



WORDSPIRIT



Between **THE LIVING AND THE DEAD**

- EMEKA NDUKWE

Nations seek after God, but there is one man that God Himself seeks after, and that is the man that understands what it means to stand in the gap. That was why God talking in His Word said ***"I sought for a man that would stand in the gap..."*** (Ezekiel 22:30). Israel was busy looking for God to come and deliver them from Egypt, while God Himself was busy looking for a Moses that would stand in the gap for them. And until God found a Moses that could stand in the gap for Israel, He could not deliver them from the bondage of Pharaoh and of the Egyptians.

The man that stands in the gap is the man that bridges the gap between humanity and divinity. He is the vessel through which God flows to the nations of the earth. One man that can stand in the gap is worth more than many nations to Jehovah. That was why when God was angry with Israel, He said to Moses ***"Now, therefore, leave me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make you into a great nation"*** (Exodus 32:10). It implies that one Moses that understood what it means to stand in the gap was worth more than many nations to God.

If God does not discuss with you what He intends to

do in a city, then you are not a watchman over that city. Abraham was the watchman over Sodom, that was why God could not destroy the city of Sodom without first discussing it with him (**Genesis 18:17**). If God does not tell you things concerning your family, both nuclear and extended, then you are not the watchman over your family. And the reason you are yet to be the watchman over your family or city is that you are yet to stand in the gap for them.

A lot of awful things happen in some families today because none of the family members understands what it means to stand in the gap for their family. There are families whose gates lack gatekeepers. In the spirit realm, the most important people are found at the gate, and the scripture called them the elders at the gate (**Lamentations 5:14**). Don't let your family be without a gatekeeper while you are still alive. Don't let your city be without a gatekeeper while you are still alive!

The scripture says that Aaron stood between the living and the dead (**Numbers 16:48**). He was a gatekeeper in Israel. That he stood between the living and the dead, simply meant that he stood at the gate between the living and dead to stop the living

from crossing over to death, even as a deadly plague struck the land.

Elijah collected the only son of the widow of Zarephath as a dead child, restored the boy to life and returned him to his mother as a living child (**1Kings 17:17-23**). Any prophet can collect a dead child and bury him. But it takes a prophet that understands what it means to be a gatekeeper to open the gates of death and bring back a child that had crossed over to death. The widow of Zarephath needed a prophet that understood what it meant to be a gatekeeper. She knew Elijah was the one, and so sent for him (**1Kings 17:18**).

One young woman rushed her convulsing child to my house in the early hours of the morning. She banged on my door with so much force that I was forced to rush to the door to find out what was happening. As I opened the door, she threw the unconscious child into my hands and said to me, "I know my child cannot die in your hands". I was moved by so much compassion.

I was looking at the child and was communicating with God in the spirit realm without really saying any words with my mouth. The mother was wondering why no words came out of my mouth as I stared at the child. Little did she know that I was talking with God in my spirit, reminding Him of my covenant with Him that I will not bury any of the church members prematurely. It was after I had reminded God of that covenant, that I laid my hand on the boy's head and spoke words of healing over him. And instantly, he regained consciousness and was healed of the convulsion.

The Lord said to me, "Son, If I can find an Elijah that can stand on the mountain of intercession with his head between his knees, then I and the council of heaven cannot withhold our dew and rain"

The heaven withheld its dew and rain until the day that Elijah chose to do his work as a gatekeeper by standing on Mount Carmel in intercession, with his head between his knees. Where are the gatekeepers?

THE BURDEN OF INTERCESSION

The burden of intercession is that urge in your spirit to stand in the gap for a people or even for yourself. You are failing in your spiritual responsibility each time you feel the burden of intercession and do nothing about it. God does not move on earth anyhow; He moves in response to the prayers of men. That was why when He was sending Moses to Egypt, He said to Him *"I have heard the cry of my people, go down to*

Egypt and deliver them from the oppressions of Pharaoh ..." (**Exodus 3: 7-9**). That is to say, God developed the agenda for the liberation of Israel from Egypt because the Israelites cried out in prayers to the Lord God of Israel.

God was busy doing His business in heaven, even after Peter was arrested in the course of fulfilling his God-given assignment and was put in prison. However, that was until the early church arose in intercession. In other words, Peter would have been executed the way James was executed, if the early church had not stood in intercession. That you are doing what God had sent you to do is not enough reason for you to relent in prayer. For God moves in response to prayers.

Whenever the move of God is scarce in any particular place, it is a pointer that intercession is yet to go up to God. Intercession begets intervention. When you intercede, God intervenes. Pastor Benny Hinn had a powerful move of God on the first night of one of his meetings. The people were so blessed that they were in a haste to return the following day with their friends and family members. Hours to the next day of the next meeting, pastor Benny Hinn was hanging out with some friends when the burden to intercede for the meeting hit his spirit. He said he was not done with discussing with his friends when that burden hit him. And so, instead of responding to the burden, he chose to go ahead with the discussion with his friends. By the time he was done discussing with them, the burden for that particular intercession was no longer on him. When he eventually arrived at the venue of the meeting in the evening, he said the meeting was so dry of God's presence that he hurried away from the altar at the end of the meeting. The people were wondering if he was the same Benny Hinn that ministered the previous night.

Be careful not to play with burdens for intercession, it could be very detrimental to you. Nothing cheats a Christian like his dropping the burden for intercession to do other things. Whenever you feel that burden of intercession, that is actually when there is an opening in the spirit realm for you to act by travelling in the place of prayer. And if you don't settle it in the spirit realm at such times, it will eventually stop or affect you negatively in the physical realm. In your walk as a child of God, you are supposed to win in the spiritual realm and then manifest it in the physical realm. But if you refuse to win in the spirit realm by travelling the place of intercession, you cannot overcome it in the physical realm. Benny Hinn, as anointed as he was, struggled with his meeting because he missed it in the place of intercession.

Be careful how you play with the burdens of intercession as you may be playing with your life and those of others. A lady was hanging out with her friends when she felt a very strong burden to intercede for her family. She was actually in a restaurant. What she did was excuse her friends and entered the nearest restroom. She said she prayed in tongues until the burden was lifted. That was when she got a confirmation in her spirit that the issue had been settled in the spirit realm. She returned to her friends and by the time she sat down to continue gisting with her friends, her phone rang, and what was the message? Her parents were involved in a ghastly motor accident, all the people in the vehicle died and it was only her parents that came out unscratched. The accident happened at about that particular time she felt the burden to pray. Although she did not know what the issue was, she went ahead to pray in tongues until she had relief in her spirit.

To play with spiritual signals is to end insignificantly in life. To play with signals from the Holy Ghost is to play into the hands of the devil. And one of the major signals of the Holy Ghost is the burden of intercession. Those that understand its gravity don't play with it.

THE TRAVAIL OF THE RIGHTEOUS

The scripture says that no sooner than Zion travailed than she gave birth to nations (**Isaiah 66:8**). The scripture didn't say she gave birth to an individual, it rather says she gave birth to a nation at once. Meaning that the only place you can give birth to so many good things at once is at the place of intercession. That is the place of travelling in prayers. A travelling woman that is having contractions in labour, will have the contractions persist until she gives birth to her child. Whereas in the case of the travail of the righteous, the contractions (burden) will not always struggle with you. The Holy Spirit withdraws the burden when He sees that you are not ready to cooperate with Him by interceding. He will never continue to force Himself on you when you intentionally would not respond to His promptings.

God does not compel us to go against our will (**1 Peter 5:2**). In another part, it says, the Spirit of God will not continue to strive with man (**Genesis 6:3**). The travail of the righteous is always heavy because he does it following the promptings of the Holy Ghost. The travail of Elijah on Mount Carmel was heavy because he did it by the promptings of the Holy

Ghost. Look at what Elijah said before he travailed to get it to rain in Israel. He said, *“there is a sound of the sound of abundance of rain”* (**1 King 18:41**). Where did he hear the sound of the abundance of rain? In the spirit realm of course. He picked the signal from the spirit realm, and so travailed by it. That was what made his travail Spirit-aided.

The weight of your travail in the place of prayer is in the fact that it is aided by the Holy Ghost. No wonder the scripture says that you do not know what to say in the place of travelling in prayer, but that the Holy Ghost maketh intercessions for you with groanings that cannot be uttered (**Romans 8:26**). In other words, He aids you to travail. That is the confidence with which you can change anything in the place of prayer, for the Holy Ghost cannot fail. There is no failure with God.

The travail of the righteous can cause, as well as, stop the rain, just like we saw in the case of Elijah (**1 King 17:1; 18:41-45**). It can cause the sun and the moon to stop, just like we saw in the case of Joshua (**Joshua 10:12-13**). That is to say, he commanded the times and seasons. Whatever controls the sun and the moon also controls the times and the seasons.

THE QUALITIES OF EFFECTIVE GATEKEEPER

1. HEART FULL OF COMPASSION.

You cannot watch over a people or stand in the gap for them when you don't have compassion for them. Compassion is the mobile part of love. Whenever you hear scripture say that Jesus had compassion on anyone, it simply meant that the love in His heart moved to them. Scripture says He had compassion on them and healed their sick (**Matthew 14:14**). That is to say, the healing flowed to them because of the love in the heart of Jesus.

Jesus functioned as a gatekeeper in the home of Mary and Martha whose brother was Lazarus because He had love for the family. It was the love that Jesus had for Lazarus that made him weep at his tomb (**John 11:33-36**). When the people saw Jesus weeping because of Lazarus, they said *“look at how much He loved him...”* (**John 11:36**). Before Jesus wept, we know from the scripture that He was moved with compassion. That is to say, His weeping was a manifestation of His compassion, which was a manifestation of His love. There can never be compassion without love. Love is the mother of every compassion.

Jesus talking to Peter in the scripture said unto him,

“If you love me, feed my sheep” (John 21:16 and 17).

In other words, “if you love me, stand in the gap for my sheep”. Be their gatekeeper. God cannot put the burden of someone you don't love on you. God already knows that nothing can work outside of love. Pastor David Yongi Cho of South Korea could not be the gatekeeper of Japan for as long as he hated them. He once told the story of how he went to minister in Japan. And as he mounted the podium to preach, the hatred in his heart towards them was so much that he couldn't even say a word to them. He said he stared at them until he started weeping out of the hatred in his heart. He confessed to the people there on the stage that he was struggling with the hatred he had for them as Japanese all because of the way the Japanese massacred his people, the South Koreans, during one of the wars in that region. The Japanese brethren there joined him in weeping and begged him to forgive them and the sins of their fathers.

At that point, Pastor Yongi Cho discovered he could not forgive them with his human strength and then asked the Holy Spirit to help him overcome the bitterness he felt in his heart. He said it was at that point that he felt the melting power of the Holy Spirit as it melted every darkness of unforgiveness in his heart. That was when he felt as if a heavy load was lifted from him. From that day onward, he was able to love the Japanese people wholeheartedly and went ahead to be their gatekeeper. Then his ministry spread over Japan, and he became a source of tremendous spiritual blessing to them. He couldn't be a gatekeeper in Japan until he was able to love them. It is a spiritual mystery!

2. STRONG PERSONAL ALTAR WITH GOD.

The stronger your altar with God, the more effective you can be at being a gatekeeper to the nations of the

earth. That was why it was only Elijah, even though the other seven thousand prophets had not bowed to Baal, that could stand as the gatekeeper of Israel on Mount Carmel. They were seven thousand prophets with altars not strong enough, and that was why they all hid in caves even the day Elijah appeared on Mount Carmel.

As a child of God, you must build an altar not just strong enough to bear your spiritual burdens, but also those of others. That is when you are a representative of God on earth. That is when you can reach out to others and be a blessing unto them. Let your altar with God be strong enough to bear the burdens of others. That is when you can be effective at impacting other lives. That was why it took a Moses that had a strong altar with God to be the gatekeeper of Israel.

This is where a lot of the men of God are missing it these days; they are trying to build relationships with men at the expense of their altar with God. If you put God first, then your relationship with God must be paramount. The scripture says the apostles were called to be with Jesus, that He might send them (**Mark 3:14**). They were called to be with Jesus so that they might develop an altar strong enough to stand as gatekeepers so that Jesus could then dispatch them to their world.

The man that spends only few minutes in a day at his altar with God cannot be equipped enough to be the gatekeeper to his immediate family, let alone the gatekeeper to his extended family or his nation. That was why after God called Moses to be the gatekeeper of Israel, one of the first things He taught him was how to spend forty days and forty nights at his altar with God (**Exodus 24:18**).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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