

# John Eckhardt: How Prayer and Confession of the Word Release God's Power

Prayer and confession of the Word of God are two of the most powerful weapons believers have. Together they can help to bring victory over any demonic opposition. You will see a great release of God's power when these two are combined.

I began writing Scripture-based prayers as I studied the Word of God. The Holy Spirit illuminated many scriptures to me that needed to be released through prayer. I began to see clearly the plan of God for believers and how the enemy wanted to stop that plan. The Lord taught me the importance of praying the Word to overcome spiritual resistance to the plan of God for my life.

The prayers were forged over a period of many years and were birthed out of warfare and deliverance. They came from years of experience in ministering to individuals and nations. As I was gaining this experience, the Holy Spirit helped me understand many scriptures and how to use them in prayer. You can find the prayers I wrote, which are based on the Word of God, in my book *Prayers That Rout Demons*.

Prayer is one of the ways we release the will of God upon the earth. We must study the Word of God in order to know the will of God. This is why prayer and the Word must be combined. Daniel was able to pray effectively because he knew the Word of God concerning God's people (Dan. 9:2-3).

We should pray with understanding (1 Cor. 14:15). Understanding the will of God will help us pray correctly. The Word of God is the will of God. We are not to be unwise, but understanding of what the will of the Lord is (Eph. 5:17). Prayer also helps us walk perfectly and completely in all the

will of God (Col. 4:12).

### **Praying and Confessing the Word**

Life and death are in the power of the tongue (Prov. 18:21). Right words are forcible (Job 6:25). The words we speak are spirit and life (John 6:63). We can be snared by the words of our mouth. We need to articulate the thoughts of God by praying and confessing His Word (Isa. 55:8). God's Word released through our tongues will cause His power to manifest in our lives.

Words are used to convey our thoughts. The words of God are the thoughts of God. We are releasing the mind of God when we pray and confess His Word. The thoughts of God are peace and prosperity (Jer. 29:11). They are designed to bring us to an expected end.

Jesus taught us that our faith is released through our words (Mark 11:23). Our faith-filled words can move mountains. There is nothing impossible to those who believe. Our faith is a key to seeing miracles and breakthrough on a consistent basis. Whatever we ask in prayer, believing, we will receive (Matt. 21:22).

The Word is near us (Rom. 10:8). The Word is in our mouth and heart. This is the Word of faith. The mouth and the heart are connected. We speak from the abundance of the heart. The Word of God in our heart will come through our mouth. Faith in the heart will be released through our mouth. God watches over His Word to perform it (Jer. 1:12).

### **God Hears and Answers Our Prayers**

We are encouraged to call upon the Lord. He has promised to show us great and mighty things (Jer. 33:3). The Lord delights in our prayers. He delights in answering our prayers. Before we call, He will answer (Isa. 65:24). The Lord's ears are open unto the prayers of the righteous (1 Pet. 3:12). The effectual

fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much (James 5:16). We are told to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17).

Our God hears prayer. All flesh should come to Him in prayer (Ps. 65:2). All believers have similar challenges and must overcome them. God is no respecter of persons. He is near to all who call upon Him (Ps. 145:18). The Lord will hear your supplication and will receive your prayer (Ps. 6:9).

Calling upon the Lord will bring salvation and deliverance from your enemies (Ps. 18:3). This has always been a key to deliverance. You can pray yourself out of any adverse situation. The Lord is your helper. God will not turn away your prayer (Ps. 66:20). God will not despise your prayer (Ps. 102:17). The prayer of the upright is God's delight (Prov. 15:8).

### **Prayers Bring Victory Over the Enemy**

We have been given the keys of the kingdom (Matt. 16:19). This gives us the authority to bind and loose. To bind means to restrict, stop, hinder, fetter, check, hold back, arrest, or put a stop to. To loose means to untie, unbind, unlock, liberate, release, forgive, or free. Keys represent the authority to lock (bind) or unlock (loose). Prayer and confession are two of the ways we use this authority. We can bind the works of darkness, which include sickness, disease, hurt, witchcraft, poverty, death, destruction, confusion, defeat, and discouragement. We can loose ourselves and others from the works of darkness. This will result in greater liberty and prosperity.

Binding and loosing will help us in the area of deliverance. We can loose ourselves from many things by using our authority. We can loose others by praying these prayers. Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He came that we might have life in abundance.

Believers must know and operate in authority. Jesus gave His

disciples power and authority over all devils (Matt. 10:1). We are seated with Christ in heavenly places far above all principalities and powers (Eph. 1:20, 2:6). Believers can use this authority through prayer and confession. We have authority to tread upon serpents and scorpions (Luke 10:19). Jesus promised that nothing would hurt us. Many believers suffer unnecessarily because they fail to exercise their authority.

Scripture-based prayers are for believers who have a hatred for the works of darkness (Ps. 139:21). Do you hate every false way (Ps. 119:104)? Do you want to see changes in your city, region, and nation? You are a king, and you have the power to change geographic regions (Eccles. 8:4). The fear of the Lord is to hate evil (Prov. 8:13).

Prayers based on the Word are designed to demolish strongholds. God's Word is like a hammer that breaks the rock in pieces (Jer. 23:29). We need powerful prayers to demolish these strongholds. These prayers are for those who want to see breakthroughs in their personal lives as well as in their cities, regions, and nations.

Satan has been defeated through the cross. Principalities and powers have been spoiled (Col. 2:15). We are enforcing this victory through our prayers. We are executing the judgments written. This honor is given to all His saints. The saints have possessed the kingdom (Dan. 7:18). This means we have authority with the King to advance the reign of Christ over the nations.

David was a king who understood the place of prayer in victory. He had many victories over his enemies. He saw mighty deliverance through prayer. He prayed for the defeat of his enemies and God answered him. We will have the same results over our spiritual enemies. We are not wrestling against flesh and blood. We must overcome principalities and powers with the armor of God. We must take the sword of the Spirit and pray

with all prayer (Eph. 6:12–18).

The prayers of David ended with Psalm 72:20. In the previous verse of this psalm, he prayed that the whole earth would be filled with God's glory (v. 19). This is the end of prayer. We believe that the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea (Hab. 2:14). This is our goal. We will continue to pray toward the fulfillment of this promise. We will see the growth of God's kingdom and the destruction of the powers of darkness through our prayers. Revival and glory are increasing, and our prayers are adding fuel to the revival fire. {eoa}

*The preceding is an excerpt from **John Eckhardt's** book *Prayers That Rout Demons* (Charisma House, 2010). To order a copy of the book, please visit .*

**John Eckhardt** is overseer of *Crusaders Ministries*, located in Chicago, Illinois. Gifted with a strong apostolic call, he has ministered throughout the United States and overseas in more than eighty nations. He is a sought-after international conference speaker, produces a weekly television program called *Perfecting the Saints*, and has authored more than 20 books.

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**Supernatural Encounter  
Radically Transforms Worldly**

# Executive Into Powerful Bible Teacher

Growing up as a Southern Baptist, the only Bible Dr. Richard Booker ever knew was the one his mother gave him as a boy. Because it wasn't "a personal thing," he glanced through it and never really read it or came to know Jesus through God's Word.

That all changed nearly 50 years ago, when business associates asked Booker to attend a weekly Bible study. He quickly became intrigued with the Bible. But it wasn't until he had a miraculous supernatural encounter with God and the Holy Spirit that he discovered the incredible power of God's Word that would turn his and his family's world upside down.

Instead of becoming a high-level business executive and potentially a wealthy man, Booker became an ordained minister, the president of Sounds of the Trumpet ministries founded in 1979, the founder and director of the Institute for Hebraic-Christian studies, an author of 40 books including the best-seller *The Miracle of the Scarlet Thread* and a developer of seminars and college-level Bible courses.

Booker and his wife of 55 years, Peggy, founded the IHCS in 1997 as a ministry to educate Christians in the Hebraic Culture and the background of the Bible, to build relationships between Christians and Jews and to give comfort and support to the people of Israel. Booker's teachings are designed to help believers better understand the Bible and their covenant God.

Booker knew exactly what he wanted out of life as a secular executive—until God intervened in a huge way. In 1974, he appeared on his way up the corporate ladder as the corporate director of Management Information Systems for the Occidental

Petroleum Corporation in Houston, Texas. To that point, he and Peggy had lived what he terms a secular life, knowing about God but not actively pursuing Him.

The invitation to a Bible study took Booker by surprise, but he didn't hesitate to accept. Soon afterward, his life took a dramatic turn.

"When I was invited to go to a Bible study, I had never really even heard of such a thing," Booker says. "At that time, Peggy and I were sort of seeking after God, but we didn't know how to find Him. We were secular, worldly. Even though both of us had been raised in denominational Christianity, God was kind of long distance to us. I don't want to sound critical, but the denominational Christianity we were experiencing was of a God who used to be and not the God of now. We live in the now, so I needed him now.

"And so, I went to something called a Christian bookstore and got a Bible," he says. "If you're going to go to a Bible study, you need a Bible, right? So I purchased one, and I took it home, and I started reading it, starting in the book of Leviticus. Doesn't everyone start there? It was just a random thing because I really didn't know what I was doing. I didn't know I was supposed to start in the New Testament with Matthew or the book of John. I didn't have any guidance, so I started reading Leviticus. When you think about it, the devil tries to keep people out of Leviticus because that's the mother lode of the gospel in the Old Testament.

"Incredibly, the more and more I read it, the more it sounded familiar; you know, all of that stuff about the sacrifices and the tabernacle and those high priests and all that blood stuff," he says. "I turned to Peggy and asked her, 'Doesn't this sound familiar? This sounds like the stuff we heard about when we were kids in church.'"

The more Booker read through Leviticus, he says, the more

intrigued he became. He felt compelled to return to the same Christian bookstore, where he bought a “bulky” concordance to help him study God’s Word more easily.

## **Supernatural Encounter**

Peggy agreed to begin reading and studying the Bible at the same time Richard did. Like him, she had begun developing a hunger to know more about God. But also like her husband, she didn’t know how to go about it.

“The Bible says that if you seek God with your whole heart, you’ll find Him,” Richard says. “Sooner or later, you’re going to run into Him. I’m educated, so I know how to study. I studied Leviticus at first, and then, some time later, I had discovered the whole Bible, and I was reading Luke 24 when Jesus appeared to His disciples and explained that all of this was about Him. In a ‘heaven second’ ... God honored my seeking Him when he took Luke 24, where Jesus said this was all about Me, and laid it on top of Leviticus.”

That is when, Richard says, his supernatural experience took place, and the Word of God became more real than he could ever have imagined. The encounter shook him to his core.

“All of a sudden, the Bible just exploded inside of me,” Richard says. “It was like 66 bombs just going off, the 66 books of the Bible. It wasn’t like one right after another, but all at once. It was a rare spiritual revelation from heaven. Through images, God downloaded the whole Bible into me in a heaven second. The power of that was so explosive, I thought I was going to die.

“Peggy and I were raised in denominational Christianity that didn’t talk about miracles and supernatural things,” Richard says. “We had no idea what it was, but it was overwhelming. The Bible talks about the weight of the glory of God, when God comes down upon people. I actually hid under my desk thinking God couldn’t find me. I begged Him not to show me any more

because I didn't think I could take any more.

"I couldn't walk," he continues. "I just crawled around the house because the weight of God's glory that was on me at that moment was so strong. I crawled up onto the couch until it passed. I couldn't imagine what Peggy was feeling. All she was hearing was me screaming 'glory to God' from the other room.

"So this was the defining moment of my life, when I found my purpose for being here," he adds. "Everything I thought was important to me in my life was no longer important. This was so overwhelming because I had a successful business career and was really at the top of my career path. You might say my career was my God. But the Bible says the things you used to love and glory in; you don't glory in them anymore."

## **Life Change**

Peggy says Richard's supernatural encounter with the Holy Spirit didn't scare her or "freak her out," as might have happened. Instead, she realized she had only one choice going forward.

"The simplest way I can say this is that I can see now, having all of these numbers of years to truly walking with the Lord and trusting and depending upon Him, I know it was all Him to begin with," she explains. "I believe He put his faith in my heart to be able to just go with it. In the Bible, God talks about 'a measure of faith,' and I believe He gave me that faith to know that, even though I didn't know everything that was going on. I didn't know what was going to happen, but I was at ease and at peace with it."

Richard understood that God's plan for his life meant quitting his cushy job and the lifestyle he and Peggy had enjoyed. When Richard left his job, he had no stocks to sell, no bonds to cash, no big checking account, no savings, no insurance, no more first and 15th paycheck, no helpers and no idea where he and Peggy would get money to pay their bills. Peggy knew this

decision would have challenging repercussions, but she trusted both God and her husband as they moved ahead.

“I had come to know and love my husband so much and, even though all of this was very new to us, I knew that God had touched his life and was in the midst of changing both of our lives,” she says. “God gave me the supernatural peace to not be fretful or anxious. I didn’t say that I wasn’t concerned, but there is a difference. I remember saying to Richard one time, ‘I don’t know what all of this means, but I just want to be able to ask the Lord to enable us to always pay our bills on time.’”

God honored Peggy’s heartfelt prayer. For the past 47 years, the Bookers have never failed to pay their bills when they have come due. They have been debt free for over 40 years and pay cash for all their major expenses. There were times when there were bills to pay and no money to pay them, Peggy says. But in her heart, she trusted God would come through and He has—sometimes at the last moment.

Along with the other changes the couple experienced, Peggy says their mindset about money had to change as well.

“Once we truly got into the Word, God taught us how to be givers,” she says. “He taught us that we weren’t the storehouse, that we had to help others. When we started giving from our limited resources, God gave back to us from His unlimited resources.”

As they approach their 80 birthdays, Richard and Peggy still live the simple life of faith, trusting God for their daily finances.

## **Kingdom Work**

Richard jokes that “some have accused me of preaching from time to time.” But he realized soon after his supernatural encounter that his main kingdom work would come as a Bible

teacher, communicating scriptural truth in a way that “brings life out of the Bible and into people’s hearts.”

“Although I’ve done a little bit of everything, my calling and gifting is to teach the Bible,” he adds. “The uniqueness that God has blessed me with is to be able to take the Bible, which many consider a hard-to-understand book, and to explain it in oral and written form; taking it from the complex to the simple and keeping them focused on Jesus.”

In addition to his life-changing books, he has many video teachings on his YouTube page you can watch for free at [www.youtube.com/richardakers](#). He also has courses in Hebrew-Christian Studies you can take by correspondence online at [www.charisma.com](#).

You can also watch his seminar on “The Root and the Branches” from your app store. In addition to this emphasis, Richard and Peggy have led tour groups to Israel for 30 years where, for 18 years, Richard was a featured teacher at the Christian celebration of the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem attended by 5,000 believers from 100 nations.

“Not everyone is going to have a supernatural encounter like I had,” Richard says. “But I know that people can be taught to understand the Bible like I have been. God wants to reveal Himself to you in supernatural ways. When He does that, He will show you He has something wonderful for your life.

“If you’re seeking God with your whole heart, you’ll find Him,” he adds. “This is true for all of His people. He has something supernaturally special for every one of us. If you seek Him and really get into His Word, He will show it to you. Don’t let the Bible be just some book that sits there. Let it come alive to you, and you’ll discover a whole new world.”  
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**Shawn A. Akers** is the overall online editor for *Charisma Media*.

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## **Kenneth Copeland Shows You How to Abolish Your Pain, Stress and Anxiety**

*Note: Pay close attention beginning at 20:26 of the video.*

In 2004, Kenneth Copeland experienced back pain he says he would never want to experience again. A disc “exploded” in his back and it knocked him to the floor, screaming in agony.

After receiving consultation from Dr. Don Colbert, he returned to his home and put heating pads on his legs. It was then he decided that he would no longer “take the pain.”

“Pain is of the mind, and I simply thought to myself, ‘I don’t take that pain,’” Copeland said on a recent edition of the Believers Voice of Victory. “When they go to do surgery, what do they do? They put you out of your mind so there is no pain. So, I just began to say that. I don’t take the pain, and why? Because He (Jesus Christ) bore my pain. Matthew 8:17 says, ‘He Himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses.’”

Whether it’s sickness, anxiety, financial stress or simple daily stress, Copeland says you must take captive your thought life, as it says in 2 Corinthians 10:5 (MEV): “... casting down

imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.”

“If the thought comes, don’t say it. If you don’t say, the thought will die stillborn,” Copeland says. “You just say, ‘I’m not touching that with my thought life. My mind is my mind, devil, and you can’t make me say that.’ But you can turn that around and go to the Word and take His thought and say it. That’s freedom.” {eoa}

For more of this teaching from Kenneth Copeland, watch this video.

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## **Messianic Rabbi: Our Turbulent Flight on Eagles’ Wings**

If your past few years have been like mine, then you have spent a good amount of time asking G-D “why” questions

For most of us, the last couple of years seemed to have become much more intense: more people sick, more people dying, more people losing jobs or businesses and more families in crisis of every kind imaginable. I cannot tell you the number of times I stopped what I was doing to look toward the sky and ask G-D, “Why?”

It isn't as if none of these things had happened before. Most of us have dealt with sickness, disease, death and financial struggles in our past. But it does seem as if these things are happening more often and closer together than ever.

I remember just a few months back when two of our family's closest friends died within weeks of each other. One was one of my closest friends and the other was my wife's closest friend. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people were praying for them and yet they both passed from this world to the world to come. In my brokenness, I ask the question to G-D, "Where are You"?

During this season, my faith had always remained strong; however, my vision had become distorted. I knew G-D was still there but it was as if someone had turned the focus knob on my spiritual eyes. I had really begun to understand what Paul's words meant in 1 Corinthians 13:12 (TLV):

"For now we see in a mirror dimly."

This week, as I was reading the Bible, I came across a couple of verses that helped me refocus my vision that has, in a real way, become like a kaleidoscope. I was reading Exodus 19:3-4 when I saw these words:

"Moses went up to God, and Adonai called to him from the mountain saying, 'Say this to the house of Jacob, and tell Bnei-Yisrael, "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I carried you on eagle's wings and brought you to Myself.'"

These are the words that G-D instructed Moses to speak to the people of Israel just before they were to receive the Torah on Mount Sinai. As we read these words, they seem extremely encouraging. Just look at the phrase "I carried you on eagle's wings and brought you to Myself."

As we read those words, our minds imagine G-D swooping down

from on high to scoop Israel up and carry them safely into the heavens while He destroys the Egyptian army. But is that what really happened? Yes and no.

If we read through the Exodus narrative in the book of Exodus, it doesn't seem as if G-D swooped down and scooped up Israel at all. What we read about is Israel's slavery; the death of all male Jewish babies; Moses's eventual arrival and proclamation: "Let my people go"; Pharaoh's response by making things more difficult; the plagues, of which the first three Israel endured along with the Egyptians; the Israelites having a rushed meal and running out of Egypt followed by the Egyptian army; the parting of the Sea, which they had to walk across; and then the wilderness journey, which at this point brought them only as far as Mount Sinai.

While we do see many miracles provided by G-D, most of us would not describe the above list as being scooped up and carried on eagle's wings. In our minds, the concept of being carried on eagle's wings carries with it the idea of soaring high above the world and its problems. Yet, even though we would not describe the above as being carried on eagle's wings, that is the exact wording G-D used to describe His perspective of Israel's experience from Egypt to Mount Sinai.

Because I know that G-D's perspective is always correct, as I read these verses, I allowed the words to begin to refocus the lens of the eyes of my heart. Suddenly, I understood the words of Psalm 23:4:

"Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for You are with me: Your rod and Your staff comfort me."

The more I meditated on these verses, the more into focus the events of the past few years became. I began to understand the answer to my why and it became clear to me that the answer to "where are you?" was that G-D had never left. He was carrying

me on wings of eagles, just as He carried Israel all those years ago. He didn't carry them out of, or over, their problems. He carried them *through* them just as He was and is carrying me and you through, not over, the tragic events in our lives.

The answer to my "why question" was also made clear when I remembered that things became progressively and speedily worse for the children of Israel just before they were delivered from Egypt through the blood of the Lamb. We all know that the Bible tells us that things will get worse as the day of Yeshua's return approaches. We must not allow ourselves to become overwhelmed as we watch the Scriptures become fulfilled in front of our eyes.

Rather, we must remember that no matter what is happening around us, G-D is carrying us on eagle's wings, bringing us to Himself. {eoa}

**Eric Tokajer** is the author of *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?*, *With Me in Paradise*, *Transient Singularity*, *OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry*, *#ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians* and *Galatians in Context*.

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# Dr. Don Colbert: The Lethal Habits Americans Willingly Undertake Daily

When it comes to food, we typically do what we are told, eat what's put in front of us, follow the food recommendations of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA), listen to our doctors, and let society dictate our eating habits. We basically follow along.

Some will argue, "That's not true. I'm not controlled by anyone. I eat whatever I want." That is also true – and also part of the problem!

You see, as a whole, we in the Western world (the United States, in particular) eat whatever we want, then go to the doctors and expect them to fix what ails us. But there is no magic pill that makes us lose weight, much less stems the tide of all the sicknesses and diseases that come as a result of what we put in our mouths.

The government is of little to no help either. Take a look at the US dietary guidelines, and you will see it is recommended that carbohydrates make up 45–65 percent of our calories per day. If we eat 2,000 calories a day on average, that means 900–1,300 calories or 225–325 grams should be from carbs every day. No wonder we are fat!

We eat on average 133 pounds of flour per person per year, which translates into about 1.3 cups of flour per person per day. That's a lot of carbohydrates, which then turn into sugar when our bodies use it for fuel.

As for sugar itself, we eat a lot of it! The average American eats and drinks a total of about 130 pounds of sugar each year. There are 36 tablespoons in one pound of sugar, so that

breaks down to almost thirteen tablespoons of sugar each day per person!

Most of the sugar is hidden in foods and drinks, but still, is it any wonder that prediabetes, type 2 diabetes, obesity, and insulin resistance numbers are off the charts?

And did you know that our sugar addiction is actually a biological disorder, driven by insulin, appetite hormones, and neurotransmitters that fuel our insatiable food cravings and “affect the same brain pleasure centers as heroin or cocaine?” Not only are the sugars (and carbs) we consume addictive, but they play with our minds, our hormones, and our wallets!

Of course, our expanding waistlines are not solely the result of consuming the daily recommended number of carbs along with lots and lots of sugar, but they play a significant part in our overall weight gain.

Don't believe me? The United States is the most overweight industrialized nation in the world. More than 70 percent of the U.S. population over age 20 is considered overweight. In 1960 only 13.4 percent of the US population was obese, and now we are up to over 40 percent.

And because obesity is a root cause of many diseases, it would then follow that we would have a dramatic increase in these obesity-related diseases over the past 50 to 60 years. That is precisely what is happening.

### **The Trap of Cardiovascular Disease**

Cardiovascular disease, which kills more people than all forms of cancer combined, happens to be the costliest killer as well. The American Heart Association (AHA) states that heart disease is increasing and predicts that 45 percent of the U.S. population will have at least one issue related to the disease by 2035, with the associated costs expected to double from \$555 billion in 2016 to \$1.1 trillion in 2035.

The AHA noted that unfortunately other risk factors, such as obesity, poor diet, high blood pressure, and type 2 diabetes, are on the rise. Not only are Americans not getting the message about heart disease, they are not getting the message about what they should eat and drink.

- ❌ Combining obesity with inflammation is like tying a brick to a paper airplane in a rainstorm and expecting it to fly. It is doubly impossible. {eoa}

*The preceding was an excerpt taken from chapter one of **Dr. Don Colbert's** book, *Beyond Keto* (Charisma House, 2022). You can order the book at .*

**Don Colbert, MD**, has been a board-certified family practice doctor for over twenty-five years in Orlando, Florida, and most recently in Dallas, Texas. He is also board certified in antiaging medicine through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. He is the author of three New York Times best-selling books: Dr. Colbert's Keto Zone Diet, The Seven Pillars of Health, and Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet, along with best sellers Toxic Relief, the Bible Cure series, Living in Divine Health, and Stress Less. He has sold more than 10 million books and treated over 50 thousand patients in his years of practicing medicine.

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# How God Wants Us to Renew Our Minds to Change Our Habits

Every person wants to change something about themselves but few have any idea how to do that. In my case, I weighed 430 pounds and wanted to lose weight.

When I finally got to the point that I surrendered this issue to God, I knew I couldn't go on another diet. Diets had never worked for me because I always went back to the way I had eaten before and gained the weight back.

God revealed to me through several different sources that I needed a forever lifestyle change. However, in order to change anything about myself, I realized I had to learn how to change the habits that had gotten me into the mess I was in.

## **What Is a Habit?**

A habit is simply a routine or a shortcut our minds use to conserve energy. We are creatures of habits. But our minds don't know a good habit from a bad. They only know there are certain things we do every day the same way at about the same time.

Every morning I get up, I take my morning vitamins and I'm so glad I have those vitamins put into my weekly planner because if not, some mornings I wouldn't even remember taking them. I have to check and make sure. Why? It's habit. I don't have to think about it.

My mind reads the habit I have programmed by doing the same thing the same way at about the same time. When I do this long enough, I form a habit that doesn't require anything from my mind than automatically accessing that routine. Then my mind is free to think about more complex issues.

## **Good and Bad Habits**

Several years ago, we were gone for over two weeks. When we got home the next morning, I got up to go exercise and my phone told me how many minutes to the pool and what the traffic was like. The mini-computer in my phone does that every morning when I'm in my hometown and get in my car at about that time.

Our minds do this same thing. They remember our habits, even if we've ditched them for a time period. If we try to stop a habit but haven't put another in its place, our minds will again suggest the habit we are trying to stop.

Exercise is a good habit but my phone doesn't know if the pool is a good place for me to go or not. I could be going to Dairy Queen every morning and it would still remind me because I would have programmed it by showing it what I want to do.

## **Changing Habits**

To make my phone change, I would have to be in my hometown, leave from my house at that same time and go somewhere else. When I had consistently done that for a long time, then it would automatically suggest the new route.

This is basically how we change our habits. We stop an old habit that is bad for us and start a new, better habit in its place. Our minds will recognize the better habit if our intention is to get the same reward system activated and we have done the new habit consistently. For example, instead of eating when we are frustrated, we might choose to listen to soothing music. If we do that enough, it becomes the habit our minds recognize that we want to do.

The key to developing a new habit is choosing the new habit over the old consistently for a long enough time that our minds recognize that as our preferred habit. Then our minds will work with us instead of fighting against what we are trying to change.

## **Habit Highways**

Habits travel on a kind of nerve highways in our brains. In order to negate any habit, we have to put a better one in its place. I call this process stop-start because I am stopping a negative habit and replacing it with a positive one.

My first stop-start was to stop eating candy and start exercising three times a week in the water for at least 30 minutes. It worked for me because both were things I knew I needed to do. They made sense to me and they were things I would do.

My goal was to eventually give up all sugar, but this was early in my journey. I had surrendered sugar to God but I still had a desire for it. I knew giving up all sugar cold turkey would just result in me running back to it like a long lost, though evil, lover.

## **Lasting Habit Change**

Changing my bad habit of eating sugar was something I wanted to make happen, but this time I was determined to make it a lasting habit change. Still, I had to start slow and creep up on myself.

My mentor advised us to make our stop-start something with a little challenge but something we felt we could do relying on God for help. He wanted us to experience at least a small success.

Small successes are great motivators. The more success we have, the more we want. Successes no matter how small will keep us on the journey.

## **Goal Realized**

Around four months from when I started my first habit change, I had cut out all sugar and was able to make that a firm stop. The good habit I started was to eat as much fruit as I wanted. I mainly ate strawberries or other berries in a protein shake in the mornings or salads in the evenings.

This helped eradicate my desire for sugar and gave me a fallback of a fresh fruit as a dessert if others were having sugary desserts. It's the fallback I still use instead of dessert.

Each stop-start has helped me look at my life in a different way. I am not on a diet. I am looking at my life and asking God what are the bad habits I have? What are the good habits I need to start? Which one is the most important for me to work on now? How can I break it down, so I can be successful?

### **Biblical Basis for Stop-Start**

Stop-start is all through the Bible I realized when I began looking for it. There are many examples, but the one that really relates to transformation is the best.

“Do not be conformed to this world, [any longer with its superficial values and customs], but be transformed and progressively changed, [as you mature spiritually] by the renewing of your mind [focusing on godly values and ethical attitudes], so that you may prove [for yourselves] what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His plan and purpose for you],” (Rom. 12:2, AMP).

Hear the stop-start in there? Stop being conformed to the world. Stop focusing on things that don't matter. Start being progressively changed. Start renewing your mind.

God loves to help us with this project, but we have to want Him to help us be progressively changed. We have to allow Him to renew our minds and change our habits. We have to ask Him to show us what needs to change in our lives so we can begin this journey to transformation.

Habit change is one major issue we work on in Overcomers Academy. Doors are open now. For more on this topic, listen to episode 116: How Habits Work on Sweet Grace for Your Journey podcast:

*Teresa Shields Parker is the author of six books and two study guides, including her No. 1 bestseller, Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds. Her sixth book, Sweet Surrender: Breaking Strongholds, is live on Amazon. She blogs at . She is also a Christian weight-loss coach (check out her coaching group at Overcomers Academy) and speaker. Don't miss her podcast, Sweet Grace for Your Journey, available on CPN. This article first appeared on .*

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## **What Some Prominent Prophets Are Saying for 2022**

*Note: This is part two of a two-part series. For part one, [click here](#).*

At the beginning of every year, Elizabeth Tiam Fook of International Young Prophets hosts a number of prophets on social media to share what God is saying for the year. For "What is God Saying for 2022," Elizabeth hosted Bishop Bill Hamon, Patricia King, Barbara Yoder, Kim Owens, Jamie Galloway and Chazdon Strickland.

Barbara Yoder prophesied, saying, "We are to come home to making God our priority, to His presence. He is everything, the first and the last. There is a real grace to coming home. God's arms are open to welcome us home. Not only are we to come home to God, but also to our authentic selves. The person God has made us to be. Our identity in Him. God is not only

dropping new mantles this season but clarified mantles. A declaration and revelation of who you are.”

Barbara also said, “We need profound humility before God as He is dealing severely with pride and arrogance. And we must surrender completely to Him to have an encounter with Him that clarifies us similar to what Isaiah had in Isaiah 6 and Paul had on the road to Damascus.”

Chazdon Strickland, a pastor in Florida, said, “2020 began a new era for the Church and the world. There are prophetic words that need to come to pass, but they must be fought for. Deliverance ministries will increase and be released as we must war for prophetic words. In this particular year, God is bringing us into an unveiling. He is preparing a new breed, and a re-stirring of the apostolic and the prophetic. The glory of God will increase in a way we have not seen in a long time. There will be an unveiling of new and fresh apostolic voices. The voices of God’s remnant Church will be amplified. And swift justice is coming to America as the Church will regain the ground the enemy has stolen.”

Jamie Galloway prophesied, “This year we must guard our hearts as we cannot end this year with any disappointment. The Lord wants to clean house and purify our hearts. Our desires in Him must be a sustainable source of giving life. This year will be incredible but also difficult in some ways. The next few years will be like this. The Lord wants to return to His bride, be reunited with His bride. Believers must be in God’s peace, rest in His presence as He will crush the devil.”

Jamie also said, “We can have the shalom, the peace of God, in the middle of hardship. This year will be difficult for those who are not in the rest of God. We have a spirit of love, power and a sound mind. And we must remain at peace in the midst of conflict. This is a year where we will have to defend everything God has given us. We are to guard what the Father has given us as the enemy wants to take it away. We cannot

give promised land to the enemy this year.”

This article is part 2 of 2 and had to paraphrase the prophetic words. Read the first article on Charisma . For the full prophetic insight, I encourage you to check out the powerful broadcast to hear what the prophets are saying for 2022 on International Young Prophets YouTube. {eoa}

**Jared + Rochelle Laskey** co-founded *Fireborn Ministries* to teach believers how to live a daily Spirit-empowered life. You can find their resources and learn more about their ministry on . They also have e-courses such as *Entry Level Prophecy*, *The Last Days*, *The Baptism with the Holy Spirit* and more on and the popular podcast, ‘*Adventures in the Spirit*,’ available anywhere you listen to podcasts.

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## **Messianic Rabbi: Sometimes Grace Looks Like Black Cherry Soda**

It is funny how certain things trigger our memories. Sometimes, it may be the smell of something cooking, the sound of a car or motorcycle, a scene from a movie or a song playing on the radio.

Our memories seem to be connected together by threads similar to the way #s (hashtags), group thoughts, ideas or topics on

social media do.

This week, while I was reading my Bible, I read a verse which brought my mind back to a memory of my family having dinner together. The memory was as vivid as if a movie was playing on the backside of my eyelids. My family was sitting around the table and we were eating my Nana's pot roast along with side dishes.

One of my brothers began to complain about the pot roast being too dry. (For the record, I remember clearly it was cooked to perfection the way my Nana cooked everything.) My grandfather told him that the roast was just fine, and that he should eat it and be thankful for it. (I remember the exact words used to express this statement but because this is a family blog, and because I don't use those words in English or Yiddish, I translated/interpreted his statement.)

However, my grandfather's strong encouragement didn't sway my brother from his grumbling. This two-way dialogue went on for several rounds of discussion, as my brother complained and my grandfather encouraged. Then suddenly, my grandfather arose from his seat and walked around the table to where my brother was seated. Those watching were expecting my grandfather to take away my brother's plate and that my brother was about to be reintroduced to my grandfather's wrath, including my brother. However, instead of my grandfather using the rod, so as to not spoil the child, he picked up my brother's black cherry soda and poured it liberally upon my brother's roast beef. After my grandfather finished pouring, he quietly and calmly stated, "Now the roast is no longer too dry. Eat it, every bite!"

My brother, realizing that he had somehow avoided the harsh discipline he was expecting and knew he deserved, quietly ate every bit of roast on his plate. He didn't enjoy it and his stomach ached afterwards, but he ate it all until the plate was clean.

The biblical text that caused me to recall this memory comes from Numbers 11:1-9 (TLV):

“The people were murmuring in the ears of Adonai about hardship, and when Adonai heard, His anger burned. The fire of Adonai blazed among them, ravaging the outskirts of the camp. The people cried out to Moses, so Moses prayed to Adonai and the fire died out. The name of that place was thus called Taberah because fire from Adonai had burned among them. The grumblers among them began to have cravings, so Bnei-Yisrael began to wail repeatedly, saying, ‘If we could just eat some meat! We remember the fish that we used to eat in Egypt, for free—the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic! But now we have no appetite. We never see anything but this manna.’ Now the manna was similar to coriander seed and had an appearance like gum resin. The people went about, gathered it up, and ground it in a hand mill or crushed it in a mortar. They cooked it in a pot or made it into cakes. It had a taste like something made with olive oil. When the dew descended on the camp at night, the manna descended with it.”

As we read about the children of Israel complaining in these verses, we have to remember that this isn't the first time they complained about food. In Exodus 16, we see a similar event taking place where the people complained, followed by G-D providing quail and then manna. However, this time the people had been eating manna for quite a while.

Just imagine getting up each day and only having to walk outside your tent so that you could gather all the food you would need for the day. No plowing, no planting, no watering, no weeding, no picking or harvesting. Just grabbing your basket every morning and picking up what G-D had provided for you. But instead of being grateful for G-D's blessings, the Israelites, like my brother, began to complain about the food they were being “served.”

And just like my grandfather, G-D responded in an unexpected

way. G-D could have simply said, "Well, if you don't like My food, then from now on you can get your own." Or G-D could have had the ground open up and eat those who complained about what they had to eat.

Instead, G-D gave them what they wanted: meat, lots of meat. He told them they got what they wanted and now they were going to eat every bit of it. The result was the same as what happened to my brother. They got sick and then they remember that in life many times, we have to choose between what we want and what G-D wants to provide.

Most of the time when we are grumbling, it isn't because we don't have something; it is because we want something other than what we have. So, we complain and complain and complain to G-D.

I am so thankful that when we do get into that cycle of ungrateful complaining that G-D demonstrates His grace. Sometimes that grace looks like quail and sometimes it looks like black cherry soda, and it will often result in our stomachs being upset. But an upset stomach is so much better than G-D removing His provision from our lives. {eoa}

**Eric Tokajer** *is the author of* *Overcoming Fearlessness, What If Everything You Were Taught About the Ten Commandments Was Wrong?, With Me in Paradise, Transient Singularity, OY! How Did I Get Here?: Thirty-One Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before Entering Ministry, #ManWisdom: With Eric Tokajer, Jesus Is to Christianity as Pasta Is to Italians and Galatians in Context.*

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# 7 Signs the Leaven of Herod Has Taken Root in Your Life

In Mark 8:15, Jesus warned the disciples about the leaven of Herod. He explained that the leaven of the Pharisees was hypocrisy but did not elaborate on the leaven of Herod. Since Herod was a political leader, I believe it is likely that the leaven Jesus was warning against was political entanglements. I believe that such entanglements often pollute a person's pure devotion to the kingdom of God.

By leaven, Jesus refers to a substance, like yeast, that causes dough to rise. In this article, I use it as a pervasive influence that modifies something or transforms it negatively. Since political maneuvers take place in every realm of life, including the sphere of religion, I will focus on political entanglements regarding the civic realm, the church and Christians.

This kind of leaven is rarely spoken about in the church. What occurred in the evangelical church the past few years related to national politics justifies the need for the focus of this article. In my opinion, many in the evangelical church have unwittingly succumbed to the leaven of Herod during this season by mixing their brand of politics with Christianity. As a result, their faith was polluted.

(I believe in the separation of church and state, but I do not believe in the separation of God and state.)

The following are seven signs the leaven of Herod has taken root in your life:

**1. You believe a political leader is the key to restoring your**

**nation.** Too many Christians have acted as though the destiny of both the nation and the body of Christ depends upon who gets elected to the presidential office or other high levels of government. While voting for godly, capable leaders is an important matter of biblical stewardship, to equate a political leader with the fate of a nation is borderline idolatry. This violates the teaching of Scripture, which portrays Jesus as the only one who has the government on His shoulders and is the anointed One who inherits the nations (Isa. 9:6-7; Ps. 2:8-9). If you act as though anyone other than Jesus is the savior of your nation or church, then the leaven of Herod has taken root in you.

**2. You believe your political party represents the kingdom of God.** Many Christians on both the Left and the Right act as if their particular political party represents God's kingdom. However, Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). If you believe your party perfectly represents His kingdom, the leaven of Herod has infected you.

**3. You're more committed to political change than practicing and promoting the spiritual disciplines.** Many Christians seem to be more passionate about changing laws and promoting public policy than pouring over the Word and seeking the face of God. God has called us to bring systemic societal change commensurate to the extent we seek first His kingdom (Matt. 6:33). When your passion for political change eclipses your pure devotion to Christ, then the leaven of Herod has infected you (2 Cor. 11:1-3).

**4. Your primary focus is on external change more than the proclamation of the gospel.** Although the Bible calls for the church to be the light of the world, the focus is never primarily on external but on internal change. Jesus said that unless a person is born from above, he will not see the kingdom. Paul said the gospel is the power of God for those who believe (John 3:3-8; Rom. 10:16). When your focus is on creating a utopia through external change instead of first

starting with internal personal transformation, then the leaven of Herod has infected you. Truly, only transformed people can transform culture.

**5. You give more financially to political causes than to the church and the advancement of the gospel.** In the last presidential election, I was told that millions of dollars pledged to evangelism and missions were diverted to the presidential elections. This is one unfortunate example of the Herod of leaven infecting Christians.

**6. You get more excited about attending political rallies than assembling your local church.** In this past election season, it seemed to me that many Christians were more passionate about attending political rallies than attending church services. When a Christian exerts more passion toward man-made political events than the collective worship of God, it is a sign that the leaven of Herod has infected them.

**7. You use the Bible more as a political handbook to promote specific policies than as a tool for self-transformation.** I have seen Christians with a superficial knowledge of God, and His Word, use the Bible as a proof text to promote their political views. Having a biblical worldview involves much more than promoting a few political positions. Those who utilize the Scriptures solely as a political handbook demonstrate that the leaven of Herod has infected them.

May the Lord awaken society by restoring the church to the way of Christ and His apostles. {eoa}

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# Dr. Don Colbert Reveals How You Can Effectively Lose Weight on Keto Diet

Losing weight is the number one reason that people begin a keto diet. It only makes sense, because a keto diet revs up your metabolism rather than slowing it down. That alone is a great reason for choosing a keto diet to lose weight.

But that is not all. Knowing how your body loses weight on a keto diet will help you in the weight loss process, and it will help you understand just how a keto diet prepares you to shift seamlessly into a Mediterranean-keto lifestyle.

The goal is to have a healthy lifestyle that you can enjoy while keeping the weight off. That is the end goal for every dieter. This is a win-win, and everyone likes that.

## The Macros

When people say “macros,” they are talking about the main food groups or macronutrients, such as carbs, proteins, and fats, that we consume on a daily basis. All food has these macros, just in different proportions.

The typical Western or American diet looks about like this:

- 50 percent carbs
- 34 percent fats
- 16 percent proteins

On a pretty strict keto diet, where you are trying to lose weight or overcome a sickness or disease, it usually looks

something like this:

- 75 percent fats
- 20 percent proteins
- 5 percent carbs

The more relaxed Mediterranean-keto lifestyle looks like this:

- 50-55 percent fats
- 20-25 percent proteins
- 20-25 percent carbs

You can easily see the differences. You can see where you might have been (the typical American diet), where you may need to go (a keto diet), and where you want to go after you have achieved a healthy weight (the Mediterranean-keto lifestyle).

The two biggest changes at the macro level between the typical American diet and a strict keto diet are the drastic decrease in carbs and the drastic increase in healthy fats.

### **How a Keto Diet Works**


Our bodies typically burn sugar (glucose) for energy, and on a high-carb diet (45-65 percent, as is recommended by the US dietary guidelines), there is more than enough glucose to burn. Unfortunately, any extra glucose is usually stored as fat, and the stored fat rarely burns off because the cells' energy factories (mitochondria) always burn glucose before they burn fat.

But there is plenty of glucose on hand, so the fat doesn't get a chance to be burned as fuel. And the cycle continues, year after year, pound after pound. In other words, the typical American high-carb diet is a weight-gaining and fat-gaining diet and never a fat-loss diet. It is simply almost impossible to burn fat for energy when sugars, carbs, and starches are consumed in excess. Because the body burns carbs

preferentially (it is much easier and faster to metabolize a carb than a protein or fat), shifting the macros from a high-carb to a low-carb diet is the only way to break the cycle.

On a keto diet, you can't help but notice how different the macros are. And it's on purpose. You see, the low-carb, high-fat, moderate-protein diet eventually shifts your metabolism from burning sugars as fuel to burning fat as fuel.

Can protein be the energy source? Interestingly, the body turns excessive proteins into sugar, which is why a high-protein diet cannot work. If you eat too much protein, the body converts it to sugar, and you are back to where you started, only with protein as the source rather than carbs. Only a keto diet with its high-fat content can keep the body burning fat rather than reverting back to burning glucose for energy.

 Technically what happens on a keto diet is that when your glucose levels, glycogen levels, and insulin levels get low enough, your body naturally shifts from burning sugar as fuel to burning fats and ketones as fuels, similar to a hybrid car that shifts from burning gasoline to using electric energy stored in batteries. During this ketosis process, because there is less glucose around, ketones and fats are burned as energy. {eoa}

*The preceding was excerpted from chapter 7 of **Dr. Don Colbert's book, Beyond Keto.** For more information on Beyond Keto, check out . You can also order the book at .*

**Don Colbert, MD**, has been a board-certified family practice doctor for over twenty-five years in Orlando, Florida, and most recently in Dallas, Texas. He is also board certified in antiaging medicine through the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine and has received extensive training in nutritional and preventive medicine. He is the author of three New York Times best-selling books: Dr. Colbert's Keto Zone Diet, The

Seven Pillars of Health and Dr. Colbert's "I Can Do This" Diet, *along with best sellers Toxic Relief, the Bible Cure series, Living in Divine Health and Stress Less. He has sold more than ten million books and treated over fifty thousand patients in his years of practicing medicine.*

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