

Scripture in intercession and worship.

Foundational to our belief is that all Scripture is God breathed. (2 Tim 3:16). It has been spoken by Him to His prophets and they in turn wrote it down so that all generations would be able know and understand Him.

There are many different images in the Bible that help us understand what God's word can do.

- 1) It is a fire and a hammer that breaks rock (Jer 23:29)
- 2) A double edged sword that reveals our motives and their origin (Heb: 4:12)
- 3) It is a sword, belonging to the Spirit, that we wield under His inspiration (Eph 6:17).
- 4) It is a lamp and a light, guiding us along our path. (Psalm 119:105).
- 5) It is bread that nourishes us daily (Deut 8:3 and Matt 4:4)
- 6) It is like a seed that once planted in our spirit and soul, begins to grow and bring life (1 Pet 1:23)
- 7) It is the mirror of God that allows us to see ourselves as He sees us and to live out His promises to us (James 1:22-25).

God's word has 2 forms: the logos and the rhema.

The logos is the complete word of God which is our Bible and Jesus Himself.

Both are the full/complete revelation of God. (John 1:1)

The rhema is a revealed portion (Matt 4:4)

In addition to the ways that as children of God we read and study and grow in God's word, there are 3 different ways that God's word is directed in intercession and worship.

- 1) To God. We remind God of His promises and call upon who He says He is. Abraham did this in Genesis 18:20-25.
- 2) To the earth – creation, nations, cities, individuals. We can prophetically proclaim God's intent and will. There are Scriptures that have not yet been fulfilled, and we can stand on these and declare them, and there are His promises that are a continual and eternal action: salvation, healing, freedom, provision, deliverance etc. But, all of God's word is living –

Isaiah 55:11:

As the rain and snow come down from heaven and stay upon the ground to water the earth, and cause the grain to grow and to produce seed for the farmer and bread for the hungry, so also is my word. I send it out,

and it always produces fruit. It shall accomplish all I want it to and prosper everywhere I send it.

God's word as we speak it out releases the intention/will/purpose of God. To stick with the imagery here in Isaiah, it's as though there is a massive rain cloud over the earth that is full of God's words, just waiting to pour down. As we pray with God's word, we add to the weight of the cloud until it reaches the point of bursting and raining over the situation. This causes the words that have already been sown to grow. We can also ask God for what He has already spoken about a situation, the seeds, and speak it out again and again and again in faith and in the knowledge that it will bear fruit! God has said it would.

- 3) To satan and the demonic realm. Satan knows Scripture, but don't be deceived into thinking he understands it fully, he does not. Jesus would not have been crucified if he had.

In the gospels of Matthew and Luke, we read of Jesus' response to the tempting of satan. He attempted to use Scriptures, the word of God against the Word of God. Meditate on that for a moment. A fallen angel tried to use the words of his creator against the Creator incarnate. The more you think about it, the more ridiculous it seems.

And what was the Word's response? "It is written..." 3 times He responded with Scripture; no argument, no justification or explanation, simply "It is written..." We have this same Word living in us through Holy Spirit. That same authority that spoke to satan then, speaks through us today. This is such a powerful weapon in our warfare. But it requires that we know the Logos, that we have it in our hearts – our memory, in order to have the rhema response at any given time. Jesus didn't take time to research what was the appropriate response. He knew it by heart because He had studied it all His natural life.

Speak in Faith

When we speak out Scripture in faith, we speak what in Hebrew is referred to as "dabar"; it means 'spoken word', and within it is everything needed to accomplish what is being spoken, the intent and will of God. I refer to *dabar* as the '4P word': promise; purpose, power and provision. Those are all included in the meaning of God's word, God's *dabar*. That is why the prophet Isaiah wrote what he did in Isaiah 55:11. He knew and understood that when God spoke, everything necessary was already contained in His words.

Genesis 1:3: "Let there be... and it was". When we pray using Scriptures, we release this "let it be" of God, and in the fullness of its appointed time, it will be. Sometimes that time is not always when we would like it to be, but remember God has said that His words will fulfil His plans.

The Word of God is our double edged sword as we have already seen. It builds up and it cuts down. It tears down the lies and strategies of the enemy and anything that exalts itself above the knowledge of God. It builds us up! As we hear the words, the promises, power, provision and purposes of God, our faith increases as we hear/see as God does. We have revelation! We experience the "Oh, that is what You're doing and going to do" and we move into a position of agreeing with Him and declaring "Let it be according to Your word"! Our focus moves from the situation **to** God. Instead of trying to think of our own solution and what we think needs to happen, we see what God is already planning, that He has the power to do it, and we are reminded of His faithfulness to His promises. We become strengthened and energised. We lift up God's standard, and it is always so much higher than our own.

Practically, how does it look? In the desert, we see Jesus simply quoting a verse, even half a verse, and Satan departed. Sometimes that is enough, and we can see the effects immediately. But I am not Jesus and I do not speak with full understanding, or with the exact same authority that He did. I'd have slept a lot better last night if I did! (Big storm) Also, God's word, just like His name, is not a magic wand that we wave and 'poof'! As with His name, our authority in using both comes from our intimacy and obedience to Him. That doesn't mean I have to theologically study Scriptures before I can use them, but as I have already said, I do need to know them well enough to have it my arsenal. And I also need to rely on Holy Spirit to open them up to me as I pray.

What does that mean? When we are in prayer and a verse comes to mind, God wants us to release the promises, power, provision and purpose, the 'let it be', which we do as we what I call 'butterfly' the verse/s with Holy Spirit.

What do I mean by 'butterfly'? To butterfly in cooking terms, means to open up a piece of meat. You start with a lump, and with a knife, cut it in a way that spreads it out further, making it easier to cook and therefore eat. It's like you have your hands clasped together tightly, then you open them out flat. All that space and room! As you begin to speak out the word you will 'see' so much more than the words on the page, and for those listening, different verses, revelations and connections will come and faith will rise. As we listen to the prayers of each other, intentionally listening for what stirs our faith, and pray

from that place, we move into a very powerful place in intercession and worship.

Example:

God, You have said in Your word, (Isaiah 65:1 – don't need to quote the reference to God), You were sought by those who didn't ask for You and were found by those who weren't seeking you and that even to a nation that didn't know You, You said 'Here I am'. Father, we are a nation that does not know You. We are a nation that is not seeking You. We have chosen to go our own way, to shut You out and ridicule those who do seek after You. We seek our own justice, our own righteousness. We do not value justice or life and we are full of violence and wickedness. Yet You, O God, You are still saying "Here I am". Through everything that You, Jesus did on the cross, the death You died in our place, You are still saying "Here I am." Oh God, in Your mercy, in Your kindness, would You open the ears of our nation to hear Your invitation to come to You, to find You...."

There are so many other verses popping into my mind as I freely write this prayer. What stirs you? What verses pop into your mind as you hear that prayer? Take note of them, write them down.

It takes practice, but once you find yourself in the flow, you can go far. And that's on your own. Imagine being with others and feeding your faith from their faith? This is why intercession is thrilling and fulfilling!

God wants us to take His word and wield it well! As we do, we unleash His power, promises, provision and purpose on the earth, and then we get to stand back and watch Him be God.

Practical Application:

Ephesians 1:3-23.

We're going to pray for 2 different areas using the same passage of Scripture.

- 1) Pray for the global church, for her to be living in the fullness of everything that God has for her in these times so that she can be the witness to God that God has always intended her to be.
- 2) Pray for those who don't yet know Him, who haven't yet responded to His invitation to come.

Read the verses out loud and invite Holy Spirit to highlight one or 2 verses to you. Take note of what is stirring you, either in faith, with verses, images, emotions. Don't dismiss what you feel as you hear the verses being read. God uses all our senses to speak to us.

Read, listen, one person start (no sharing), listen to each other and pray only from what has stirred you as you listened. When you feel you have stopped with that verse, somebody else starts to pray with the verse from the passage that stirred them and so on.

We'll pray for 15-20 minutes then come back before moving on to the second topic.