

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 26-29, 2009

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message One

The Central Goal of Prayer and the Prayer of the Age

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:36; Eph. 1:19-23; 3:19b-21; 4:22-24; 5:27; Matt. 16:18-19

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.

Eph. 1:19-23 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:19-21 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Eph. 4:22-24 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Eph. 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

Matt. 16:18-19 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. **19** I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

I. The central goal of prayer is for God to have a glorious church; this prayer is according to the ministry of the age and the vision of the age:

- A. The particular recovery and work that God is doing in one age are the ministry of that age, the ministry that ministers the vision of that age—Prov. 29:18a.

Prov. 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint; / But happy is he who keeps the law.

- B. Today we can be in one accord because we have only one vision, an up-to-date, all-inheriting vision, the vision of the eternal economy of God—Acts 26:19; Eph. 1:17; 3:9.

Acts 26:19 Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision,

Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him,

Eph. 3:9 And to enlighten all *that they may see* what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things,

- C. The central goal of prayer is the goal of the eternal economy of God, the goal of Christ having a glorious church as His counterpart for His satisfaction—5:27; John 17:23; Eph. 1:23; 3:19b-21.

Eph. 5:27 That He might present the church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such things, but that she would be holy and without blemish.

John 17:23 I in them, and You in Me, that they may be perfected into one, that the world may know that You have sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

Eph. 1:23 Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:19-21 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

- D. Christ as the High Priest is caring for us and praying for us according to God's need, God's interests, and God's goal:
1. God will listen to our prayer when our prayer to God is toward Christ, the kingdom of God, and the house of God as the goal in God's economy—1 Kings 8:48; Dan. 6:10.

1 Kings 8:48 And *if* they return to You with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who have carried them captive, and they pray to You toward their land that You have given to their fathers, the city that You have chosen, and the house that I have built for Your name;

Dan. 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had *always* done so previously.

2. No matter for whom we are praying, our prayers should be aimed at the interests of God, that is, at Christ and the church as God's interests on earth, for the fulfilling of God's economy—Eph. 5:32; 6:17-18.

Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great, but I speak with regard to Christ and the church.

Eph. 6:17-18 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God, **18** By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

3. We should not usurp God for our own prosperity, but we should pray, live, and be persons according to God's heart and for His economy—1 Sam. 4:3.

1 Sam. 4:3 And when the people came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, Why has Jehovah struck us down today before the Philistines? Let us take for ourselves the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah from Shiloh that it may come into our midst, and *thus* save us from the hand of our enemies.

II. In order to pray the prayer of the age for the fulfilling of God's economy, we must be people who live in ascension:

- A. Every man who is saved is not only one whose sins are forgiven and not only one who is made alive from death and has God's life but also is one who is seated with Christ in the heavenlies, the highest place in the universe; thus, he is a man of ascension—Eph. 2:5-6.

Eph. 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) **6** And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

- B. The life of Christ that we have received is ascended and heavenly and is given from heaven; therefore, once we obtain this life, we have fellowship with heaven and are joined to heaven—Col. 3:1-4; John 1:51; cf. 3:13.

Col. 3:1-4 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth. **3** For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. **4** When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

John 1:51 And He said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, You shall see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

John 3:13 And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended out of heaven, the Son of Man, who is in heaven.

- C. Christ as our life has saved us into a position in which we are seated together with Him in the heavenlies, a position in which we are above all God's enemies; here in the heavenly atmosphere of His heavenly presence, with a heavenly nature and

characteristic, we are a heavenly people.

- D. Today we realize and experience this reality in our spirit through faith in the accomplished fact—2 Cor. 4:13; cf. Heb. 4:2.

2 Cor. 4:13 And having the same spirit of faith according to that which is written, "I believed, therefore I spoke," we also believe, therefore we also speak,

Heb. 4:2 For indeed we have had the good news announced to us, even as they also; but the word heard did not profit them, not being mixed together with faith in those who heard.

- E. We need to maintain the position of ascension in our daily living, living in the life of heaven; we need to be continually touching heaven in our inner being and living in the heavenly condition, situation, and atmosphere of the Lord's presence, which, when touched by others, will enable them to obtain the heavenly supply—Eph. 4:8; Rev. 1:20.

Eph. 4:8 Therefore *the Scripture* says, "Having ascended to the height, He led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men."

Rev. 1:20 The mystery of the seven stars which you saw upon My right hand and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the messengers of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

- F. By living in ascension, we are transformed to become the Lord's bridal army, a woman "who looks forth like the dawn, / As beautiful as the moon, / As clear as the sun, / As terrible as an army with banners"—S. S. 6:10; cf. Gen. 1:16-18.

S.S. 6:10 Who is this woman who looks forth like the dawn, / As beautiful as the moon, / As clear as the sun, / As terrible as an army with banners?

Gen. 1:16-18 And God made the two great light-bearers, the greater light-bearer to rule the day and the lesser light-bearer to rule the night, and the stars. **17** And God set them in the expanse of heaven to give light on the earth **18** And to rule over the day and over the night and to separate the light from the darkness, and God saw that it was good.

- G. We must be men of ascension with the position of ascension so that we can pray the prayer of warfare and the prayer of the age, the prayer of ascension—Eph. 2:6; 6:12; S. S. 4:6-9; cf. Gen. 3:14; 1 Cor. 15:47-48.

Eph. 2:6 And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph. 6:12 For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of evil in the heavenlies.

S.S. 4:6-9 Until the day dawns and the shadows flee away, / I, for my part, will go to the mountain of myrrh / And to the hill of frankincense. **7** You are altogether beautiful, my love, / And there is no blemish in you. **8** *Come* with me from Lebanon, *my* bride; / With me from Lebanon come. / Look from the top of Amana, / From the top of Senir and Hermon, / From the lions' dens, / From the leopards' mountains. **9** You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride; / You have ravished my heart with one *glance* of your eyes, / With one strand of your necklace.

Gen. 3:14 And Jehovah God said to the serpent, Because you have done this, / You are cursed more than all the cattle / And more than all the animals of the field: / Upon your stomach you will go, / And dust you will eat / All the days of your life.

1 Cor. 15:47-48 The first man is out of the earth, earthy; the second man *is* out of heaven. **48** As the earthy is, such are they also that are earthy; and as the heavenly is, such are they also that are heavenly.

- H. If we stand in the position of ascension, we can directly command the environment, rebuke difficulties, and destroy all the works of the enemy.
- I. Regrettably, the prayers of the church today contain all too few authoritative commands; therefore, they cannot deal with the enemy; this proves that our actual condition is still on earth and not in the heavenlies in the position of ascension with the reality of ascension.

III. The prayer of the age is the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ, the prayer that exercises the authority of Christ as the ascended Lord and Head of the Body, for the fulfilling of God's economy; to enter into this kind of prayer, we need a heavenly vision to see something that is far beyond our natural concept—Eph. 1:17:

Eph. 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full

knowledge of Him,

A. We need to see the meaning of the ascension of Christ:

1. The ascension of Christ indicates that the entire work of redemption has been completely accomplished—Heb. 1:3; 10:12.

Heb. 1:3 Who, being the effulgence of His glory and the impress of His substance and upholding and bearing all things by the word of His power, having made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Heb. 10:12 But this One, having offered one sacrifice for sins, sat down forever on the right hand of God,

2. The ascension of Christ indicates that the lordship of Christ has been established—Acts 2:36:

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.

- a. Everything that the Lord has obtained and attained is being transmitted “to the church”—Eph. 1:19-23; 3:20.

Eph. 1:19-23 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

- b. We need to see the heavenly fact that Christ has been exalted by God, established as the Lord of the universe, and made Head over all things to the church; all things are under His feet, and everything He has obtained and attained is being transmitted to the church, which is His Body—1:22-23.

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

B. We need to see the church’s position as the Body of Christ; because the church is the Body of Christ, the position of the church is exactly the same as that of Christ; since the Body is one with the Head, the position of the Body is exactly the same as that of the Head—1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 5:30.

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

1 Cor. 12:27 Now you are the Body of Christ, and members individually.

Eph. 5:30 Because we are members of His Body.

C. We need to see the authority of the church as the Body of Christ:

1. The authority of the Body is the authority of the Head exercised by the Body; thus, the authority of the Body is the authority of the Head.
2. As the church, the Body of Christ, we need to assume the authority of Christ—Matt. 28:18b-19a; Luke 10:19.

Matt. 28:18-19 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. **19** Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Luke 10:19 Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

D. We need to see the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ:

1. This kind of prayer is not the prayer of individual believers but the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ; physically,

we may even be praying in our room by ourselves, but spiritually, we are one with the Body.

2. In this kind of prayer we do not beg the Lord to do something for us; instead, we claim what the Lord has obtained and attained:
 - a. Christ has obtained the lordship and the headship; He is the Lord and the Head over all things to the church.
 - b. Christ has attained the highest place in the universe; He has been raised from the dead and is seated at God's right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule, authority, power, and lordship in the universe—Eph. 1:20-21.

Eph. 1:20-21 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;

3. When we pray according to what the Lord has obtained in ascension, we may pray, "Lord, we do not go along with the present situation. As Your Body, we take the ground of Your ascension and claim Your lordship over the present situation."
4. When we pray according to what the Lord has attained in ascension, we should simply declare who we are and where we are; we are in the Body, the Body is in the Head, and the Head is transcendent; if we have the vision that we are the Body of the Head and that the Head is now transcendent, we will take the ground to claim what the Lord has attained and tell all the negative things, "Do not bother me. Go to the lake of fire! I am transcendent. You cannot touch me. You are under my feet."
5. Because the Body is one with the Head in the heavens, the Body has the authority to bind or loose what has already been bound or loosed in the heavens—Matt. 16:19; 18:18.

Matt. 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

Matt. 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

6. The church is built upon a rock, and this rock is the ascended Christ; as a result, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church—16:18.

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

- E. To fully enter into this kind of prayer and be able to exercise the authority given by the Head to the Body, there are two things that we must realize:
 1. We must realize that we are members of the Body, and we must live, act, and move in the Body.
 2. In our daily life we must always put off the old man and put on the new man by being renewed in the spirit of our mind; the new man is composed of the Head with the Body, Christ with the church—Eph. 4:22-24; 2:15-16.

Eph. 4:22-24 That you put off, as regards your former manner of life, the old man, which is being corrupted according to the lusts of the deceit, **23** And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind **24** And put on the new man, which was created according to God in righteousness and holiness of the reality.

Eph. 2:15-16 Abolishing in His flesh the law of the commandments in ordinances, that He might create the two in Himself into one new man, *so* making peace, **16** And might reconcile both in one Body to God through the cross, having slain the enmity by it.

- F. "We need to see the vision of the ascended Christ and learn to pray the prayer of authority. For two thousand years these matters have been neglected, but we believe that in these last days the Lord is going to recover them. Too often we do not take the ground of Christ's ascension and claim what He has obtained and attained. Nevertheless, we believe that the Lord will recover this lost ground. This is the highest peak, the highest mountain of the good land. In these last days the Lord will recover this highest peak, this highest mountain. We must realize the facts, take the ground, and claim what the Head has obtained and attained. This is the prevailing prayer of the church. This is the prayer of the age"—The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1963, vol. 1, p. 165.

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GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message Two

The Two Greatest Prayers of the Apostle Paul

Scripture Reading: Eph. 1:17-23; 3:14-21

Eph. 1:17-23 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:14-21 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, **15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, **16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

I. In Paul's first prayer in Ephesians (a prayer for revelation), he prays that we would have a spirit of wisdom and revelation with the eyes of our heart being enlightened to know the hope of God's calling, the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints, and the surpassing greatness of God's power toward us who believe—Eph. 1:17-23:

Eph. 1:17-23 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

A. We must be God's friends, those who understand His heart; we have to see, know, and have the vision of eternity, a vision that seizes us and captures us to the extent that we live the life of eternity and work the work of eternity—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; 1 Cor. 2:9-10; 6:17; 15:10; 16:10.

Gal. 1:15-16 But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, **16** To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

1 Cor. 2:9-10 But as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard and *which* have not come up in man's heart; things which God has prepared for those who love Him." **10** But to us God has revealed *them* through the Spirit, for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

1 Cor. 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am; and His grace unto me did not turn out to be in vain, but, on the contrary, I labored more abundantly than all of them, yet not I but the grace of God which is with me.

1 Cor. 16:10 Now if Timothy comes, see that he is with you without fear; for he is working the work of the Lord, even as I am.

B. The hope of God's calling is "Christ in you, the hope of glory"—Col. 1:27 :

Col. 1:27 To whom God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

1. Christ realized by us, experienced by us, and gained by us to the fullest extent to be our ultimate manifestation and consummation as our glory is the hope of our calling—Phil. 3:14; Rom. 5:2.

Phil. 3:14 I pursue toward the goal for the prize to which God in Christ Jesus has called *me* upward.

Rom. 5:2 Through whom also we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand and boast because of the hope of the glory of God.

2. God called us and justified us, and He will glorify us, conforming us to the image of His Son; eventually, we all will be absolutely the same as Christ— 8:29-30; 1 John 3:2.

Rom. 8:29-30 Because those whom He foreknew, He also predestinated *to be* conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the Firstborn among many brothers; **30** And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not yet been manifested what we will be. We know that if He is manifested, we will be like Him because we will see Him even as He is.

3. The hope of God's calling is the ultimate consummation of our enjoyment of Christ, which will be the transfiguration of our body and the manifestation of the sons of God—Eph. 4:4; Phil. 3:21; Rom. 8:19, 23-25.

Eph. 4:4 One Body and one Spirit, even as also you were called in one hope of your calling;

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

Rom. 8:19 For the anxious watching of the creation eagerly awaits the revelation of the sons of God.

Rom. 8:23-25 And not only *so*, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body. **24** For we were saved in hope. But a hope that is seen is not hope, for who hopes for what he sees? **25** But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly await *it* through endurance.

C. The riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints speaks of God's sealing us with Himself to make us His inheritance for His enjoyment and God's pledging Himself to us to make Him our inheritance for our enjoyment—Eph. 1:11, 13b-14, 18:

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 1:13-14 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, **14** Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph. 1:18 The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

1. God's glory has its riches, which are the many different items that constitute God's divine attributes, such as light, life, power, love, righteousness, and holiness, expressed to different degrees.
2. Since we are God's inheritance, the Holy Spirit is a seal upon us; since God is our inheritance, the Holy Spirit is a pledge to us of this inheritance.
3. The sealing and pledging of the Holy Spirit continue to permeate and transform us with God's divine element for our enjoyment until we are mature in God's life and our body is transfigured in glory—vv. 11, 13b-14; 4:30; Rom. 8:23; Phil. 3:21.

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 1:13-14 In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, **14** Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph. 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed unto the day of redemption.

Rom. 8:23 And not only *so*, but we ourselves also, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan in ourselves, eagerly awaiting sonship, the redemption of our body.

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

- D. The surpassing greatness of God's power—His resurrecting power, ascending (transcending) power, subjecting (subduing) power, and heading-up (overruling) power—is operating “in us,” is “toward us who believe,” and is “to the church”—Eph. 3:20; 1:19-23:

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

Eph. 1:19-23 And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

1. The church is the depository of this surpassingly great fourfold power of the Triune God.
2. When this power operated in Christ, it made Him the Head; when this power operates in us, it makes us the Body.
3. To experience the divine transmission of this power, we need to realize that this power is in us already—3:16, 20; Phil. 3:21b; 4:13; Col. 1:29.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

Phil. 3:21 Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation to be conformed to the body of His glory, according to His operation by which He is able even to subject all things to Himself.

Phil. 4:13 I am able to do all things in Him who empowers me.

Col. 1:29 For which also I labor, struggling according to His operation which operates in me in power.

4. To experience the divine transmission of this power, we need to have a strong desire to get completely out of death—Rev. 3:1; 2 Cor. 3:6; 5:4.

Rev. 3:1 And to the messenger of the church in Sardis write: These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are living, and yet you are dead.

2 Cor. 3:6 Who has also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, *ministers* not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

2 Cor. 5:4 For also, we who are in this tabernacle groan, being burdened, in that we do not desire to be unclothed, but clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

II. In Paul's second prayer in Ephesians (a prayer for experience), he prays that we would be strengthened into our inner man for God's unique work to build Himself into our being—3:14-21:

Eph. 3:14-21 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, **15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, **16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

- A. In verses 16 through 19 the word that is used four times in the apostle's prayer: the apostle prayed that the Father would grant us to be strengthened; the result of such a strengthening is that Christ makes His home in our hearts; the result of Christ's making His home in our hearts is that we are full of strength to apprehend the dimensions of Christ—the breadth, length, height, and depth—and to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ; and the result of this apprehending and knowing is that we are filled unto all the fullness of God; these steps make up a metabolic process by which the Body of Christ is constituted with the riches of Christ through our enjoyment of those riches.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

- B. In Ephesians 1 our spirit is revealed as an organ for us to receive revelation concerning the church; in Ephesians 3 our spirit is a person, the inner man, for us to experience Christ for the church; in order to experience Christ unto the fullness of God, we need to be strengthened with the fourfold power of the Triune God into our spirit through the Holy Spirit.

Eph. 1:1-23 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus and are faithful in Christ Jesus: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **3** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ, **4** Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love, **5** Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **6** To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved; **7** In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of offenses, according to the riches of His grace, **8** Which He caused to abound to us in all wisdom and prudence, **9** Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself, **10** Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him; **11** In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will, **12** That we would be to the praise of His glory who have first hoped in Christ. **13** In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of the promise, **14** Who is the pledge of our inheritance unto the redemption of the acquired possession, to the praise of His glory. **15** Therefore I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you and your love to all the saints, **16** Do not cease giving thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, **17** That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the full knowledge of Him, **18** The eyes of your heart having been enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, **19** And what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the operation of the might of His strength, **20** Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, **21** Far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come; **22** And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:1-21 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you, the Gentiles — **2** If indeed you have heard of the stewardship of the grace of God which was given to me for you, **3** That by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I have written previously in brief, **4** By which, in reading it, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ, **5** Which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in spirit, **6** That in Christ Jesus the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the Body and fellow partakers of the promise through the gospel, **7** Of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God which was given to me according to the operation of His power. **8** To me, less than the least of all saints, was this grace given to announce to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ as the gospel **9** And to enlighten all that they may see what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things, **10** In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, **11** According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord, **12** In whom we have boldness and access in confidence through faith in Him. **13** Therefore I ask you not to faint at my afflictions for your sake, since they are your glory. **14** For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father, **15** Of whom every family in the heavens and on earth is named, **16** That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God. **20** But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us, **21** To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations

forever and ever. Amen.

- C. Our heart is the totality of our inward parts (our mind, emotion, will, and conscience) and the center of our inward being; when Christ makes His home in our heart, He controls our entire inward being and supplies and strengthens every inward part with Himself.
- D. In our experience of Christ, we first experience the breadth of what He is and then the length; when we advance in Christ, we experience the height and depth of His riches:
1. Our experience of Christ must become three-dimensional, like a cube, and must not be one-dimensional, like a line.
 2. In our experience of Christ we must go back and forth and up and down so that eventually our experience of Him may be a solid “cube,” like the Holy of Holies—Exo. 26:2-8; 1 Kings 6:20; Rev. 21:16.

Exo. 26:2-8 The length of each curtain shall be twenty-eight cubits, and the width of each curtain, four cubits; all the curtains shall have the same measurement. **3** Five curtains shall be joined to one another; and *the other* five curtains shall be joined to one another. **4** And you shall make loops of blue *strands* on the edge of the one curtain at the end in the set; and likewise you shall make *them* in the edge of the outermost curtain in the second set. **5** You shall make fifty loops on the one curtain, and you shall make fifty loops on the edge of the curtain that is in the second set; the loops shall be opposite one another. **6** And you shall make fifty clasps of gold, and join the curtains to one another with the clasps, so that the tabernacle may become one. **7** And you shall make curtains of goats' *hair* for a tent over the tabernacle; eleven curtains you shall make. **8** The length of each curtain shall be thirty cubits, and the width of each curtain, four cubits; the eleven curtains shall have the same measurement.

1 Kings 6:20 And the interior of the innermost sanctuary was twenty cubits long and twenty cubits wide and twenty cubits high; and he overlaid it with pure gold, and he overlaid the cedar altar.

Rev. 21:16 And the city lies square, and its length is as great as the breadth. And he measured the city with the reed to *a length of* twelve thousand stadia; the length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

3. When our experience of Christ is like this (balanced by the Body), we cannot fall or be broken—cf. 1 Cor. 12:24.

1 Cor. 12:24 But our comely *members* have no need. But God has blended the body together, giving more abundant honor to the *member* that lacked,

- E. We eventually can know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that we may be filled unto all the fullness of God—Eph. 3:19:

Eph. 3:19 And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

1. The love of Christ is knowledge-surpassing, yet we can know it by experiencing it.
2. The fullness of God is the issue of our enjoyment of the unsearchably rich Christ as the embodiment of God dispensed into our being; through His indwelling, Christ imparts the riches of all that God is into our being to make us the fullness of God, the corporate expression of God.

- F. God superabundantly fulfills not only above all that we ask but also what we think concerning the church according to the power that operates in us—v. 20.

Eph. 3:20 But to Him who is able to do superabundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power which operates in us,

- G. We are being strengthened into our inner man according to the riches of God's glory, and then unto Him is glory in the church; first the glory of God is wrought into us, and then it returns to God for His glorification—vv. 16, 21.

Eph. 3:16 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man,

Eph. 3:21 To Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all the generations forever and ever. Amen.

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 26-29, 2009

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message Three

The Prayer That Expresses God's Will

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:18; Ezek. 36:37; Isa. 62:6-7; 1 John 5:14-16a; Matt. 6:5-6, 9-15; 26:39

Eph. 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Ezek. 36:37 Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Moreover for this I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do *it* for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.

Isa. 62:6-7 Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, / I have appointed watchmen; / All day and all night / They will never keep silent. / You who remind Jehovah, / Do not be dumb; **7** And do not give Him quiet / Until He establishes / And until He makes Jerusalem / A praise in the earth.

1 John 5:14-16 And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. **15** And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. **16** If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he should make request concerning that.

Matt. 6:5-6 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full. **6** But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

Matt. 6:9-15 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; **10** Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth. **11** Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **14** For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also; **15** But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses.

Matt. 26:39 And going forward a little, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You *will*.

I. In the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will; God wants man's will to be joined to Him and be one with Him so that man may express and echo His will back to Him in prayer for His good pleasure—Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 26:39; Phil. 2:13:

Isa. 14:12-15 How you have fallen from heaven, / O Daystar, son of the dawn! / How you have been hewn down to earth, / You who made nations fall prostrate! **13** But you, you said in your heart: / I will ascend to heaven; / Above the stars of God / I will exalt my throne. / And I will sit upon the mount of assembly / In the uttermost parts of the north. **14** I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; / I will make myself like the Most High. **15** But you will be brought down to Sheol, / To the uttermost parts of the pit.

Matt. 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth.

Matt. 7:21 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens.

Matt. 26:39 And going forward a little, He fell on His face and prayed, saying, My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You *will*.

Phil. 2:13 For it is God who operates in you both the willing and the working for *His* good pleasure.

A. The tree of life represents God with His divine will, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents Satan with his satanic will, and Adam represents man with his human will; we have lost many spiritual blessings because we have not expressed God's will, according to the principle of the tree of life, through our prayers—Gen. 2:9.

Gen. 2:9 And out of the ground Jehovah God caused to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, as well as the tree of life in the middle of the garden and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

B. A genuine man of prayer is one whose desires are fully blended into God's desires and whose thoughts are fully one with God's thoughts; he is a man in whom God's desires are imprinted, a man of revelation whose heart is a duplication of God's heart—1 Sam. 2:35; 3:21; 12:23.

1 Sam. 2:35 And I will raise up for Myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in My heart and in My mind; and I will build him a sure house; and he will go before My anointed continually.

1 Sam. 3:21 And Jehovah continued to appear in Shiloh, for Jehovah revealed Himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of Jehovah.

1 Sam. 12:23 Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I would sin against Jehovah by ceasing to pray for you, but I will instruct you in the good and right way.

- C. Prayers that originate from our needs to satisfy our own lust may be answered by God, but they have no spiritual value, and we will become weak before His eyes and displeasing to Him—Psa. 106:14-15; cf. Num. 11:18-35.

Psa. 106:14-15 But lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, / And tempted God in the desert. **15** And He gave them their request, / But He sent leanness into their soul.

Num. 11:18-35 And you shall say to the people, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of Jehovah, saying, Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt. Therefore Jehovah will give you meat, and you shall eat. **19** You shall eat not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days, **20** But a whole month, until it comes out from your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have rejected Jehovah who is among you and have wept before Him, saying, Why did we ever come out of Egypt? **21** But Moses said, The people, among whom I am, are six hundred thousand on foot; and You have said, I will give them meat so that they may eat a whole month. **22** Will flocks and herds be slain for them, to satisfy them? Or will all the fish of the sea be gathered together for them, to satisfy them? **23** And Jehovah said to Moses, Has Jehovah's hand become short? Now you will see whether My word will come to pass for you or not. **24** So Moses went out and told the people the words of Jehovah, and he gathered seventy, each one from the elders of the people, and set them around the tent. **25** And Jehovah came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and He took of the Spirit who was upon him, and put *Him* upon the seventy elders. And when the Spirit rested upon them, they prophesied, but they did not do *so* again. **26** But two men had remained in the camp, the name of the one was Eldad, and the name of the other Medad. And the Spirit rested upon them. (Now they were among those who were registered, but they had not gone out to the tent.) And they prophesied in the camp. **27** And a certain young man ran and told Moses and said, Eldad and Medad are prophesying in the camp. **28** And Joshua the son of Nun, the attendant of Moses, one of his chosen men, answered and said, My lord Moses, restrain them! **29** But Moses said to him, Are you jealous for my sake? Oh that all Jehovah's people were prophets, that Jehovah would put His Spirit upon them! **30** And Moses returned to the camp, he and the elders of Israel. **31** And a wind went forth from Jehovah and brought quails from the sea and let *them* fall beside the camp, about a day's journey on this side and a day's journey on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the earth. **32** And the people rose up all that day and all the night and all the next day, and they gathered the quail. He who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread *them* out for themselves all around the camp. **33** While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the people, and Jehovah struck the people with a very severe plague. **34** And the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah because there they buried the people who lusted. **35** From Kibroth-hattaavah the people journeyed to Hazeroth, and they remained at Hazeroth.

- D. Only the prayers that are initiated by God and echo what He has initiated have any spiritual value; we must learn to pray this kind of prayer—Eph. 6:18; Ezek. 36:37; Isa. 62:6-7; 1 John 5:14-16a.

Eph. 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Ezek. 36:37 Thus says the Lord Jehovah, Moreover for this I will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do *it* for them; I will increase them with men like a flock.

Isa. 62:6-7 Upon your walls, O Jerusalem, / I have appointed watchmen; / All day and all night / They will never keep silent. / You who remind Jehovah, / Do not be dumb; **7** And do not give Him quiet / Until He establishes / And until He makes Jerusalem / A praise in the earth.

1 John 5:14-16 And this is the boldness which we have toward Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. **15** And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him. **16** If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and he will give life to him, to those sinning not unto death. There is a sin unto death; I do not say that he should make request concerning that.

- E. When we come to the Lord in prayer, we need to allow the Spirit to mingle our desires with His desires, lead our thoughts into His thoughts, and imprint His desires and thoughts into us; then the prayers that we utter to God with His inward desires will be precious, weighty, and valuable to Him and will cause Satan to suffer loss—Rom. 8:26-27; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2, 12; Mark 9:28-29; Eph. 6:10-20.

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

Phil. 4:6 In nothing be anxious, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

Col. 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

Col. 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

Mark 9:28-29 And when He entered into the house, His disciples questioned Him privately, Why were we not able to cast it out? **29** And He said to them, This kind cannot come out by any means except prayer.

Eph. 6:10-20 Finally, be empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength. **11** Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil, **12** For our wrestling is not against blood and flesh but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of evil in the heavenlies. **13** Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. **14** Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness **15** And having shod your feet with the firm foundation of the gospel of peace; **16** Besides all these, having taken up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming darts of the evil one. **17** And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God, **18** By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints, **19** And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel, **20** For which I am an ambassador in a chain, that in it I would speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

F. The real meaning of prayer and of all spiritual work is that they consist of four steps:

1. God intends to do something according to His will.
2. He reveals His will to us through the Spirit for us to know His will.
3. We return and echo His will back to Him through prayer.
4. God accomplishes His work according to His will.

G. God needs man to exercise his spirit with his resurrected will to pray according to God's divine will for Christ to be manifested and enjoyed by us, for the Body life to be practiced by us, and for the Body of Christ to be built up through us— Heb. 10:5-10; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 1:4-6, 9, 11, 22b-23; 3:16-19; 4:16.

Heb. 10:5-10 Therefore, coming into the world, He says, "Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but a body You have prepared for Me. **6** In burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You did not delight. **7** Then I said, Behold, I have come (in the roll of the book it is written concerning Me) to do Your will, O God." **8** Saying above, "Sacrifices and offerings and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin You did not desire nor delight in" (which are offered according to the law), **9** He then has said, "Behold, I have come to do Your will." He takes away the first that He may establish the second, **10** By which will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

Rom. 12:1-2 I exhort you therefore, brothers, through the compassions of God to present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, well pleasing to God, *which is* your reasonable service. **2** And do not be fashioned according to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of the mind that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and well pleasing and perfect.

Eph. 1:4-6 Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blemish before Him in love, **5** Predestinating us unto sonship through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, **6** To the praise of the glory of His grace, with which He graced us in the Beloved;

Eph. 1:9 Making known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself,

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 3:16-19 That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man, **17** That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love, **18** May be full of strength to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are **19** And to know the knowledge-surpassing love of Christ, that you may be filled unto all the fullness of God.

Eph. 4:16 Out from whom all the Body, being joined together and being knit together through every joint of the rich supply and *through* the operation in the measure of each one part, causes the growth of the Body unto the building up of itself in love.

H. We have to pray according to God's desire and His will for the fulfillment of His economy; then we have the assurance that we have received what we have prayed for—Mark 11:22-26.

Mark 11:22-26 And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God. **23** Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. **24** For this *reason* I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received *them*, and you will have them. **25** And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father who is in the heavens may also forgive you your offenses. **26** But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father who is in the heavens forgive your offenses.

II. Hannah's prayer was an echo, a speaking out, of the heart's desire of God; it was a human cooperation with the divine move for the carrying out of God's eternal economy—1 Sam. 1:10-20:

1 Sam. 1:10-20 And she was bitter in soul and prayed to Jehovah and wept much. **11** And she made a vow and said, O Jehovah of hosts, if You will indeed look upon the affliction of Your female servant and remember me and not forget Your female servant, but give to Your female servant a male child, then I will give him to Jehovah for all the days of his life, and no razor will come upon his head. **12** And while she continued praying a long time before Jehovah, Eli watched her mouth. **13** And Hannah was speaking in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard. So Eli thought that she was drunk. **14** And Eli said to her, How long will you be drunk? Put away your wine from you. **15** And Hannah answered and said, No, my lord. I am a woman oppressed in spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I have been pouring out my soul before Jehovah. **16** Do not take your female servant for a worthless woman; for out of the greatness of my anxiety and provocation I have been speaking all this time. **17** Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace, and may the God of Israel grant your request that you have requested from Him. **18** And she said, Let your servant find favor in your sight. And the woman went her way; and she ate, and her countenance was *sad* no more. **19** And they rose up early in the morning and worshipped before Jehovah; and they returned and came to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and Jehovah remembered her. **20** And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son; and she called his name Samuel, For, *she said*, I asked for him of Jehovah.

- A. God could motivate Hannah as a person who was one with Him on the line of life; the line of life is a line that brings forth Christ for the enjoyment of God's people, that on earth God may have His kingdom, which is the church as the Body of Christ, the very organism of the Triune God—John 10:10; Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17-18; Eph. 1:22-23.

John 10:10 The thief does not come except to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life and may have *it* abundantly.

Matt. 16:18-19 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. **19** I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

Rom. 14:17-18 For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. **18** For he who serves Christ in this is well pleasing to God and approved by men.

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

- B. As long as God can gain a person who is one with Him on the line of life, He has a way on earth; Hannah's prayer indicates that God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce a Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of God's desire—1 Sam. 1:19-2:11.

1 Sam. 1:19-2:11 And they rose up early in the morning and worshipped before Jehovah; and they returned and came to their house in Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and Jehovah remembered her. **20** And in due time Hannah conceived and bore a son; and she called his name Samuel, For, *she said*, I asked for him of Jehovah. **21** And the man Elkanah went up with all his house to offer the yearly sacrifice to Jehovah and his vow. **22** But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, When the child is weaned, then I will bring him up, so that he may appear before Jehovah and stay there forever. **23** And Elkanah her husband said to her, Do what is good in your sight; stay until you have weaned him. Only, may Jehovah establish His word. So the woman stayed and nursed her son until she weaned him. **24** And as soon as she weaned him, she brought him up with her, along with three bulls and one ephah of flour and a skin of wine; and she brought him to the house of Jehovah in Shiloh, although the child was young. **25** And they slaughtered the bull and brought the child to Eli. **26** And she said, Oh, my lord, as your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood here by you, praying to Jehovah. **27** It was for this child that I prayed, and Jehovah has granted me my request that I requested from Him. **28** Therefore I, for my part, have lent him to Jehovah; all the days that he lives, he is lent to Jehovah. And he worshipped Jehovah there. **1** And Hannah prayed and said: / My heart exults in Jehovah; / My horn is exalted in Jehovah; / My mouth is enlarged against my enemies, / Because I rejoice in Your salvation. **2** There is none holy like Jehovah, / For there is none besides You; / Nor is there a rock like our God. **3** Talk no more so very proudly; / Do not let arrogance go forth from your mouth; / For Jehovah is a God of knowledge, / And actions are weighed by Him. **4** The bows of the mighty men are broken, / And those who stumbled are girded with strength. **5** Those who were full have hired themselves out for food, / And those who were hungry are not so any longer. / She who was barren has borne seven, / And she who had many children languishes. **6** Jehovah kills and makes alive; / He brings down to Sheol and brings up. **7** Jehovah makes poor and makes rich; / He makes low and also lifts up. **8** He raises the poor from the dust, / From the ash heap He lifts the needy, / That He may seat *them* with princes / And cause *them* to inherit the throne of glory. / For the pillars of the earth are Jehovah's, / And He has set the world upon them. **9** He will keep the feet of His faithful ones, / But the wicked will be silenced in darkness; / For not by strength shall any man prevail. **10** Those who strive with Jehovah will be shattered; / Against them He will thunder in heaven. / Jehovah will judge the ends of the earth; / And He will give strength to His king / And exalt the horn of His anointed. **11** And Elkanah went to Ramah to his house. And the child ministered to Jehovah before Eli the priest.

III. Elijah, "a man of like feeling with us,...prayed in prayer"—James 5:17 (lit):

James 5:17 Elijah was a man of like feeling with us, and he earnestly prayed that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.

- A. A prayer from the Lord was given to Elijah, in which he prayed; he prayed in the prayer given to him by the Lord for the accomplishing of His will.
- B. He did not pray in his feeling, thought, intention, or mood, or in any kind of motivation, arising from circumstances or situations, to fulfill his own purpose.

IV. Daniel was a man of prayer who was joined to God's desire through God's word; only those who join themselves to God's word to pray prayers of God's economy can be of real use to God—Eph. 6:17-18; Dan. 9:2-3, 17:

Eph. 6:17-18 And receive the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which *Spirit* is the word of God, **18** By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

Dan. 9:2-3 In the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by means of the Scriptures the number of the years, which came as the word of Jehovah to Jeremiah the prophet, for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *that is*, seventy years. **3** So I set my face toward the Lord God to seek *Him* in prayer and supplications with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.

Dan. 9:17 And now hear, O our God, the prayer of Your servant and his supplications, and cause Your face to shine upon Your sanctuary that has been desolated, for the Lord's sake.

- A. The highest expression of a man who cooperates with God is in prayer; such a man is a man of preciousness to God, even preciousness itself—10:11, 19; 9:23.

Dan. 10:11 And he said to me, Daniel, man of preciousness, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand in your place, for I have now been sent to you. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling.

Dan. 10:19 And he said, Do not be afraid, man of preciousness. Peace to you. Be strong, yes, be strong. And when he spoke to me, I received strength and said, Speak, sir, for you have strengthened me.

Dan. 9:23 At the beginning of your supplications the command went forth, and I have come to tell *you*, for you are preciousness itself. Therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision.

- B. Daniel depended on prayer to do what man could not do, and he depended on prayer to understand what man could not understand—2:14-23; 6:10; 10:1-21.

Dan. 2:14-23 Then Daniel responded in counsel and with discretion to Arioch, the captain of the king's bodyguard, who had gone forth to slay the wise men of Babylon. **15** He answered and said to Arioch, the king's commander, Why is the decree from before the king so harsh? Then Arioch made the thing known to Daniel. **16** Daniel then went in and sought from the king that he would give him a time to declare the interpretation to the king. **17** Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, **18** That they might request compassions from before the God of the heavens concerning this mystery so that Daniel and his companions would not be destroyed with the rest of the wise men of Babylon. **19** Then the mystery was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of the heavens. **20** Daniel answered and said, Let the name of God / Be blessed from eternity to eternity, / For wisdom and might are His. **21** And it is He who changes the times and seasons; / He deposes kings and causes kings to ascend. / He gives wisdom to the wise / And knowledge to those who have understanding. **22** He reveals the deep things and the hidden things; / He knows what is *obscured* in the darkness, / And the light dwells with Him. **23** To You, O God of my fathers, I render thanks and praise, / For You have given me wisdom and might; / And You have now made known to me what we requested of You, / For You have made known the king's matter to us.

Dan. 6:10 Now when Daniel came to know that the writing had been signed, he went to his house (in his upper room he had windows open toward Jerusalem) and three times daily he knelt on his knees and prayed and gave thanks before his God, because he had *always* done so previously.

Dan. 10:1-21 In the third year of Cyrus the king of Persia a word was revealed to Daniel, who was named Belteshazzar; and the word was true and *concerning* a great distress. And he understood the word and had an understanding of the vision. **2** In those days I, Daniel, had been mourning for three full weeks. **3** I ate no desirable food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, until the three full weeks were completed. **4** And on the twenty-fourth day of the first month, while I was by the great river, that is, the Hiddekel. **5** I lifted up my eyes and I looked, and there was a certain man, clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with the fine gold of Uphaz. **6** His body also was like beryl, His face like the appearance of lightning, His eyes like torches of fire, His arms and His feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of His words like the sound of a multitude. **7** And I, Daniel, alone saw the vision, for the men who were with me did not see the vision; instead, a great dread fell on them, and they fled to hide themselves. **8** Thus I was left alone and I saw this great vision; and no strength was left in me, but my color turned deathly pale; and I retained no strength. **9** Yet I heard the sound of His words; and when I heard the sound of His words, I fell into a deep sleep on my face, with my face to the ground. **10** And at that moment a hand touched me and sent me trembling on my knees and the palms of my hands. **11** And he said to me, Daniel, man of preciousness, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand in your place, for I have now been sent to you. And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. **12** And he said to me, Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand *this matter* and to afflict yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. **13** But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me for twenty-one days; but now Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I remained there *alone* with the kings of Persia. **14** Thus I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the last days, yet the vision pertains to *something many days from now*. **15** And when he had spoken to me according to these words, I turned my face to the ground and was dumb. **16** And at that moment one who resembled the sons of men touched my lips; and I opened my mouth and spoke, and I said to him who stood before me, Sir, because of the vision my

anguish has turned upon me, and I have retained no strength. **17** For how can such a servant of my lord speak with such as my lord? For as for me, just now there is no strength in me, nor has there been breath left in me. **18** Then the one who was in appearance like a man touched me again and strengthened me; **19** And he said, Do not be afraid, man of preciousness. Peace to you. Be strong, yes, be strong. And when he spoke to me, I received strength and said, Speak, sir, for you have strengthened me. **20** Then he said, Do you know why I have come to you? And now I will return to fight with the prince of Persia; so I go forth, and the prince of Javan is now about to come. **21** However I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who holds strongly with me against these ones except Michael your prince.

V. Abraham lived in intimate fellowship with God and became God's friend; even before the incarnation, Jehovah as Christ appeared to Abraham in human form, with a human body, and communed with him on a human level—Gen. 13:18; 18:1-2, 13-15, 22; James 2:23; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8:

Gen. 13:18 And Abram moved his tent and came and dwelt by the oaks of Mamre, which are in Hebron, and there he built an altar to Jehovah.

Gen. 18:1-2 And Jehovah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of *his* tent in the heat of the day. **2** And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and there were three men standing opposite him. And when he saw *them*, he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them. And he bowed down to the earth

Gen. 18:13-15 And Jehovah said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child when I am old? **14** Is anything too marvelous for Jehovah? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. **15** Then Sarah denied *it*, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, No, but you did laugh.

Gen. 18:22 And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before Jehovah.

James 2:23 And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "And Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him as righteousness"; and he was called the friend of God.

2 Chron. 20:7 Did You not, O our God, dispossess the inhabitants of this land before Your people Israel and give it forever to the seed of Abraham Your friend?

Isa. 41:8 But you, Israel, My servant, / Jacob, whom I have chosen, / The seed of Abraham My friend;

A. The glorious intercession that Abraham made before God was a human, intimate conversation between two friends, an intimate talk according to the unveiling of God's heart's desire—Gen. 18:1-33; Rom. 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:1, 8; Matt. 6:6.

Gen. 18:1-33 And Jehovah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of *his* tent in the heat of the day. **2** And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and there were three men standing opposite him. And when he saw *them*, he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them. And he bowed down to the earth **3** And said, My Lord, if I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass on from Your servant. **4** Please let a little water be fetched, and do wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. **5** And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may sustain yourselves. After that you may pass on, since you have come to your servant. So they said, Do as you have said. **6** And Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, Quickly prepare three measures of fine flour, knead *it*, and make cakes. **7** And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave *it* to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. **8** And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *them* before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. **9** And they said to him, Where is Sarah your wife? And he said, There, in the tent. **10** And He said, I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and then Sarah your wife shall have a son. And Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind Him. **11** Now Abraham and Sarah were old *and* advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah according to the manner of women. **12** And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? **13** And Jehovah said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child when I am old? **14** Is anything too marvelous for Jehovah? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. **15** Then Sarah denied *it*, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, No, but you did laugh. **16** And the men rose up from there and looked down upon Sodom. And Abraham walked with them to send them away. **17** And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** Since Abraham will indeed become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? **19** For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Jehovah by doing righteousness and justice, that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken concerning him. **20** And Jehovah said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah, how great it is; and their sin, how very heavy it is! **21** I shall go down and see whether they have done altogether according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know. **22** And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before Jehovah. **23** And Abraham came near and said, Will You indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? **24** Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed destroy and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? **25** Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked. Far be it from You! Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justly? **26** And Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place for their sake. **27** And Abraham answered and said, Now behold, I have taken *it* upon myself to speak to the Lord, though I am but dust and ashes. **28** Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five? And He said, I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there. **29** And he spoke to Him yet again and said, Suppose forty are found there? And He said, I will not do it, because of the forty. **30** And he said, Oh may the Lord not be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there? And He said, I will not do *it* if I find thirty there. **31** And he said, Now behold, I have taken *it* upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it*, because of the twenty. **32** And he said, Oh let the Lord not be angry if I speak yet once more. Suppose ten are found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it*, because of the ten. **33** And Jehovah went away as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham, and Abraham

returned to his place.

Rom. 4:12 And the father of circumcision to those who not only are of the circumcision, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which *he had* in uncircumcision.

1 Tim. 2:1 I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men;

1 Tim. 2:8 I desire therefore that men pray in every place, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and reasoning;

Matt. 6:6 But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

- B. As Abraham was enjoying sweet fellowship with God, he received a revelation from Him regarding the birth of Isaac and the destruction of Sodom—Gen. 18:9-22:

Gen. 18:9-22 And they said to him, Where is Sarah your wife? And he said, There, in the tent. **10** And He said, I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and then Sarah your wife shall have a son. And Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind Him. **11** Now Abraham and Sarah were old *and* advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah according to the manner of women. **12** And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? **13** And Jehovah said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child when I am old? **14** Is anything too marvelous for Jehovah? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. **15** Then Sarah denied *it*, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, No, but you did laugh. **16** And the men rose up from there and looked down upon Sodom. And Abraham walked with them to send them away. **17** And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** Since Abraham will indeed become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? **19** For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Jehovah by doing righteousness and justice, that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken concerning him. **20** And Jehovah said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah, how great it is; and their sin, how very heavy it is! **21** I shall go down and see whether they have done altogether according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know. **22** And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before Jehovah.

1. This shows that God's intention is to work Christ into us, to bring Christ forth through us, and to destroy the "Sodom" in our home life, our work life, and our Christian and church life—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; 1 Cor. 5:7-8.

Gal. 1:15-16 But when it pleased God, who set me apart from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, **16** To reveal His Son in me that I might announce Him as the gospel among the Gentiles, immediately I did not confer with flesh and blood,

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Gal. 4:19 My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you,

1 Cor. 5:7-8 Purge out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, even as you are unleavened; for our Passover, Christ, also has been sacrificed. **8** So then let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and evil, but with the unleavened *bread* of sincerity and truth.

2. In our intimate fellowship with God, we receive the revelation that all the impossibilities become possibilities with Christ—Gen. 18:14-15; 21:2-7; Luke 18:27.

Gen. 18:14-15 Is anything too marvelous for Jehovah? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. **15** Then Sarah denied *it*, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, No, but you did laugh.

Gen. 21:2-7 And Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the appointed time of which God had spoken to him. **3** And Abraham called the name of his son who was born to him, whom Sarah bore to him, Isaac. **4** And Abraham circumcised Isaac his son when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. **5** And Abraham was a hundred years old when Isaac his son was born to him. **6** And Sarah said, God has made me laugh; everyone who hears will laugh with me. **7** And she said, Who would have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.

Luke 18:27 But He said, The things that are impossible with men are possible with God.

- C. God revealed to Abraham His intention to destroy Sodom, because He was seeking an intercessor—Gen. 18:17-22; cf. Heb. 7:25; Isa. 59:16; Ezek. 22:30.

Gen. 18:17-22 And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** Since Abraham will indeed become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? **19** For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Jehovah by doing righteousness and justice, that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken concerning him. **20** And Jehovah said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah, how great it is; and their sin, how very heavy it is! **21** I shall go down and see whether they have done altogether according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will

know. **22** And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before Jehovah.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Isa. 59:16 And He saw that there was no man, / And He was appalled that there was no intercessor. / Therefore His arm accomplished salvation for Him, / And His righteousness sustained Him.

Ezek. 22:30 And I sought a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the breach before Me for the sake of the land so that I would not destroy it, but I found no one.

D. Genesis 18 presents a clear revelation of the basic principles of intercession:

Gen. 18:1-33 And Jehovah appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre as he was sitting at the entrance of *his* tent in the heat of the day. **2** And he lifted up his eyes and looked, and there were three men standing opposite him. And when he saw *them*, he ran from the entrance of the tent to meet them. And he bowed down to the earth **3** And said, My Lord, if I have found favor in Your sight, please do not pass on from Your servant. **4** Please let a little water be fetched, and do wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. **5** And let me fetch a morsel of bread that you may sustain yourselves. After that you may pass on, since you have come to your servant. So they said, Do as you have said. **6** And Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, Quickly prepare three measures of fine flour, knead *it*, and make cakes. **7** And Abraham ran to the herd and took a calf, tender and good, and gave *it* to the servant, and he hurried to prepare it. **8** And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and set *them* before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. **9** And they said to him, Where is Sarah your wife? And he said, There, in the tent. **10** And He said, I will certainly return to you according to the time of life, and then Sarah your wife shall have a son. And Sarah was listening at the entrance of the tent, which was behind Him. **11** Now Abraham and Sarah were old *and* advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah according to the manner of women. **12** And Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? **13** And Jehovah said to Abraham, Why did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I indeed bear a child when I am old? **14** Is anything too marvelous for Jehovah? At the appointed time I will return to you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. **15** Then Sarah denied *it*, saying, I did not laugh; for she was afraid. And He said, No, but you did laugh. **16** And the men rose up from there and looked down upon Sodom. And Abraham walked with them to send them away. **17** And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, **18** Since Abraham will indeed become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed in him? **19** For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him to keep the way of Jehovah by doing righteousness and justice, that Jehovah may bring upon Abraham what He has spoken concerning him. **20** And Jehovah said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah, how great it is; and their sin, how very heavy it is! **21** I shall go down and see whether they have done altogether according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know. **22** And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before Jehovah. **23** And Abraham came near and said, Will You indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? **24** Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed destroy and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? **25** Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked. Far be it from You! Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justly? **26** And Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place for their sake. **27** And Abraham answered and said, Now behold, I have taken *it* upon myself to speak to the Lord, though I am but dust and ashes. **28** Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five? And He said, I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there. **29** And he spoke to Him yet again and said, Suppose forty are found there? And He said, I will not do it, because of the forty. **30** And he said, Oh may the Lord not be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there? And He said, I will not do *it* if I find thirty there. **31** And he said, Now behold, I have taken *it* upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it*, because of the twenty. **32** And he said, Oh let the Lord not be angry if I speak yet once more. Suppose ten are found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it*, because of the ten. **33** And Jehovah went away as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

1. The proper intercession is not initiated by man but by God's revelation; thus, it expresses God's desire and carries out God's will—vv. 17, 20-21; 19:27-29; Psa. 27:4-8; Heb. 4:16; 7:25.

Gen. 18:17 And Jehovah said, Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do,

Gen. 18:20-21 And Jehovah said, The cry of Sodom and Gomorrah, how great it is; and their sin, how very heavy it is! **21** I shall go down and see whether they have done altogether according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know.

Gen. 19:27-29 And Abraham rose up early in the morning *and went* to the place where he had stood before Jehovah. **28** And he looked down upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon all the land of the plain. And as he looked, there it was: the smoke of the land was going up like the smoke of a furnace. **29** And when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out from the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities among which Lot dwelt.

Psa. 27:4-8 One thing I have asked from Jehovah; / That do I seek: / To dwell in the house of Jehovah / All the days of my life, / To behold the beauty of Jehovah, / And to inquire in His temple. **5** For He will conceal me in His shelter / In the day of trouble; / He will hide me in the hiding place of His tent; / He will raise me up upon a rock. **6** And now my head is lifted up / Above my enemies who surround me. / And I will offer in His tent / Sacrifices of shouts of joy: / I will sing and psalm to Jehovah. **7** Hear, O Jehovah, when I call with my voice, / And be gracious to me and answer me. **8** *When You say*, Seek My face, / To You my heart says, Your face, O Jehovah, will I seek.

Heb. 4:16 Let us therefore come forward with boldness to the throne of grace that we may receive mercy and find grace for timely help.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

2. Apparently, Abraham was interceding for Sodom; actually, he was interceding for Lot by implication (Gen. 14:12; 18:23; 19:1, 27-29), showing that we should intercede for God's people who have drifted into the world.

Gen. 14:12 And they took Lot, Abram's brother's son, and his possessions and departed, for he was dwelling in Sodom.

Gen. 18:23 And Abraham came near and said, Will You indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked?

Gen. 19:1 And the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of Sodom. And when Lot saw *them*, he rose up to meet them and bowed with his face to the ground.

Gen. 19:27-29 And Abraham rose up early in the morning *and went* to the place where he had stood before Jehovah. **28** And he looked down upon Sodom and Gomorrah and upon all the land of the plain. And as he looked, there it was: the smoke of the land was going up like the smoke of a furnace. **29** And when God destroyed the cities of the plain, God remembered Abraham and sent Lot out from the midst of the overthrow, when He overthrew the cities among which Lot dwelt.

3. Intercession is an intimate conversation with God according to the inward intention of His heart; for this we must learn to linger in the presence of God—18:22-33.

Gen. 18:22-33 And the men turned from there and went toward Sodom, while Abraham remained standing before Jehovah. **23** And Abraham came near and said, Will You indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? **24** Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed destroy and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? **25** Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked. Far be it from You! Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justly? **26** And Jehovah said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare the whole place for their sake. **27** And Abraham answered and said, Now behold, I have taken *it* upon myself to speak to the Lord, though I am but dust and ashes. **28** Suppose the fifty righteous are lacking five, will You destroy the whole city because of five? And He said, I will not destroy *it* if I find forty-five there. **29** And he spoke to Him yet again and said, Suppose forty are found there? And He said, I will not do it, because of the forty. **30** And he said, Oh may the Lord not be angry if I speak. Suppose thirty are found there? And He said, I will not do *it* if I find thirty there. **31** And he said, Now behold, I have taken *it* upon myself to speak to the Lord. Suppose twenty are found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it*, because of the twenty. **32** And he said, Oh let the Lord not be angry if I speak yet once more. Suppose ten are found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it*, because of the ten. **33** And Jehovah went away as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

4. Intercession is according to God's righteous way; in Abraham's intercession for Lot, he did not beg God according to His love and grace; he challenged God according to His righteous way—vv. 23-25; Rom. 1:17.

Gen. 18:23-25 And Abraham came near and said, Will You indeed destroy the righteous with the wicked? **24** Suppose there are fifty righteous within the city; will You indeed destroy and not spare the place for the sake of the fifty righteous who are in it? **25** Far be it from You to do such a thing, to put to death the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous should be as the wicked. Far be it from You! Shall the Judge of all the earth not do justly?

Rom. 1:17 For the righteousness of God is revealed in it out of faith to faith, as it is written, "But the righteous shall have life and live by faith."

5. Abraham's intercession did not terminate with his speaking but with God's, showing that genuine intercession is God's speaking in our speaking—Gen. 18:33; Rom. 8:26-27.

Gen. 18:33 And Jehovah went away as soon as He had finished speaking with Abraham, and Abraham returned to his place.

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

VI. The pattern of prayer that the Lord taught the disciples in Matthew 6 is the prayer that expresses God's will—vv. 9-15:

Matt. 6:1-34 But take care not to do your righteousness before men in order to be gazed at by them; otherwise, you have no reward with your Father who is in the heavens. **2** Therefore when you give alms, do not sound a trumpet before you as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be glorified by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full. **3** But you, when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing. **4** So that your alms may be in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. **5** And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full. **6** But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. **7** And in praying do not babble empty words as the Gentiles do; for they suppose that in their multiplicity of words they

will be heard. **8** Therefore do not be like them, for your Father knows the things that you have need of before you ask Him. **9** You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; **10** Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth. **11** Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **14** For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also; **15** But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses. **16** And when you fast, do not be like the sullen-faced hypocrites, for they disfigure their faces so that they may appear to men to be fasting. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full. **17** But you, when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, **18** So that you may not appear to men to be fasting, but to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you. **19** Do not store up for yourselves treasures on the earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves dig through and steal. **20** But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not dig through nor steal. **21** For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. **22** The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is single, your whole body will be full of light; **23** But if your eye is evil, your whole body will be dark. If then the light that is in you is darkness, how great is the darkness! **24** No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon. **25** Because of this, I say to you, Do not be anxious for your life, what you should eat or what you should drink; nor for your body, what you should put on. Is not the life more than food, and the body than clothing? **26** Look at the birds of heaven. They do not sow nor reap nor gather into barns, yet your heavenly Father nourishes them. Are you not of more value than they? **27** Who among you by being anxious can add one cubit to his stature? **28** And why are you anxious concerning clothing? Consider well the lilies of the field, how they grow. They do not toil, neither do they spin *thread*. **29** But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. **30** And if God so arrays the grass of the field, which is *here* today and tomorrow is cast into the furnace, *will He* not much more *clothe* you, you of little faith? **31** Therefore do not be anxious, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, With what shall we be clothed? **32** For all these things the Gentiles are anxiously seeking. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. **33** But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. **34** Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself; sufficient for the day is its *own* evil.

Matt. 6:9-15 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; **10** Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth. **11** Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. **14** For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also; **15** But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses.

- A. The principle of prayer is to pray in secret to be seen by our Father who sees in secret; we need to pray to the Lord, worship the Lord, contact the Lord, and fellowship with the Lord in a secret way—vv. 5-6:

Matt. 6:5-6 And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites, because they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners, so that they may be seen by men. Truly I say to you, They have their reward in full. **6** But you, when you pray, enter into your private room, and shut your door and pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

1. The thing that frustrates us the most from growing in life is the self, and the self enjoys doing things in public display for the glory of men—John 5:44; 12:43.

John 5:44 How can you believe when you receive glory from one another and do not seek the glory that is from the only God?

John 12:43 For they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God.

2. If we live by the Father's hidden life, we may pray much, but others will not know how much we have prayed—Isa. 45:15.

Isa. 45:15 Surely You are a God who hides Himself, / O God of Israel, the Savior.

- B. Matthew 6:9-13 is the Lord's instruction to us to "pray in this way" to "our Father who is in the heavens" (v. 9a); this pattern of prayer can be divided into three sections:

Matt. 6:9-13 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; **10** Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth. **11** Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

Matt. 6:9 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified;

1. The three basic prayers concerning God are related to the Divine Trinity; "Your name be sanctified" is related mainly to the Father; "Your kingdom come," to the Son; and "Your will be done," to the Spirit—vv. 9b-10a:

Matt. 6:9-10 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; **10** Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth.

- a. This is being fulfilled in this age, and it will be ultimately fulfilled in the kingdom age when the name of God will be

excellent in all the earth, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Christ, and the will of God will be accomplished—Psa. 8:1; Rev. 11:15.

Psa. 8:1 O Jehovah our Lord, / How excellent is Your name / In all the earth, / You who have set Your glory over the heavens!

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the *kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

- b. After the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, Christ came to bring the heavenly rule to earth so that the earth could be recovered for God’s interest, so that the will of God could be done on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10b); the kingdom people must pray for this until the earth is fully recovered for God’s will in the coming kingdom age.

Matt. 6:10 Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth.

2. The three requests concerning our need are protective prayers: “Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one”—vv. 11-13a:

Matt. 6:11-13 Give us today our daily bread. **12** And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. **13** And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

- a. Daily bread indicates a living that is by faith; we should live by faith, on the Father’s daily supply.
b. The kingdom people should ask the Father to forgive their debts, their failures, their trespasses, as they forgive their debtors to maintain peace (by the arbitrating peace of Christ); we have to clear up any separating factors between us and God and between us and others—vv. 14-15; Col. 3:15.

Matt. 6:14-15 For if you forgive men their offenses, your heavenly Father will forgive you also; **15** But if you do not forgive men their offenses, neither will your Father forgive your offenses.

Col. 3:15 And let the peace of Christ arbitrate in your hearts, to which also you were called in one Body; and be thankful.

- c. Because we know our weakness, we should ask the Father not to bring us into temptation but to deliver us from the evil one, the devil, and from the evil that is out of him (by being filled with the Spirit)—John 17:15; Eph. 5:16-18; 6:13.

John 17:15 I do not ask that You would take them out of the world, but that You would keep them out of *the hands of the evil one*.

Eph. 5:16-18 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. **17** Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit,

Eph. 6:13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

3. The prayer to the Father concludes with three reverent praises as extolling prayers: “For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen”—the kingdom is of the Son, which is the realm in which God exercises His power, and the power is of the Spirit, which carries out God’s intention so that the Father may have His corporate expression in glory—Matt. 6:13b:

Matt. 6:13 And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

- a. Thus, the pattern of the Lord’s prayer begins with the Divine Trinity and ends with the Divine Trinity.
b. It also begins with God the Father and ends with God the Father; God the Father is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.
C. Such a critical prayer increases our seeking of the kingdom of the heavens as the Father’s heart’s desire and affords us our need of the divine supply of grace to fulfill all the supreme and strict requirements of the kingdom of the heavens for God’s good pleasure.

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 26-29, 2009

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message Four

Praying in the Name of the Lord Jesus

Scripture Reading: Phil. 2:9-11; Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:17; John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24

Phil. 2:9-11 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Eph. 5:20 Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to *our* God and Father,

Col. 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, *do* all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

John 14:13-14 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 16:23-24 And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you, Whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give to you. **24** Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be made full.

I. The Lord's name is the expression of the sum total of what the Lord Jesus is in His person and work; in the name of Jesus means in the sphere and element of all that the Lord is—Phil. 2:9-11; Acts 3:6.

Phil. 2:9-11 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene rise up and walk.

II. The name Jesus is the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew name Joshua, which means “the Savior,” or “salvation of Jehovah”; this name includes the name Jehovah, which means “Am Who I Am”—Matt. 1:21; Exo. 3:14:

Matt. 1:21 And she will bear a son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for *it is* He *who* will save His people from their sins.

Exo. 3:14 And God said to Moses, I AM WHO I AM. And He said, Thus you shall say to the children of Israel, I AM has sent me to you.

A. The name of Jesus is above every name; since the Lord's ascension, there has not been a name on earth above the name of Jesus—Phil. 2:9-11.

Phil. 2:9-11 Therefore also God highly exalted Him and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** And every tongue should openly confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

B. The exalted name of Jesus is for us to believe into (John 1:12), to be baptized into (Acts 8:16; 19:5), to be saved (4:12), to be healed (3:6; 4:10), to be washed, sanctified, and justified (1 Cor. 6:11), to call upon (Rom. 10:13; 1 Cor. 1:2), to pray in (John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:24), to be gathered into (Matt. 18:20), to cast out demons (Mark 16:17; Acts 16:18), and to speak boldly in (9:27).

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the authority to become children of God, to those who believe into His name,

Acts 8:16 For He had not yet fallen upon any of them, but they had only been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 19:5 And when they heard *this*, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene rise up and walk.

Acts 4:10 Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified *and* whom God has raised from the dead, in this *name* this man stands before you in good health.

1 Cor. 6:11 And these things were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Rom. 10:13 For "whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

1 Cor. 1:2 To the church of God which is in Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, the called saints, with all those who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ in every place, *who is* theirs and ours:

John 14:13-14 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 16:24 Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be made full.

Matt. 18:20 For where there are two or three gathered into My name, there am I in their midst.

Mark 16:17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

Acts 16:18 And she did this for many days. But Paul was greatly disturbed; and turning, he said to the spirit, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

Acts 9:27 But Barnabas took hold of him and led *him* to the apostles, and he related to them how *Saul* had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how in Damascus he had spoken boldly in the name of Jesus.

C. Satan hates the name of Jesus and utilizes people to attack the name of Jesus—4:17-18; 5:40; 26:9.

Acts 4:17-18 But in order that this would not be spread further among the people, let us threaten them that they no longer speak based upon this name to anyone. **18** And when they called them, they charged *them* not to utter *anything* at all nor teach based upon the name of Jesus.

Acts 5:40 And they were persuaded by him. And having called the apostles to *them*, they beat *them* and charged *them* not to speak based upon the name of Jesus; and they released *them*.

Acts 26:9 Well then, I thought to myself that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus the Nazarene,

D. The Lord Jesus praised the overcomers in Philadelphia because they did not deny His name; the recovered church has abandoned all names other than that of the Lord Jesus Christ, belonging to the Lord absolutely—Rev. 3:8.

Rev. 3:8 I know your works; behold, I have put before you an opened door which no one can shut, because you have a little power and have kept My word and have not denied My name.

III. The name of Jesus signifies authority and power and denotes the fact that God has given Him the all-transcending authority and power, and being in the name of Jesus is for the believers to partake of His name and use this name—Matt. 28:18; Acts

3:6; 4:7, 10:

Matt. 28:18 And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene rise up and walk.

Acts 4:7 And they stood them in the midst and inquired, By what power or in what name did you do this?

Acts 4:10 Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified *and* whom God has raised from the dead, in this *name* this man stands before you in good health.

- A. To be in the name of the Lord Jesus means that the Lord is bold enough to commit His name to our hands and allow us to use this name—Mark 16:17.

Mark 16:17 And these signs will accompany those who believe: in My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues;

- B. The church is a group of people on earth who can use the Lord's name, and God takes responsibility for their action as they use this name—Acts 16:18.

Acts 16:18 And she did this for many days. But Paul was greatly disturbed; and turning, he said to the spirit, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

- C. There are three results of acting in the Lord's name:

1. God has called men out of the nations into His name; this is the effect of the acting in the Lord's name on man—Matt. 28:19; Acts 3:2-6; 22:16.

Matt. 28:19 Go therefore and disciple all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

Acts 3:2-6 And a certain man who had been lame from his mother's womb was being carried *there*, whom they had laid day by day at the door of the temple which is called Beautiful to ask alms from those entering into the temple. **3** And he, seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple, began to ask to receive alms. **4** And Peter, gazing at him with John, said, Look at us! **5** And he turned his attention to them, expecting to receive something from them. **6** But Peter said, Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene rise up and walk.

Acts 22:16 And now, why do you delay? Rise up and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name.

2. With the Lord's name, we can deal with all the power of the enemy; this is the effect of the acting in the Lord's name on the devil—Luke 10:17-19; Acts 16:18.

Luke 10:17-19 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name. **18** And He said to them, I was watching Satan fall like lightning out of heaven. **19** Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Acts 16:18 And she did this for many days. But Paul was greatly disturbed; and turning, he said to the spirit, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

3. The Lord's name enables us to go to the Father and speak to Him, and our prayer is answered because of the Lord's name; this is the effect of the acting in the Lord's name toward God—John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:24.

John 14:13-14 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 16:24 Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be made full.

IV. We need to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus—Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:17:

Eph. 5:20 Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to *our* God and Father,

Col. 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, *do* all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- A. To be in the Lord's name means to be one with the Lord, to live by the Lord, and to let the Lord live in us—1 Cor. 6:17; John 6:57; Gal. 2:20:

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

1. The Lord came and did things in the Father's name, meaning that He was one with the Father, that He lived by the Father, and that the Father worked in Him—John 5:43; 10:25, 30.

John 5:43 I have come in the name of My Father, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, you will receive him.

John 10:25 Jesus answered them, I told you, and you do not believe. The works which I do in My Father's name, these testify concerning Me;

John 10:30 I and the Father are one.

2. In the Acts the disciples as the expression of the Lord did even greater things in the Lord's name; they needed to have the Son living in them in order that the Son might be expressed as the Spirit—John 14:12, 19; Acts 3:6; 4:7, 10, 12; 16:18.

John 14:12 Truly, truly, I say to you, He who believes into Me, the works which I do he shall do also; and greater than these he shall do because I am going to the Father.

John 14:19 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene rise up and walk.

Acts 4:7 And they stood them in the midst and inquired, By what power or in what name did you do this?

Acts 4:10 Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified *and* whom God has raised from the dead, in this *name* this man stands before you in good health.

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no other, for neither is there another name under heaven given among men in which we must be saved.

Acts 16:18 And she did this for many days. But Paul was greatly disturbed; and turning, he said to the spirit, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

- B. In our Christian life and service, we need to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus—Eph. 5:20; Col. 3:17.

Eph. 5:20 Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to *our* God and Father,

Col. 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, *do* all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

- C. Ephesians 5:20 and Colossians 3:17 indicate that we have been put into a oneness with the Lord; because we are one with Him,

we can use and act in His name:

Eph. 5:20 Giving thanks at all times for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to *our* God and Father,

Col. 3:17 And whatever you do in word or in deed, *do* all things in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

1. When we are in the name of the Lord Jesus, we are in Christ, Christ is in us, and we are one with Christ—John 14:20; 1 Cor. 1:30; 6:17.

John 14:20 In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

1 Cor. 1:30 But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became wisdom to us from God: both righteousness and sanctification and redemption,

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

2. To do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus should always remind us that He is one with us, that we are in Him and He in us, that He lives in us, and that we should live in Him—Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:20-21a.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

Phil. 1:20-21 According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I will be put to shame, but with all boldness, as always, even now Christ will be magnified in my body, whether through life or through death. **21** For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

3. When we declare that we are doing things in the name of the Lord Jesus, the whole universe is reminded that there are people who are absolutely one with Christ; the angels honor this, and all the demons are afraid of this—Acts 3:6; 4:7, 10; 16:18.

Acts 3:6 But Peter said, Silver and gold I do not possess, but what I have, this I give to you: In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene rise up and walk.

Acts 4:7 And they stood them in the midst and inquired, By what power or in what name did you do this?

Acts 4:10 Let it be known to you all and to all the people of Israel that in the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, whom you crucified *and* whom God has raised from the dead, in this *name* this man stands before you in good health.

Acts 16:18 And she did this for many days. But Paul was greatly disturbed; and turning, he said to the spirit, I charge you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And it came out that very hour.

- D. To do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus is the basic aspect of our Christian life, yet there is also the aspect of regulation; we must be regulated by God's word and by God's will—Matt. 7:21-23.

Matt. 7:21-23 Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of the heavens, but he who does the will of My Father who is in the heavens. **22** Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, *was it* not in Your name *that* we prophesied, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name did many works of power? **23** And then I will declare to them: I never knew you. Depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness.

V. We should pray in the name of the Lord Jesus—John 14:13-14; 15:16; 16:23-24:

John 14:13-14 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do *it*.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 16:23-24 And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Truly, truly, I say to you, Whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give to you. **24** Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be made full.

- A. Through resurrection the Lord Jesus was born as the firstborn Son of God and also became the life-giving Spirit, and now we, the believers, in the Spirit, by the Spirit, and with the Spirit can be one with Him—1 Cor. 15:45b; 6:17.

1 Cor. 15:45 So also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving Spirit.

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

- B. The reality of the Lord's name is the all-inclusive compound Spirit, who is in our spirit—S. S. 1:3; Exo. 30:23-30; Phil. 1:19; 1 Cor. 6:17.

S.S. 1:3 Your anointing oils have a pleasant fragrance; / Your name is like ointment poured forth; / Therefore the virgins love you.

Exo. 30:23-30 You also take the finest spices: of flowing myrrh five hundred *shekels*, and of fragrant cinnamon half as much, two hundred fifty *shekels*, and of fragrant calamus two hundred fifty *shekels*, **24** And of cassia five hundred *shekels*, according to the shekel of the sanctuary, and a hin of olive oil. **25** And you shall make it a holy anointing oil, a fragrant ointment compounded according to the work of a compounder; it shall be a holy anointing oil. **26** And with it you shall anoint the Tent of Meeting and the Ark of the Testimony, **27** And the table and all its utensils, and the lampstand and its utensils, and the altar of incense, **28** And the altar of burnt offering with all its utensils, and the laver and its base. **29** Thus you shall sanctify them that they may be most holy; whatever touches them shall be holy. **30** And you shall anoint Aaron and his sons and sanctify them that they may serve Me as priests.

Phil. 1:19 For I know that for me this will turn out to salvation through your petition and *the* bountiful supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

1 Cor. 6:17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit.

- C. To be in the Lord's name means to be one with the Lord, to live by the Lord, and to let the Lord live in us, and to pray "in My name" simply means to pray "in Me"—John 15:4-5, 16; 14:19-20; Gal. 2:20.

John 15:4-5 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

John 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you, and I set you that you should go forth and bear fruit and *that* your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He may give you.

John 14:19-20 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

Gal. 2:20 I am crucified with Christ; and *it is* no longer I *who* live, but *it is* Christ *who* lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the *faith* of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

- D. To ask in the Lord's name requires us to abide in the Lord and to let Him and His words abide in us so that we may actually be one with Him—John 15:4-5:

John 15:4-5 Abide in Me and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you unless you abide in Me. **5** I am the vine; you are the branches. He who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

1. While the Lord is moving, acting, motivating, and energizing within us, we will express what we feel within; this is prayer in the spirit—Eph. 6:18.

Eph. 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

2. When we abide in the Lord and let His words abide in us, we are actually one with Him, and He is working within us; then whatever we pray, it is not only we who are praying, for He is praying in our praying—John 15:7.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

3. We cannot have this kind of prayer on our own; this prayer in the spirit comes from the indwelling Christ, through the Spirit, and by His word—14:19-20; 15:7.

John 14:19-20 Yet a little while and the world beholds Me no longer, but you behold Me; because I live, you also shall live. **20** In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.

John 15:7 If you abide in Me and My words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you.

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 26-29, 2009

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message Five

The Prayer of Administration and the Prayer of Authority

Scripture Reading: Rev. 8:3-5; Matt. 18:18; Mark 11:20-24

Rev. 8:3-5 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

Matt. 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

Mark 11:20-24 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. **21** And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered. **22** And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God. **23** Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. **24** For this *reason* I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received *them*, and you will have them.

I. The incense altar is the center of God's administration, and the prayer offered at the incense altar governs the universe— Rev. 8:3-5:

Rev. 8:3-5 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

A. The book of Revelation is a book of God's administration, a book of divine execution, revealing the throne of God and the divine administration throughout the universe—4:2-3, 5, 9; 5:6.

Rev. 4:2-3 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne *there was* One sitting; **3** And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and *there was* a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

Rev. 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev. 4:9 And when the *four* living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits upon the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever,

Rev. 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having *just* been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

B. In Revelation the executing center of God's administration is actually not the throne but the incense altar, which is directly in front of the throne of God's authority—4:2-3, 5; 5:6; 8:3-5.

Rev. 4:2-3 Immediately I was in spirit; and behold, there was a throne set in heaven, and upon the throne *there was* One sitting; **3** And He who was sitting was like a jasper stone and a sardius in appearance, and *there was* a rainbow around the throne like an emerald in appearance.

Rev. 4:5 And out of the throne come forth lightnings and voices and thunders. And *there were* seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God;

Rev. 5:6 And I saw in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures and in the midst of the elders a Lamb standing as having *just* been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

Rev. 8:3-5 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

- C. God's administration needs our prayers, which are a response to Christ's heavenly ministry; as we pray He administrates, and as He administrates we pray—Heb. 7:25; Col. 3:1-2; Rev. 5:8; 8:3.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Col. 3:1-2 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth.

Rev. 5:8 And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which *bowl*s are the prayers of the saints.

Rev. 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

- D. As another Angel, Christ executes God's administration over the earth at the incense altar by ministering to God as the High Priest with the prayers of His saints, adding His incense to these prayers—vv. 3-5:

Rev. 8:3-5 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

1. The golden censer signifies the prayers of the saints (5:8), and the incense signifies Christ with all His merit added to the saints' prayers so that their prayers offered upon the golden altar might be acceptable to God—8:3:

Rev. 5:8 And when He took the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell before the Lamb, each having a harp and golden bowls full of incense, which *bowl*s are the prayers of the saints.

Rev. 8:3 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

- a. The incense typifies the resurrected and ascended Christ as the unique One who is acceptable to God—Exo. 30:34-38.

Exo. 30:34-38 And Jehovah said to Moses, Take fragrant spices — stacte and onycha and galbanum — fragrant spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each; **35** And you shall make of it incense, a fragrant compound *according to* the work of a compounder, seasoned with salt, pure *and* holy. **36** And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put some of it before the testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I will meet with you; it shall be to you most holy. **37** And the incense which you shall make, you shall not make for yourselves according to its composition; it shall be holy to you for Jehovah. **38** Whoever shall make *any* like it, to smell it, shall be cut off from his people.

- b. The prayer that ascends to God as a sweet-smelling fragrance is God's administration—Rev. 8:4:

Rev. 8:4 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God.

- (1) The incense is our going to God with Christ and as Christ in prayer for God's enjoyment—Exo. 30:34-38.

Exo. 30:34-38 And Jehovah said to Moses, Take fragrant spices — stacte and onycha and galbanum — fragrant spices with pure frankincense; there shall be an equal part of each; **35** And you shall make of it incense, a fragrant compound *according to* the work of a compounder, seasoned with salt, pure *and* holy. **36** And you shall beat some of it very fine, and put some of it before the testimony in the Tent of Meeting, where I will meet with you; it shall be to you most holy. **37** And the incense which you shall make, you shall not make for yourselves according to its composition; it shall be holy to you for Jehovah. **38** Whoever shall make *any* like it, to smell it, shall be cut off from his people.

- (2) This kind of prayer simultaneously satisfies God with sweet fragrance and carries out God's economy, God's administration.

2. When the prayers of the saints ascend to God with the incense of Christ, God carries out His administration—Rev. 8:5:

Rev. 8:5 And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

- a. The incense ascends to God at the throne of administration, and God answers the saints' prayers; as a result, fire comes

down to earth to execute the divine judgments—vv. 4-5.

Rev. 8:4-5 And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

- b. The pouring out of God's answers to our prayers equals God's administration.
- c. This is a picture of the incense altar being the administrating center for God to execute His judgments in His administration—Exo. 30:1-6.

Exo. 30:1-6 And you shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. **2** Its length shall be a cubit, and its width, a cubit; it shall be square, and two cubits its height; its horns shall be of *one piece with* it. **3** And you shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides around *it* and its horns; and you shall make a rim of gold around *it*. **4** And you shall make for it two rings of gold under its rim; on its two sides, on its opposite sides, you shall make *them*; and they shall be as holders for poles with which to carry it. **5** And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. **6** And you shall put it before the veil that is over the Ark of the Testimony, before the expiation cover that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you.

II. The most important prayer and the most spiritual prayer is the prayer of authority—Matt. 18:18; Mark 11:20-24:

Matt. 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

Mark 11:20-24 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. **21** And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered. **22** And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God. **23** Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. **24** For this *reason* I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received *them*, and you will have them.

- A. The prayer of authority is a command based on authority—Isa. 45:11; Mark 11:20-24:

Isa. 45:11 Thus says Jehovah, / The Holy One of Israel and the One who formed him, / Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, / And concerning the work of My hands, command Me.

Mark 11:20-24 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. **21** And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered. **22** And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God. **23** Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. **24** For this *reason* I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received *them*, and you will have them.

- 1. The prayer of authority is a commanding prayer—Isa. 45:11 .

Isa. 45:11 Thus says Jehovah, / The Holy One of Israel and the One who formed him, / Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, / And concerning the work of My hands, command Me.

- 2. If we wish to have weighty and valuable prayers before God, we need to be able to give out some authoritative commands before God—Mark 11:23.

Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.

- B. The prayer of authority has two aspects—binding and loosing—Matt. 18:18:

Matt. 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

- 1. Ordinary prayers are prayers that ask God to bind and loose.
 - 2. Prayers with authority are those in which we bind and loose by exercising authority.
- C. Praying with authority is praying the prayer of Mark 11:20-24—a prayer that is directed not to God but to “this mountain”—v. 23:

Mark 11:20-24 And as they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots. **21** And Peter remembered and said to Him, Rabbi, behold, the fig tree which You cursed has withered. **22** And Jesus answered and said to them, Have faith in God. **23** Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it. **24** For this *reason* I say to you, All things that you pray and ask, believe that you have received *them*, and you will have them.

Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.

1. A prayer with authority does not ask God to do something; rather, it exercises God's authority and applies this authority to deal with problems and things that ought to be removed—v. 23.

Mark 11:23 Truly I say to you that whoever says to this mountain, Be taken up and cast into the sea, and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that what he says happens, he will have it.

2. A prayer with authority is not asking God directly; rather, it is dealing with problems by directly applying God's authority—Exo. 14:15-27.

Exo. 14:15-27 And Jehovah said to Moses, Why do you cry out to Me? Tell the children of Israel to move forward. **16** And you, lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea, and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go into the midst of the sea on dry ground. **17** And I will now harden the hearts of the Egyptians, and they will go in after them; and I will glorify Myself through Pharaoh and through all his army, through his chariots and through his horsemen. **18** Then the Egyptians will know that I am Jehovah when I glorify Myself through Pharaoh, through his chariots and through his horsemen. **19** And the Angel of God, who went before the camp of Israel, moved and went behind them; and the pillar of cloud moved from before them and stood behind them. **20** And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel. And the cloud was there with the darkness, yet it gave light by night *to them*. Thus one did not come near the other all night. **21** And when Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, Jehovah caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all the night and made the sea dry land; and the waters were divided. **22** And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left. **23** Then the Egyptians pursued; and all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen went in after them into the midst of the sea. **24** And at the morning watch Jehovah looked down upon the camp of the Egyptians *from* within the pillar of fire and of cloud and threw the camp of the Egyptians into confusion. **25** And He caused their chariot wheels to swerve and made them drive with difficulty, so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from Israel, for Jehovah is fighting for them against the Egyptians. **26** And Jehovah said to Moses, Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters come back over the Egyptians, over their chariots and over their horsemen. **27** And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to its level when the morning appeared. And the Egyptians fled against it, and Jehovah cast the Egyptians off into the midst of the sea.

3. The most important work of the overcomers is to bring the authority of the throne to earth; if we want to be an overcomer, we must learn to pray with authority and speak to the mountain—Rev. 11:15; 12:10.

Rev. 11:15 And the seventh angel trumpeted; and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, The kingdom of the world has become the *kingdom* of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever.

Rev. 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, Now has come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers has been cast down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

- D. When the church prays with authority, it rules over Hades—Matt. 16:18:

Matt. 16:18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

1. The church has the authority to rule over every satanic thing.
2. The church should subdue all the activities of the evil spirits by means of prayer and should exercise dominion through prayer—Luke 10:17-19; Matt. 18:18.

Luke 10:17-19 And the seventy returned with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name. **18** And He said to them, I was watching Satan fall like lightning out of heaven. **19** Behold, I have given you the authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

Matt. 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

- E. If we would pray the prayer of authority, we must first submit to God's authority ourselves; unless we submit to God's authority with respect to His position and to His authority in our daily living and in all practical matters, we cannot pray with authority—Isa. 45:11; 1 Pet. 5:6; Rev. 22:1.

Isa. 45:11 Thus says Jehovah, / The Holy One of Israel and the One who formed him, / Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, / And concerning the work of My hands, command Me.

1 Pet. 5:6 Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God that He may exalt you in due time,

Rev. 22:1 And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb in the middle of its street.

F. The prayer of authority has heaven as its starting point and earth as its destination—S. S. 4:8; 6:10; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:6; 6:18:

S.S. 4:8 Come with me from Lebanon, *my* bride; / With me from Lebanon come. / Look from the top of Amana, / From the top of Senir and Hermon, / From the lions' dens, / From the leopards' mountains.

S.S. 6:10 Who is this woman who looks forth like the dawn, / As beautiful as the moon, / As clear as the sun, / As terrible as an army with banners?

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Eph. 2:6 And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph. 6:18 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints,

1. A prayer with authority is prayed from heaven to earth; it begins from a heavenly position and goes downward from heaven to earth—2:6.

Eph. 2:6 And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

2. To pray downward is to stand in the position that Christ has given us in the heavenlies, to command Satan with authority and reject all his works, and to proclaim with authority that all God's commands should be accomplished—Matt. 6:9-10.

Matt. 6:9-10 You then pray in this way: Our Father who is in the heavens, Your name be sanctified; **10** Your kingdom come; Your will be done, as in heaven, *so* also on earth.

G. The position of prayer is ascension, and the authority of prayer is also ascension; all prayers in ascension are prayers of authority—Eph. 2:6; 1:22-23:

Eph. 2:6 And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him *to be* Head over all things to the church, **23** Which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

1. The prayer of authority is the prayer by one who is able to give out commands by standing in the position of ascension—Isa. 45:11.

Isa. 45:11 Thus says Jehovah, / The Holy One of Israel and the One who formed him, / Ask Me about the things to come concerning My sons, / And concerning the work of My hands, command Me.

2. If we are in the position of ascension, our prayer will be equal to God's administration; it will be the executing of His commands—Rev. 8:3-5.

Rev. 8:3-5 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

H. When we come to the point where we have the heavenly position and the heavenly authority and are thus able to utter forth authoritative prayers, we are on the throne, reigning with the Lord—Eph. 2:5-6; Rev. 3:21; cf. Ezek. 1:26:

Eph. 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in offenses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved) **6** And raised *us* up together with *Him* and seated *us* together with *Him* in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus,

Rev. 3:21 He who overcomes, to him I will give to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat with My Father on His throne.

Ezek. 1:26 And above the expanse that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, like the appearance of a sapphire stone; and upon the likeness of the throne was One in appearance like a man, above it.

1. At this time, our prayer is not only an authoritative prayer but also a reigning prayer, and our prayer becomes God's administration, the execution of God's rule—Rom. 5:17, 21; Matt. 18:18; Rev. 8:3-5.

Rom. 5:17 For if, by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.

Rom. 5:21 In order that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Matt. 18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

Rev. 8:3-5 And another Angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer, and much incense was given to Him to offer with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. **4** And the smoke of the incense went up with the prayers of the saints out of the hand of the Angel before God. **5** And the Angel took the censer and filled it with the fire of the altar and cast *it* to the earth; and there were thunders and voices and lightnings and an earthquake.

2. If we are willing to learn, we will arrive at a place where we can utter such prayers for the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose—Eph. 1:10-11; 3:9-11.

Eph. 1:10-11 Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in Him; **11** In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 3:9-11 And to enlighten all *that they may see* what the economy of the mystery is, which throughout the ages has been hidden in God, who created all things, **10** In order that now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies the multifarious wisdom of God might be made known through the church, **11** According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Outline of the Messages for the Thanksgiving Conference

November 26-29, 2009

GENERAL SUBJECT: THE PRAYER OF THE AGE

Message Six

The Prayer of Intercession

Scripture Reading: Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:26-27, 34; Acts 12:5; Col. 1:9; 4:2

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Acts 12:5 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him.

Col. 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of *it*, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Col. 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

I. In His heavenly ministry Christ is interceding, and we need to respond to His intercession—Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1-2:

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Col. 3:1-2 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth.

A. In Romans 8:34 Christ intercedes for us to be glorified (vv. 17, 30), and in Hebrews 7:25 Christ intercedes for us so that we may be saved to the uttermost; being saved to the uttermost is the equivalent of glorification.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Rom. 8:17 And if children, heirs also; on the one hand, heirs of God; on the other, joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with *Him* that we may also be glorified with *Him*.

Rom. 8:30 And those whom He predestinated, these He also called; and those whom He called, these He also justified; and those whom He justified, these He also glorified.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

B. Christ is our High Priest, according to the order of Melchizedek, interceding for us—5:10; 7:24-26:

Heb. 7:24-26 But He, because He abides forever, has His priesthood unalterable. **25** Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them. **26** For such a High Priest was also fitting

to us, holy, guileless, undefiled, separated from sinners and having become higher than the heavens,

1. Christ died for us, He was resurrected, and now He is in the heavens interceding for us and caring for us; God has appointed Him to take care of us, and He is now taking care of us by interceding for us—Rom. 8:34.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

2. As the One who intercedes for us, the Lord is able to save us to the uttermost, that is, completely, entirely, perfectly, for all time and eternity, and to the end—Heb. 7:25.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

3. Christ undertakes our case by interceding for us; He appears before God on our behalf, praying for us that we may be saved and brought fully into God's eternal purpose—1 John 2:1; Heb. 9:24; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9.

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous;

Heb. 9:24 For Christ did not enter into a holy place made by hands, a figure of the true, but into heaven itself, to appear now before the face of God for us;

Eph. 1:11 In whom also we were designated as an inheritance, having been predestinated according to the purpose of the One who works all things according to the counsel of His will,

Eph. 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which He made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

2 Tim. 1:9 Who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before the times of the ages

- C. Christ's intercession requires our response; we need to become on earth the reflection of Christ's intercession in His heavenly ministry, praying the prayers of the interceding Christ—Rom. 8:26-27, 34.

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

II. In order to respond to Christ's heavenly intercession, we need to know the significance of the golden incense altar—Exo. 30:1-10:

Exo. 30:1-10 And you shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. **2** Its length shall be a cubit, and its width, a cubit; it shall be square, and two cubits its height; its horns shall be of *one piece with it*. **3** And you shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides around *it* and its horns; and you shall make a rim of gold around *it*. **4** And you shall make for it two rings of gold under its rim; on its two sides, on its opposite sides, you shall make *them*; and they shall be as holders for poles with which to carry it. **5** And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. **6** And you shall put it before the veil that is over the Ark of the Testimony, before the expiation cover that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you. **7** And Aaron shall burn on it fragrant incense; every morning when he dresses the lamps he shall burn it. **8** And when Aaron sets up the lamps at twilight, he shall burn it, a perpetual incense before Jehovah throughout your generations. **9** You shall not offer any strange incense on it, or a burnt offering or a meal offering; and you shall not pour a drink offering on it. **10** And Aaron shall make expiation on its horns once a year; with the blood of the sin offering of expiation once a year he shall make expiation for it throughout your generations. It is most holy to Jehovah.

- A. The incense altar is a type not of Christ's prayer but of His person; it signifies Christ praying, Christ interceding—Heb. 7:25.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

- B. The incense altar signifies Christ as the Intercessor to maintain the relationship between God and His people; without such an interceding Christ, the proper relationship between God and us could not exist and could not be maintained—Exo. 30:1-6; Heb. 7:25; Rom. 8:34; 1 John 2:1.

Exo. 30:1-6 And you shall make an altar on which to burn incense; you shall make it of acacia wood. **2** Its length shall be a cubit, and its width, a cubit; it shall be square, and two cubits its height; its horns shall be of *one piece with it*. **3** And you shall overlay it with pure gold, its top and its sides around *it* and its horns; and you shall make a rim of gold around *it*. **4** And you shall make for it two rings of gold under its rim; on its two sides, on its opposite sides, you shall make *them*; and they shall be as holders for poles with which to carry it. **5** And you shall make the poles of acacia wood and overlay them with gold. **6** And you shall put it before the veil that is over the Ark of the Testimony, before the expiation cover that is over the testimony, where I will meet with you.

Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things I write to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous;

- C. Today the intercessor is not merely Christ Himself but Christ with His Body; as members of the Body of Christ, we should participate in Christ's interceding life by praying in Him as the golden incense altar—Rom. 8:26-27, 34; Eph. 6:18-19; Col. 1:9; 4:3, 12:

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

Eph. 6:18-19 By means of all prayer and petition, praying at every time in spirit and watching unto this in all perseverance and petition concerning all the saints, **19** And for me, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known in boldness the mystery of the gospel,

Col. 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of *it*, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Col. 4:3 Praying at the same time for us also, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ (because of which also I am bound),

Col. 4:12 Epaphras, who is one of you, a slave of Christ Jesus, greets you, always struggling on your behalf in his prayers that you may stand mature and fully assured in all the will of God.

1. After His resurrection and ascension, the individual Christ has become the corporate Christ; thus, before God today not only is the individual Christ interceding, but the corporate Christ, the Head with the Body, is interceding as well—1 Cor. 12:12; Acts 12:5, 12.

1 Cor. 12:12 For even as the body is one and has many members, yet all the members of the body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ.

Acts 12:5 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him.

Acts 12:12 And when he became aware of *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, where there was a considerable number assembled together and praying.

2. Christ the Head is interceding in the heavens, and the church the Body is interceding on earth—Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; Acts 12:5, 12.

Rom. 8:34 Who is he who condemns? It is Christ Jesus who died and, rather, who was raised, who is also at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

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Acts 12:12 And when he became aware of *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, where there was a considerable number assembled together and praying.

3. As the members of Christ and parts of the Body-Christ, we cooperate with Christ in His ministry of intercession, carrying out His intercession in our prayers of intercession—Rom. 8:26-27, 34; Heb. 7:25; 1 Tim. 2:1.

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

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Heb. 7:25 Hence also He is able to save to the uttermost those who come forward to God through Him, since He lives always to intercede for them.

1 Tim. 2:1 I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, thanksgivings be made on behalf of all men;

III. The interceding Spirit helps us, sympathizes with us, sustains us, comforts us, and supports us by interceding for us—Rom. 8:26-27:

Rom. 8:26-27 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered. **27** But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

- A. The Spirit, who indwells us, helps us in our weakness; in particular, the weakness referred to in Romans 8:26 is weakness in prayer:

Rom. 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1. Because we are weak in God's interest and in the divine things and do not know what kind of prayer God desires, the indwelling Spirit works in us to help us in our weakness in praying.
2. The Spirit joins in to help us "in like manner"; in whatever manner we are, He also is—v. 26a.

Rom. 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered.

3. The Spirit helps us in every kind of situation, for He knows our needs, problems, and shortcomings, and He sympathizes with us, supports us, and sustains us.
- B. The Spirit intercedes for us with groanings in our manner—v. 26b:

Rom. 8:26 Moreover, in like manner the Spirit also joins in to help *us* in our weakness, for we do not know for what we should pray as is fitting, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for *us* with groanings which cannot be uttered.

1. Apparently, this is our groaning, but in our groaning is the groaning of the Spirit.
2. While we are groaning from deep within our spirit, the Spirit, who dwells in our spirit, joins in with our groaning, interceding for us mainly that we would have the transformation in life for growth in life unto maturity.

- C. As the Spirit works in us by helping us in our weakness and by interceding for us, He infuses His according-to-God mind into us in our prayer—v. 27:

Rom. 8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

1. Ephesians 4:23 speaks of the spirit of the mind, but Romans 8:27 speaks of the mind of the Spirit; the spirit of the mind is for renewing, and the mind of the Spirit is for interceding.

Eph. 4:23 And *that* you be renewed in the spirit of your mind

Rom. 8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

2. The Spirit's mind is mingled with our mind; our mind is set on the spirit, making our mind one with the mind of the Spirit—vv. 6, 27.

Rom. 8:6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Rom. 8:27 But He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to God.

IV. In Acts 12 we have the intercessory prayer of the church, and in Colossians 1:9-11, the intercessory prayer of the apostle Paul:

Acts 12:1-25 Now about that time Herod the king laid hands on some from the church in order to mistreat them. **2** And he did away with James, the brother of John, with the sword. **3** And when he saw that it was pleasing to the Jews, he went on to arrest Peter also (now *those* were the days of Unleavened Bread), **4** Whom also he seized and put in prison, delivering him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. **5** So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him. **6** And when Herod was about to bring him forward, that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards before the door were keeping the prison. **7** And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shined in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and roused him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off his hands. **8** And the angel said to him, Gird yourself and tie on your sandals. And he did so. And he said to him, Throw your cloak around *you* and follow me. **9** And he went out and followed *him*; yet he did not know that what was taking place through the angel was real, but thought that he was seeing a vision. **10** And passing the first guard and the second, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened of itself to them. And going out, they went forward one lane; and immediately the angel departed from him. **11** And Peter came to himself and said, Now I know truly that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me out of Herod's hand and from all the expectation of the Jewish people. **12** And when he became aware of *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, where there was a considerable number assembled together and praying. **13** And when he knocked at the door of the entry, a maiden named Rhoda came to listen. **14** And when she recognized Peter's voice, she did not open the gate for joy, but ran in and reported that Peter was standing before the entry. **15** But they said to her, You are crazy! But she insisted that it was so. And they said, It is his angel. **16** But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the gate*, they saw him and were beside themselves. **17** And motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he related to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison, and he said, Report these things to James and the brothers. And going out, he went to another place. **18** Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers, *they not knowing* what had become of Peter. **19** And when Herod searched for him and did not find *him*, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led off *to execution*. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time *there*. **20** Now he was furious with the Tyrians and Sidonians. And they came to him with one accord; and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country was fed from the king's *country*. **21** And on an appointed day Herod arrayed himself in royal clothing and sat on the judgment seat; and he delivered a public address to them. **22** And the populace cried out, The voice of a god and not of a man! **23** And instantly an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give the glory to God; and he was eaten by worms and expired. **24** But the word of God grew and multiplied. **25** And Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem, having completed the dispensing; *and they took along with them John, who was surnamed Mark.*

Col. 1:9-11 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of *it*, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, **10** To walk worthily of the Lord to please *Him* in all things, bearing fruit in every good work and growing by the full knowledge of God, **11** Being empowered with all power, according to the might of His glory, unto all endurance and long-suffering with joy,

- A. When Peter was in prison, “prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him”—Acts 12:5:

Acts 12:5 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him.

1. Behind the scene there was a battle of spiritual forces, a battle between God and His enemy, Satan—vv. 4-6.

Acts 12:4-6 Whom also he seized and put in prison, delivering him to four quaternions of soldiers to guard him, intending after the Passover to bring him out to the people. **5** So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him. **6** And when Herod was about to bring him forward, that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards before the door were keeping the prison.

2. By prayer the church fought the battle with God against Satan, the evil one—vv. 5-23.

Acts 12:5-23 So then Peter was kept in the prison; but prayer was being made fervently by the church to God concerning him. **6** And when Herod was about to bring him forward, that night Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains; and guards before the door were keeping the prison. **7** And behold, an angel of the Lord stood by *him*, and a light shined in the cell; and he struck Peter's side and roused him, saying, Rise up quickly. And his chains fell off his hands. **8** And the angel said to him, Gird yourself and tie on your sandals. And he did so. And he said to him, Throw your cloak around *you* and follow me. **9** And he went out and followed *him*; yet he did not know that what was taking place through the angel was real, but thought that he was seeing a vision. **10** And passing the first guard and the second, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened of itself to them. And going out, they went forward one lane; and immediately the angel departed from him. **11** And Peter came to himself and said, Now I know truly that the Lord has sent forth His angel and rescued me out of Herod's hand and from all the expectation of the Jewish people. **12** And when he became aware of *this*, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, who was surnamed Mark, where there was a considerable number assembled together and praying. **13** And when he knocked at the door of the entry, a maiden named Rhoda came to listen. **14** And when she recognized Peter's voice, she did not open the gate for joy, but ran in and reported that Peter was standing before the entry. **15** But they said to her, You are crazy! But she insisted that it was so. And they said, It is his angel. **16** But Peter continued knocking; and when they had opened *the gate*, they saw him and were beside themselves. **17** And motioning to them with his hand to be silent, he related to them how the Lord had led him out of the prison, and he said, Report these things to James and the brothers. And going out, he went to another place. **18** Now when it became day, there was no small disturbance among the soldiers, *they not knowing* what had become of Peter. **19** And when Herod searched for him and did not find *him*, he examined the guards and ordered that they be led off *to execution*. And he went down from Judea to Caesarea and spent time *there*. **20** Now he was furious with the Tyrians and Sidonians. And they came to him with one accord; and having persuaded Blastus, the king's chamberlain, they asked for peace, because their country was fed from the king's *country*. **21** And on an appointed day Herod arrayed himself in royal clothing and sat on the judgment seat; and he delivered a public address to them. **22** And the populace cried out, The voice of a god and not of a man! **23** And instantly an angel of the Lord struck him because he did not give the glory to God; and he was eaten by worms and expired.

- B. Paul prayed that the saints would “be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding”—Col. 1:9:

Col. 1:9 Therefore we also, since the day we heard of *it*, do not cease praying and asking on your behalf that you may be filled with the full knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

1. Here the will of God concerns the all-inclusive Christ as our portion—v. 12.

Col. 1:12 Giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you for a share of the allotted portion of the saints in the light;

2. The will of God is profound in relation to our knowing, experiencing, and living the all-inclusive Christ; God's will for us is that we know Christ, experience Christ, enjoy Christ, live Christ, and have Christ become our life and our person—Phil. 3:7-10; 1:21a; Col. 3:4; Eph. 3:17a.

Phil. 3:7-10 But what things were gains to me, these I have counted as loss on account of Christ. **8** But moreover I also count all things to be loss on account of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, on account of whom I have suffered the loss of all things and count *them* as refuse that I may gain Christ **9** And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness which is out of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is out of God *and based on faith*, **10** To know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Phil. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Col. 3:4 When Christ our life is manifested, then you also will be manifested with Him in glory.

Eph. 3:17 That Christ may make His home in your hearts through faith, that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

V. We must persevere in prayer and respond to Christ's intercession by seeking the things which are above and by setting our mind on them—Col. 4:2; 3:1-2.

Col. 4:2 Persevere in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving,

Col. 3:1-2 If therefore you were raised together with Christ, seek the things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. **2** Set your mind on the things which are above, not on the things which are on the earth.