

The Walk of the Redeemed in Christ - Part 5

TEXT: *10 And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. 11 And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. 12 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. 13 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. (Daniel 10:10-13)*

Any man or woman who has *walked* faithfully with the Lord for a period of time can attest to his or her prayers being “answered”, “delayed” or not “answered”. Since prayer is the cornerstone of the *walk* of the redeemed, why then are some of our prayers hindered? From our selected text, **Daniel 10:10-13**, it is clear that there are forces that sometimes hinder our prayers. There are various forces that are hindrances to our prayers namely, demonic forces as here in Daniel, praying with wrong motives, and sins such as - pride (self-righteousness), and unforgiving spirit, or being unequally yoked (in marriage or business). I will not discuss each of these hindrances in detail because of time and space but rather I will allow the Spirit to determine the extent to which they may be discussed.

It is a bit difficult to determine when demonic forces hinder answers to our prayers because it is not always obvious when these forces come into play. Clearly, Daniel had no idea that the answer to his prayer was hindered by the *prince of the kingdom of Persia* (Satan). Naturally, when we make our requests known to the Lord, we do not have any clue when the answer will come. Anybody who has done some serious praying knows that answer to prayers could take hours, days, weeks, months or years. The process of waiting for the Lord’s answer exposes how humanly finite we are because while we anticipate

the Lord's response, we have no idea if the answer to our prayers is hindered by Satan or delayed by the Lord Himself or if the Lord will answer us at all. In **Daniel 10:13**, we observe that the Lord's answer to Daniel's prayer came almost instantly but it was withheld or hindered for twenty-one days by Satan. If Daniel had not remained steadfast on his knees in His *secret place* of prayer, who knows how long the hindrance would have lasted. This is a very good and clear message to all prayer warriors to persist in their prayers until they prevail with God. The Bible says, "*Pray without ceasing*" (**1 Th. 5:17**); "*To this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint*" (**Luke 18:1**). We must "pray until something happens" – P. U. S.H.

On the hand, demonic attack on one's prayer life may be apparent if he constantly struggles daily to pray, assuming he is consecrated and living holy. Such struggles may include an inability to open your mouth and verbalize your needs to the Lord, always falling asleep while praying, feeling drowsy while reading the Bible, or a serious lack of concentration and/or distraction during your devotion time. Possibly, you have been visited with a spirit of oppression or a spirit of heaviness by a demonic force if prayer becomes drudgery and absentminded. In this case, you may need prayer for deliverance by a trusted and capable deliverance minister.

Please take note, what I have just described above pertains strictly to the truly redeemed in Christ whose *walk* is holy and whose prayer life is solid. Assuredly, oppressive demonic forces can attack even the stoutest prayer warrior if he or she opens a doorway. However, demonic attack is not the major hindrance to our prayers. For instance, it would be very wrong for a man or woman who is living in sin to erroneously claim demonic attack because his or her prayer is a constant struggle for him or her. Sin is the primary hindrance to prayer. And that is the truth.

When we live in disobedience to God's Word, Satan has the opportunity to take us *captive to do his will*. While in Satan's captivity, the first thing he

(Satan) does is to strip us of our urge and ability to read the Bible and commune with God. The disobedient are cast away from God's presence so that even when they do try to pray, their prayers avail nothing because the Lord is not listening. The Bible says, "*Your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear*" [you] (**Isaiah 59:2**). With God there's no qualification or level of sin, God hates all sin, period. God and sin are like oil and water – they do not, nor will they ever mix.

If you read your Bible which you are supposed to, you'll discover that God's answer to our prayers is contingent on our obedience to His Word. The first step to prevailing with God in prayer is confession and repentance of your sins before Him. Indeed, a sinner has no other prayer except a prayer of repentance – prayed with deep contrition (*a broken and a contrite heart*). Anything less will not move God. To avoid prolonged hindrance to your prayers, I recommend that you meditate on the following scripture: "*Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.'* And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me a sinner!'" (**Luke 18:10-14**).

Here we have two sinners, a high-minded Pharisee and a meek tax collector, both praying, but each with a different disposition before the Almighty Judge. The Pharisee was full of himself while the other was of a humble and contrite heart. The proud and self-righteous Pharisee did not see the need to plead with God for mercy, grace and forgiveness. Hence, he prayed amiss by justifying himself and despising others before the Lord. In comparison, the tax collector came before the Lord in humility and self-deprecation, pleading for mercy and for forgiveness of his sins. The bible says,

“The Lord resists the proud but gives grace to the humble”. So, though the tax collector’s prayer was very short but to the point, it obtained mercy and grace from our Lord Jesus. The tax collector’s prayer prevailed with the Lord and he was also declared justified, whereas, the prayer of Pharisee who trusted in his self-righteous resume was rejected because only the meek shall inherit the kingdom of God. Men and brethren, I beseech you to humble yourselves before the Lord and weep before Him for your sins. Be proud of nothing and perhaps He will quickly heal you of your wounds and afflictions.

Another glaring hindrance to prayer is the sin of an unforgiving spirit. The unforgiving spirit is a huge topic that needs to be discussed as a separate series of its own. I will try to squeeze a little bit of it here in this edition of “Bread of Life” because of how it seriously hinders our prayers. The Bible commands us to forgive *one another, even as God in Christ forgave us*. Forgiving one another is a very basic Christian principle. Christ forgave us all, and so it is a travesty of reciprocation for us not to forgive one another. God does not take the unforgiving spirit lightly. The Lord abhors even the offering and prayer of a man or woman who possesses an unforgiving spirit. The Lord prescribes that we *first be reconciled* to anyone with whom we have issue, before coming into His presence ([Matthew 5:24](#)). Having an unforgiving spirit is a sin and disobedience towards God. If you don’t forgive your (father, mother, husband, wife, sister, brother, cousin or co-worker) the Lord will definitely not forgive you and you can kiss your prayers goodbye. The Lord does not care how terribly you were wronged; He wants you to forgive that He may forgive you too. Search your heart; do you have bitterness towards anyone? Is there anyone that you just cannot stand for whatever reason? Ask God to help you overcome such bitterness and hatred so that your prayers will avail much without hindrance.

Hindrance to prayer must also be averted in a matrimonial home because prayer is the oxygen of any family. Whoever coined the phrase “the family that

prays together stays together” was up to something. Without doubt, neglect or hindrance to prayer has allowed the devil to wreak havoc in the matrimonial homes of many of the redeemed in Christ. Married couples may put forth the most vigorous effort to stay married – and yet fail to do so because they do not pray or their prayers are hindered. Many husbands never bring their families together for daily prayers. They tend to pray alone but God’s not listening because they’ve been cold, unloving or unfaithful to their wives. They willfully abdicate their duties as heads of household and sometimes physically abuse the wives of their marriage covenants.

It is plainly stated in **1 Peter 3:7**, *Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them [wives] according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.* That sounds plain enough to me, and it should to all of us. It is not that Christians do not know what the Bible says about the orderliness of matrimonial homes. Every Christian man or woman, married or single knows the roles that God has apportioned to each gender, but like every other Scripture we have mangled, trampled and distorted God’s code of matrimony. We have gotten very comfortable with taking God’s Word for granted and having no fear of God. The husbands live for themselves, ignoring God’s call to *“love your wives, just as Christ loved the church”*

The wives then, are apathetic to the command *“Wives, submit unto your husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife”* (**Ephesians 5:22-23**). Today, many aggressive wives are acting as husbands, but such role reversal directly flouts the Word of God. It instantly hinders prayer and makes it highly impossible for the Lord to visit such a family without repentance. How could our God of order visit a home where a wife tussles for headship with her husband? *“But I want you to know that the head of every man is Christ, the head of woman is man, and the head of Christ is God”* (**1 Corinthians 11:3**). Every churchgoer believes and accepts that the *head of every man is*

Christ. There no is question that the man must obey and submit to Christ. I have never met any churchgoer, man or woman who has ever thought that a man is equal to Christ. In fact, any man that would make such a preposterous claim would be considered an anti-Christ by all Christians and even by some unbelievers that know a few things in the bible.

However, on the other hand, there seems to be snickering, jeering or even outright rejection and disapproval when the headship of the man over the woman is brought up. But can we selectively obey the Scriptures? I mean the idea of believing and accepting half a verse of a Scripture is almost unbearable. It is sort of like rejecting one side of the same coin. Generally, we accept that one side of a coin is equal to the other side of the same coin, otherwise it would not be considered a genuine coin. The same thing applies to verses in the Bible. A verse is accurate and complete by itself. There are no half-truths in scripture. Therefore, if you believe and accept that *Christ is the head of every man* you must also believe that the *man is the head of the woman* to avert hindrance to your prayer. You must believe this wholeheartedly, not just when it is convenient. The Scriptures are God's ordinances and not man's. If you disobey any of God's word, you are rebelling against Him. Can you fight against God's word and for how long? Jonah tried but failed. Are you next?

Having said this, it is paramount that we prayerfully select our spouses. We are to be equally yoked with the person whom we marry. Being *unequally yoked* is the genesis of many marital problems. There are many Christians who blatantly violated the word of God when they willfully married unbelievers or people of other religions, faiths and practices. Many of these marriages have ended in divorce and many more are still suffering under the yoke of this bondage. Being *unequally yoke* is a huge hindrance to prayer. Please read **Malachi 2:11-12**. May nothing hinders your prayer in the Name of Jesus. Amen.