

## The Sacrament of Prayer

It is the sense of the sublime which startles men by that which **is** but cannot be put into words. The attempt to convey what we see and cannot say is the everlasting theme of man's unfinished symphony.

We have kinship with the spirit of being. The awareness of the unknown is earlier than the awareness of the known. We should not expect thoughts to give us more than what they contain. Mind and heart are not the same. It often seems as if ideas and our own selves were strangers who somewhere in the realm of time met and became friends. We realize that we are able to look at our world with two faculties: reason and wonder. With reason we try to explain and adapt the world to our concepts and with wonder, we stand in awe of the ineffable one.

Doubt is not applied to that of which we have immediate awareness. We do not doubt that we exist, that we see and hear. Our question is whether we know what we see is a true reflection of what exists in reality. Doubt, then, is an activity of the mind. First we see, next we judge and form an opinion and thereafter doubt. In other words, to doubt is to question that which we have accepted as possibly true a moment ago. Doubt is an act of appeal. One must first hold a belief before doubting. If one must know in order to question, then doubt cannot be the beginning of knowledge.

Wonder goes before knowledge. We are amazed at our ability to doubt and at our ability to wonder. Doubt may come to an end. Wonder lasts forever. Wonder is a state of the heart. Its basis, in part, may come from knowledge in which nothing is taken for granted. Spiritually one cannot live by borrowed or inherited knowledge. Inquire of your mind—what does it know, what does it take for granted?

Being is unbelievable. We are amazed that there is being at all. Radical doubt ends in radical despair. Plato said, "Philosophy begins with wonder", Theaetetus 155D. When in doubt, we raise questions. When in wonder, we do not even know how to answer a question. Doubts may be resolved and radical amazement of our ineffable God can never be erased. There is no answer in the world to man's radical wonder about God. It has a wider spiritual scope than any other act of man. If we fail in our continued quest for insight, our being gets cut off at its roots.

The tree of knowledge and the tree of life have their roots in the same soil. In the course of nature, the tree of knowledge often has its brilliant but sapless leaves instead of fruits. The tree of life allows us not to ignore the mystery to which we are attached by our very existence. The most intimate is the most mysterious. Wonder alone is not enough. However it allows us to live within the spiritual core. The world of things we see is but a veil and reason is not the only motor of mental life.

Sometimes I wish the world could cry and tell me what makes it so full of fear. We are light to the darkness. What true light portrays is more than a way; it is the sense of our ineffable God and the perception of something objective which cannot be conceived by the mind.

Subjectivity is the *manner*, not the *matter*, of our perceptions. Our radical amazement responds to the mystery, but does not produce it. Man has not invented the grandeur of the sky nor endowed himself with the mystery of birth and death. We do not and have not created the ineffable; we merely encounter it (him).

Divine revelation introduces the mind to a reality which is not only *other* than itself, but *higher* than the universe. We are introduced to a reality, the mere awareness of which is more precious to us than our own existence. His presence may be *defied*, but not *denied*, and where at the end, faith in him is the only way.

The beginning of a faithful life of prayer is not a feeling for the mystery of living or a sense of awe, wonder or fear. The root of religion is the question of what to do with the mystery of living, what to do with awe, wonder or fear. In that journey we know that all we **own** we **owe**. "Thanks be to God for his unspeakable (indescribable) gift," II Corinthians 9:15.

The consequence of our fallen world includes the fact that any created living being, whether plant or animal will die when detached from its life source. When a flower is pulled up by its roots, or a stream of water blocked from its source—both will die. Death is a sad reality.

When the human spirit is detached from what is greater than itself, the good becomes bad, order becomes chaotic. What holds the inner life together? It is not only to know about God, even to know him, but to be known by him.

Distraction must be the highest priority on Satan's list today. The heart of man must be open to the remote and unseen in order to perceive what is near. Unless we seek "Our Utmost for His Highest,"<sup>1</sup> we shrink to inferiority.

Prayer is our attachment to the "utmost." We do not step out of the world when we pray. We see our world in a different setting. The selfish "I" or "me" is not the hub of reality. It is but one spoke in the revolving wheel of life. In prayer we shift the center of living from self-need to self-surrender. God, our Father, is the center toward which all forces of history move. "He is the source, and we are the flowing of his force, the ebb and flow of his tides."<sup>2</sup>

Prayer leads us to holy aspirations. It implants faith, vision and ideals we should cherish. It also is the foundation of spiritual living. When justice lapses into human cruelty and righteousness into hypocrisy, prayer revives us and keeps alive the rare greatness of some past encounter with God, which encounter glowed with greatness and meaning.

There are some things in life for which there is no substitute. Prayer is one. Obedience is another. Prayer provides a light. In our obedience we are often caught in dark places. Envy, fear, despair, anger and grief often lie heavily upon the heart and are dispelled by our Lord as shadows and replaced by light.

But prayer is more than a light before us. It is a light within us, I John 1:5-7 NIV. "Prayer is not a soliloquy. But it is a dialogue with God."<sup>3</sup> Do we address God as person to person? It is incorrect to describe prayer by analogy with human conversation. We do not communicate with God as with man. We only make ourselves communicable to him. Prayer is an emanation of what is most precious in us toward him, the outpouring of the heart before him. It is not a relationship between person and person, between subject and subject, but an endeavor to become the object of his thought.

Clement of Alexandria said, "Prayer is a dialogue with God."<sup>4</sup> What does that mean? It is an answer to God: Here am I. And this is the record of my days. Look into my heart, into my hopes and regrets.

Prayer never ends, for faith endows us with a bold craving that he draw near and approach us as a father. We do not walk in his ways so much, but **his** entering into our ways. The purpose of prayer, then, is to be brought to his attention, to be listened to, to be understood by him, to know him, yes, but more so to be known to or by him.

When we pray, we share spiritual life not only as a result of his power, but become a concern of his will and make our lives his divine concern. For many years I desperately pursued information and knowledge about God. Now I want to be an object of his knowledge and concern.

The conclusion of the matter is to live before God, to become a thought of God—this is the ultimate career of man. Man lives in the mind of God when God lives in the life of man.

“Grant us grace, Almighty Father, so to pray as to deserve to be heard,” Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

#### End Notes

1. My Utmost for His Highest. A wonderful idea and description of one of God’s greatest men, Oswald Chambers.
2. Heschel, Abraham, Between God and Man, The Free Press, New York, 1959, p. 198.
3. Heschel, *Ibid.*, p. 100.
4. Clement of Alexandria. See Max Pohlenz, *Die Stoa*, Gottingen, 1948, Vol. 1, p. 423.

## Lesson One – Prayer, the Priority of God

Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Eternity. That is all there was. The Triune God has always existed. When Father decided on alternative existence, “In beginning (time) God (force) created (energy) the heavens (space) and earth (matter), Genesis 1:1.

There is sparse biblical information regarding existence in the celestial realm. The total of that realm was spirit, Psalm 148:2,5; John 1:1,3; Colossians 1:16. Each angel (spirit, Hebrews 1:14) had a beginning. They were created, Psalm 148:1, 5, but as spirit, once created could never die. Angels who sinned, II Peter 2:4, can never be forgiven because they cannot die. Because of sin, thank God for death. Man dies and death to sin positions him for resurrection to new life in Christ, Romans 6:4-6.

When Satan, and possibly one third of all angels sinned, they had to be deposed from the holy presence of God. The celestial realm could not tolerate a dual will.

The creation of heaven and earth was already in God’s plan. Then the scene of God’s principle action dramatically changed. It appears that this primeval sphere was vacant territory unless eons later it would serve a useful purpose. And so it did. It is my thought that if angels had never sinned, God may have never chosen to create man.

Because of the foreknowledge of God, his grace and agape love factored into whatever would happen on this planet. There was obviously “a meeting” of the Triune God. Father God addressed *Logos*, Jesus, before he was born to Mary saying, *You are my Son, today I have become your Father. ASK of me and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession....*, Psalm 2:7-8.

David was not the son about whom the Father was speaking, however he may have been included. More is said in this passage than ever about the greatest king of Israel. William Barclay in his Commentary on Acts, p. 112 said “The resurrection is the fulfillment of prophecy as promises were made to David that were not fulfilled in him, but fulfilled in Christ.” David was privileged above all prophets. He did not address the future. He spoke about events before time and before Adam was created. The question arises immediately, of whom was he speaking?

In one of Paul's greatest sermons was this conclusion; *We tell you the good news; what God promised to our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm, you are my Son, Today I have become your Father, ask of me, Acts 13:32-33.*

The Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek words for **ask** is a principle word for prayer. Prayer was the first and the center piece of God's concern for humanity. Further validation is recorded when Jesus acknowledged that his father *loved him before the creation of the world*, John 17:24b. Jesus Christ (*Logos*) was chosen *before the creation of the world and was revealed in these last days for your sake*, I Peter 1:20. *The Lamb (Jesus) was slain from the creation of the world*, Revelation 13:8b. *Grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior, Jesus Christ*, II Timothy 1:9b-10a. The grace of God was the way by which prayer would be preeminent thousands of years before there was a Calvary, *so that having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs of eternal life*, Titus 3:7b.

Since *Logos* (Jesus) was in the beginning with God and was God; all things were created by him, John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16. The first thing Father God said to him was **ask of me**. This places prayer first and foremost above all else in the mind of God on behalf of humanity.

This explains why prayer is the center piece of all of God's concern. Prayer before the creation of time was central in his discourse with man in the Old Testament and was a continual discourse between the Father and Son during his total earthly existence. *He forever lives to intercede for us in the presence of the Father*, Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:34b.

The interference of Satan in Eden interrupted God's plan for man. The Lord intended for man to be the supreme ruler of the earth. "The Lord God placed man in the Garden of Eden to till (work it) and guard it (take care of), Genesis 2:13. *The highest heavens belong to the Lord, but the earth he has given to man*, Psalm 115:16. The Lord said, *'With great power and outstretched arm I made the earth...and I give it to anyone I please*, Jeremiah 27:5. There must be reclamation returned to man's oversight of the world that Adam gave to Satan. Scripture says *the whole world is under the control of the evil one*, I John 5:19b. The first priority of God regarding His Son Jesus was prayer.

## Lesson 2 – The Death of the Lamb Before Time Began

### Introduction

1. Satan and his followers sinned in the celestial realm, II Peter 2:4. Their disobedience greatly changed their environment. They felt the sting of making God angry. This was spiritual death.
2. Satan and Eve possessed two entirely different natures. Neither one had any knowledge or experience with physical death.
3. God said to Adam and Eve, *You must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die*, Genesis 2:17.
4. Satan could not die and Eve had never experienced it, perhaps neither knew completely what God meant when he said, “you will surely die.”
5. Angels could only die spiritually, man dies physically and spiritually.
6. What does it mean “that the Lamb was slain from the creation of the world” and why? Revelation 13:8b.
7. This lesson brings us to the absolute importance of this study.

### Discussion

#### I. The Nature of Sin.

##### A. Indifference, unbelief and/or disobedience to the will of God.

1. “Manifested in attitude, thought, word, deed or settled disposition or conduct,” I.S.B.E., v. 4, p. 2798.
2. The temptation of Adam and Eve was a moral and a religious test.
3. The trial was whether they would trust God.
4. Would God be the center of their lives or would they center on their own selfishness?

##### B. Sin and freedom.

1. Adam and Eve were free from sinful bias and free to choose. This is inherent in moral existence.
2. The consequence, not the guilt of Adam’s sin, is passed on to all men “for all have sinned,” Romans 5;12.
3. Man cannot keep the law perfectly, Romans 8:3-8.
4. “By custom we are children of wrath,” Ephesians 2:3.
5. Only by being in Christ are we free from sin. Romans 8:13-14.  
*For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live, because those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*

## II. The Forbearance of God.

### A. Jehovah is Holy.

1. *Qadosh*, to be separated, set apart, Isaiah 5:11,  
“*But the LORD Almighty will be exalted by his justice, and the holy God will show himself holy by his righteousness.*”
2. *Hagios* – sacred, pious, pure.
3. Revelation 15:3-4, *and sang the song of Moses the servant of God and the song of the Lamb: ‘Great and marvelous are your deeds, Lord God Almighty. Just and true are your ways, King of the ages. Who will not fear you, O Lord, and bring glory to your name? For you alone are holy. All nations will come and worship before you, for your righteous acts have been revealed.’*
4. I Peter 1:16, *for it is written: ‘Be holy, because I am holy.*

### B. The nature of holiness cannot tolerate evil. This is why angels who sinned had to be removed from his presence.

1. Because of agape love the forbearance of God allows him to tolerate sin without immediate annihilation.
2. That does not mean God overlooks or ignores sin but makes provision for it.
3. God burdened man with a clay body yet implanted a part of himself inside each human. This may be the reason man has a sense of wrong doing such as Adam and Eve hiding from God, yet have the ability to repent. This may be God’s leniency.
4. Only God knows how bad sin is. Therefore only he would know how incredible a price it would take to forgive sin.

### C. Relationship and provision.

1. It is one thing to be lost and another to find the way back to safety.
2. There are those who never do and live in fear.

### D. God’s pursuit of man.

1. “For God so loved the world...”
2. “God said let us make man...,” Genesis 1:26.
3. “God said to them,” Genesis 2:28-29.
4. “The Lord God commanded the man...,” Genesis 2:16.
5. “The Lord said to Cain...,” Genesis 4:9.
6. “So God said to Noah...,” Genesis 6:13.
7. “The Lord God said to Abram...,” Genesis 12:1.
8. “God called to him, Moses, Moses,” Exodus 4:4.

## III. God's Provision.

- A. Noah, "by faith he built an ark for the saving of his house," Hebrews 11:7a.
- B. Abram, "by faith he went out not knowing..." Hebrews 11:8-10.
- C. *Abraham believed God and it was counted to him for righteousness*, Romans 4:3.
- D. Moses, Israel and the Day of Atonement, Leviticus 16:2. The Day of Atonement was the annual expiation for all the sins, irreverence and impurities of all classes in Israel during the previous year. It was to be observed as a solemn fast in which they were to afflict their soul. It was reckoned a Sabbath, kept as a season of holy convocation or assembling for religious purposes and the persons who performed any labor were subject to the penalty of death. It took place on the tenth day of the seventh month corresponding to our October. This chapter, Leviticus 16, along with chapter 23:27-32, were to be read each year publicly. The Day of Atonement was God's affirmation that he had not forgotten the Jews, not forgiven, but not forgotten.

There was an additional reason for the absolute importance of the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur. In order for all Jews to enjoy right standing with Jehovah, an appropriation must be made annually. Otherwise they would be charged as heathen. Romans 3:25-26 affirms that *God presented him (Jesus) as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished--he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.* Moffett's translation is in order. "...in view of the fact that sins formerly committed during the time of God's forbearance had been passed over." This showed God as a just God in all history up to and after the death of Jesus. He is now justifier having made provision from eternity regarding the horrible domination of sin to be forever obliterated.

This is made clearer in Hebrews 9:15 NIV as it related to the Jewish people beginning with Abraham. *For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance-- now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant.*

No person from Adam until the death of Jesus had their sins forgiven. The Day of Atonement was the means Jehovah chose to hold forth the sins of all Jews until the death of Jesus. That made

“The Fast”, as Paul called it in Acts 27:9 important. The faithful Jews from Moses to the cross observed “the fast” on the tenth day of the seventh month, *tishre* or October. *The LORD said to Moses, The tenth day of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. Hold a sacred assembly and deny yourselves, and present an offering made to the LORD by fire, Leviticus 23:26-27.*

- E. Fasting, Yom Kippur, was God’s provision for Israel’s sin from Moses until the cross of Christ.
  - 1. The provision saved the Jews for 1,500 years.
  - 2. The blood of bulls and goats was all Israel had to offer. *The blood of bulls and goats cannot take away sin, Hebrews 10:4*
- F. When dealing with the price of sin one must remember the man is possessed of two natures; spiritual and physical. The blood of an animal sacrifice could never suffice for a moral transgression.
  - 1. In death bodies decay. The deceased body of Jesus entered a borrowed tomb. His spirit entered Paradise, Luke 23:43.
  - 2. Jesus was *menogena*, only begotten, one of a kind son of God, John 3:16.
  - 3. *Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil--and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted, Hebrews 2:14-18. NIV*
  - 4. The perfect one had to be the sacrifice for the imperfect, Psalm 2:7-8.

## Conclusion

- 1. Prayer was in the mind of God from the beginning.
- 2. Knowing man would sin required a provision for sin.
- 3. There was a cross in the mind of God many years before there was a Calvary 2,000 years ago.
- 4. In the death of Jesus “life and immortality were brought to light through the gospel,” II Timothy 1:10.
- 5. The gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, I Corinthians 15:1-4.

## Lesson Three – The Role of Prayer in Spiritual Warfare

### Introduction

1. The importance of prayer is concisely set forth in the concluding verse of this series, *And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints*, Ephesians 6:18.
2. Prayer, the duty, is an appointed privilege.
3. Six divisions in the directory for prayer, Complete Christian Armour, William Gurnall, 1675:
  - a. Time for prayer, “pray always.”
  - b. Kinds of prayer “all prayer and supplication.”
  - c. Inward principle “pray in the Holy Spirit.”
  - d. Guard to be set “watching thereunto.”
  - e. Unwearied constancy “with all perseverance.”
  - f. Comprehensiveness of the duty “pray for all saints.”

### Discussion

#### I. The Nature of Prayer.

##### A. Definition

1. One of the best illustrations of prayer is the aura, the warmth, closeness of a newborn first experiencing the beating of the same heart which gave it life as it rests on its mother’s breast. Only now it is in a new place, outside of the womb in which it first existed. What is the new birth if it does not reflect and maintain an intimacy? The experiences of the life of a child for good or bad are the similar experiences of the life of a child of God.
2. Prayer is more than verbal communication. A Christian mother moves through her life in connection with her child. There is conversation, but there is more.
3. A delightful, but obscure passage of Scripture is Psalm 109:4. The Hebrew Bible uses two words *Vani Tephillah*, I am prayer.
  - a. No English Bible I have examined translates the text accordingly.
  - b. The closest text is the Holy Scripture according to the Masoretic text published by the Jewish Publication of American, 1917, p. 857, which reads But I am all prayer.

## B. Biblical words for prayer.

1. "Shael". A Hebrew word that means "to ask, inquire or consult", Strong, p. 829.
2. "Sheal", an Aramaic word also meaning require or demand.
3. "*Proseuche, palal, deoma*" are three words for prayer. There are others. Thayer's definition is the same as above but much more detailed, p. 545.
4. Prayer is more than formed or verbal articulation. It includes the mind, but may also utilize the heart in its heavenward ascent.

## C. No English word has ever reached the throne room of God.

1. The Holy Spirit chose to unmask the voice of God to man in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.
2. This is the scope of the sacred writings. When God spoke to a human being, whether it was Adam, Moses, Balaam, unnamed prophet or Saul on the Damascus Road, it was in the language of the recipient.
3. When prayer begins with human words and ascends beyond the heart into the domain of the Holy Spirit it is beyond human language, Romans 8:27.
4. Therefore no English or contemporary language has ever been uttered in heaven.

## II. Prayers of Jesus.

## A. Anticipating the cross, the greatest battle in all history.

1. Battles have been fought since the Trinity determined alternative existence.
2. When Lucifer coveted Jehovah's domain, rather than covering it, celestial and terrestrial, there was war.
3. The sin of Adam in Eden was a form of war.
4. When Cain killed Abel there was war in Cain's heart.
5. Written and unwritten history confirms wars and rumors of war since the beginning.
6. Warfare in the moral or spiritual realm is the worst of all.
7. *Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms, Ephesians 6:10-12.*

- B. "Jesus was called of God...", Hebrews 5:4.
1. *But God said to him, you are my Son, today I have become your father,* Hebrews 5:5.
  2. *During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission,* Hebrews 5:7.
  3. The prayers of "strong cries and tears" anticipated the horrors of Calvary.
  4. *'You believe at last!' Jesus answered. 'But a time is coming, and has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me. 'I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world,'* John 16:31-33.

### III. The High Priestly Prayer, John 17.

- A. "He looked toward heaven and he prayed."
1. He described the Glory of God.
  2. It came through him to sinful man as eternal life. The grandeur of it all is that we may come to know God, John 17:3.
- B. Jesus knew his death was soon. He said to his Father, "I am coming to you now," John 17:13.
1. His presence with his disciples gave them divine joy.
  2. There would be warfare because the world would hate the disciples as it hated Jesus.
  3. His disciples could share in the eternal love of God which Jesus experienced "before the creation of the world," John 17:24b.

### IV. The Triumphal Entry.

- A. Frequent preaching followed.
1. Controversial issues such as faith, temple abuse, destruction of the temple and parables.
  2. The woe chapter, Matthew 23, hastens the end of his life.
- B. The Horrors of Gethsemane.
1. Earth's greatest battle; Gethsemane.
  2. The bravest battle that ever was fought I tell you where and when, you find it not on the maps of earth, but in the ultimate battle between Jesus and my sin.

3. The battle was two-fold:
    - a. prayer in the garden
    - b. prayer on the cross.
  4. Gethsemane was not Calvary. There could not have been a cross if Jesus had not fought and won the greater battle in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- C. The garden battle, Matthew 26:36-46.
1. Those words from eternity, “Son **ask** of me...,” Psalm 2:7.
  2. Peter, James and John were so caught up in this world they had no idea the depth of the humanity of Jesus that needed human love and understanding. Do you know why they did not get it? Jesus was in the midst of a battle with Satan.
  3. The sin issue of this earth was at its crescendo; eternity with God for believers, or hell for every responsible unbeliever.
  4. This issue must be settled here else the cross would simply have been the death of an imposter.
  5. God would have enjoyed friendship and companionship with man forever had Adam not sinned.
  6. The consequence of sin is death, Romans 5:12.
  7. This causes God to meet man on the pain side of life. Jesus was aware of pain and was deeply touched by its sorrow.
- D. My God, my God why did this happen to me?
1. Jesus had no outcry at pain. He did not deserve pain.
  2. He asked, “My God, my God, why?”
    - a. “Father, why have you forsaken me?”
    - b. Not why he suffered. He accepted pain.
- E. In Gethsemane all was sorrow and trouble. Oh, such sorrow and trouble—until he begins to speak to God and pray; then it is all right. That is the way it was with Jesus. The garden was dark. He came out in the light because he prayed to his Father. He went into Gethsemane in agony. He came out with the victory won. He came out with peace in his heart because he had talked with God. It makes all the difference in what tone of voice a man says, ‘Thy will be done.’
1. He may say it in a tone of helpless submission, as one who is in the grip of a power when all is hopeless. The words may be the death knell of hope.
  2. He may say it as one who has been battered into submission. They may be words of defeat.

3. He may utter the words frustrated over a dream that can never come true, or they may be words of bitter anger. He knows he has no power to do anything about it.
4. He may say it with the accent of perfect trust—that is how Jesus said it. “Not my will, but Your will be done.”
5. He was speaking to the Father, who from the beginning said, “You are my Son, ask of me.” He knew his Father whose everlasting arms were underneath him and would be with him in the final ordeal of crucifixion. He was submitting to the love that would never let him go.
6. Life’s hardest task is to accept what we cannot understand, but we can even do that if we are sure of the *agape* love of God. God, Thou art love. I build my faith on that...  
I know Thee, who has kept my path, and made light for me in the darkness, tempering sorrow, so that it reached me like a solemn joy. It was too strange that I should doubt Thy love.
7. Jesus spoke like that and when a man has perfect trust, he can say ‘Thy will be done.’

NOTE The above quotes I have edited from one of my favorite authors and scholars, Dr. William Barclay, Commentary on Luke, “Thy Will be Done,” Westminster Press, Philadelphia, PA, 1955.

- F. Reasons for pain in humanity.
1. Pain is a necessary consequence of breaking God’s law as touching a hot stove breaks a natural law.
  2. Pain compels humanity to a careful road or to toils they do not want to endure.
  3. Christ accepted pain because of sin, giving us a deeper insight into the mind of God, I Corinthians 2:6ff.
  4. Pain may purge us from hardness of heart, apathy and selfishness. How much human charity exists because of pain?
  5. Sometimes we cannot understand. Walk by faith in God who understands and cares.
  6. The human wants answers and knowledge. For God it may be more how you handle what you don’t know.
  7. In the song, “sometime we’ll understand.”

## Conclusion

1. Because prayer was in the mind of God from eternity makes it inclusive for all time.
2. The life of Jesus Christ was and is the center piece of all human history.
3. Prayer was the principle weapon as history brought him “in the fullness of time” to fulfill the will of our Father.
4. We have studied relevant passages of the prayer life of Jesus including the Garden of Gethsemane.
5. As his death drew nearer, the weight of the cross became heavier.
6. This must cause us to appreciate and be thankful for his victory in the garden.
7. Next we look into the provision and deliverance of all sin.

## Lesson Four – God’s Provision and Deliverance

## Introduction

1. Tasted of the Heavenly gift *geusamenous doreas epouraniou*.
2. What is meant by heavenly gift and tasting it?
3. Sometimes it is taken for the grant or giving itself; sometimes for the thing given.<sup>1</sup>
4. Thanks be to God for his gift you cannot talk about, II Corinthians 9:15. This seems to be referencing the privilege of giving to the poor saints back in Jerusalem.
5. The grant (privilege) is called God’s heavenly gift.<sup>2</sup>
6. *Taste and see that the Lord is good*, Psalm 34:8.
7. Jesus is the Divine manna. We have a personal experience of a living union with him.
8. There is the gift of Christ. *For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life*, John 3:16.
9. According to the measure of the gift of Christ, God is pleased to give and grant the fruit of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22-25.
10. Sometimes it refers to Jesus himself or his work done by others.
11. *If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that says to you, give me a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water*, John 4:10; James 1:17.

## Discussion

- I. The Ultimate Gift of Jesus.
  - A. One must begin at the beginning.
    1. *I will proclaim the decree of the LORD: He said to me, ‘You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession’*, Psalm 2:7-8.
    2. Beyond and before David, Jehovah said to *Logos*, who would later be Jesus, *You are my son, today I have become your father –ask of me*.
  - B. “Today” was not the birth of the Messiah. This was spoken before time began.
    1. Jesus said in John 17:24b... *you loved me before the creation of the world*.
    2. Revelation 13:8b affirms *the Lamb was slain from the creation of the world*.

3. John 1:1, *In the beginning the Word (Logos) was with God and was God. He was with God in the beginning.*
  4. Psalm 2:7-8 was looking beyond King David, Acts 13:32, 33, *We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm, 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'*
  5. The second truth stated here is that before the beginning of time, God instructed *Logos* to **ask** of Him. This is one of the foundation words in Hebrew (shall) and Greek (*aiteo*) for prayer.
  6. From the creation of the world, God gave prayer the supreme role for accomplishing the mission of *Logos*, Jesus. As the specific result, God said *'ask of me and I will make the nations your inheritance and the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery,* Psalm 2:8.
  7. The privilege of continued relationship, yet the unbelievable responsibility would be his existence on earth.
- C. The connection of Psalm 2 and Acts 13:32, 33.
1. *We tell you the good news: What God promised our fathers he has fulfilled for us, their children, by raising up Jesus. As it is written in the second Psalm: 'You are my Son; today I have become your Father.'*
    - a. The first promise God made to our fathers was to Abraham, Genesis 12:1, 2.
    - b. A second promise to David was God's everlasting covenant of mercy and faithful love, Isaiah 55:3-5.
    - c. The whole of the second Psalm from which the quotation is made, is evidently messianic for none of it is applicable to any person other than Christ.<sup>3</sup>
  2. The greatest promise: Psalm 16:10 *because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay.* The promise received its fulfillment with the resurrection of Jesus; not only was his being raised up as the seed of David, but his being raised from the dead... This means the promised mercies which had been promised to David had been fulfilled.<sup>4</sup>
  3. Acts 13:34 assures the resurrection must be once for all. He (Jesus) could no more turn to corruption. So to him came the mercies promised to David.<sup>5</sup>

4. The blessing of the pronouncement. The fact of resurrection was the gate way by which “all nations would be reclaimed for God and the ends of the earth his possession.” It was the “commencement of spiritual life by the power of God; so raising up sinners from the death of sin, or so producing spiritual life that they should sustain to him the relation of sons. Thus he raised up Christ from the dead, and imparted life to his body and hence he is said figuratively to have begotten him (Jesus) from the dead and thus sustain toward the risen Savior the relation of father.”<sup>6</sup>
  5. The Divine voice has confirmed his position “God’s decree secures to him the entire sway embraced in the ancient promises to Abraham and in the sure mercies of David; ask of me and I will give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Nothing could stand in the way of this decree. The nations might resist, but, if so, they would be broken in pieces like a potter’s vessel – an image of irretrievable destruction.”<sup>7</sup>
  6. This accounts for pre-time, time and post-time. Prayer was the beginning, middle and end of the redemptive work of *Logos*, Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God.
- D. The *Logos* was the “field-man” for the Father.
1. He was empowered by the Holy Spirit (*Ruach*) from the beginning of time until his birth which began a new era.
  2. Did the *Logos* enter Mary’s womb? Was *Logos* the Spirit part which became Jesus? Mary’s body (her seed) gave Jesus a body. He was God-man, Galatians 4:4b.
  3. Dr. H.B. Swete wrote “Jesus was God-man which is inscrutable to human understanding”.
  4. The Holy Spirit named *Logos* Jesus, Matthew 1:21.
  5. Jesus, until his ascension, assumed a new, but equally important role, his earthly ministry.
- E. There was/is relationship of authority between the Father and the *Logos*, Son.
1. There was equality, but differences. The *Logos*, Jesus, surrendered form, but not status.
  2. The *Logos* existed from creation until born of the virgin in Bethlehem in the days of Herod the King
  3. Jesus was born, 6-4 B.C. and continued as Jesus of Nazareth.
  4. Scripture frequently speaks of the Father and Son relationship within our word Trinity.

## F. Illustrations of the relationship:

1. The Father “gave” His only begotten Son, John 3:16.
2. The Father sent His Son into the world, John 3:17, 34, 4:34, 8:42; Galatians 4:4.
3. Father predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son, Romans 8:29; I Peter 1:2.
4. Father chose us in the Son before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4.
5. The Son is obedient to the command of the Father, John 12:49.
6. Jesus said, ‘*I have come to do the will of Him who sent me*’, John 4:34, 6:38.

## G. Relationships that are never reversed.

1. Scripture does not say:
  - a. The Son sent the Father into the world.
  - b. The Father obeys the command of the Son.
  - c. The Father obeys the commands of the Holy Spirit.
  - d. The Son predestined us to be conformed to the image of the Father.
2. The role of planning, directing, sending and commanding belonged to the Father, God only.

## H. Relationships are eternal.

1. The Father predestined us before the foundation of the world, Ephesians 1:4. God has eternally been Father and the Son has eternally been *Logos/Son*.
2. If the Father’s agape love is seen in that He gave his *monogena* (only begotten) Son, John 3:16, then the Father had to be Father and Son had to be *Logos* before He came into the world, John 17:24.
3. We see from these verses that the idea of headship and submission within a personal relationship was from eternity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit as the Trinity.
4. They differ in attribute as they relate to each other.
5. That relationship is one of leadership and authority on one hand and voluntary, willing, joyful submission to authority on the other hand as eternal purposes are carried out, Acts 13:32-33.
6. It is the glory of the Son as He relates to the Father.
7. It is our glory as we through the Holy Spirit relate to Jesus our deepest religious experience.

- I. He continues his heavenly rule over his kingdom responsibilities throughout the remainder of time, I Thessalonians 4:16; John 5:28-29.
  1. When all earthly history and human issues have been finalized, *then the end will come, when he hands over the Kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority, and power*, I Corinthians 15:24.
  2. This ushers in the New Heaven and New Earth. This will be the final residence of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, holy angels and redeemed humanity. Jesus loved us enough to become our “elder brother.”
  3. “Won’t it be wonderful there?”
- II. How Does One Embrace Jesus, the Heavenly Gift? Hebrews 6:5b.
  - A. Growing in agape love.
    1. God is love (*agape*), I John 4:16.
    2. *Agape* love is supernatural.
    3. *A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another*, John 13:34.
    4. *Agape* love is a spiritual dimension of love as opposed to *phileo* a human love.
  - B. The fruit of *agape* love.
    1. This empowered Jesus to possess a level of honor, honesty, integrity, empathy, discernment and justice never before seen on this planet.
    2. He threatened racial and language barriers.
    3. He was explicit in his concern for the poor and made pride always take a back seat.
    4. His God-kind of love enabled him in all circumstances to place the spiritual and eternal above the physical. These were his choices to make.
    5. He did not retaliate, harbor bitterness or refuse to forgive, Luke 23:34.
- III. His Greatest Bittersweet Issue is the Cross of Calvary.
  - A. The necessity of the cross.
    1. They have received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. *They have tasted the heavenly gift, the Divine manna, Jesus Christ.*

2. Christian growth is organic progress in one area related to progress in another.<sup>8</sup>
  3. This is the heavenly gift of God's love – *Now that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious, I Peter 2:3.*
- B. From the time Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, the existence of man has been a dilemma.
1. The possibilities of spiritual potential that God places in each human is obscured or sometimes hidden from its valued purpose.
  2. The Christ of God did not become vaporized into some dark void because of mortal sin. His life is available to us in present time and will count in eternal splendor.
  3. Out of earth's most horrible hour came eternity's greatest blessing.
- IV. The Greatest Horror.
- A. The death of Jesus Christ.
1. Jesus rose higher in the demonstration of human life in what he said, did and because of the cup of extreme bitterness he drank.
  2. The cup of wrath was the guilt of all human sin forever.
  3. The Father swallowed. He looked at the Prince of Light. "The darkness will be great," He said. He passed His hand over the spotless face of His Son. He went on, "The pain will be awful."
  4. Then He paused and looked at His darkened dominion. When He looked up, His eyes were moist.
  5. The Son looked into the stars as He heard the answer; "Then, let it be done."
  6. Slowly the words that would kill the Son began to come from the lips of the Father; "Hour of death, moment of sacrifice, it is your moment". Rehearsed a million times on false altars with false lambs; the decisive moment has come.
  7. Then the Father said, "Oh, My Son, My Child. Look up into the heavens and see My face before I turn it away from you. Hear My voice before I silence it. Would that I could save You and them. But they don't see, and they don't hear. The living must die so that the dying can live. The time has come to kill the Lamb."
  8. God must have wept as He performed His task. Every lie, every lure, every act done in the shadows was in that cup of wrath. Slowly, hideously, the Son absorbed them into His body. "He became our sin." The death and resurrection of Jesus were the final acts of incarnation. We pause, reflect and remember the only begotten Son of God.

9. *God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God, II Corinthians 5:21.*
- B. *About the ninth hour Jesus **cried** out in a loud voice, ‘Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?’, which means, My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?, Matthew 27:46.*
1. The wailings of Jesus still haunt all of history as a voice for the cry of despair, pain and suffering.
  2. *And when Jesus had **cried** out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit, Matthew 27:50.*
  3. The word cry (*kradzo*)<sup>9</sup> includes screaming because of intense suffering. His heart (spiritually) and his body (physically) cried out in a loud voice as if to howl or wail.
  4. The scream (*kradzo*) of Jesus from the cross must have been the most horrifying sound the earth has ever heard. The earth shook, darkness covered the earth, graves were opened and the planet convulsed. It was the death cry of Jesus on the cross.
- C. The horror of his scream embraced all sin forever.
- It really happened!**
1. He was tested by Satan. He was out of the reach of his enemies to destroy him. *Get behind me, Satan, Matthew 4:10.*
  2. Human law condemned him, but he demonstrated the **intangible** power of God in this **tangible** world.
  3. There is an order of spiritual intelligences in another state of existence. When the tangible force of God’s power makes an earthly appearance, it is his goodness, a miracle.
- D. *Jesus, for the joy set before Him (prospect) endured the cross, despising the shame (past) and is seated at the right hand of God, (present/future), Hebrews 12:2b.*
1. The spiritual capability and expectations of man affirm that there is more to humanity than anything else created.
  2. Jesus the man became the ultimate model in dealing with the present at whatever cost for the future.
  3. The lonely precincts of the tomb gave Jesus a refuge from his foes, a place in which he could solve the problem of his human existence.
  4. The cross only severs what you consent to part from. The severing of the Cross is not an actual experience, unless the will of the believer desires and consents to the actual separation in fact and practice.<sup>10</sup>

5. Death may be found to be only a mortal dream which comes in darkness, then disappears with the eternal light of resurrection.
6. His three days in the tomb set the seal of eternity on time. Jesus met and mastered the power of spirit over matter.
7. In Jesus, divinity brought to humanity the revelation of infinity above that of human invention. The rock-ribbed walls of his grave were no prison. The great stone rolled from the cave's mouth was no hindrance. He stepped forth from his gloomy resting place and was crowned with the Glory of God in everlasting victory. He will never retrace his steps to Gethsemane. In heaven neither shall we. No Gethsemane, No Calvary.

## Conclusion

### 1. The Greatest Blessing

Divinity overcomes humanity at every point. *Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question 'Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?' Jesus replied 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind'. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments, Matthew 22:34-40.*

2. There are depths in the heart which no eye but God's can penetrate. There are experiences so sacred, tender and wonderful that it would be a form of profanity to try to unfold them in the form of speech.
3. No one who reveres the sacredness of spiritual life will attempt to pry into what is secret between the heart of another and his/her God. There should be in each life feelings which belong to no one else.
4. Enjoy tasting the Heavenly Gift, Jesus.
5. That is the Jesus I have come to know. I hear His voice in my mind, His *rhema* in my heart. My needs are cared for by Him. How may I help along the way?

Endnotes – God’s Provision and Deliverance

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## Lesson Five – Praying to the Holy Spirit

### Introduction

1. The prayers of Paul have a **shameless persistence**.
2. The intercession of the Holy Spirit in Paul's prayers was real to him.
3. His prayer life exhibited not only a personal relationship with God but a prayer life of power.
4. Paul urged the Corinthians to follow his example, I Corinthians 11:1.
5. The past is forgiven, Colossians 1:14.
6. The present is secure, Hebrews 13:5.
7. The future is settled, John 6:47.
8. The following is an effort to verbalize Paul's ministry in the Spirit.
9. God created us with immense mental potential, much spent in physical concerns. We are "dumbed down" morally, intellectually and spiritually by the enemy. Allow God to lift your spiritual perception out of your "box" and be welcomed into His very large room, Psalm 31:8.

### Discussion

- I. "...transformed by the renewing of your mind," Romans 12:1-3.
  - A. The Holy Spirit in all his glory resides in the heart of each saved person. This means that inside the depths of every believer is a vast Spirit of shining, stainless purity. This Spirit is working to bring the saved to a state of total health. The Holy Spirit responds to all of man's convoluted patterns with even more intelligent and encompassing patterns of its own. This Spirit is all-loving, all-powerful and all-knowing. In the end, this Spirit is absolutely guaranteed to see the Christian through to the end, no matter what.
  - B. When we know that the Holy Spirit indwells a person, we love that person because such a pure and beautiful Spirit would only dwell in what is equally pure. To love (agape) someone is to know for certain that the Holy Spirit is overseeing his/her life. Paul trusted and relied upon that fact which enabled him to rise above Satan's testing. Seeing the fruit of the Spirit in the lives of others is a way to have the Holy Spirit answer your own prayers. This is true intercession. Listening to the Holy Spirit in the voice of another is a good way to know what kind of help they really need.
  - C. The Blessed Residue.
    1. There are calls for love.
    2. There are expressions of love.

3. We know that any thought/action can have both 1 and 2. Most every thought and/or action will be a mixture of the two, so what does one do?
- D. Paul allowed the Holy Spirit to interpret which thought or deed was a call for love and which was an expression of love. The Spirit determines the following:
1. The example of suffering is a major test. In the Christian's final analysis, all of the past is gone and nothing remains except the blessing. The Spirit assures one that he is saved and that all of his kind, loving thoughts are honored. He also assures that he has purified those thoughts that hid their light and now presents them to you in their own perfect radiance. They are beyond destruction and beyond guilt. These assurances come from the Spirit within.
  2. The idea here is that as we are producing thoughts each moment, the Holy Spirit is placing them one-by-one through his filtering system.
- II. *The Holy Spirit intercedes according to the will of God*, Romans 8:27.
- A. The heart and teachings of Paul.
    1. Whatever is in accord with light, the Spirit retains. This strengthens kingdom principles in the saved.
    2. What is partly in accord with light, he accepts and purifies.
    3. What is out of accord, he rejects entirely.
  - B. It should be clarified that this rejection or judgment is not a condemnation. It is not an evaluation as something evil by intent on the part of the believer, He simply rejects it as false.
  - C. This filtering process results in light, that which is good; only the true in our thoughts is retained. All else is discarded leaving only the "**blessed residue.**"
- III. Light Versus Darkness.
- A. One may hang on to dark thoughts and reap what has been accumulated over a lifetime as a mountain of inner darkness with only little flecks of light. But the Holy Spirit sees the legacy of all our past thoughts as a shining collection of pure light without the faintest hint of shadow or impurity.
  - B. The leadership and help of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Christian is what Paul experienced and encouraged.

1. The Holy Spirit is performing this purifying process inside of us right now whether we are in agreement or not.
  2. We can benefit so much more if we consciously experience this purification of our thoughts.
  3. When we contemplate our thoughts, we are appealing silently for the Spirit to show the elements of truth in them.
  4. We pray that as the Spirit evaluates them, he will remove distracting elements and give them back to us as clear ideas that do not contradict the will of God.
- C. Give your thoughts to Him and He will give them back to you as wonderful blessings. As each thought is transformed, it takes on healing power from the Spirit. This will prevent falsehood and deception from Satan.
- D. I personally find that this process is effective. I believe that what both Paul and the Holy Spirit are urging us to do in regard to others is what the Holy Spirit has done to our own thoughts.
1. As we see the thoughts of others in their behavior, let us commit them to the Holy Spirit.
  2. We pray that He will discard from them everything but the light, then give back pure and holy thoughts.
  3. In this process, we will see love beyond hate, constancy in change, the horrors of sin and ultimately heaven's blessing on the world.

## Conclusion

The following is one of Paul's many metaphors from his writings.

*If any man builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, his work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each man's work. If what he has built survives, he will receive his reward. If it is burned up, he will suffer loss; he himself will be saved, but only as one escaping through the flames, I Corinthians 3:12-15.*

## Lesson 6 - Praying in the Holy Spirit, Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20.

Holy Spirit, creator of the church and renewer of the world, renew our hearts and recreate our church. Not with new or different teaching, but with new and exciting challenges. Our world is in some ways another Tower of Babel, where ambition and pride dominate. We seek for a spiritual life that honors Jesus and strives for community. Call me to repentance so that any change I seek in others will have first begun in me. Breathe on us, breath of God, and make us as fresh and new as the dawn.

Holy Spirit of healing, each of us needs your saving touch in our moral, emotional and physical lives. I ask to continue to be a healing presence to my family and friends. I know one of the greatest healings is the forgiveness of sins. Purify each of us of all sin, by your grace through the cross.

Generous Spirit, you have given us many gifts. May the Gamaliel principle teach me to keep an open mind and trust that movements among your people, those which are controversial and upsetting, will succeed if they are truly God's will, otherwise they will come to nothing.

Holy Spirit who watches over the church, you inspired servants of old to step forward and replace vacancies left in the ranks. Bless now, and strengthen many of these new families and members who will serve and build up the Body of Christ.

Help us to preach, teach, and serve whatever the calling with renewed wisdom and bring each to a more mature faith in the ministry of the Word. Give each one, as if it were, the face of an angel. Dearest Spirit of conversion, help us to discern the difference between magic tricks and authentic Divine wonders. You link the gift of your Holy presence in our communion with you and one another.

Powerful Spirit, you tackled the mighty Saul of Tarsus and re-directed his zeal on behalf of the Gospel. You turned a murderer into a martyr, the greatest persecutor into the greatest missionary. So complete was your victory over Paul's soul that nothing ever stopped his passionate desire to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus. Give us conversion energy and may nothing ever quench the fire of your Spirit in our lives. Lead us to share our faith and fill us with your Spirit of love.

Remove blind spots in my own soul so I may see those who need to be loved and taught. We sing of your protection and praise your guardianship of your church. Your servants of old were led by you and sent by you. We are attracted to such leadership of you, blessed Holy Spirit. We have much inner sensitivity to acquire. Holy Spirit, warm us with

your presence and lead us to both hear and follow your call. It seems that one of your gifts is the call to suffer for the cause. At first, dear Lord, that does not seem like a gift to me. We fear pain. But where you call me to bear the cross, give me the grace to carry it.

“Spirit of Grace and Supplication”, in almost every century you have called, inspired, equipped your anointed leaders to face issues that challenge the church. Upon prayerful reflection and wisdom from above you have moved your church forward in time. You have always been there to move them. I praise you, adore you and thank you. As I grow older my trust is stronger because I know you have done that. Move us forward, Holy Spirit, as we approach the final consummation. *May the peace of God, the love of Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit rest upon your heart.*

## Addendum – The Prayer of Edith Stein to the Holy Spirit

1. The following prayer has its place as a true marker in 20<sup>th</sup> Century Christianity.
2. Edith Stein, an author and a Catholic scholar, was a contemporary of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In 1945, Adolf Hitler gave direct orders to Himmler for Bonhoeffer to be hanged. Edith Stein also died in 1945 in a gas chamber in Auschwitz. Both of them died as martyrs.
3. Her writings are some of the most enlightening, yet challenging, I have ever read.
4. When the Gestapo arrived at the Carmel of Echt, Edith took her sister, who by this time was also in residence there, by the hand and said, “Come, Rosa. We’re going for our people.” Death came swiftly since from the Final Solution devised by Hitler there would be no return.
5. Because she was Jewish, Edith Stein was taken with her sister Rosa and many other Catholic Jews from the Netherlands to the concentration camp in Auschwitz, where she died with them in the gas chambers. Today we remember them all with deep respect.
6. Despite the dangers surrounding her, Edith did not succumb to fear. She looked forward, always raising her sights to the horizon of faith that sustained her. These sentiments are finely articulated in the “Prayer to the Holy Spirit,” which she composed a few months before her death.

I. Who are you, sweet light that fills me  
 And illumines the darkness of my heart?  
 You lead me as with a mother’s hand,  
 And if you would let go of me  
 I could not take one step more  
 You are the space that from all sides  
 Encompasses my being and shelters it.  
 Apart from you it would sink into the abyss  
 Of nothing, out of which you raised it into existence.  
 You, nearer to me than I to myself  
 And more interior than my innermost  
 Yet ungraspable and incomprehensible,  
 Beyond the scope of every name:  
     Holy Spirit –  
     Eternal love!

II. Are you not the sweet manna

Which from the heart of the Son  
Streams into my own heart,  
The food of angels and saints?  
He who rose from death to life  
Has also restored me to new life  
From the sleep of death.  
And he gives me new life from day to day,  
And one day his fullness will flood through me,  
Life from your life – ye you yourself  
Holy Spirit –  
Eternal life!

III. Are you the ray that from the throne  
Of the eternal judge beams down  
And invades the night of the soul  
Which could never know itself?  
Compassionately – yet relentlessly –  
It penetrates into hidden recesses.  
Frightened by the view of itself,  
The soul grants space for holy fear,  
The space for the beginning of that wisdom  
Which comes from on high  
And firmly anchors us there,  
Space for your working, which creates us anew,  
Holy Spirit –  
All-penetrating ray!

IV. Are you the fullness of the spirit and the power  
With which the lamb breaks the seals  
Of God's eternal decree?  
Driven by you, the messengers of judgment  
Ride through the world  
And with keen sword divide  
The realm of light from that of night.  
Then heaven and earth are made new,  
And all things come to their rightful place  
Through your breath:  
Holy Spirit –  
Victorious power!

V. Are you the master builder that raises the

eternal cathedral,  
Towering up from earth to heaven?  
Its pillars, given life by you, rise up to the heights  
And stand unshakably firm  
Marked with the eternal name of God,  
They extend up into light  
And support the dome which, like a crown,  
Completes the holy edifice,  
Your world-encompassing work.  
Holy Spirit –  
God's fashioning hand!

VI. Are you that which created the clear mirror,  
Close by the throng of the Most High,  
Like a sea of crystal,  
In which the Godhead lovingly self-beholds?  
You bend down over the most beautiful work  
of your creation,  
And your own brilliance, in its streaming,  
is reflected back to you  
And unifies the pure beauty of all beings  
In the lovely form of the Virgin, your spotless bride:  
Holy Spirit –  
Creator of all!

VII. Are you the sweet song of love and holy awe  
That eternally serenades the three-fold throne  
And unifies the pure sound of all beings?  
You bring the harmony which joins the members  
to the head,  
Wherein each member blissfully finds the secret  
meaning of its being and streams forth rejoicing,  
Set free in your streaming:  
Holy Spirit –  
Eternal exultation!

Translated by Richard Rojcewicz, PhD, of the Simon Silverman  
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### **Come, Holy Spirit**

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,  
With all Thy quickening powers;  
Kindle a flame of sacred love  
In these cold hearts of ours.  
Look how we grovel here below,  
Fond of these earthly toys;  
Our souls, how heavily they go  
To reach eternal joys.

In vain we tune our formal songs,  
In vain we strive to rise;  
Hosannas languish on our tongues,  
And our devotion dies.

Dear Lord, and shall we ever live  
At this poor dying rate?  
Our love so faint, so cold to Thee,  
And Thine to us so great!

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,  
With all Thy quickening powers;  
Come, shed abroad a Savior's love,  
And that shall kindle ours.

Isaac Watts (1674-1748)  
Herald of His Coming  
October 2004, p. 6.