

Are your prayers “FERVENT prayers”?

James 5:16



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Warm welcome everyone! And welcome to Light on the Rock, where our teachings and blogs are free and we delight in sharing the light of the word with all of you.

As we come closer to the Passover season, I recommend you all check out my sermons from Feb-April in previous years, as there are SO MANY pre-Passover topics on this website. Don't miss them:

- Do this in remembrance of Me
- When I See the Blood..."
- The deeper meaning of the Passover Emblems

For college, I attended a 4-year liberal arts theology-based college in England.

I loved those years. We made many lifelong friends from those years. One of the things I remember was we had an area in our **men's dorm reserved for "prayer closets"** – places we could go in to pray –and be private – and without being interrupted. Since it was a religious college, we also heard a lot about prayer and how to pray. We often heard a verse or two out of James 5 about praying fervently. Our prayers had to be "fervent".

Somehow I began to equate that with concepts like -- pray with gusto, even some volume, be sure to include vigorous hand gestures while praying, definitely be vigorous. I don't know that anyone ever taught those concepts, but somehow I began to believe a prayer had to be audible, persuasive, and confident – and yes, at least 30 minutes long to be a truly top quality prayer. But now I smile as I think about that. I also smile as I remember some of the students' prayers could be heard through their prayer closets – as they were praying loudly. Perhaps they thought "fervent prayer" meant loud prayer.

Why? Because some of the most effective prayers in the Bible didn't fulfill *any* of those points – but they were very "fervent". Let's read it.

James 5:16-18

"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, FERVENT prayer of a righteous man avails much. 17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and **he prayed earnestly** that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. 18 And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit."

Why should we spend time on this topic?

Well, I know most of us want to prayers that work, that “avail much”, that are effective and are powerful. *Who wants “ineffective” prayers that don’t “avail much”?* There are many keys to answered prayer – but this is such a big one, I want to focus entirely on being FERVENT in our prayers, and what that means.

IF you – dear child of God – and if I – also a dear child of God – would commit ourselves to fervent prayer each time we prayed, there would be NO LIMIT on what we’d see our great God Almighty doing in and through our lives. NO limit! One of the biggest mistakes that children of God make is this: we under-estimate the power of fervent prayer to the living God!

I think we all “kind of” know what fervent prayer is – but if you’re honest, maybe you’ll admit that you’re not praying FERVENT prayers all the time, or even most of the time, and therefore your praying has not been as effective as it should be! So this will be a great review for you on this vital topic of praying fervently.

And it also goes without saying that this verse goes on to say that prayers of righteous people are more effective than prayers from active sinners – unless those active sinners pray fervently to be forgiven, then even THEIR prayers are heard and are effective. Remember the story of the publican who went to the temple to repent—and the self-righteous Pharisee who also went. The one who was heard was the sinful publican – but he prayed fervently for God to be merciful to him, a sinner (as he called HIMSELF), and God heard!

There are also a few other things in these few verses, such as the hint that if you want to be healed, pray even more for others’ healing. Pray even for those who hate you and have insulted you. That prayer of course is to ask for their forgiveness and that they come see the light and stop their evil words – but your prayers are positive. Then, the end of verse 16—“the effective, FERVENT prayer” of the righteous are the ones that are most effective.

So this blog today: Are we praying “fervently”. The matter of being righteous is for another blog. Let’s focus on fervency in prayer today.

What makes a prayer a “fervent” prayer?

- Are they loud and animated? What scriptures would you use to support your belief they have to be loud and animated? I’m sure many fervent prayers are loud and animated, as we shall see – but others were not, also as we shall see.
- Do they have to be long? Or can a prayer GOD sees as “fervent” be a short prayer? What scriptures would you use to back up your belief on this?

When I was attending a private liberal arts college, it was often implied that a fervent prayer was powerful, was loud, and was animated. You catch my drift? But is that true? Does a prayer have to be loud to be fervent? Can you pray fervently in your mind, unknown to others, unheard by others?

The English word “fervent” comes from the Latin “fervere” –to boil over. To be HOT for what you’re doing and saying. The Greek has connotations of stretching out – as in beseeching. The words “labored fervently” – as used in Colossians 4:12 of Epaphras– is the

Greek agonizomai-- where we get the word “**AGONIZE**” from. It is translated “labor fervently”, strive, and fight. Do you remember Jacob wrestling with the Man all night until He would bless Jacob?

FERVENT PRAYER – IS WRESTLING with and CLINGING to GOD IN PRAYER, putting your whole being into it, your whole heart and soul – as you shall see. (GEN 32:26). **Jacob was NOT going to let God go until he received what he needed... a new name, a blessing.** THAT’S fervent prayer!!! We stay clinging to God in prayer until there is an answer. Paul got his answer after 3 requests. Yeshua himself prayed the same basic prayer three times in Gethsemane.

So we see that included in “fervency” is also the understanding of persistency, keeping at it, like the “importunate widow” of Luke 18, like Jacob wrestling all night, like Paul, like Elijah, like so many. If you pray fervently only once, for a short time, that may not really qualify as truly “fervent”. Fervency is built on a pattern of daily seeking our Maker and Savior and so when we do need to make the request, yes – sometimes it can be one quick short prayer – but it’s really a prayer built on a solid foundation of wrestling with God.

Genesis 32:26

And He said, "Let Me go, for the day breaks."

But he (Jacob) said, "I will NOT let You go unless You bless me!"

A KEY POINT: Fervency is not going to be enough, if you’re not praying to the one and only true living God, as we’ll see in the example of Elijah. And Jacob –he was wrestling all night with the one who became Yeshua, the Messiah.

What examples from the scriptures would you cite to illustrate fervent prayers? Let’s pause and you write down whatever prayers come to your mind immediately as fervent prayers from the Bible.

OK – let’s start with a few examples and see what common denominators they have.

1. JAMES USES ELIJAH’S prayers as an example of fervent prayer. We’ll start with that and move up!

James 5; 16- the fervent prayer is discussed. **V. 17-18**– he cites ELIJAH praying for it to stop raining for 3 years and it did stop raining. We’re not told much about the prayer in scripture, but the Spirit guided James to use that prayer as his example. You can read of the account in **1 Kings 17:1-7**. What I get from that story is the strong FAITH demonstrated by Elijah. He stated there would be no rain – except at his word – and that’s what happened.

On the other hand, when **Elijah prayed for it to start raining again, he prayed SEVEN times before the answer came. SEVEN TIMES.** So perhaps one point we can get from fervent prayer is this: are we really being fervent about a prayer topic (healing, a job we need, etc) if we stop praying about it when we don’t SEE the answer we asked for?

This was right after the dramatic miracle of the fire from heaven devouring the soaked sacrifices of Elijah – again, right after an earnest, fervent prayer – but one that took less

than a minute to say! The the pagan priests of Baal had been praying all day long – all to no avail, though they certainly were fervent! But they were not righteous. And they weren't praying to the correct and only God!

Elijah prayed – James says “earnestly”, a different word from the Hebrew word for “fervent”, but a word that implies heavy worship within the prayer. Elijah bowed with his head between his knees – seven times. He actually even announces to evil King Ahab that he knew it would rain soon, and that the sound of “abundance of rain” – before there was even a cloud in the sky! Let's read it in 1 Kings 18.

1 Kings 18:41-46

Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go up, eat and drink; for there is the sound of abundance of rain." 42 So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; then he bowed down on the ground, and put his face between his knees, 43 and said to his servant, "Go up now, look toward the sea."

So he went up and looked, and said, "There is nothing." And seven times he said, "Go again."

44 Then it came to pass the seventh time, that he said, "There is a cloud, as small as a man's hand, rising out of the sea!" So he said, "Go up, say to Ahab, 'Prepare your chariot, and go down before the rain stops you.'"

45 Now it happened in the meantime that the sky became black with clouds and wind, and *there was a heavy rain*. So Ahab rode away and went to Jezreel [many miles away]. 46 Then the hand of YHVH came upon Elijah; and he girded up his loins and ran ahead of Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

Obviously the prayer just before this one was fervent also when he prayed for YHVH, the one true living God, to accept his sacrifice in the sight of those gathered there:

1 Kings 18:36-39

36 And it came to pass, at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near and said, "YHVH God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let it be known this day that **You are God in Israel** and I am Your servant, and that I have done all these things at Your word. 37 **Hear me, YHVH, hear me**, that this people may know that You are YHVH Elohim (Lord God), and that You have turned their hearts **back to You** again."

38 Then the fire of YHVH fell and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood and the stones and the dust, and it licked up the water that was in the trench. 39 Now when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, "**YHVH, He is God! YHVH, He is God!**"

And by the way, ELIJAH – or Eliyah or Eliyahu in Hebrew – means “YAH is my God.”

What other examples of fervent prayers can you think of?

2. YESHUA, the ultimate fervent prayer example.

I would put this as #1 except I just thought I would use the same example that James used, but certainly the example of our Lord and Savior is the greatest example of all fervent prayers. There are several recorded in scripture we can learn from. Here is God-made-flesh praying to his heavenly father – and we might be tempted to

think he didn't need to pray like we have to. But he prayed OFTEN, and FOR A LONG TIME and KNEW where his power came from. DO WE? Do we ACT like we know?

The most classic of his fervent prayers was in the Garden of Gethsemane -- where he was put through an OLIVE PRESS of tension until he sweated blood. Gethsemane means "olive press".

A> GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Luke 22:39-46

Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. 40 When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

41 And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, **and He knelt down and prayed**, 42 saying, "Father, if it is your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done." 43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. **44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.**

45 When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. 46 Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

He spoke the same words, in three sessions of praying. And in this case – did God hear his prayer? YES. He heard the part, "NOT according to my will, **but your will** be done."

But are we hearing and seeing something in these prayers? In his **agony**, he prayed. He prayed earnestly. Notice the anguish of soul, the distress, the pathos that Mark describes:

Mark 14:32-39

Then they came to a place which was named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here while I pray." 33 And He took Peter, James, and John with Him, and **He began to be troubled and deeply distressed**. 34 Then He said to them, "**My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch.**"

35 He went a little farther, **and fell on the ground [Matthew 22:39 says he "fell on his face"] and prayed** that if it were possible, the hour might pass from Him. 36 And He said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will."

37 Then He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch one hour? 38 Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."

39 Again He went away and prayed, and spoke the same words.

All of that perfectly describes the ultimate fervency. Was his heart in those prayers?

Look how Paul describes what we just read:

Hebrews 5:6-9

As He also says in another place:

"You are a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek";

7 who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with ***vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death***, and was heard because of His godly fear, 8 though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered.

Some of you have NEVER cried in prayer. Yeshua did! Don't resist it, if the Spirit is guiding you to plead with tears to the Almighty –especially if it's for a fervent prayer for someone else, your wife, your daughter, someone very sick or someone feeling very low – when you pray FERVENTLY for others, GOD HEARS.

I asked several brothers and sisters in the faith to send me what they feel about this word – “Fervent” in terms of prayer. Each who answered added a new dimension to the basic understanding and I think you'll find their comments interesting:

A sister in the faith from Oklahoma said this below. And how I LOVE her candor and honesty about issues she sometimes has (and many of us also have at times) with prayer.

“Fervent as it relates to prayer: at first I see fervent to mean a burning in ones heart to pursue speaking with God as a priority in life. When I am fervently pursuing something (prayer as well) I feel that I am connecting deeply to the act. I see connection, trust, and sacrifice. Also faith. It takes faith and strong belief to act or at the very least to be consistent and not give up.

I find connecting to God in prayer in a fervent manner can be hard. I get caught up in the world and struggle to believe God really hears me when I call on Him. Recently, I have been meditating before prayer to bring down my walls to connect with how I am truly feeling so I can pray honestly. I want to be more connected with God and therefore, I know I must bring my walls down and fervently pursue this, until I can unveil myself to Him. Of course, He knows what I feel already, but this process helps me to come to Him with a more open heart.

So YES – I love how she says it: “**UNVEIL yourself**” before your Savior and Father and let the Spirit pray with and for you as Paul tells us in Romans 8, and open up your heart. Fervency has a LOT to do with opening up your heart and “Unveiling yourself”.

B_ LAZARUS' RESURRECTION --

Another great example of fervent prayer – but one that was short – was when Yeshua prayed for Lazarus to be resurrected. Prior to that prayer, he wept. (Those of you who resist weeping – are you getting this?) This was a day when our God openly wept in front of others. So you big tough guys – don't be tougher than God. He also wept over Jerusalem.

John 11:32-44

Then, when Mary came where Jesus was, and saw Him, she fell down at His feet, saying to Him, "Lord, if You had been here, my brother would not have died."

33 Therefore, when Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her weeping, He groaned in the spirit and was troubled. 34 And He said, "Where have you laid him?"

They said to Him, "Lord, come and see."

35 Jesus wept. 36 Then the Jews said, "See how He loved him!"

37 And some of them said, "Could not this Man, who opened the eyes of the blind, also have kept this man from dying?"

38 Then Jesus, again **groaning in Himself**, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone lay against it. **39 Jesus said, "Take away the stone."**

Martha, the sister of him who was dead, said to Him, "Lord, by this time there is a stench, for he has been dead four days."

40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not say to you that if you would believe you would see the glory of God?" 41 Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying.

(Jesus' prayer)

And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, **"Father, I thank You that You have heard Me."** [AWESOME faith; "have heard" – the dead man was still very dead at this point!!] 42 And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me." 43 Now when He had said these things, **He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!"** 44 And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

You've heard that story before. But are you feeling the PATHOS, the heart, the soul, the feeling of the Christ – and in this case, a short prayer, but full of power and pathos!

C – CHOOSING THE DISCIPLES – UP ALL NIGHT.

There are also accounts of our Savior praying ALL NIGHT before making major decisions – like who would be the 12 apostles, whose names would be forever and ever on the 12 foundations of the heavenly Jerusalem? (Revelation 21:14).

Luke 6:12-16

Now it came to pass in those days that He **went out to the mountain to pray, and continued ALL NIGHT in prayer to God.** 13 And when it was day, He **called His disciples to Himself; and from them He chose twelve whom He also named apostles:** 14 Simon, whom He also named Peter, and Andrew his brother; James and John; Philip and Bartholomew; 15 Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot; 16 Judas the son of James, and Judas Iscariot who also became a traitor.

Have you ever prayed all night long – about anything, about anyone? If not, why not?

(Story of my son Jon's blood spots on brain... prayed much of the night – and by morning, all was well.)

AN EXAMPLE OF A POWERFUL, SILENT PRAYER

One of the most powerful and fervent prayers in all the Bible was by a woman who had been barren. She was one of two wives of the Levite. Her name means “grace”. Do you know who I’m referring to?

Hannah. In her praying for a child, her lips moved but her words could not be heard, and so the High Priest Eli assumed she was drunk! And that prayer she prayed was answered so powerfully by God – leading to one of the descendants of Korah, Samuel, a famous “son of Korah” – one of the leading prophets in all the Bible! Her prayer was obviously a fervent prayer.

1 Samuel 1:9-18

“So Hannah arose after they had finished eating and drinking in Shiloh. Now Eli the priest was sitting on the seat by the doorpost of the tabernacle of YHVH. 10 And she **was in bitterness of soul**, and prayed to YHVH **and wept in anguish**. 11 Then she made a vow and said, “YHVH of hosts, if You will indeed look on the affliction of Your maidservant and remember me, and not **forget** Your maidservant, but will give Your maidservant a male child, then I will give him to YHVH all the days of his life, and no razor shall come upon his head.” [She made a Nazirite vow for her son-to-be.]

12 And it happened, as she continued praying before YHVH, that Eli watched her mouth. 13 **Now *Hannah spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard.*** Therefore Eli thought she was drunk. 14 So Eli said to her, “How long will you be drunk? Put your wine away from you!”

15 But Hannah answered and said, “No, my lord, I am a woman of sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor intoxicating drink, **but *have poured out my soul before YHVH.*** 16 Do not consider your maidservant a wicked woman, **for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief I have spoken until now.”**

17 Then Eli answered and said, “Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant your petition which you have asked of Him.”

18 And she said, “Let your maidservant find favor in your sight.” So the woman went her way and ate, and her face was no longer sad.

When she had the baby boy Samuel, she returned.

1 Samuel 1:25-28

Then they slaughtered a bull, and brought the child to Eli. 26 And she said, “O my lord (adon)! As your soul lives, my lord, I am the woman who stood by you here, praying to YHVH 27 **For this child I prayed, and YHVH has granted me my petition which I asked of Him.** 28 Therefore I also have lent him to YHVH; as long as he lives he shall be lent to YHVH.” So they worshiped YHVH there.

She prayed fervently -- from her *heart*. God heard. *How many prayers could we be having answered, if we would learn from Hannah – which means “Grace, or Favor” by the way?*

Now let’s review what made it “fervent”. First note that her HEART was in this prayer. She was deeply anguished. And she was not audible. Her lips moved but her voice was not heard.

Verse 13 is a key verse: "Hannah spoke in her heart". She was thinking this prayer. It was a heart-felt prayer, from and in her heart. Then **in verses 15-16** she reveals more of the answer.

"I have poured out my soul before YHVH"

"Out of the abundance of **my complaint** and **grief** have I spoken..."

I really fear that too many times, too many of us pray quickie prayers, going through the motions, and not with our whole hearts. If we're not careful, our praying is not much more than those who "say" their prayers, rather than PRAY. Do you hear the difference?

When we "Say our prayers" – we're going thru the routine, like so many Hail Mary's or those who recite old printed prayers rapidly, over and over, without their hearts in it.

So what makes a prayer "fervent"?

- **It's not so much about volume as it is about pouring out your soul to God. It's opening up your heart, your innermost hurts, disappointments, even complaints and feelings and worries and joys -- like you've never opened up before – before the One who knows you better than you know yourself.**
- **It's clinging to God and repeating the request several times with all your heart.**

Is your PRAYER FOR OTHERS as fervent as prayers for yourself?

Danger, danger:

- **We tend to be fervent when we're in deep trouble.** When we – or someone in our family – are in deep trouble, we're fervent. I think a lot of that is normal and understandable....
 - **Even David's prayers in the Psalms – we can feel his pathos and agony in praying about the troubles he was going through.**

But do we lose fervency when we're praying for someone else? I think we do much of the time... Are we AS fervent, praying for someone else's prayer request to us?

- **Is it just a prayer list – checking off points as we go down hurriedly?**
- **David DID say he actually FASTED for his enemies (I afflicted my soul).**

Remember – the FERVENT prayers of a righteous man avail much. If you're going to pray – put your heart and soul into it.

- **Another danger: sleepy-time prayers**
- **The "check it off my to-do-list prayers**
- **The distracted prayers.**

A man I respect highly from the NW USA had this to say:

"Fervent prayer: you will already have in mind to use James 5:16 and Col 4:12. And you probably have definitions (having or showing great warmth or intensity of spirit, feeling, enthusiasm; intensely passionate; ardent) so you have that covered. And you certainly will have the example of Yeshua's all night prayer where he sweated blood.

Colossians 4:12

“Epaphras, who is one of you, a bondservant of Christ, greets you, **always laboring fervently for you in prayers** that you may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God”

(Note on what Epaphras focused on in his prayers: that we stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.” Do we pray about those same things for others? Seriously, when did you last pray for someone to “stand perfect and complete in all the will of God”? We should be! Let’s continue with my brother in the faith’s comments now. My brother in YHVH continues...)

He continues: “Fervent for me consists of three things:

- 1) **When I am emotionally involved. When my heart aches with sorrow for what another is suffering.** When I am passionately involved in desiring a complete and immediate positive outcome (within God's will of course).
- 2) **When I am deeply focused in the words of my prayer.** (Often time’s distractions creep in during prayer time.) When there is so much concentration of what is being said/beseeched that there is no room for distraction to creep in (from without or within). Total focus.
- 3) Urgency. A combination of the two above.”

Fervency then has to do with having your HEART in your prayers. Emotion is good when channeled by God’s spirit. HE gave us tears. Even David, Hezekiah and even the son of God cried deep tears as they prayed. So don’t fall prey to those who belittle proper emotion.

So have your **heart** in your prayers. Be deeply **focused** -- but not on the giant problem, but on the giant problem *slayer*, our great God. Feel the **urgency**. These indeed are the key ingredients to examples of fervent prayer in God’s word. And I think we should always ask to be shown the leading of the Holy Spirit in everything we ask. Then believe in faith, according to God’s will.

I love the examples of prayers like the lad **Ishmael and Hagar’s** prayer in the wilderness with the son who became ancestor to so many of today’s Arabs – Ishmael. He was ready to die from thirst in the wilderness. **Genesis 21:14-21**. God heard the voice of the lad, dying in the wilderness, and even for Ishmael the living God heard and answered.

Paul and Silas, confined in the dank jails of the old world, in chains, with bleeding stripes – not only prayed, but sang hymns and praises – and they were heard. Read this if you’re unfamiliar with the story. **Acts 16:25-31**

Jehoshaphat – 2 Chronicles 20 – one of the greatest stories of answered prayer. His prayer started out terrified of the hordes of enemy outside the gates. Read that story for yourself. It’s terrific.

Another king – King Hezekiah – was being attacked by Assyrian Sennacherib – who belittled Hezekiah’s trust in the one living God – and here’s the story. Feel the pathos. Feel the fervency. Feel Hezekiah’s heart. Let his heart beat inside your chest as we read the

story. See how HE addressed that problem. Learn from that, plus recognizing to whom he took his problem. Notice what he said and did:

2 Kings 19:14-21

And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Hezekiah went up to the house of YHVH, and **spread it before YHVH**. 15 Then Hezekiah prayed before YHVH, and said: "YHVH God of Israel, the One who dwells between the cherubim, **You are God, You alone**, of all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. 16 Incline Your ear, YHVH, and hear; open Your eyes, YHVH, and see; and hear the words of Sennacherib, which he has sent to reproach the living God. 17 Truly, YHVH, the kings of Assyria have laid waste the nations and their lands, 18 and have cast their gods into the fire; for they were not gods, but the work of men's hands — wood and stone. Therefore they destroyed them. 19 Now therefore, YHVH our God, I pray, save us from his hand, **that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You are YHVH God, You alone.**" 20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah, saying, "Thus says YHVH God of Israel: **'Because you have prayed to Me against Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard.'**

*Did you get that? YHVH says – “**BECAUSE you prayed...** i.e., you **PUT YOUR HEART** into your prayer... “I have **HEARD**.” Wow!!! How much could **WE** be experiencing from YHVH – but aren’t – because we haven’t prayed to Him at all about these things?*

FOLKS: how much TIME do we – yes, me too – how much time do we WASTE in worry and being all stressed out and trying to figure things ourselveswithout at least fervently praying about our situation or others’ situations we’re praying about?

NEHEMIAH’S QUICK EFFECTIVE FERVENT PRAYER

A good example of another fervent prayer that was done quickly, but in one’s mind, but which was apparently powerful, was Nehemiah’s prayer when the king asked him what was troubling him. It was dangerous to not be happy around the king, as he could suspect you were plotting an assassination. To pray before answering the king, had to mean it was a very, very short prayer. **Nehemiah 2:2-4** – recounts a prayer that was made between sentences in a conversation with a king! And it too, was powerful and effective. And it too, was from a broken heart spilling out to God in heaven, who heard that prayer!

This happened right around Passover time – in the month of Nisan.... Just about where we are soon.

Nehemiah 2:1-5

And it came to pass in the month of Nisan, in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was before him, that I took the wine and gave it to the king. Now I had never been sad in his presence before. 2 Therefore the king said to me, "Why is your face sad, since you are not sick? This is nothing but sorrow of heart."

So I became dreadfully afraid, 3 and said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and its gates are burned with fire?"

4 Then the king said to me, "What do you request?"

So I prayed to the God of heaven. 5 And I said to the king, "If it pleases the king, and if your servant has found favor in your sight, I ask that you send me to Judah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may rebuild it."

What I like about Nehemiah's fervent prayer is that it was for Jerusalem! Not for himself. It was for Jerusalem! And his prayer started from a state of FEAR. Do you – and do I – *ever* pray fervently for Jerusalem – with our hearts, with feeling, with agony over what happens in Jerusalem today and what is about to happen?

Psalms 122:6

"Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:

"May they prosper who love you."

And now that you know we are to pray fervently, are we praying for the peace of Jerusalem – at all – and if we do, fervently so? Nehemiah sure did.

While the Jews were in captivity, they remembered Zion and this is what they said:

Psalms 137:5-6

"If I forget you, O Jerusalem,

Let my right hand forget its skill!

6 If I do not remember you,

Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth —

If I do not exalt Jerusalem

Above my chief joy."

Isaiah 62:6-7

"I have set watchmen on your walls, O Jerusalem;

They shall never hold their peace day or night.

You who make mention of YHVH, do not keep silent,

7 And give Him no rest till He establishes

And till He makes Jerusalem a praise in the earth."

I am thinking that "fervent" prayer has more to do with speaking from our hearts, opening up our thoughts – fears- concerns – even complaints – before God, openly than anything else. I said even "fears". *But we've been told for so long that we should not fear, so we fear to say we are afraid!* But God is our Daddy, and daddies want to know what is making their children afraid. They might know already -- but it helps if the children (that's US) get their fears out!

So when we pray – let's open up our hearts to our father. He knows our hearts anyway, but let's let it spill out. Cry and weep if you feel like it. Unveil yourself. Let your heart speak. It doesn't have to be loud, but it should be from your heart.

"Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks" – so let your words be truly what fills your heart and soul. **Matthew 12:34.**

So don't be afraid to express fear, doubt and worry. Just don't STAY there.
Psalms and others all express some fear. It's normal! We think of how brave
Moses was on and in a mountain that was on fire with God's presence! But
look at this:

Hebrews 12:20-21

(For they could not endure what was commanded: "And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow." 21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, "I am exceedingly AFRAID and trembling.")

TELL your God you are afraid! He wants you to! Just be sure you know where to look.

See v 19 of Deut 9:15-20: Moses was TERRIFIED, but still prayed, still spoke to GOD to spare his brother Aaron:

Deuteronomy 9:19-20

19 For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure with which YHVH was angry with you, to destroy you. But YHVH listened to me at that time also. 20 And YHVH was very angry with Aaron and would have destroyed him; so I prayed for Aaron also at the same time.

God worked a lot of times with people who were afraid:

Psalms 56:3-4

"Whenever I am AFRAID, I will trust in You.

4 In God (I will praise His word),

In God I have put my trust; I will not fear. What can flesh do to me?"

And yet God actually likes to reassure us to NOT be afraid. Let that sink in. Peace. Shalom. (I REFER to these scriptures quickly in the audio.)

Matthew 17:5-8

"While he was still speaking, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them; and suddenly a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!" 6 And when the disciples heard it, they fell on their faces and were greatly afraid. 7 But Jesus came and touched them and said, "Arise, and do not be afraid." 8 When they had lifted up their eyes, they saw no one but Jesus only.

ANOTHER HUGE point in fervent prayer – is this: the Prayer that Abba in heaven gets to hear may be distilled and refined to something quite a bit different than you may have started with. This is a good thing.

Romans 8:25-28

"But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God. 28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose."

Children of the Highest:

- **how much are we leaving undone – because we're not praying at all, or if we pray, they are dull, repetitious sleepy-time prayers that don't do much good?**
- **What could happen if we would just learn to pray fervently?**
- **How much more could we as children of God, bonded together, coming together, be doing if we would as one body, one mind, and one heart – pray more often, pray more fervently?**

ONE OF THE BIGGEST mistakes the children of God make – and the enemies of God make – is to misjudge the POWER of frequent and fervent prayer to the ONE TRUE LIVING GOD. Praying to “gods” of wood and stone, or to one's imagination, is not true effective prayer. And our prayers should be full of faith. Prayer is the one big tool we all claim to understand – but I have to wonder how many of us actually pray often, and pray fervently.

Let's you and I decide right now – we are going to be different, going forward. WE are going to be praying fervent prayers... for “the effective FERVENT prayer of the righteous man -- avails much.”

Closing prayer. I asked God and Yeshua to show us not just how to pray fervently, but also how to love them more than we ever have before. (By the way, it came to me in the closing prayer: one of the big points of being able to pray fervently is to learn to love what our God loves, to hate what he hates, to hurt what hurts him, to be pleased with what pleases him. Then, when we pray, we're praying the heart of God!)

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Other sermons on prayer from which you could benefit:

1. ["Hindered Prayer" - 1 Peter 3:7 by Philip Shields](#) April 5, 2012
How effective could we be as the Body of the Messiah, if more of us had powerful, effective, answered **prayer** - and less of us had **"hindered"** prayer? Discover 7 things God's Word tells us hinder prayer ...
- 2 -- [Pray For These Things Also by Philip Shields](#) Nov 7, 2006
(Sermon media)
If you're in a **"prayer slump"** lately, this sermon can be a solid "pick-me-up" for you. Here we focus on scriptures that tell us clearly what to pray about. Then we take it up a notch and examine the de ...
- 3 [Why Pray? - Part I by Philip Shields](#) Dec 15, 2005
We know we should pray. But why? Knowing "why" may give more meaning to your **prayers** and more incentive to pray. Does God hear the prayers of sinners, or people who are not part of 'His' church?
4. [Why Pray? - Part II by Philip Shields](#) Jan 5, 2006
We know we should pray. But why? Knowing "why" may give more meaning to your **prayers**
- 5. [BE God's holy Living Temple and House of Prayer by Philip Shields](#) Sept 14, 2014
... Are our lives His House of **Prayer**? Being dedicated and consecrated for sacrifice, prayer and worship. Temples and threshing floors. When God's temple needs cleansing. All this and more. ..