

## STUDY UNIT 7

1 Pet. 5:8 / Eph. 6:10–18 / 1 Tim. 4:7 / Lk. 4

### THE POWER OF PRAYER IN THE INVISIBLE WAR

At this point in our study, we shall now address the necessity and power of intercessory prayer in the awful war we face against our adversary Satan.

*“Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. **Your adversary, the devil**, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. **But resist him**, standing firm in your faith.”*

1 Peter 5:8–9

Unless you are aware of the invisible war we are in with Satan and know how to use **both** the weapons of **God’s truth and intercessory prayer**, you will be a casualty more than a useful and decorated soldier as a Christian.

*“Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm.*

*“Stand firm therefore, 1) Having girded your loins **with truth**, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, **which is the word of God**. 2) **With all prayer and petition pray at all times** in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition **for all the saints**.”*

Ephesians 6:10–18

Our goal in this study is to:

- 1) review the nature of **our battles with Satan**,
- 2) clarify **the importance of prayer** in these battles, and
- 3) learn **how to use the weapon of prayer** against Satan in conjunction with the weapons of truth.

#### 1. Our Battles with Satan:

- **Satan’s Lies, Schemes, and Snares**

Satan is God's Adversary, opposing His plans for His creation and mankind. He seeks to lead every person to violate and oppose God's will through deception. He uses elaborate schemes, hidden snares, and counterfeit lies to deceive, divide, discourage, and destroy God's people and creation.

*"The devil... was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature, for **he is a liar, and the father of lies.**"*  
John 8:44

*"If perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from **the snare of the devil**, having been held captive by him to do his will."*  
2 Timothy 2:25–26

*"Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against **the schemes of the devil.**"*  
Ephesians 6:11

- **The Primary Battlefield: Our Minds**

The war with Satan is fought primarily in our mind. Spiritual warfare is a conflict fought in the mind against the false concepts that Satan places before us against the truth. We are to examine every thought, compare them with what God has revealed to us in His Word, and deal with them as God wants.

*"We are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ."* 2 Corinthians 10:5

We should remember that just as Satan first deceived Adam and Eve by deceiving them into believing a lie, so centuries later he attempted to cause our Lord to likewise believe his lies. The battlefield has always been people's minds, as Adam and Eve's, so the Lord's, and so every person's who has lived and will live.

*"The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."*  
Genesis 3:4–5

*"Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. And the devil said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread.' And Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "Man shall not live on bread alone."' And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, 'I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours.' Jesus answered him, 'It is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.'"*

*"And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, 'If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; for it is written, "He will*

*command His angels concerning You to guard You,” and, “On their hands they will bear You up, so that You will not strike Your foot against a stone.” And Jesus answered and said to him, ‘It is said, “You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.”’ When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.”* Luke 4:1–13

**The key to success in spiritual warfare** is becoming skilled in using the truths of God’s Word against the lies of the Devil. We cannot fight Satan unless we know the truth. As soldiers of Christ, we must engage in a lifelong study of God’s Word.

We are to **impose these truths on our thinking and our circumstances**, regardless of the consequences. We are also to **proclaim these truths to others** in whatever spiritual state they are in. We are to teach them to our children, stand for them in the world, teach them to the lost, and encourage one another with them, as we face the consequences of living life in this awful war.

One of these truths is that **prayer is the key weapon** that empowers the truth in the war. Truth and prayer are often found together in Scripture. We shall address this more fully later in the study, but first let us review very briefly by way of reminder the following points.

- **How Do People Get Deceived About Life and How to Live It?**

1. **They are not purposefully under God ordained authority.**

“Rebellion is as the sin of **witchcraft**” which exposes a person to the realm and power of Satan (1 Sam 15:13).

They must be taught the truth that they are to honor and submit to God ordained authorities. But if they reject this, they are open to the Deceiver who is looking for such victims.

2. **Their guard is not up.** They are not “taking every thought captive.” They are naïve in the war. They are not on the alert to the Deceiver and how he operates.

*“See to it that no one **takes you captive** through philosophy and empty **deception**, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ.”* Colossians 2:8

3. **They have sinned and not dealt with it**—so they are under a burden of guilt and shame.

*“To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but **both their mind and their conscience are defiled**. They profess to know God, but by their deeds they deny Him, being detestable and disobedient and worthless for any good deed.”* Titus 1:15–16

*“In view of this, I do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience both before God and before men.”* Acts 24:16

4. **They associate with the wrong people** at the wrong level of intimacy.

*“Leave the presence of a fool, or you will not discern words of knowledge. The wisdom of the sensible is to understand his way, but the foolishness of fools is **deceit**.”*

Proverbs 14:7–8

5. **They set worthless things before their eyes**, wrong entertainment, evil images and conduct, and their minds are captured by them.

*“I will walk within my house in the integrity of my heart. I will set no worthless thing before my eyes; I hate the work of those who fall away; **It shall not fasten its grip on me**. A perverse heart shall depart from me; I will know no evil. Whoever secretly slanders his neighbor, him I will destroy; no one who has a haughty look and an arrogant heart will I endure. My eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me; he who walks in a blameless way is the one who will minister to me. He who practices deceit shall not dwell within my house; he who speaks falsehood shall not maintain his position before me.”* Psalm 101:2–7

6. **They have become embittered** toward offenders and God.

*“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.”*

Hebrews 12:15

7. **They have come to love “the things of the world,”** worldly counsel, worldly pleasures, and worldly wealth.

*“For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”* 1 Timothy 6:10

*“For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God**; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so, and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”*

Romans 8:5–8

## 2. **The Importance of Prayer in the Battle**

- **Where is the battle decided? On the mountain of prayer.**

Does God need to intervene in our preaching, witnessing, and discipling efforts, or can we just speak the truths of God’s Word and see people born again, transformed into Christ’s image, and escape from Satan’s lies? God must intervene, and He has chosen to include us in the battle by being the third element in this incredible “triangle of prayer.” We ask God to intervene for others. He has promised, as we have seen, that if we ask according to His will, He will do it! The weapons of truth and prayer must be used together. **Like a bullet without powder is the truth without fervent and effectual prayer.** Charles Spurgeon was once asked about the

revival that was occurring at his church with thousands being saved and growing in the faith. He said, “Let me show you the power plant that we have here” as he led them to the basement where hundreds of church members were gathered, praying as they habitually did during all of the services. He was a great preacher of **truth** in a church of great **prayer**. Both are necessary. One of the clearest examples of the importance of prayer in our battles for God in this fallen world is the account in Exodus 17 of Moses on the **mountaintop** praying, while Joshua was in the **valley** using the weapons of war against the enemy. Where was the battle decided? **The victory in the valley was won by the intercessions on the mountain!**

*“So Moses said to Joshua, ‘Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.’ Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed.*

*“But Moses’ hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword.”*  
Exodus 17:9–13

The staff of God symbolized God’s personal involvement, and Moses’ “hands up” or “hands down” symbolized Moses’ intercessions to God—or lack of them. The battle was won because of Moses’ intercessory prayers to God, as well as by the efforts and sacrifices of those using the weapons in the valley.

- **Destroying Satan’s strongholds with prayer**

*“For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for **the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses**. We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.”* 2 Corinthians 10:3–5

*“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*  
Ephesians 6:12

Deception is deception. People actually believe that the lies they believe are the truth. The “strongholds” mentioned in the above verse are false beliefs or false belief systems that a person has accepted as true. Humanism is a false belief system. So is Mormonism. Believing that I can reject the commandments of God without consequences is false. Choices have consequences. Some are eternal.

So, destroying these false beliefs and replacing them with the truth is what we are tasked with. But prayer is needed to win these battles.

How can we help others escape the lies, schemes, and snares of the Devil? How can we help others escape from the deceptions, and attempts to divide, discourage, and destroy us? How are we to pray?

### 3. How To Use the Weapon of Prayer in Our Battles with Satan

There are **three primary commands** from our commander as to how we are to fight for Him in this awful war. All are essential. Prayer is one of them.

1. We are sent to **shine the light of our transformed life into the darkness.**

- *"Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."* Mathew 5:16
- *"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."* Matthew 28:19–20

2. We are to **speak the truth of God's Word directly to others** as God directs.

- *"If your brother sins, go and show him his fault."* Matthew 18:15
- *"Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."* 2 Timothy 4:2
- *"We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone."* 1 Thessalonians 5:14

3. Finally, we are to **PRAY FOR OTHERS.**

*Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth... which is the word of God... With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints."* Ephesians 6:14–18

Go up on the mountain to seek God, and ask Him, according to His will, to interceded for others.

Here are examples of the intercessory prayers that God has instructed us to pray on the mountaintop, as we engage the enemy for the victims of Satan's deceptions in the valley.

- **We are to ask God to rebuke Satan's intervention into their life.**  
(Eph 6:12 / Lk 22:31–32)

"Heavenly Father, we ask that you would **PROTECT** \_\_\_\_\_ from the Satanic principalities and powers, world rulers of this darkness, and spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places, and give them no place or influence in their life. Amen."

- **We are to ask God to draw them to Christ, away from deception and death.**

(John 6:40–44)

“Heavenly Father, we ask that You would **DRAW** \_\_\_\_\_, by Your truth and the leading of the Holy Spirit, to seek, with all of their heart, fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Amen”

- **We are to ask God to deliver them from evil and keep them in His name.**

(Matt 6:13 / John 17)

“Heavenly Father, we ask that You would **LEAD** \_\_\_\_\_ to:

- Seek the protection that comes from Satanic lies by honoring the authorities You have placed in their life by seeking their counsel and direction.
- Seek to take every thought captive to Your truths as revealed in Your Word.
- Seek and gain a clear conscience before You and men by seeking forgiveness and making restitution for their sins.
- Seek to walk in life avoiding the presence and influence of foolish and corrupt people and activities. Amen”

## Conclusion

As we finish our study, we should remember the value that God places on our prayers. The following scenes are from God’s revelation of the events of the final victory over Satan. Wonder of wonders, notice the place of our prayers.

*“And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth. And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. When He had taken the book, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each one holding a harp and golden bowls full of incense, **which are the prayers of the saints**. And they sang a new song, saying, ‘Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth.’”*

Revelation 5:6–10

*“Another angel came and stood at the altar, holding a golden censer; and much incense was given to him, so that he might add it to **the prayers of all the saints** upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, **with the prayers of the saints**, went up before God out of the angel’s hand.”*

Revelation 8:3–4

## **UNIT 7 STUDY SESSION #1:**

In preparation for the group study read the summary above and then complete the following self-evaluation.

### **Evaluating My Prayer Life In The Invisible War**

1. Regarding **my awareness** of living in the constant presence and influence of Satanic schemes, snares, and deceptive lies:
  - It has been \_\_\_ very good \_\_\_ ok, but not too important \_\_\_ poor
2. Regarding my grasp of **the necessity** of intercessory prayer in this war:
  - \_\_\_ it has been poor \_\_\_ I have thought that using the truth was enough \_\_\_ it has been ok, but not fervent and constant \_\_\_ it has been good
3. Regarding **my actual prayer life** in this war:
  - It is \_\_\_ constant and fervent \_\_\_ sporadic \_\_\_ not very strong \_\_\_ poor

### **Discussion Questions For Study Session #1**

The material in our study is extensive and has three divisions. Lets address each of these:

#### Section 1:

- The study reminds us that the primary battlefield in our war with Satan is mental. What kind of experience have you had in this regard?
- The study lists 7 ways that people get deceived. What are your thoughts on #1 and deceptions that come when we are our own authority.
- Comments on any of the other 6?

#### Section 2:

- What do you think about the “prayer on the mountain” and “battles in the valley” concepts presented in the study from Exodus 17? Applicable to us?
- Consider the concept of being held captive by the strongholds built in our minds through the lies of Satan. What are your thoughts and experiences with this and the means of “tearing these strongholds down?”

#### Section 3:

- What comments might you have about this material on praying for God’s Protection, Drawing, and Leading others in this war?

### **Prayer Together**



## **UNIT 7 STUDY SESSION #2:**

In preparation for Session #2, continue with the other prayer projects that you have initiated in our previous studies as the Lord leads you, and consider pursuing the following project regarding our battles in the invisible war.

### **Preparation For Session #2: Application Project**

Plan a time(s) of intercession for those you know who are in a serious battle or already in mental bondage with Satanic deceptions. Set aside time this week to go. Note the lists of prayers provided in Section 3 of the study. Use them if they are helpful. Remember James 5:16.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. If you were able to pursue the application project for the week, can you share with us how it went?
2. Other than the project for this week, what else happened in your prayer life?

### **Prayer Together**