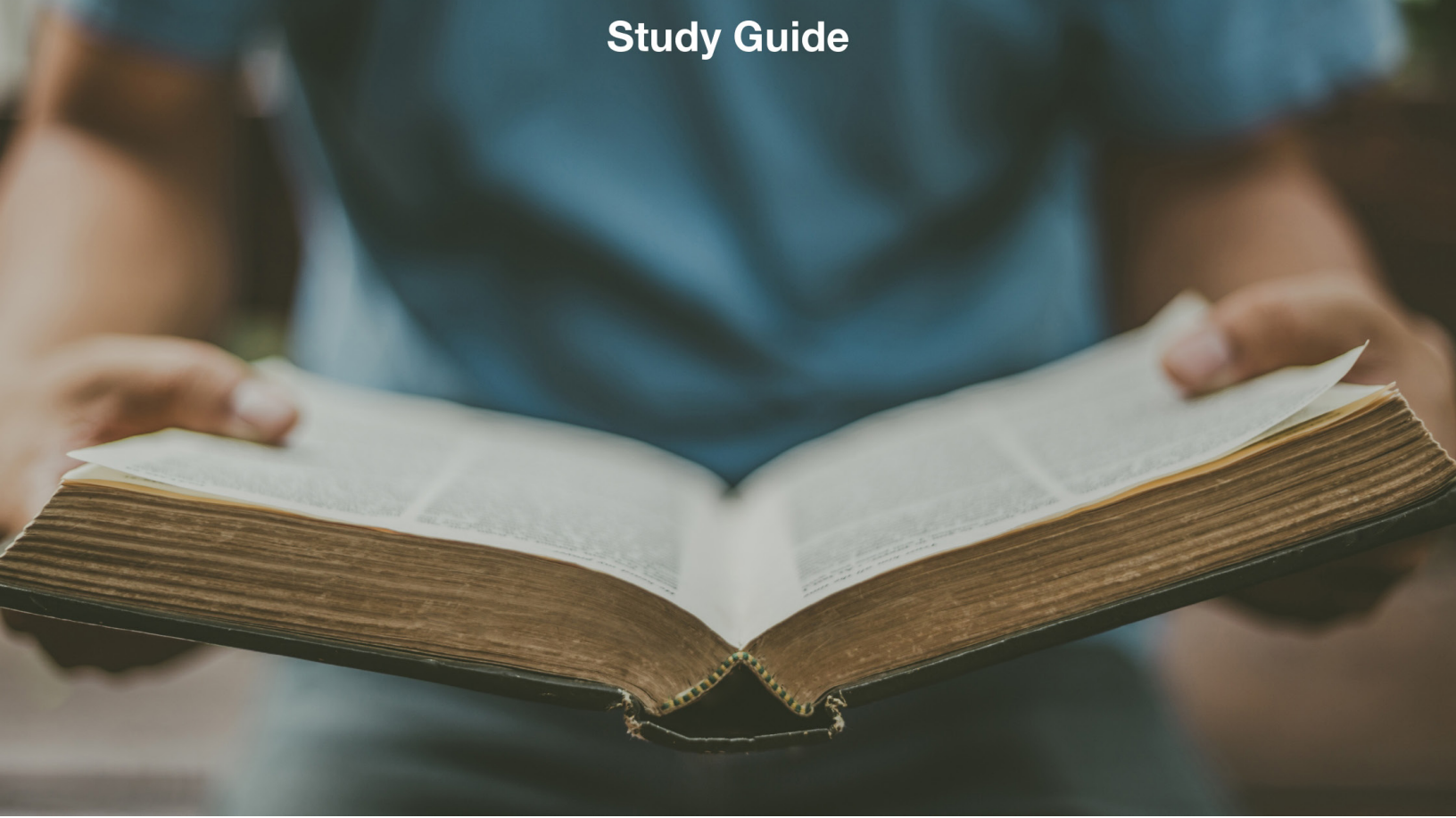


Our Intercession Can Change End-time Events

Things are set to transpire in the end-time, but are they in the context that God said, “This will happen, no matter what”? Or is God just telling man, “Unless something different transpires, this is what is going to happen.” We see an example of this in what happened to Jonah. He went to Nineveh “according to the word of the LORD” and cried out saying, “Yet forty days and Nineveh will be overthrown” (see Jonah 3:3–4). But when the king of Nineveh issued a proclamation, the people repented and put on sackcloth.

“By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let man, beast, herd, or flock taste a thing. Do not let them eat or drink water. But both man and beast must be covered with sackcloth; and let men call on God earnestly that each may turn from his wicked way and from the violence which is in his hands. Who knows, God may turn and relent and withdraw His burning anger so that we will not perish.” When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it. (Jonah 3:7–10)

However, most Christians look at today’s world events and say, “Oh look! This is what God said would happen. It’s the fulfillment of prophecy!” But somewhere there must be a people who say, “Yes, but God did not say that it had to happen. And He didn’t say that our intercession could not change it.”



The Scriptures Are Powerful Instruments

We can read the Scriptures aloud with a force that is tremendously creative. If you are praying for the world, then you can quote a Scripture like, “The earth is the LORD’s, and all it contains, the world, and those who dwell in it” (Psalm 24:1). Or you may declare what Paul said about Yeshua:

He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man has seen or can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.
(1 Timothy 6:15–16)

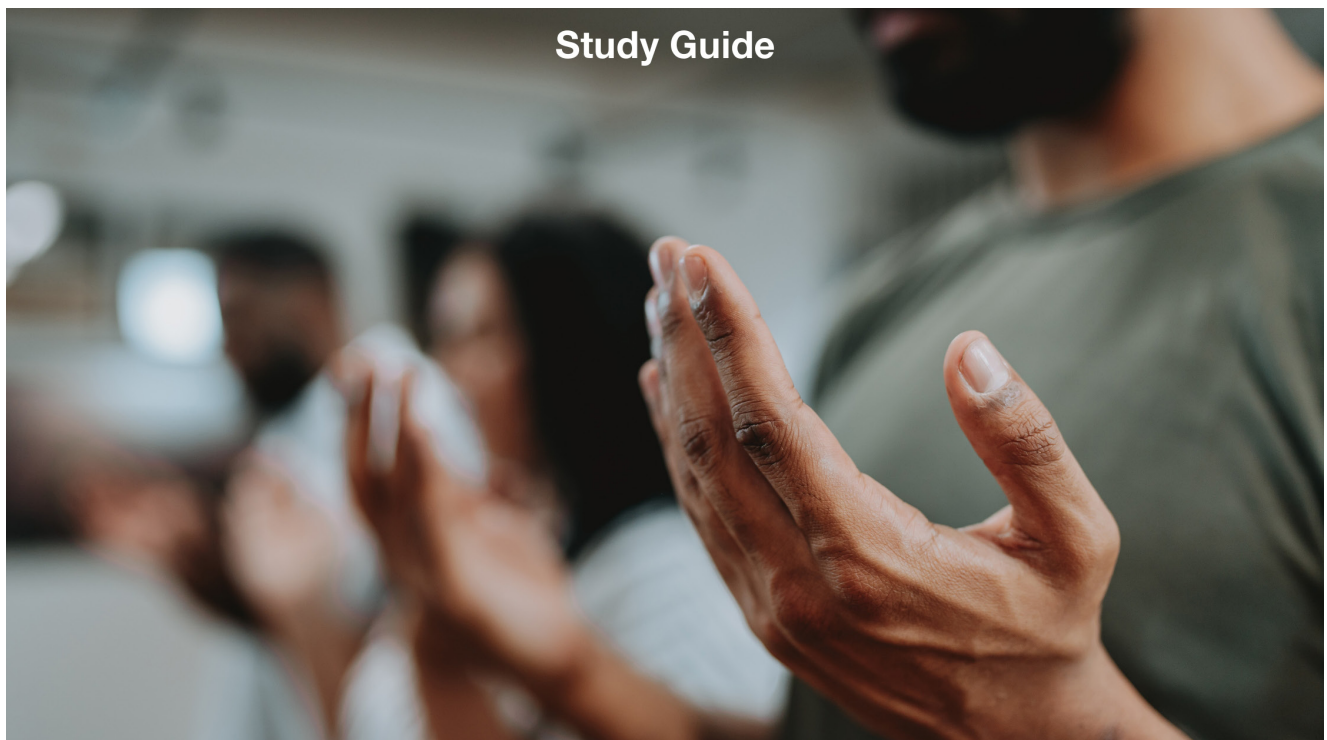
I want to find Scriptures that are important for us to know, apply, and memorize. We can use them as powerful instruments in our devotion to prayer. I want to find Scriptures like, “The gates of Hades shall never overpower it.” These Words from God will give us spiritual ammunition in our cannons: “For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses” (2 Corinthians 10:4).

Another Scripture that will help when you are praying for oneness in the Body of Christ is in Yeshua’s conversation with the Father.

“The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me

where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.” (John 17:22–24)

In English we call this the present perfect tense: “the glory which You *have given* Me” (emphasis added). The present perfect tense is used for actions that started in the past and are related to or continue into the present. I like the strength of that; it is already done and continuing. There are no other options. This understanding is important in dealing with oneness because there are a million reasons why we cannot become one and why we cannot stay one. But there is no way around this Scripture. Christ has already given us His glory that we may be one just as He and the Father are one. And when we proclaim God’s Word, we are creating in this natural realm what already exists in the realm of spirit.



No Matter What Things Look Like, God Will Do It!

Let us look at another example in the eleventh chapter of Ezekiel.

“Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “I will gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I will give you the land of Israel.”’ When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. And I will give them one heart, and put a new spirit within them. And I will take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God.” (Ezekiel 11:17–20)

If you have ever wondered what would happen to Israel in all the controversy they are facing today, here is your answer. This Scripture in Ezekiel gives no option: God will give them a new heart and a new spirit. There were times when Israel sinned, and God warned them what would happen. But this promise has the power to stop everything that has ever happened and reverse it; it brings a whole new life to Israel. And I want to be part of the fulfillment of this Scripture with them: I want a new heart and a new spirit. I want the enabling to walk in His statutes, to keep His ordinances, to be among His people, and for Him to be my God.

So look for Scriptures like this where God says, “This will happen. No matter what things look like, it will happen!” Our finding and proclaiming these Scriptures will change the course of nations. The Scriptures talk about the things that are hidden and those who find them.

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.”
(Deuteronomy 29:29)

Therefore, the focus of our lives must be on the most important things: devotion to prayer and devotion to the Word of God. We can make this happen.

Please let us know how you are using our Study Guides. We would love to hear from you.
Contact us by sending an email to **silvana@hargraveministries.org**

All Scripture references are from the New American Standard Bible 1995 (NASB1995).

ABOUT GARY HARGRAVE



GARY HARGRAVE has a passion for leading people into spiritual maturity. Gary effectively ministers the life-changing truth of God's Word through Bible teaching and prophetic revelation that emphasizes the Lordship of Christ.

Gary embraces the teachings and insights of the Hebrew Scriptures as the essential foundation of God's Kingdom and the roots of Christian faith.

By cultivating spiritual maturity in Christians, Gary is deeply committed to teaching and inspiring unity in the Body of Christ and between Christians and the Jewish people.

Throughout decades of ministry, Gary has worked closely with leaders in the Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant communities to build relationships based on commonality and understanding. He frequently leads study tours to Israel in the land of the Bible.

Gary is the host of a weekly podcast entitled *Growing In God* and is the founder of Shiloh University, an accredited online Bible college and seminary.

Gary and his family reside in Hawaii.

For other insightful resources by Gary Hargrave, including podcasts, books, articles, videos, and other educational materials, please visit: www.HargraveMinistries.org.

ABOUT HARGRAVE MINISTRIES

The calling of the Lord upon this ministry is to lead people into spiritual maturity by revealing biblical truth. **Our passion is to see the Kingdom of God manifest on earth** as the Body of Christ grows in unity, power, and love.

Everything we do flows from the revelation of the Jewish foundations of our Christian faith. It is our desire and privilege to bless the land and people of Israel. Our Israel outreach includes our ability to:

- **Feed the poor and break the cycle of poverty in Israel.**
- **Support the orphans and widows of fallen Israeli soldiers.**
- Provide physical and emotional care to **child victims of terrorism.**
- **Build bridges between Christians and Jews with biblical study and research.**
- Support archaeology and preservation of the **biblical City of David.**
- Provide 24/7 **care for Holocaust survivors.**
- **Help persecuted Jews around the world return to Israel and start new lives.**
- Plant trees to **reforest Israel** and help create **"The Gospel Trail"** between Nazareth and Capernaum.

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