

Prayer

Store

**Intercession – Calling down
the power of prayer**

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Jim Smith

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When we begin to intercede in a serious way, we need to draw all the power of the spiritual world to help us. What spiritual power is available to us? Let's look at what there is, and how we can bring that power into our intercessory prayer.

1. Angels

It's clear that there are angelic powers. We know this from the Old Testament, through the Apocrypha, the book of Enoch, the New Testament, and the material of Dionysius of Aeropagite. Jesus said that he could call down legions of angels to his assistance.

There are key biblical verses which we can use as we think about angels.

“He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully.” (Lk 4:10)

“Do you think I cannot call on my Father and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt 26:53)

“An angel from heaven appeared to him and strengthened him.” (Lk 22:43)

“Are not all angels ministering spirits sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?” (Hebs 1:14)

These four verses, and many others like them, show us that the angelic forces in heaven are at our disposal to strengthen us and encourage us.

In our intercession, we need to learn to call down the legions of angels and send them out into the places where we need their activity.

Learn to identify the key points of prayer, and place angels specifically at these points. This might be a place, an event or a request. Be specific, and be abundant. There are plenty of angels to call on.

2. The Testimony

**I bind unto myself the power
Of the great love of cherubim;
The sweet 'Well done' in judgment hour,
The service of the seraphim,
Confessors' faith, Apostles' word,
The Patriarchs' prayers, the prophets' scrolls,
All good deeds done unto the Lord
And purity of virgin souls. (St. Patrick's breastplate)**

This ancient Irish hymn is telling us that as well as angelic powers, there is great power in the tradition of the church – the Old Testament tradition, the New Testament tradition, and 2000 years of the apostolic tradition.

Most of us are familiar with the biblical tradition, but not so familiar with the apostolic tradition which grew from it. If we were to make a summary of the apostolic tradition we would have to add many pages to this book.

* We would have to study Clement, Irenaeus, Athanasius, John Chrysostom, Basil, Gregory the Theologian, Gregory the Enlightener – just a few among hundreds of godly men and women who have furthered our understanding of faith.

* We could then move on to study the many traditions of contemplation - Richard Rolles, Teresa of Avila, St. John of the cross, Julian of Norwich, Theresa of Liseaux, Mechthild Magdeburg, Padre Pio and many others.

* We would have to consider the powerful stream of the Reformation - Martin Luther and John Calvin, the powerful traditions of Mount Athos, and on into the tremendous statements of Vatican 2.

* We have many modern examples –Pastor Kobe of Auschwitz, Archbishop Romero, Jim Elliott, Mother Teresa, and another list which could be endless.

The Orthodox Church and the Catholic Church teach us to “venerate” these great men and women of God, who, along with many Synods and documents make up our tradition. This does not mean to worship them but we recognise that within them there was some unique contribution to the deposit of faith which is ours today. We, for our part, are not just custodians, but are adding to it and passing it on.

There is strength to be had from this tradition.

When we are praying in an intercessory way we are able to draw down this great apostolic tradition. We are able to surround ourselves with it, to soak ourselves into it, to say to the enemy “we do not stand alone here in this room praying in the middle of the night but we are surrounded by “A great crowd of witnesses.” (Hebrews 12:1)

Sometimes I feel that our Reformation experience has shut our eyes to the value of the apostolic tradition - to the great crowd of witnesses which surround us. We need them very much. We do not need to be standing alone and we must not stand alone. We send out the angels into the battle field, and we call down the Testimony to stand with us.

We must learn to call not just on the angels, but on the apostolic tradition. We have to learn to imagine ourselves surrounded by all what has gone before. We are, in fact, identifying ourselves with the whole church - visible and invisible - in our praying. Such strength! And we need it.

So, the angels and the Tradition form the framework of powerful intercession. Now let's move to the heart of our praying.

3. The Trinity

“The least soul is a daughter of the Father and a sister of the Son and a friend of the Holy Spirit and indeed a bride of the Holy Trinity”
(Mechthild of Magdeburg)

I bind unto myself today the strong Name of the Trinity. By invocation of the same, the Three in One and One in Three. (St Patrick's breastplate)

It's essential as we're calling down the power of prayer that we pray in the strength of the Trinity.

*** We need the creative power of the Father.**

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” (Gen 1:1)

*** We need the redemptive power of the Son.**

“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Cor. 5:17)

*** We need the energising power of the Holy Spirit.**

“But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you. All that belongs to the Father is mine. That is why I said the Spirit will receive from me what he will make known to you.” (John 16:13-15)

We need to call down the completeness of God into the prayers we are praying and the situations in which we find ourselves.

Any one name of our God would be sufficient, because in the One is the Three, but in our praying we need to maximise our strength. I believe we maximise it by praying in the strength of the creative Father the redeeming Son and energising Spirit.

As we pray in the power of the Trinity not only do we put the enemy to flight, but we also draw to ourselves the many gifts and offices which the Trinity releases into the church. So by praying in the power of the Trinity we are praying in the power of releasing, of healing, of reclaiming, of redeeming, of sanctifying, of empowering, of delivering, of building up, of victory, of hope and of glory. Here are the references:-

*** Releasing: “Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”**
(Jn. 8:32)

*** Healing: “That evening after sunset the people brought to Jesus all the sick and demon-possessed. The whole town gathered at the door, and Jesus healed many who had various diseases. He also drove out many demons, but he would not let the demons speak because they knew who he was.”**
(Mk.1:32-34)

***Reclaiming: “I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten—the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm—my great army that I sent among you.”** (Joel 2:25)

*** Redeeming: “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed**

down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” (1 Peter 1:18-20)

*** Sanctifying: “Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship.”(Romans 12:1)**

*** Empowering: “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)**

*** Delivering: “When they came to Jesus, they saw the man who had been possessed by the legion of demons, sitting there, dressed and in his right mind; and they were afraid.” (Mark 5:15)**

*** Building up: “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jer 29:11)**

*** Victory: “When the perishable has been clothed with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true: “Death has been swallowed up in victory.” (1 Cor.15:54)**

*** Hope: “In his name the nations will put their hope.” (Matt.12:21)**

*** Glory. “We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:12)**

We need to learn the ability to call down the fullness of God. That`s the joy of starting with the angels and the Testimony. We create a spiritual framework into which we can call on the power of the triune God. This will protect us and make us strong - formidable opponents - which is what we need to be.

4. The word of God

“The true treasure of the church is the most holy gospel of the glory and the grace of God.” (Theresa of Liseaux)

From the very beginning the Word of God has been a key part of the Christian faith. It’s gone through many transformations. Even in the early Church era, there were different ways of interpretation from Alexandria to Antioch. The Early Fathers used the Bible extensively, but their translations of the Old Testament were not as accurate as ours, and this led to some uncertain interpretations. The church went through a long period where the Bible was used allegorically until certain theologians, (Richard of St. Victor) began to recover the original meanings of the Bible.

The Reformation helped rediscover the centrality of the actual text, assisted by the introduction of printing, and the beginning of more accurate translations in vernacular languages. Today, all the major streams of the Christian faith have been working with good Hebrew and Greek translations of the Bible. Whatever point we stop at in the Tradition, the Bible has been the vital heart of our Faith.

But we have to learn how to use it in prayer. Apostle Paul tells us that we should “take the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God.” (Eph. 6:17)

We have to learn in our praying to use the word of God powerfully and effectively. I suspect most intercessors are already doing this but for many the word of God has become separate from the angels, the testimony and the Trinity. If the Angels and the apostolic tradition provide the framework for the Trinity, *then the Bible is the carrier wave of all the power of God.*

This is a bit more complicated than just “naming and claiming.” The whole experience has to become part of us. The word must live, and so we must impart our very life to it. When Moses was told to hold out his staff over the Red Sea, this was not an academic exercise in exegesis, but a life and death situation. The way we use the word has to be a life and death experience to us also, if we are going to be effective.

We have to draw together the legion of angels, bind to ourselves the Trinity, stand in the middle of the great cloud of witnesses, and wield the sword. This will break open a way for our intercession.

5. The power of the blood, the sacrifice and the cross

“When I was suspended on the lofty tree of the cross because of my unfathomable love to thee and all mankind, my whole frame was grievously distorted, my bright eyes were extinguished and turned in my head. My divine ears were filled with scoffing and blasphemy. My delicate nostrils were wounded with foul smells. My sweet mouth was tormented with bitter drink. My tender feelings with hard blows. The whole earth was not able to afford me any rest for my feeble head was bowed down with pain and distress. My faire throat was unnaturally distended. My pure countenance polluted with spittle. My comely figure withered entirely away.”

(Henry Suso “The little book of eternal wisdom.”)

“While I looked at the cross I was safe. For apart from the cross there is no safety but only the horror of devils. Thus I choose Jesus as my heaven.”

(Julian of Norwich)

There is no getting away from it - we have to know how to plead the blood in our intercession. The Angels and the Tradition are the framework, the Trinity is the heart, the word is the carrier wave. The power is found in the blood.

*** The blood**

(* This material is based on “Releasing the power of the blood”, which can be downloaded from www.visionworld27.org)

The history of the blood. The murder of Abel

1. Blood carries the essence of life.

Two men prepare a sacrifice for the Lord. (Gen 4:1-5) Cain brings fruits of the soil, but forgets that God has already cursed the land. (Gen 3:17) Abel brings an animal sacrifice. The Bible teaches:-

“For the life of a creature is in the blood, and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar; it is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.” (Lev 17:11)

In other words, blood carries the essence of life in it. So to make an offering which involves sacrifice and the shedding of blood is something very powerful. The fruits of the earth have no blood and so no life in them.

2. Innocent blood demands justice.

“Now Cain said to his brother Abel, “Let's go out to the field.” And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him. Then the Lord said to Cain, “Where is your brother Abel?” “I don't know,” he replied. “Am I my brother's keeper?” The Lord said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.” (Gen.4:8-10)

Now we see another issue concerning blood. It is much more than just an issue of sacrifice -*blood has power in itself*. Cain murders Abel, but the blood cries out from the ground for justice and vengeance. From this point on, we have to deal with the two issues which this passage has exposed to us:

* **Blood is to do with life and sacrifice.** “The life is in the blood” will finally bring us to the sacrifice of Jesus.

* **Innocent blood has the power to damage the spiritual flow of blessing in any heart or any nation.** It has to be dealt with, or we are forever trapped at the moment of its spilling. The blood of Abel stands as a great warning to subsequent spiritual history. It was innocent blood, and it remained unrepented of. Cain did not repent, but only complained at the unfairness of God's punishment. Lamech (Gen 4:23-24) did not repent either, and so the shed blood, unrepented of, passed down the generations.

The history of the blood. Passover – the power of the blood

“On that same night I will pass through Egypt and strike down every firstborn— both men and animals—and I will bring judgment on all the gods of Egypt. I am the Lord. The blood will be a sign for you on the houses where you are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you. No destructive plague will touch you when I strike Egypt.” (Ex 12:12-13)

Moving on many centuries, we begin to see the power of the blood from God's perspective. The great plague of the firstborn must have looked very frightening from a human perspective. But there was a way to prevent it entering the house - by sprinkling the blood of the lamb on the doorposts of the house. This blood “*spoke*” to God, being enough to turn away his judgment.

This is a big development in our understanding of the blood, and its power. Even animal blood, offered within the covenant setting, could be effective.

The history of the blood. Covenant - the guarantee of the blood

“Moses got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the Lord. Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he sprinkled on the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, “We will do everything the Lord has said; we will obey.” Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, “This is the blood of the covenant that the Lord has made with you in accordance with all these words.” (Ex 24: 3-8)

Moving on many more years, we come to this covenant, which is sealed with the sprinkling of blood. The blood marked out this event, protecting it from Satan’s attack, and making it, in effect, everlasting. The new sanctuary was also sealed with blood, (Ex 29) making it an acceptable place for the Lord.

Blood -the pollution

Before we move on to the New Testament, we must consider this verse: **“Do not pollute the land where you are. Bloodshed pollutes the land, and atonement cannot be made for the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it.” (Num. 35:33)** In many ways, this verse needs to be considered along with one we have already looked at: **“What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground. Now you are under a curse and driven from the ground,” (Gen 4:10,11)**

Despite all our teaching about the blood, and despite all the animal sacrifices, the issue of pollution and justice remains unsolved in the pre Christian era. **Animal blood cannot atone for innocent human blood.** The innocent blood of so many people continues to cry out to the Lord for justice and revenge. The land is polluted. No amount of Temple sacrifice or of following the Law can change this principle. With this in mind, let’s turn to the New Testament teaching.

The history of the blood. Jesus - the perfect sacrifice

“The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)

In order to deal with the blood, a better blood was needed. That blood was the blood of Jesus. There are many biblical verses to support this:-

*** He was “the lamb of God.”**

The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)

*** He was the perfect offering.**

“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Cor. 5:21)

“He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.” (1 Peter 2:22)

Now let’s look at the theology:-

1. We must identify with the blood, and it must identify with us.

To make the blood effective, Jesus teaches us that we have to be identified with that blood:- **“Jesus said to them, “I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.” (John 6:53)**

The blood also has to be identified with us: **“While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take it; this is my body.” Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” he said to them. “I tell you the truth; I will not drink again of the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it anew in the kingdom of God.” (Mark 14:22-25)**

2. The blood showed its power at the death of Jesus.

“At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook and the rocks split. The tombs broke open and the bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life. They came out of the tombs, and after Jesus' resurrection they went into the holy city and appeared to many people.” (Matt 27:51-53)

The blood was so powerful that it established its control over sin, (the curtain was torn) over nature, (the rocks split) and over death. (The tombs were opened.) The sacrifice of the blood was complete. A greater sacrifice than that of bulls and goats had achieved its mission. The Church soon began to understand this truth.

3. The blood of Jesus was the perfect sacrifice.

The New Testament writers teach extensively about the blood. Here are a few key examples:

* “and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.” (Col 1:20)

* “For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your forefathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect. He was chosen before the creation of the world, but was revealed in these last times for your sake. Through him you believe in God, who raised him from the dead and glorified him, and so your faith and hope are in God.” (1 Peter 1:18-21)

* “When Christ came as high priest of the good things that are already here he went through the greater and more perfect tabernacle that is not man-made, that is to say, not a part of this creation. He did not enter by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption. The blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkled on those who are ceremonially unclean sanctify them so that they are outwardly clean. How much more, then, will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself unblemished to God, cleanse our consciences from acts that lead to death, so that we may serve the living God!” (Hebrews 9:11-14)

* “They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.” (Rev 12:11)

Summary

This is a lot of theology to absorb, and I encourage people to struggle and get hold of it. Fortunately, it is easily summarised:

* The blood of Abel began a very sad line of theology. The innocent blood of Abel, unrepented of, continued to cry out down the centuries. Much more innocent blood was added, all crying out for justice and revenge.

* The blood of animals could not appease this blood. The life which was in this innocent blood was the life of humanity, not the animal creation. But which human could possibly atone for all this blood?

* Jesus had the purer, sinless blood of humanity and divinity. He could offer the pure sacrifice, and he did at Calvary. His blood speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.

* At his second coming, all this innocent blood will cease crying out. His better word will end it all.

Using the power of the blood today

We are living in the time between his death and his return, so innocent blood can still cry out, and in that crying, damage a nation's soul. I have read people who tell me that this is not the New Testament message. But there is no division between Old and New. The Old says that unrepented blood stains the land. It did when those words were written, and it still does today. This will never end permanently until the second coming of Jesus. The Old Testament tells us that the blood has to be dealt with by the one who spilt it. Fortunately, in the New Testament we learn that Jesus is willing to stand in that place. He can deal with the spilt blood. But his blood has to be brought to bear on those situations which still harm us today.

So what can intercessors do?

1. Be identified with the blood.

“For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.” (1 Peter 1:18-19)

Through the breaking of the bread and sharing of the cup, in whatever form, we identify ourselves with the “better blood.” This releases power into the spiritual world. We should not hesitate to go to places where there is spilt innocent blood, and break the bread together. We can go to key places in the Nation and break the bread together. Don't let the “father of lies” whisper that

this is a waste of time. When we identify with the blood in this way, power is released - to forgive, to release, to break down and to build up.

2. Repent and bring the sin to the blood.

“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, and pray and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.” (2 Chron. 7:14)

We have to follow the example of Nehemiah, taking the sin of the nation as if it were ours, and bring it to the cleansing of the blood. We need to seek out those sins which are binding and holding back the nation. We must look into our history and find where sinful events took place, and especially where these led to the shedding of innocent blood. Then we can repent for them and bring them to the blood. This is very important where there is innocent blood. That blood is crying out for justice and revenge. We have to cover that blood with the blood of Jesus, which cries out for forgiveness and mercy. Again the enemy will mock these things. That is because he is afraid of them.

3. Move in the blood.

This looks so strange on paper, but is easier to experience in reality.

- * We need to feel the power of the blood.
- * We need to release the power of the blood in biblical word and worship.
- * We have to place the blood into and onto situations which will not yield to us.
- * We have to plead the blood from Jesus - plead for him to release its power.

*** The sacrifice**

Christians understand Christ's death on the cross to be a necessary atonement for the sins of the world. In the first generation after Jesus' death, the Apostle Paul wrote:

“For I delivered to you first of all, what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he rose again on the third day.” (I Corinthians 15: 3-4)

Christ's death was the final sacrifice, which superseded the need for animal sacrifices offered in the past by the high priest:

“Having therefore a great high priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus Son of God. . . because he continues forever, he has an everlasting priesthood.” (Hebrews 4: 14, 7:24).

Christ was both priest and sacrificial victim.

Christianity often refers to Jesus' Passion as the “ultimate” or “perfect” sacrifice. The Christian church believed that Christ's death occurred as the ultimate expiation of sins and that it annulled the need for sacrifices named by the Old Testament.

How do we use the sacrifice in our intercession?

Now we can develop our picture more. The angels and the Tradition provide the framework, the Trinity is the heart, the word is the carrier wave, the blood is the power and the sacrifice is the banner we fight beneath.

We are marked as Victors by the sacrifice. The enemy cannot match our sacrifice, counterfeit our sacrifice, or break our sacrifice. In a very real way, there is nothing we can do about the sacrifice. The sacrifice “is” and we “are” under it.

*** The cross**

“Take therefore first, as an indestructible foundation, the cross, and build upon it the other articles of the faith” (St. Cyril of Jerusalem).

The cross receives so much attention because it is crucial for our understanding of the Christian faith. The word “crucial”-meaning decisive, critical, essential-comes from the Latin “cruX”, from which we derive our English word “cross.” Our language points towards the truth that the most important event in history is what happened on the cross. That act is at the root of salvation and is the basis for Christian theology. It contains much of our theology.

The cross – a reconciliation

There are many events in the Old Testament that foreshadow the cross:-

- * The blood of a lamb placed on lintels and doorposts during Passover. (Exodus 12:23)
- * Moses lifting his staff and parting the Red Sea. (Exodus 14:16)
- * Moses' arms outstretched in prayer for victory over Israel's enemies. (Exodus 17:8-15)
- * Israel being saved from poisoning by looking at a bronze serpent on a pole. (Numbers 21:6-9)
- * There are also prophetic allusions to the cross: the curse of being hung on a tree (Deuteronomy 21:23) and the predicted passion of the Messiah. (Psalm 22)

God reconciles His people by delivering us from the consequences of sin:-

“Therefore I will give him a portion among the great, and he will divide the spoils with the strong, because he poured out his life unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors. For he bore the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” (Isa 53:12)

“For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”
(Colossians 1:19-20; see also 2:13-15)

The cross - a sacrifice. (See above)

The cross - a Shield

“The shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.” (Ephesians 6:16).

From the very beginning of Christianity, believers were using the sign of the cross as a means of protection against evil. Crosses were commonly placed on walls, over doorways, and above beds in Christian homes to safeguard the family. It is not the piece of wood, nor the gesture of making the sign of the

cross with our hands, that has supernatural powers; rather it is our faith that saves us.(Luke 7:50; 17:19; 18:42). The cross is a powerful reminder to depend on God when we are being tempted.

The cross is a powerful ally against the demonic forces trying to rob us of our salvation:-

“He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; “by his wounds you have been healed.” (1 Peter 2:24)

The cross - for eternity

The cross is symbolic of God's promise to us of eternal life:-

“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting? The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Cor.15:55-57)

The cross - our victory

“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Col 2:13-15)

The cross - the totality of the Christian message

“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit.” 1 Peter 3:18

“When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.” (John 19:20)

“When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross. And having disarmed the

powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.” (Col 2: 13-15)

Our small picture is getting complicated! The angels and the testimony as a framework, the Trinity as the heart, the word as the carrier, the blood as the power, the sacrifice as the banner.

And the cross is our regimental badge, marking us out as men and women of the cross - redeemed by the cross, empowered by the cross, living crucified lives, and bringing down every stronghold and power ranged against us. When the enemy sees intercessors with this badge, he is truly afraid. He knows he must yield.

6. Worship

“Lord you are my lover, my longing, my flowing stream, my sun and I am your reflection” (Mechthild of Magdeburg)

The stream of mystic Christian intercession is very focused on worship, and they are alerting us to something which in our spirits we know for certain.

If prayer is the power house of our life then worship is the furnace!

It is as we worship God that the power is activated in us because in worship we are joined with the heavenly places. We were called for the purpose of praising and worshipping God.

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, *that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*” (1 Peter 2:9).

It is as we worship God that the power is activated in us because in worship we are:

1. Touching the heart of God.

God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth.” (John 4:22-24).

2. Touching heaven.

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!”

The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped. (Rev 5:13-14)

3. Fulfilling our destiny

“You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, *that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.*” (1 Peter 2:9).

4. Worship comes down.

When Solomon finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. The priests could not enter the temple of the LORD because the glory of the Lord filled it. When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the Lord above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and they worshiped and gave thanks to the Lord , saying,

“He is good; his love endures forever.” (2 Chronicles 7:1-3)

5. Worship rises up

Then the king and all the people offered sacrifices before the Lord. ” (2 Chron. 7:4)

It rises from a heart of gratitude, need, joy or sorrow.

6. Worship is a move of the Spirit in us

All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. (Acts 2:4 - and note “as the Spirit enabled.”)

Worship is the lifeblood of the church. It comes down, it rises up. It totally satisfies us, and it is easily crushed out. (Isaiah 42:3)

Worship and intercessory prayer

Our service to God is not centred on a time or a temple, but is done whenever and wherever we are, ***because we are the temple of God. When we intercede and worship, we become the Temple of God - much more magnificent than Solomon's temple, because Jesus is in it. Your chair, your room, your private place - a temple greater than Solomon's temple. Imagine that!!***

Richard Rolles, the English mystic, said that highest and closest experience we could have of God was to sing! Worship is a powerful weapon to break open the way for our prayer - so get singing!

7. The Resurrection.

“Bursting from the spiced tomb” (St Patrick’s breastplate)

If the cross is the place of victory, then it is not a victory on its own. It is the confirmation of the victory of Calvary. The joy of adding the resurrection to the cross is that it gives us a three dimensional picture to draw into our spirits. It isn’t just a **sacrifice and a victory over Satan** but it is the **raising to life not only of us but all the works and opportunity which Satan has destroyed and broken**. New life, new beginnings, the breaking of strongholds and the releasing of prisoners now become a powerful reality in the life of the intercessory believer.

* New life: **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!”** (2 Cor.5:17)

*Breaking of strongholds: **“The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.”** (2 Cor. 10:4)

*Releasing prisoners: **“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour.”** (Luke 4:18-19)

* Restoration of life: **“But we had to celebrate and be glad, because this brother of yours was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.”** (Luke 15:32)

We have to allow the power of the resurrection, the way it broke hell, broke death and guaranteed the breaking of sin into our praying.

8. The cloud of glory

How do we draw the Shekinah glory into, or perhaps over our praying so that we are glorious in our prayers?

The word *shekinah* does not appear in the Bible, but the concept clearly does. The Jewish rabbis chose this word, (a form of a Hebrew word that literally means “he caused to dwell,”) to indicate a divine visitation of the presence or dwelling of God on this earth. The Shekinah was first seen when the Israelites set out from Succoth in their escape from Egypt.

“After leaving Succoth they camped at Etham on the edge of the desert. By day the Lord went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people” (Exodus 13:20-22).

The visible manifestation of God’s presence was seen not only by the Israelites but also by the Egyptians: **“During the last watch of the night the Lord looked down from the pillar of fire and cloud at the Egyptian army and threw it into confusion. He made the wheels of their chariots come off so that they had difficulty driving. And the Egyptians said, ‘Let's get away from the Israelites! The Lord is fighting for them against Egypt’”** (Exodus 14:24-25).

Just the presence of God’s Shekinah glory was enough to convince His enemies that He was not someone to be resisted.

In the New Testament we have a classic shekinah at the transfiguration of Jesus:- :- **“After six days Jesus took Peter, James and John with him and led them up a high mountain, where they were all alone. There he was transfigured before them. His clothes became dazzling white, whiter than anyone in the world could bleach them. And there appeared before them Elijah and Moses, who were talking with Jesus.**

Peter said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah.” (He did not know what to say, they were so frightened.)

Then a cloud appeared and covered them, and a voice came from the cloud: “This is my Son, whom I love. Listen to him!” (Mark 9: 2-7)

Jesus Christ is the dwelling place of God's glory, and Apostle Paul makes it clear "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form," (Col 2:9)

The Shekinah in intercession

We need the shekinah covering in our praying for our protection, and we need the shekinah glory in our praying, so that our prayers fit the glory of heaven. This is a gift of the Spirit, but we must desire it. We need the transformation of our earthly prayers into the glory prayers of heaven.

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