

How Do We Make an Entrance Into God's Presence?

We will be looking at the subject of opening the gates in the realm of the spirit. In the natural, gates are used for two primary purposes:

- To keep things or persons out by being closed.
- To let things or persons in by being open.

As it is in the natural, so it is as well in the spiritual.

A. From the Life of Abraham

"I will indeed bless you and I will indeed multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens and as the sand that is on the seashore. Your descendants will possess the gate of their enemies. Through your offspring all the nations of the earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice" (Gen. 22:17-18).

1. Gal. 3:16 – "Now the promises were made to Abraham and his Seed. He does not say, "and to seeds," meaning many, but 'and to your Seed,' meaning one, who is Christ."
2. It is through Christ that you are blessed. The power of the blessing will flow to such an extent that the power of the blessing will overpower the curse.
 1. Jesus is the seed (singular) who possessed the "gates" of the enemy. We also are to possess what Christ has redeemed for us.
 2. A "gate" is a portal, passageway, doorway, threshold, entrances or opening. We are to possess, buy back or take back those gates the enemy has stolen and open up—through the battering ram of Jesus' name—gates which have historically been closed.

B. The Victor Has Overcome

Matt. 16:18 – And I tell you that you are Peter (*stone*), and on this rock (*petra*) I (*Jesus*) will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it (Matt. 18; Rev. 1).

1. We are called to possess the gates.
2. Jesus is the victor who has overcome.
3. Jesus has taken the keys of death and Hades away from the enemy.
4. We have been given the keys of the enemy.
5. Remember gates are to: a) Shut—to keep things in and keep things out; b) Open—allow things in and out.
6. Little keys open big doors.
7. Let's learn to put in the keys to set the captives free and for God's glory to be manifest.

C. Gates of the Heavenly

Not only are there dark gates of the demonic worldly, but there are good gates of the heavenly world—God's kingdom. Through attitudes and actions of thanksgiving, sacrifice and praise we can make entrance into our Lord's presence.

“Enter his gates with thanksgiving and into his courts with praise; give thanks to him, and bless his name” (Psalm 100:4).

D. Jacob and the Gate of Heaven

“Then Jacob went out from Beersheba and went toward Harran. He came to a certain place and stayed there all night, because the sun had set. He took one of the stones of that place and put it under his head, and lay down in that place to sleep. He dreamed and saw a ladder set up on the earth with the top of it reaching to heaven. The angels of God were ascending and descending on it. The Lord stood above it and said, ‘I am the Lord God of Abraham your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, to you will I give it and to your descendants. Your descendants will be like the dust of the

earth, and you will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south, and in you and in your descendants all the families of the earth will be blessed. Remember, I am with you, and I will protect you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. For I will not leave you until I have done what I promised you.' Jacob awoke out of his sleep, and he said, 'Surely the Lord is in this place, and I did not know it.' He was afraid and said, 'How awesome is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven'" (Gen. 28:10-17).

1. Like in Jacob's time, our dry, hard and rocky places can become places of visitation.

2. We need the "eyes of the Lord" to get proper spiritual understanding of the place we dwell in and to see the gates of heaven.

3. When we do, everything around us changes, we see through God's redemption lens and see His purposes, plans and destiny.

E. A Psalm of David

"Lift up your heads, O you gates; and be lifted up, you everlasting doors, that the King of glory may enter. Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O you gates; lift up, you everlasting doors, that the King of glory may enter" (Psalm 24:7-9).

1. This is first of all, a Messianic prophecy concerning the historic moment when the King of Glory (Jesus Christ) would have the "keys" and would be welcomed into heaven.

2. In like manner our prayer becomes: "Open be the way for a great visitation."

3. Let there be gateways opened from heaven to earth for the power and the glory and of His presence and God's angelic army be released to come to our aid.

F. The Elders Gate—Jesus Our Chief Elder

“Her husband is known (respected, NIV) in the gates, when he sits among the elders of the land” (Prov. 31:4).

1. It is my conviction that city church government will take on new understandings of being Gatekeepers of His Presence.

2. Church and marketplace leaders who will know what to let in and what to forbid into a city will be recognized and work together.

3. John 10:7-9 says, “Then Jesus said to them again, ‘Truly, truly I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters through Me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.’”

4. Jesus will be honored as the Chief Gatekeeper in our midst and all other gatekeepers will honor and submit to His leadership.

How Do We Enter These Gates?

We enter through His gate through:

A. Praise

“But you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise” (Is. 60:18b).

B. Worship

“Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable serve with reverence and awe” (Heb. 12:28).

C. Sacrifice

“The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, You will not despise” (Ps. 51:17).

D. Thanksgiving

“Enter His gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise, give thanks to Him; bless his name” (Ps. 100:4).

E. Unity

“Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brothers to dwell together in unity” (Ps. 133:1).

F. Death

“Whosoever does not carry his cross and come after Me cannot be my disciple” (Luke 14:27).

The Call to be Gatekeepers

There are many levels of being gatekeepers, but in one dimension we are all called to be gatekeepers of our own soul and mind as well as gatekeepers of His presence.

A. Gatekeepers of Our Minds

1. In the book of Nehemiah, part of building the walls was the gates being put in place. So symbolically it is also true with building the walls around our own soul. Isaiah 60:18 says, “But you shall call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise.”

2. The Hebrew word for ‘Gates’ is to think or render a decision.

3. *As you think, so you are.* Your quality of life is governed by what goes on in your mind. To be in a place of seating in the city gates of your own soul, then one must control his thoughts taking every thought captive to Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 10:3-5).

B. From the Soul to the Spirit

We are to welcome into the gates of our soul, both

individually and corporately the mind of Christ. Then in the pattern of the rewards for faithfulness, if you are faithful in the little you will be given much. God rewards faithfulness with increase. You will gradually graduate! You will go from the “soul” to the “spirit.” Do you want to be a “spirit bearer” for the Lord? Then be faithful and watch Him by His grace reward your cooperation.

B. The Call Released

In our day, the Holy Spirit is looking for modern day Simeons and Annas who will minister in the temple and welcome the manifested presence of Jesus. “If they wait He will come” is a word that must be heard! The call for gatekeepers of His presence is going forth. Do you hear it? Will you be one?

The Brilliance of His Presence

A. Primary Text—Exodus 33:13-23

“‘Now therefore, I pray You, if I have found favor in Your sight, show me now Your way, that I may know You, and that I may find favor in Your sight. Consider too that this nation is Your people.’ And He said, ‘My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.’ Then he said to Him, ‘If Your Presence does not go with us, do not bring us up from here. For how will it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we will be distinguished, I and Your people, from all the people who are on the face of the earth?’ The Lord said to Moses, ‘I will do this thing of which you have spoken, for you have found favor in My sight, and I know you by name.’ Then Moses said, ‘I pray, show me Your glory.’ Then He said, ‘I will make all My goodness pass before you, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before you. I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.’ He said, ‘You cannot see My face, for no man can see Me and live.’ Then the Lord said, ‘Indeed, there is a place by Me.

You must stand on the rock. While My glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft of the rock and will cover you with My hand while I pass by'" (Ex. 33:13-22).

B. My Personal Testimony—An Invitation

One time when I was "resting" in the Lord's presence, the Holy Spirit said, I want to teach you to release the highest weapon of spiritual warfare." I continued to listen as I knew there must be more. I was eager to hear what He had to say on this subject as I had studied it for years. He continued, "I will teach you to release, the brilliance of My presence." In a moment, it seemed all theological debate on the issues of spiritual warfare were answered. What is the highest weapon? Why He is! He is the highest weapon of spiritual warfare. He wants us to be gatekeepers so we can release the brilliance of His great presence!

C. A Day in Your Courts

Yes, once you have truly tasted the goodness of the Lord's presence, nothing else will satisfy you! You are ruined for the rest of your life! It is true! Oh how I have found it be true! A day is better than the best this world could ever offer! Tell the Lord now that you want to be a gatekeeper—a gatekeeper of His presence.

"For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give favor and glory, for no good thing will He withhold from the one who walks uprightly. O Lord of Hosts, blessed is the man who trusts in You" (Ps. 84:10-12).

James W. Goll is the president of Encounters Network, director of Prayer Storm, and coordinates Encounters Alliance, a coalition of leaders. He is director of God Encounters Training, an e-school of the heart, and is a member of the

Harvest International Ministries apostolic team. James is the author of numerous books and has also produced multiple study guides and hundreds of audio and video messages. This article was excerpted from his book Radical Faith, Chosen Books, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2011. Used by permission. All rights to this material are reserved.