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Joel S Goldsmith
42:A The Nature of God and Prayer (Part 1)

Good afternoon! In my own hometown nobody says *Good Afternoon*. (Response: Good afternoon)

Although this is the first time that I have been in New York City with the message of The Infinite Way, this is really my home town. This is where I was born and brought up and lived the first twenty-five percent of my life on earth. I still had seventy-five percent to go.

Those of you who have read The Infinite Way writings know, of course, that the entire work began when I was a youngster of twelve or thirteen and brought up in a home that had no religious training. We had no religious schooling at any time except that our parents taught us the Ten Commandments. But somewhere along about thirteen an unrest came, which my mother later told me she believed to be a desire to know God, but which I couldn't understand because I had no knowledge of what God might be.

And then it was when I was nineteen years of age a voice spoke within me and said *If you could become a Mason you would learn about God*. And inasmuch as no member of my family up to that time had been a member of a Masonic lodge, I didn't know what that meant until I spoke to some of the men in our business. And they told me that God played a part in Masonic work. And of course from then on I had no rest until my application was in a Masonic lodge. And it was arranged that right after my twenty-first birthday I should receive my first initiation, which I did.

Immediately after my twenty-first birthday I received the first degree in Masonry and was presented with a Bible. And that is the first Bible that I have any knowledge of having seen. Since then I've discovered that what we call *Gideons* in hotel bedrooms are really Bibles. But at that time I didn't know it.

In the Masonic work I did find my first reference to God. But I did not receive the answer of what God is. Strangely enough a research into Masonic antiquity resulted later in my finding the key of this work; and we'll come to that a little later. Meanwhile the point that has always been with me has been: *What is God?* And the answer never came satisfactorily during those early days of search and study. More particularly because the same question presented itself to me then that presents itself to so many millions in the world today and to which the orthodox religions of the world have no answer. And that is this: If there is a God how is it possible to have so much sin, disease, death, lack, limitation, poverty, volcanoes, earthquakes, disasters, automobile catastrophes, still-born children, children born blind, deformed? How can all that be - and there be a God? There are many earnest people who question God for that very reason.

Well, if you think it over from that standpoint there is a lot to the question, isn't there? If there is a God how can all these things be? And of course the whole purpose now of this work is to reveal the answer to that question. That is the discovery that I made. How there can be a God and these things too. And how the contact or realization of God eliminates these things from our individual experience. And when turned to, even collectively, will change them for whole communities, whole industries. Ultimately, it must change it for the world.

You know it probably seems strange that as the years roll on people all over the world congregate to pray to God. The strange thing that people can do that thousands of years on end with so little answer to their prayers and still keep on praying, and often even hope that although it hasn't happened for all these thousands of years, it may happen now.

Sometime ago the question came up: where does prayer fit into this work of God realization? And my answer was: first there must be the acknowledgement that all of the prayers taught in a church is a sin. All of the prayer taught in a church is a sin. It seems startling at first. Until I ask how many people have prayed in the Depression for supply, how many people have prayed for food or clothing, or fuel or housing or money? And of course the answer you know: millions, millions. And then I ask this question: Did the Atlantic Ocean or the Pacific Ocean run out of fish in those Depression years? Did the State of Maine run out of potatoes or the Middle-west run out of wheat or the South run out of cotton? Did the earth run out of coal, oil, diamonds? No, you know there was just as much on earth then as in the Roaring Nineteen-Twenties; just as much of everything if not a little more. And yet people were praying to God.

And while people were praying to God for these things, the government was taking them and destroying them; taking food out into the ocean in thousands and sinking it to keep it off the market; paying farmers not to raise crops, ploughing under cattle. And all of this time, millions of people gathering in churches and praying to God for food, clothing, housing. Sin wasn't it? A sin, in the face of God to ask that more should be sent to earth while most of what was being sent to earth was being destroyed.

And the answer to the how, the why, the wherefore of this comes in this realization: turning to God for anything is what separates us from. Turning to God and asking for more is what separates us from our good. God has no more to give than God is giving. God has no more to supply than God is supplying. The earth is full of God and God's riches, God's abundance and God's grace - without money, without price. Ah, that's true and you know it!

The next question comes: how do I avail myself of this infinite abundance? And there is where the intelligent question comes in. First make the acknowledgement that the earth is full of God's abundance. First make the acknowledgement that God has no more to give. The oceans are full of fish, the oysters are full of pearls and the earth is full of oil, coal, fuel, fodder, crops, animals. The cattle on a thousand hills are yours and a thousand hills are filled with cattle. *The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, and Son, all that I have is thine.*

So rather than turn to God in prayer in asking, pleading, petitioning or even in the modern prayer of affirming, let us find the secret of prayer, and you will have the secret of harmony, wholeness, completeness, perfection, even peace on earth.

It has been my great privilege in the past two years to be called in on four of the major capital/labour problems in the United States; problems dealing with the major unions and the heads of the major unions, and major industries. And to see these problems solved in twenty-four hours after prayer was called for. Not asking God to please give us capitalists our way and not asking God to give us poor workmen our way. No, no, no! Prayer - that prayer that brings the individual into conscious union with the power that is, the power we call God.

To reach this point of unfoldment, demonstration, it first becomes necessary to understand what God is. Back in India where the first spiritual light was given to mankind, God was known as Father and as Mother. But mostly as Mother, they used the term Father very little. It was only as the light went across Egypt and from Egypt to Abraham and to the Holy Lands that God became Father. Mother was virtually dropped from the Hebraic teachings and God became Father. And this you'll find carried all the way up through the ministry of Christ Jesus: *Father, Our Father which art in heaven, the Father within me doeth the works.* And so as you study the nature of God through the mind, the soul, the consciousness of our ancient saints, sages, seers, prophets, you will find that the word God really had meaning when men took it into their consciousness as Father, as a creative principle, as a protective principle, as a

governing principle, as all that we understand by the term Father, more especially a loving father.

Later, when the Quakers began their work in Europe they adopted the oriental title of Mother and combined it with the Hebrew title of Father, and gave us Father Mother God, giving us the entire principle, creative principle, maintaining principle, governing principle, care, love, all that is implied in what we call Father and Mother.

And as we have come down into the modern days, God is usually referred to as He. It so happened that Mrs Eddy who was brought up a few miles from the Quaker settlement and there learned of the Father Mother God and incorporated it into her teachings. Later it was taken into Unity and today in the metaphysical world you have a great deal of the Father Mother idea of God. While it is true that as you get into a personal relationship with God, intimate relationship with God, you find all of those qualities of creative principle and fatherhood and motherhood. It is also true that the perpetuation of the term He and She so personalized God as to make God a sort of Super Man, and thereby we lose much of our realization of the nature of God.

And so it came to me in my work – I didn't originate it – but it came to me forcibly in my work that the proper way to understand God would be with the word It. Take that quality of male and female out of it, take that quality of man and woman out of it and perhaps get closer to some idea of that which could never be personalized and that is God; never be personalized in our sense of a Super Father or Super Mother. Because by then it was becoming evident to me that the world was fast getting nowhere with its prayer and that the metaphysical world was coming closer to it in using affirmation and denial in place of petition, pleading and sacrifice.

God is a very difficult subject to talk about, because once we have been touched by the finger of God or once we have touched the hem of that robe, the very outer fringe of it, God becomes so much of a reality that words fail to express it. But it becomes clearer when we search the scripture and find a great thread running all the way through from the scripture of India, say four, five thousand BC, up through the Hebrew scriptures, the Christian and all through - in the sense of an everpresent God that a recently modern poet has said *Closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet*; omnipresent with us, with us, with us.

As you go back into that you find the great miracle of Moses in the realization that *I am*. And when you go through from Moses and realize the word *Emanuel*, God with us, or Elijah's *still small voice* – and the still small voice could not be very far off could it? And then you learn that *thou I make my bed in hell Thou art there. Whither shall I flee from Thy spirit? If I make my bed in hell Thou art there.* And the psalmist says *Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil for Thou art there.*

And we begin to get the realization that whatever God is, whatever the nature of God is, It is where I am. That much must become clear before prayer can be effective. Whatever God is, wherever God is, one thing must first of all become clear to you and that is whatever the nature of God, It is where I am. And that I can be brought nowhere except where God will be found, whether it be in hell; the hell of sin, the hell of disease, the hell of poverty, wherever it is that I am, God is right there.

Now, many people believe that sin or disease or death is the evidence of the lack of God and thereby they separate themselves from it. God is never so close as when we are in sin, disease, death, lack or limitation, and our acknowledgement of that opens the door for the experience of God. It is very much like... let us turn back here for a moment to Romans: *Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or*

famine or nakedness or peril or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us, for I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God. Do you follow that?

Our belief has been that when we have been in sin, lack, disease, fear, God is absent from us and in that very belief we have perpetuated that sense of separation. Now, as you study Moses and find the *I am*, Elijah and find the *still small voice*, the Psalmist and discover that *even in hell and even in death or the shadow of death*, that God is omnipresent through all that, and as you follow through into the Master *the Father within me*; not outside here but *the Father within me doeth the work*. And then come to St Paul and learn *I can do all things through Christ, the spirit of God which is in me, for I live yet not I, Christ the spirit of God liveth in me*, Emanuel liveth in me – for Christ and Emanuel are the same thing.

You come down to this point of realizing we haven't yet found what God is but we at least have discovered that wherever I am, God is. And it makes no difference now whether I am Jew or Gentile. And afterwards you will find as you go through the study, it makes no difference whether you are Mohammed or Hindu or Catholic, whatever you may be, wherever you are, that one infinite eternal Father is, whether it's under the name of *I am* or whether it's under the name of the *still small voice*, whether it's under the name of *the Father within* or *the Christ in me*.

It was about this time as these things were dawning on me, that a woman who was of very, very advanced years – quite up into the nineties, late nineties – had a very pleasant healing through my work and wanted to make me a gift. And not being of great means she searched to see what she could give me. And one day she came in and said: *Are you by any chance a Mason?* I said: *Yes by some chance I am a Mason*; by the chance that God put my nose in that particular direction some nineteen years ago. *Well, I want to give you this book.*

And it's a book on, as it turned out, a man's search for the lost password in Masonry. It's a word not used and so it's no violation to tell you the secret password of a Mason since it isn't that any longer, but it was at one time. Men have searched for it and men have found it.

According to the story, when a man became a Master Mason, he was to be given a word, a password, and this password would enable him to travel throughout the world, any place. But wherever he was, just with the presentation of this password, he would receive a Master's wages, not just a helper, not just an unskilled workman but a Master's wages – very much like carrying a Union card today. But in those days his password was to give him a Master's wages. Now what do you think that password is? I am sure most of you know it or can guess it. The password is *I am*.

And all a man had to know is *I am* and immediately he found himself in possession of a Master's wages. Now you see we have that same secret today in our work. Any individual who carries the name *I am*, not *I will be* or *shall be* or *could be* or *would like to be*, not even *I pray to be* or *hope to be* or *I deserve to be*, no; but anyone who carries in their consciousness, in their inner wisdom those words *I am* will find themselves in possession of health, harmony, wholeness, completeness, perfection, peace, joy, power, dominion.

It is not possible to understand that the *I in the midst of me is mighty* and lack for any good thing. It is not possible, when we understand that God is in the very midst of our individual being, right where I am is holy ground; *the place whereon thou standest is holy ground*.

Now, I said that why if this true, is there still so much sin, disease, death, lack, limitation, fear in the world? And again we go back to scripture and we learn this: In the 91st Psalm we

are told *He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most high*, and then the psalm goes on to tell us of all of the *evils that will not come nigh our dwelling place*. But we have misread that psalm and we have believed that none of these errors, discords, inharmonies, terrors by night, will come nigh your dwelling place or my dwelling place and it never said that. It said that it *will not come nigh the dwelling place of he that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High*. He that lives there, *lives and moves and has his being in God*. Ah, to the others *a thousand will fall at thy left hand and ten thousand will fall at thy right*. Ah, *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee; stayed on Thee*. There's the secret, *stayed*.

I have never seen the righteous begging bread, we read. It's true. Who are the righteous though? People who go to church Sunday? Not necessarily. The righteous are those who fulfil the law of scripture, those who *keep their minds stayed on God*, those who *dwell in the secret place of the Most High*, those who *pray without ceasing*, those who *live and move and have their being in God-consciousness*, those who *render unto God that which is God's* or, as our Hebrew scriptures have told us, *Except the Lord build the house they labour in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the watch, the watchmen waketh but in vain*.

We don't believe that. We get up in the morning, we make our physical preparations for the day, we have our breakfast and we go out to work. And where's God in that? Waiting for Sunday, waiting for Saturday, waiting for Friday night, Wednesday night? No. We eat; we sit down to a table and get into our food without the recognition of its source, without the recognition of that which produced it for us. You see, the whole secret lies in this, let's have this:

The story of the prodigal son is the story of a man, who by virtue of inheritance had everything. The son of wealth, prominence, position and by divine right of inheritance had everything. But not being satisfied with this, wanting probably to be a success in his own name, he wandered from his father's household, using up his inheritance and winds up in a feast with the swine, the taste of which he didn't like and turned him back to his father's house. And while yet afar off, the father came unto him and again gave him the jewelled ring and the robe; his inheritance again.

As human beings, that is what our experience is. Somewhere, sometime in our lives we left the Father's house. In other words instead of a complete reliance and dependence on that Father within, instead of a complete acknowledgement of Him in all our ways *Lean not under thy own understanding; acknowledge Him in all thy ways* and He will give thee all these other things. Instead of that reliance, instead of that recognition of omnipresence within, we became something on our own account. And we, as Joel and Bill and Mary, went out on our own, got along beautifully without God for a while until the experience came of lack, limitation, degradation, sin and the realization *I'm not making a very good job of it*. And then most of us turn, some anyway, back to the Father's house and in this union with the Father, find again our inheritance. *Know ye not that ye are children of God, and if children heirs, and if heirs, joint heirs to all the heavenly riches*.

Now, in the recognition of our Sonship, divine Sonship with God, lies the recognition of our heir-ship. But our good is ours *not by might, nor by power, but by My spirit*. In this recognition of our heir-ship we learn that *Thy grace is my sufficiency* or *In Thy presence is fullness of joy*. And we learn the secret of getting away from the discords, the inharmonies of human experience, even of diseases, fears, accidents.

The secret lies in getting back consciously into that oneness, oneness or at-one-ment or attunement with this inner being; first discovering it to be at the centre of your being, *closer*

than breathing, nearer than hands and feet. First finding it to be right where all scripture tells you you will find it, *the kingdom of God is within you.*

The moment that happens, here are the miracles that we watch unfold: Moses and his Hebrews are leaving hastily, Egypt, slavery, bondage but the Egyptian hordes are upon them, breathing down their necks when Moses, the only one in this entire band with the knowledge of God, Moses alone, in the realization of his identity brings forth a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Where from? Any magician knows, and we know now, you can't get rabbits out of a hat unless the rabbits are in there. And you can't get a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night unless you have it within you. Moses knew that. He knew *I am*; God is alive in my being, God is my being, God is the life in me, the soul, the spirit. And out of God, my inner being, must come protection, safety, security. And out of that consciousness of God's presence, he drew forth the safety and security that was needed.

Later it opened the Red Sea, brought manna from the sky, water from the rock. What did? Moses' consciousness of truth, Moses' consciousness of his oneness with this divine source, his attunement with this divine source.

Well, we go through scripture and find Elijah persecuted by his own people, chased out into the woods. But fed, first by ravens, cakes baked on the stones right in front of him, the cruse of oil that never went dry. How? Did all of this take place out here? No, no, there were lots of other people around, lots of other prophets. But Elijah knew that the *still small voice*, as he called this *I am*, was within his own being and that it was the only power, and that it was wherever he was, even in the wilderness in danger. As we've read here in Romans, peril, famine, sword, persecution; it was right there where he was. And so he could rest, open his consciousness and found this inner grace appearing outwardly as whatever his need was.

You follow this all through the Hebrew scriptures. And then when you come to the New Testament you find it again in the experience of the Master, of John, of Paul. You find loaves and fishes multiplied to feed the multitudes. You find healings multiplied, that the multitudes were healed. Out of what? Out of something in space, out of somewhere out here? No, out of the consciousness of the Master, out of the consciousness of that individual who knew that *the Father is within me*. That where *I am* God is. And *all that the Father hath is mine. I of my own self can do nothing*, He said that over and over and over again. *I can of my own self do nothing. If I were to speak of myself I would bear witness to a lie. It is the Father within me.* Ah yes, *it is the Father within me*, the *I am* and He repeats the very same thing as Moses *I am that I am; I am the way, I am the truth, I am the bread, the wine, the water, I am the resurrection. I am* is the secret; the realization of this *I* in the centre of my being.

And so He repeats, and goes a step further than the great demonstrations of the Hebrew prophets, saints and seers. And so we find from that day on, from the days back in India and all through the Hebrew scriptures and through the New Testament and on up into the most modern metaphysical and spiritual and mystical writings, that whoever had the secret of the presence of God within them and placed their reliance on it, drew forth health, harmony, supply, wholeness, perfection, protection and all of these other things.

Now, one great thing is this: that the means or avenue of you or my contacting God is through prayer. As we sit here we seem to be and can very well be just human beings separated from God and ready to have all the catastrophes of humanhood visited upon us, unless we have learned the secret of true prayer.

And while on that subject, in Cincinnati two weeks ago I found this in the newspaper. The subject is *Unbroken Prayer* and it was written by John Marvin Ross: *Sometimes we may be inclined to question ??? admonition as that of Paul's calling the faithful to pray without*

ceasing. We need not pause long before it in wonderment. It is most reasonable and most practical. None of us can always be in the posture of prayer, kneeling, heads bowed, eyes closed, but each of us can cultivate the practice of ceaseless prayer. The words of scripture are helpful here, supplemented by words of our own, breathed in thanksgiving, confession, adoration, aspiration. And there is the holy ?? with this prayer; the setting of the soul toward God as one in eager expectancy, set for sail on a ship Becalmed ??, attuning the spirit to God's purposes is prayer, whatever the occasion, whatever the medium. Help us to see Father that we can pray with hand as well as with heart, that whatever brings us in touch with Thee is hallowed in Thy sight.

Prayer has no religious denomination. Prayer is the same in Hebrew, in Christianity, in Mohammedanism, Sufi, in all of the teachings of the world, true prayer is a conscious attunement with God, a conscious at-one-ment with God. Never asking God to do our will or satisfy our desires or wishes, but in coming into an attunement and bringing ourselves to God's purpose, God's will, God's wish.

Always the attempt has been in the ordinary religious world is to let God know what we want and when we want it, and what amount; *just a little bit God, just enough to get by*. But prayer reveals that God is not bending Himself to man's desires or will but that man receives the grace of God as man bends himself to God's will.

And you know it's a marvellous thing to know that God's will is very good, that God's will is one of infinity – no limit to the supply of God, no limit to the supply of good, no limit to the supply of health, youth, vitality, strength, abundance. The only limit is when we try to draw God to our wish, desire or will and it can't be done. It's fantastic always to believe that man can influence God. No, man can only bring himself into attunement with God and thus receive the grace, the royal ring, the robe of God.

Now, two points I would like to make as of paramount importance, three let us say. The first: that a teaching on the subject of prayer must be approached without any religious, denominationally religious beliefs, limitations or convictions. In other words, the subject of the study of God must be made without thinking of a Hebrew God, a Christian God, a Mohammedan God, a Hindu God, or your God or my God; since there must be among enlightened people the realization and recognition of the fact that there is but one God.

I've had people say to me in recent years, why is it that the Hebrew people with their knowledge of one God are suffering so much in these last thirty, forty years, of persecution and destruction and so forth? My answer is that I haven't noticed that they've done any more suffering than the Christian nation, or the Oriental nation. Those who've seen India, Burma, Siam, Korea, China have had little cause to wonder about the Hebrew suffering. I can assure you the other sufferings are equal. And those who have been through the last two or three or four world wars will acknowledge that even the Christian nations have suffered. And more especially it has been on the other side of the water. We over here do not see it so much and are not so conscious of it, because at least up to this time we have escaped the bulk of it. But those who have seen London or Berlin or Warsaw, I can be assured of this, they will agree that they have suffered equally with the Hebrew people, the Siamese people, the Hindu people.

No, God has not selected any group or nation or race to save or to destroy. We choose our security or our destruction; you do individually, as I do. I have been the way of all flesh, I have been the way of destruction, I have been the way of sin and lack and so has pretty nearly every one else of my acquaintanceship who has lived much out in this world. But whether it was through my ignorance or not, this I know, it was my choosing; nobody forced it upon me.

God was as much available then as now. Only my ignorance of it kept me from it. But I say to all: safety, security, peace, health, harmony is available to the people of all races, all colours, all religions, all clines - if they could once get over this nonsense of believing that God is a respecter of races, colours, creeds, churches or religions.

And let us all acknowledge that God is love and love knows no distinction. God is love. As a parent could not love one child more than another, how could the Divine Father or Mother love one nation, creed more than another?

No, that is the first and major point that I must make. And that is that God must be approached first of all as a universal spirit within you. That takes out of it all races, religious, colour, differences, beliefs and human theories. It is very much as the question was asked of Joan of Arc *Does God speak to you in French?* And Joan of Arc answered *I don't know. I understand Him in French.* And I think that's true of us. I don't know whether God speaks to us in a Hebrew religion or a Christian religion or a Mohammedan one. We understand Him in that way anyway.

So let us understand God in this universal sense of an omnipresent spirit within you and within me, and not only when we are in health and wealth. Let us not accept this metaphysical belief that is so prevalent that when you've got a healthy body or a full purse, that that's an evidence of your spirituality. It may on the contrary be an evidence that you're getting ready for a fall. A reliance on physical health and physical wealth can be very destructive. Only when we understand health and wealth to be the gift or grace of God can we have the assurance of its permanence, of its omnipresence, of its infinity.

Having realized God in this universal and omnipresent sense, we next come to the point of contact. How to make that infinite universal spirit available to us? And for that we have these passages of scripture for reminders. *Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee. Lean not unto thine own understanding; acknowledge Him in all thy ways. He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High; he that dwelleth, lives there; live, move, have our being in God. Pray without ceasing.*

All of these passages of scripture will help to keep us on the beam of God. In the first place it keeps God or the awareness of God in our consciousness. And honestly that's the only place we're ever going to meet God. The Hebrews were horribly shocked as you might know, when one of their own rabbis whom we call Christ Jesus, said to them *The time cometh when you won't worship in Jerusalem any more or in this holy temple. You'll worship Him in spirit and in truth.* That's as great a shock as telling us not to go to the corner and go to synagogue, or to church or to Rome or to Boston. Pretty shocking thing, but true.

We may avail ourselves of temples, building, edifices. Ah yes, what difference does it make whether it is this temple or that temple or the other? We must congregate, we must meet together in spirit. And let it be here or let it be in a Hebrew synagogue or let it be in a Christian church or let it be anywhere else. As long as we realize that it isn't the place that makes us holy; it is we who make the place holy, since *the place whereon we stand is holy ground.* Never forget that; wherever it may be.

I have been in prison and worked with a murderer. And saw that man come free, free without a penalty through the realization of his nature, and the District Attorney's recognition of this change in him. For that reason that prison became holy ground. I've seen wonderful things take place. I've had three years of experience with men in prison, wonderful experience. Things I love to think of and think back on, and almost can pray that I may look forward to. Because it has been proven there again that a man's sins do not bind him, except as long as he thinks there is pleasure and profit in them. The moment he, like the man at the

swine's banquet, learns the lack of substance in such banquets, they are ready for the turning to the Father's house, and then even the prison becomes holy ground.

Oh yes, I have seen mental institutes become holy ground, holy places; hospitals. Wherever an individual turns to God that is holy ground. In that recognition then, our prayer through this recognition, our prayer means an inner attunement in which we gain the conviction and realization of God's presence.

Now here comes a little change to many of you, is this idea of what we call prayer or treatment in the metaphysical world. Through years of experience I came to the realization that much of our treatment work and prayer work was ineffectual; that the results weren't always there and certainly not to the degree that we expected. And in searching for the answer I discovered that we were praying to God in one form or another, we were treating. All of this was taking place with the human mind. All of this was an activity of the human thought. And we've been told that *God's thoughts are not your thoughts. God's way are not your ways.* We've been told over and over and over again that the human mind isn't power. *Who by taking thought can add to his stature one cubit?* We've been told that over and over and over again.

And here we were sitting around with that same human mind, if not begging and pleading with God, affirming and denying with Him. And then, this is what was revealed: that when God prays in us, the work is beautiful. The effects are powerful, spiritual, harmonious. And so the point comes now of how to pray, by not praying. By letting God pray within us. And that was the thing that separated me from all of my former teachings and former practices when I realized that some way had to be found, not to pray to God. To stop praying to God, to let God pray in us.

I even found confirmation of that in the Bible. I found a passage over here. Oh, isn't that back in Romans 2? Let's look for a minute. It's Romans and Romans 8 is a very powerful thing. If you ever get to hear my recording on the 8th chapter of Romans (Mrs Caldwell has it) I think you'll find it's a pretty powerful piece of work. It says here *Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. But the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us.*

And there is one of the great secrets. The moment you learn to keep your mind stayed on God, to realize constantly God's presence, God's power, God's omniscience, omnipresence, and then in that realization turn and say Alright Father, *Speak Lord, Thy servant heareth.* That was the little Hebrew boy, Samuel. *Speak Lord, Thy servant heareth.*

And Mrs Eddy has a hymn. What is it? *I will listen for Thy voice.* Remember it? *I will listen for Thy voice.* There isn't a bigger, greater prayer in the world than any statement that will attune you to listening. Elijah knew it. The still small voice spoke to Elijah. Elijah didn't speak to God, God spoke to Elijah. And we have no right to speak to God. Our prayer should be letting God speak to us. Let God voice It's truth within us.

The Word of God is quick and sharp and powerful. It doesn't say anything about your word or mine. It doesn't say anything about the word of a metaphysical writer. It says *the Word of God, the Word of God is quick and sharp and powerful.* And the reason it is, once you can open your consciousness to let that Word come through, and then you'll understand another great passage *We do not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

Do you see that? It doesn't say anything about your words or mine or the words in a book. It doesn't say a word about your repetitions, affirmations, denials. It says specifically *We do not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* How are

you going to know the words that proceedeth out of the mouth of God if you don't hear them? And how are you going to hear them if you don't learn to *be still and know. Be still and know that I am.*

You know, too many people take the words *I am* and try to make a human being into God. And say Oh, I am God, I am spirit, I am spiritual. Oh, if they knew what they are doing to themselves with those nonsensical affirmations. *I am God, I am spirit, I am spiritual, I am the child of God*; nothing worse, nothing more dangerous, nothing more harmful than those things.

Listen and let God say to you *Know ye not that I am God? Be still and know that I.* God doesn't say that you human beings are God. God says *Be still and know that I in the midst of you am God.* Then when you hear that still small voice within you uttering itself, declaring itself, voicing itself, then you will see a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night outside here. Then you will see your manna fall from the sky if necessary. Then you will see business roll into your business house. Oh yes, you'll see supply as you never saw it before, once God speaks within you and says *I will never leave you nor forsake you.*

Oh, let's turn to Isaiah a moment. Isaiah, he's one of our wonderful wonderful... He knew this secret, he knew this secret. *But now saith the Lord who created thee O Jacob and He that formed thee O Israel, fear not I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name. Thou art Mine. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee. And to the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire thou shall not be burned. Neither shall the flames kindle upon you.*

Who makes that affirmation - you, or me, or God? Ah! Do you see the secret of prayer? That's the secret of prayer! Listen for that still small voice! Make yourself listen! *For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel thy Savior.* And so on all through...*I, even I am the Lord....*

End of tape

Side two continued on next transcript.

1953 FIRST NEW YORK LECTURE SERIES
Joel S Goldsmith
42:B The Nature of God and Prayer (Part 2)

...does the treating or the praying. Not when man whose breath is in his nostril does it. *Wherein is he to be accounted of?* Says Isaiah *Cease ye from man whose breath is in his nostril. Wherein is he to be accounted of?* God isn't listening to man's word. If God were listening to man's word we would not be living in forty years of war, destruction, famine, all these evils. Men have been praying and praying and praying throughout all of these tens of years that the world has been suffering. Men have been crying up to God and God goes blithely on Its way as if nothing was happening here on earth. Why? God isn't listening to the voice of man. Man must tune himself into the voice of God and then watch what happens to the man who is God-inspired, God-led, God-directed, God-fed. Then you will know the great secret - are you in a hurry to go? (Response *No*) God knows no time and sometimes I forget. (Laughter) - you will know the great secret of the Master.

You know, the scene is at the well of Samaria. And talking to the Samaritan woman and trying to show her His identity in several ways. But it's only when He tells her that He can give her water that she begins to wonder what it's all about. And she reminds Him that He has no bucket. *Ah, I don't need a bucket. The water that I have to give you, if you drink this water you'll never thirst. This water springs up into life everlasting.*

Ah, that must be a mystery to a person of material sense, the person without spiritual vision. Their water would only be the kind that comes in a glass, jar, jug. Now, here's a water she knows nothing about. And let us not be surprised at her ignorance. Watch the ignorance of His own disciples, right down at the end of the chapter when they discover that their Master has missed luncheon and fearing that He might lose weight, *Shall we go to the city and buy you some meat? No, I have meat that ye know not of.* Not even the disciples up to that time knew about this *meat that I have that ye know not of.*

You know, in the great transcendental teaching of the Master, you will learn about the wine, the water, the bread, the meat, the blood. You will learn all about these mystical terms that have no significance in the outer realm. And yet when understood within, appeared tangibly without.

And so, as you begin to understand that each one of us, because we have the kingdom of God within us, has within our own being all of the supply, all of the health, all the body's strength that we will ever need, and we have it now. And that instead of praying for it to be brought to us, as if there were a God withholding it... do you still believe in a God that withholds? No. So if we have any lack, stop praying to God for it and get in tune with God and let this abundance that has already been provided you in the beginning, let it flow into expression.

And you do that through prayer, any simple humble form of prayer that is a recognition that the presence within me fulfils. *I am come that ye might be fulfilled.* Say *I.* (Response: *I*) *I am come that ye might be fulfilled.* Within you is this divine *I* that has as its function the fulfilling of you. You don't need anything out here. You don't need anything from anybody.

Even if you go to a practitioner, even if you go to a teacher for help, and that's legitimate; it's a *suffer it to be so now.* Even when you do that, recognize you're not going to a human being with a great understanding. You're not going to a human being who has more spirituality than you have. You are going just to an individual who has made the attunement,

who has opened out a way for this *imprisoned splendour to escape* that our Browning tells about.

And through the proof that you get of healing or supplying of whatever you need through the practitioner, you will ultimately be led to see that that is the way for you to do it. But you also have an *I* within you that is *come that ye might be fulfilled*. You see if you keep leaning on a practitioner too long, or teacher, some day the words – ominous words – will be said that'll frighten you. *If I go not away the comforter will not come to you*. And believe me in those few days, forty of them probably, that they were physically separated from the Master they must have gone through a real hell. Until the descent of the Holy Ghost, until the Pentecost in which the Divine Comforter did come and they said *Oh, we were relying on this, on Him when we had it all the time!*

And so it is. It is a legitimate thing in the early days of our spiritual study to turn to a practitioner to help us with our problems – physical, mental, moral or financial, it makes no difference what they are. And no one should ever be criticized, judged or condemned for their mistakes, whether they're physical, mental, moral or financial, because they are all a state of ignorance that we're all subject to, always have been.

Now, as a practitioner or teacher helps you above these experiences, and you begin your own study and meditation and consecration to God, you are led to a teacher who may be able, through her or his spiritual development, to lead you on and on and on, until they reveal to you this Emanuel or Christ of your own being. Then is the time for you to walk out on the waters by yourself, and let your practitioner or your teacher go on to those still uninstructed in The Infinite Way – the way of infinity.

And always remember you need have no hesitancy in drawing completely, fully on your practitioner, on your teacher, once you are satisfied that they have the spiritual light to share with you. And only remember that you only draw on it as you need it and as a bridge across, until you find the teacher who can open up your own soul to you, your own consciousness and reveal there Emanuel, God with us, omnipresent, the Christ. Then you come to a place in consciousness where you say *I live, yet not I, It, It lives within me. It goes before me to make the crooked places straight. It goes before me to prepare places for me. In my Father's house are many mansions*, many states of divine, wonderful consciousness. And this spirit, which I have contacted within me, it leads into the fullness of glory, harmony, peace, joy, power and dominion.

Well now, there is the nature of God as this divine spirit in you *closer than breathing, nearer than hands and feet*. And there is the subject of prayer, a communion with this inner self, this inner being within you; this ability to contact that source of your good, the *I* within you *that is come that you might be fulfilled*. Once you have contacted that and realize it, you can travel any part of the globe any time and find peace, joy, safety, security and all of the good things of life.

Well, let us see now where we shall go from here.

I want to take you one more step on the road to prayer. Somehow I never am satisfied or at rest if I leave the word *prayer* without this explanation. There is no way to approach God with any hope of answer if there is hate, enmity, animosity in our consciousness.

The Master, who probably has given us more on the subject of prayer than anyone I know in all recorded history, has made much of the fact that the nations of the world pray for their friends and relatives *but it profiteth them nothing*; that you who are on the spiritual path must *pray for your enemies. You must pray for those who persecute you, who revile you, despitefully use you. You must forgive seventy times seven* – that means eternally and

immortally, time without number. In Hebrew lore seven or seventy, just like twelve, means completeness, immortality, forever. So seventy times seven means unto the end of all time forgive, forgive, forgive.

And so we are told that *if you go to the altar to pray and there remember that any man has aught against thee, get up, go and make peace with your brother, then return and leave your offering*. In other words, it isn't necessary to go out humanly and do anything to anybody or with anybody, but it is necessary to go to a quiet corner and there realize that whatever I am praying for, whatever of good I am expecting in my experience, I wish also for all those who hate me or persecute me or revile me or evilly use me. In other words, I am perfectly willing for *the grace of God to fall on the just and the unjust*. I'm willing for the grace of God to bless and benefit all mankind.

I have told this before, I will again. It was my pleasure to take fifteen boys through the Second World War - they were children of patients and students - and to see every one of the fifteen come home without a mar, without a scratch; without a penalty of any kind upon them. And that the mode and method of it was this: Each one of those boys promised - and later told me that they fulfilled the promise - that on awaking each day they would pray only for the enemy. Not for themselves, not for their families, not for their nation, but their prayer would be exclusively - if they had any time left over the rest of the day they could pray for anybody they wanted - but their early morning prayer or their prayer upon awaking, must be for the enemy.

And with that sense of no hate, no fear, no revenge within them, they found divine protection. And you can see the reason for that can't you? Is it possible do you think that God, at any time, was holding enmity against any nation on earth or any people on earth? Why no! In the sight of God, if we were at all in God's awareness, which I doubt, we were all equally murderers. It didn't make any difference whose army you were in, you were a murderer. If you think not you are fooling yourselves.

The Ten Commandments say *Thou shalt not kill*. But it doesn't say *except Germans or Japanese or Russians*. And it doesn't say *except one today and another tomorrow*. It says *Thou shalt not kill*. So let us not fool ourselves. No matter whose army we were in, we were equally murderers in the face of the Ten Commandments.

But the blessing is this, that in the sight of God nobody is ever a murderer since it is an impossibility to kill God, destroy life. And someday when we awaken out of this dream, we will find all of those whom we have believed to be dead, to be just as much alive as we are now.

So really in the sight of God there's no such thing as punishment for sin. But in the sight of our own violation, of our standards, there is the penalty. And *those who live by the sword will die by the sword*.

So always remember this: when we are called upon to fight, we must. *Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's*. That part's alright. We do our duty and we will do it with the best and finest of spirit, but let us do it with forgiveness for our enemies. Because you know we need an awful lot of forgiving at that moment too.

So prayer must be a complete wiping out of our own consciousness of the belief that there are powers, presences other than God. We must release ourselves from all sense of condemnation, revenge, animosity. Then we come to the throne pure of heart. *And the pure in heart shall see God*.

Thank you until tomorrow afternoon.