

SOME SCRIPTURE REFERENCES REGARDING INTERCESSION

Genesis 18:17-33
Nehemiah 1:4 to 2:8
Psalm 126:5
Isaiah 42:14
Isaiah 59:15,16
Isaiah 62:1-12
Isaiah 64:7

Ezekiel 13:3-5
Ezekiel 22:23-31
Ezekiel 24:15-18
Daniel 1:8
Daniel 9:5-6
Matthew 16:18-20
Matthew 23:37

Romans 8:26, 27
Galatians 4:19
Ephesians 6:10-20
Philippians 3:10
Colossians 1:24
1 Timothy 2:1-3

TRAVELLING ON MY KNEES

Last night I took a journey to ISRAEL across the seas;
I did not go by boat or plane, I travelled on my knees.

I saw so many precious people there with scars and wounds within,
But God told me I should go, that there was oil to pour for Him.

But I said: "Lord, I cannot go and work with such as these".
He answered quickly: "Yes, you can ...by travelling on your knees."

He said: "You pray, I'll meet their need; you call and I will hear.
Be concerned about their fate, of those both far and near."

And so I tried it, knelt in prayer, gave up some hours of ease;
I felt the Lord right by my side, while travelling on my knees.

As I prayed on and saw them helped and the badly wounded healed,
I saw God's workers strength renewed, while labouring on the field.

I said, "Yes, Lord, I have a job, my desire Thy will to please;
I can go and heed Thy call, by travelling on my knees."

(Anon)

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PRAYING TOGETHER FOR ISRAEL

GUIDELINES FOR CORPORATE PRAYER

1. Be brief. In Matthew 6:7 Jesus says that the Gentiles suppose they will be heard for their many words. We haven't changed much!
2. Speak clearly and loudly enough to be heard. As Paul said in another context, how can we say "Amen" if we don't know what is said?
3. Pray from the heart, don't preach. Avoid sentimentality and unnatural speech. Sometimes you can tell what group people come from by listening to them pray because they adopt a particular style. Be honest; talk to God in a natural way.
4. Keep on the theme. Pray through one subject before introducing another. Obviously, that doesn't mean we have to see the mountain moved into the sea before proceeding to the next subject, but we do need to give God time to speak concerning the subject in hand before moving on. When not praying aloud, quietly support the one who is. Don't let your mind wander.
5. Don't take "pot-shots" at the devil. Jude 9 tells us that even the Archangel Michael did not dare to bring a slanderous accusation against the devil, but said "The Lord rebuke you." We do have authority in Jesus to bind the evil forces, but this should only be done corporately as a group under the direction of the leader. One goal of corporate prayer is to reach a place in unity where we can effectively bind the enemy.
6. Avoid personal pronouns. When speaking for the group, say "We" rather than "I". Of course, if there is doubt about agreement on an issue that should be settled before praying on behalf of all.
7. Good repetition builds the case. Some teaching would indicate that once a thing is prayed for, it is unbelief to mention it again. There is need for balance in this. To keep pleading for something which God has made clear He wants to give us can be unbelief. On the other hand, true intercession is speaking into reality that which is as yet unseen. That usually takes time and repetition. We should not assume that what "worked" on the last prayer project will work on the next. There was a different strategy for different cities as Israel took the land.
8. Lay aside preconceived ideas. Die to your own imagination. Ask for fresh guidance from the Holy Spirit for **this** prayer time. We need to cultivate absolute dependence on the Holy Spirit.
9. Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise (Psalm 100:4). Let the high praises of God be in our mouths and a two-edged sword in our hands (Psalm 149:6).

(Adapted from teaching given by Lance Lambert and Art Carlson)

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP LEADERS

1. You are the leader, not the dictator. Only experience will teach us how to use authority. Avoid superiority but show a sense of quiet confidence. Give the group a clear sense of direction throughout the meeting.
2. Pray that God will send those He has chosen and keep all others away. Sometimes you may question His choice!
3. Keep the group small. It is better to have many small groups than one large group where vocal, expressive and experienced people usually dominate the prayer time.
4. Make arrangements to remind people of meeting times, especially at the beginning. It is easy to forget a new activity.
5. Practical details:
 - Provide as comfortable a setting as possible. If possible provide child care where helpful.
 - Have someone responsible for answering the phone – or unplug it.
 - Begin and end on time.
 - It is generally best not to serve refreshments during a meeting.
6. Encourage beginning efforts. Correct gently. Discipline is necessary, but Jesus doesn't crush the bruised reeds.
7. Read up to date information and prayer letters so that you can bring current needs and topics before the group. Decide on the areas you believe God wants you to pray about, and lay them out clearly to the group. Endeavour to lead the group through them step by step. However, be open to the insights of others.
8. Don't spend too much time sharing about topics, or discussing the issues they raise, before actually praying. It is usually better to pray about needs than to talk about them.
9. Don't be afraid of silence. We need time for God adjust our fine-tuning. "There will be silence before Thee and praise in Zion".
10. Praise is an essential atmosphere for prayer, and is the only appropriate way to enter God's presence. However, discourage the singing of songs during the prayer time for the sake of it.

(Acknowledgements to JoAnn Magnuson)

SPIRITUAL WARFARE – REBUKING THE ADVERSARY

There are certain questions which it is helpful to ask concerning the matter of "rebuking the adversary" which have become part and parcel of "spiritual warfare".

- Are there any limits to our authority in spiritual warfare?
- Does the Bible direct us to rebuke Satan directly, and if so, in what circumstances and on what conditions?

- Is it correct to assert that if we say, "The Lord rebuke you Satan", we have abrogated our position of authority in Christ, which in fact should enable us to say, "I rebuke you Satan"? (see Jude 9, Eph 1:19-23,2:6)

In order to answer these points we must be clear to whom we refer when we use the term "Satan", that is the Devil himself, Prince of Darkness; a ruling prince of darkness; or one of Satan's evil spirits sent to trouble individual members of the human race.

1. There is a hierarchy of demonic intelligences from the lowest (evil spirits); through principalities over nations ("rulers of this world's darkness"); to Satan himself. It is one thing to effectively cast out an evil spirit, and another to deal with a demonic prince at a national level. The Bible does not give us warrant for dealing with Satan directly, but only with his servants i.e. evil spirits or other demonic powers.

2. We must learn to pray within the scope of our authority. Thus the head of a house, by virtue of his position, has been given authority over the activity of Satan as it immediately affects his family; but not necessarily for wider issues as, for instance in the local neighbourhood or the local church.

3. In every area, and particularly for bigger issues, we must pray and wait upon God for Him to give us permission to move – a specific authorisation to act. In other words we must wait for the Holy Spirit to endorse our stand of authority.

For example, a policeman has, in principle, authority to stop traffic, but can only do so (especially in a major situation) when he receives specific directions from his supervisor to act at a given time - c.f. John 14:10 (NASB).

There seem to be three major levels of satanic activity calling for spiritual warfare:

1. Evil Spirits. The New Testament teaching on authority over demons and casting them out is concerned with local demons in possession or oppression of individuals. In this area we can take authority, and speak a word of rebuke "in the Name of Jesus".

2. Principalities and Powers. When dealing with principalities and powers, the New Testament describes the exercise of prevailing prayer, not a casting out or rebuking or commanding. Passages such as Eph 6:12,18 and Rev 12:7-9, seem to show that the battle against principalities and powers is engaged not by our words of rebuke, but by God's mighty angels moving in response to prayer (Rev.12:7-9; Dan 10:2,13,20,21; Jude:9-10). Moreover, the effective binding of such principalities and powers seems to be the work of a body of intercessors rather than that of an individual. "It is the body of Christ in a collective form who exercise this ministry of dethroning satanic world rulers ..."

3. Satan. When dealing directly with Satan, the Lord reserves to Himself the right to rebuke him –Zechariah 3:1- 2. When Jesus resisted Satan (and this sort of direct encounter must be very unusual in Christian experience), though He was the Son of God, yet, because He was at the same time living in complete submission to the Father, He deferred to the higher authority of the Father in resisting the adversary, saying: "It is written."

(Derek White)