

# Understanding The Eight Prayer Watches

In James 5:16 (NIV), we are told that the “prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.” As we pray, we stand watch over our families, cities, and nations. Just as men stood on city walls in the Bible to watch for approaching danger, God calls us to be modern-day watchmen and warn those who are in danger (2 Kings 9:17-18).

We are to watch not only for the enemy’s activity but also for the manifestation of God’s plans. If we watch for the enemy and announce his activity, we can avert the devil’s plans to steal, kill and destroy what God has for us. Jesus said in Matthew 24:43, “But know this, if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched and would not have suffered his house to be broken up.”

Today more than ever, it is important that we pray and seek the mind of the Lord: “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:10). Major decisions we are confronted with require us to know God’s individual will for our lives.

With the Holy Spirit’s leading, we can discover God’s will and expose the plans of the enemy through strategic prayer.

The Bible speaks of “watches,” which are specific times of the day or night. There are basically eight watches covering 24 hours. This is because everyone has a prayer watch, even though they may not know it. This is why you may find yourself repeatedly praying at specific times of the day or evening. If you have ever been awakened during the night or are wondering why you are being led to pray at specific times, it is probably because God wants you to pray or intercede for someone. Every prayer watch has a purpose.

First Watch (The Evening Watch from 6:00 P.M. – 9:00 P.M.)

A Time of Quiet Reflection

Jesus used the Evening Watch to go aside and pray (Matthew 14:15-23). After the business of the day is a time to release anxieties to the Lord before going to sleep. This is a time to meditate on God’s Word. Meditation quiets our emotions, realigns our mind, and frees our will to do the will of God. What we could not hear clearly earlier in the day, we begin to hear during this time. During this watch, ask God to give you clear directions for the next day and about His call on your life.

Jesus also healed many sick people during this time (Mark 1:32; Luke 4:40). This watch is usually for those who have a strong apostolic calling and anointing to break strongholds and

walls. This watch is for seasoned Christians who are determined to do mighty things with boldness in the Lord.

#### Period for covenant renewal with God

Through Jesus Christ, we have a Covenant with God. In this watch, we can ask God to manifest the blessings of His Covenant into our lives. This is also a time to release judgment on the wicked and decree into the new day God's blessings upon our life, family, church, city and nation. Whatever happens during the day is determined to a large extent by what is done during the night. The evening is the "foundation" of night and the beginning of the watches. People involved in the occult say that they begin their active witchcraft at midnight. If we begin to pray strategically during this watch with the Holy Spirit's leading, we can prevent the kingdom of darkness from releasing curses on the new day.

Prayer decrees for this prayer watch: Father, in the name of Jesus,

I am Your child by faith in Christ Jesus, and I renew my covenant commitment to love You with all my heart, soul and strength. Through Jesus Christ, I am Abraham's descendant and inheritor of the covenant blessings You promised to Abraham (Galatians 3:26, 27, 29).

You have put Your laws in my mind, and You have written them on my heart. You are my God and I belong to You. You will forgive my wickedness and You will never again remember my sins (Hebrews 8:10, 12).

Your Word is like a lamp that guides my steps and a light that shows the path I should take. (Psalm 119:105).

Your words are what sustain me; they are food to my hungry soul. Your Word brings joy to my heart because I have hidden it in my heart so that I might not sin against you (Jeremiah 15:16; Psalm 119:11).

You are my God and I trust You with all my heart and do not depend on my own understanding. I seek Your will in all I do, and You instruct me and guide me along the best pathway for my life. You advise me and watch my progress; Even at night, You give me wisdom and tell me what to do (Proverbs 3: 5-6; Psalm 32:8, 16:7).

I take delight in You and You give me my heart's desires (Psalm 37:4). I trust You and I lack no good thing (Psalm 34:10). You supply all my needs from Your riches in glory because of what Christ Jesus has done (Philippians 4:19), and I have plenty to give to every good work (2 Cor. 9:8). I have favor, good understanding and esteem in Your sight and in the sight of man (Prov. 3:4).

Second Watch (from 9:00 P.M. to 12:00 A.M.)

During this watch, intercessors are able to impact the spiritual realm before the enemy gets ready to wreck havoc. Psalm 119:62 says, "At midnight I will rise to give thanks to You because of Your righteous judgments." It was at the midnight hour that God struck down the first-born of Egypt, which resulted in His people being released from captivity and set free to worship Him. This watch is a time when God deals with the enemies that are trying to keep us from entering into His perfect plan for our lives.

In the natural, this time is characterized by deep darkness. In the spiritual realm, the Second Watch is when diabolical assignments and sabotage from the enemy are set in motion. This is why it is important for intercessors at this watch to pray for God's protection over their families, cities, and nations: "Let God arise and His enemies be scattered" (Psalm 68:1).

This is also the time for divine judgments, deliverance, prayer for the economy, tearing down walls of darkness and all the wicked structures from our economic, educational, religious, and political systems.

Pray aloud Psalm 59 and Psalm 68:1-4. Pray that God will arise and scatter His enemies. Have a session of praise and worship exalting God and commanding all creation to praise Him. Read aloud Psalm 148.

Prayer Decrees for This Prayer Watch:

Father, in the name of Jesus, You save me from my enemies. You protect me from those who come against me. You save me from those who do evil and from murderers. You are my God and my strength, I am looking to You, because You are my defender. You love me and You go in front of me. You will help me defeat my enemies. (Psalm 59: 1, 10)

I rebuke and loose myself and my family from all evil curses, spells, incantations, psychic powers or sorcery that have attach itself to me or my family line. I declare all these curses are null and void.

I break off every power of the kingdom of darkness and cancel every proud ideal in heaven that has established itself against Your plans in my life and bring every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. (2 Corinthians 10:3-5)

I rejoice in Your love every morning. You have been my place of safety, the place I can run to when troubles come. I sing praises to You, my source of strength. You are the God who loves me. (Psalm 59: 16-17)

Third Watch (The Breaking of Day Watch from 12:00 A.M. to 3:00 A.M.)

This is a period of much spiritual activity. This watch hour will strengthen your faith. It is the same time that Peter denied Christ three times. (Matthew 26: 34, 74; Mark 144:30; Luke 22:34; John 13:38).

The Witching Hour

This watch is the darkest and most demonic part of the night, especially at midnight. Witches, warlocks, and satanists have fun and start their incantations during this part of the night. The devil operates at this time because this is the time that men are in a deep sleep and there are not as many people praying to oppose him (1 Kings 3:20). This watch calls for seasoned intercessors.

You must not be afraid of witchcraft during this watch. The Lord has given us dominion and authority over all things. This watch is geared for those who already know how to use their

spiritual armor and war against the enemy. This is the time to pray against satanic attacks on your life, family members, marriages, churches and communities. We are most vulnerable to the devil's attacks because at this time we are asleep. Declare Psalm 91:5-6 for Divine protection for yourself, family, church, city and nation.

Time to set your day before it begins

This is a powerful watch to be on when commanding the morning and setting things in place before the devil and his demons have a chance to ruin it. Plane crashes, car crashes, deaths, job loss, and many other acts of the devil can be stopped during this watch when intercessors obey the voice of the Lord and saturate this time with powerful, Spirit-led prayers.

Time for spiritual warfare

This is the time to awake out of sleep and confront every storm of destruction and distraction that is robbing you of God's blessings and provisions on your life. Also, it is the time to speak peace and calm into every situation of turbulence and confusion.

Time to strengthen yourself spiritually and seek direction

Be vigilant during this time and watch for God's revelation for breakthrough and for His plans and purposes for your life and territory.

Time to pray for release from every prison

The Apostle Paul and Silas were released from prison during this time (Acts 16:25). In addition, God released the people of Israel from Egypt at this time (Exodus 12:31-34). According to Judges 16:3-4, Samson escaped from Gaza at midnight by pulling up the gates of the city and carrying them out with him.

Time to make your case in prayer

This is the period to pray for God's provision to be released (Luke 11:5-13; Acts 16:3). It is also time for miracles and for applying the Blood of Jesus.

Dreams flow during this hour

Often, we are awakened during this time with dreams God has given to us. God uses dreams and visions to bring instruction and counsel to us as we sleep. He also reveals areas where we need to concentrate our prayers and intercession. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon men, while slumbering on their beds, then He opens the ears of men, and seals their instructions." (Job 33:15).

The devil can also attack you in dreams (nightmares), so always pray before you go to sleep and ask God to keep you from the enemy's devices.

Prayer Decrees for this prayer watch:

Father, I plead the blood of Jesus against all demons of the night, nightmares, torment and sleeplessness. Father, I ask that you protect my mind while I sleep. In peace, I will lie down and sleep, for You alone, O Lord, will keep me safe. (Psalms 4:8)

Father, by the blood of Jesus and the power of His Name, I spoil every attack of the enemy. I cancel and forcefully oppose any satanic operations and strategies which are designed to hinder and prevent Your plans and purpose for my life from manifesting.

Father, You said in Your Word that whatever we bind on earth is bound in heaven; whatever we loose on earth is loosed in heaven. Therefore, through the name of Jesus and the power of His Blood, I bind and break all witchcraft, curses, spells, and powers of darkness working against me. I cancel every attack of oppression, depression, perversion, distraction, hindrance and deception. No evil shall befall me or plague come near my dwelling. No weapon formed against me will prosper, for You order Your angels to protect me wherever I go. They will hold me up in their hands so my foot will not hit against a stone. (Psalm 91: 11-12)

Father, You give me the desires and secret petitions of my heart because I delight myself in You (Psalm 37:4). I proclaim that You are my provision. I have no lack in my family, my body or my finances. You supply all my needs according to Your glorious riches in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:19).

Fourth Watch (The Morning Watch from 3:00 A.M. to 6:00 A.M.)

This fourth watch is always important because this is the last watch of the night. This watch is the time that satanic agents who went out to perform their activities are returning to their bases. This is the time of the morning when the Israelites were delivered from slavery in Egypt (Exodus 12 and 14). This is also the time Jesus walked on the water to help the disciples who were caught in the storm (Matthew 14:25-33). This is the time to establish the course of your day by speaking God's Word and breaking everything that would attempt to hinder His will for your life to manifest on third day. (Psalm 19:2).

Command your morning

Matthew 24:43 says: "But know this, that if the goodman of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up." This is a disciplined prayer watch for those who have the power and training to wake up early in the morning and set the atmosphere. This is the time for all of the enemy's plans and strategies to fail. This watch is for gaining territory, establishing the spirit of prosperity and stopping the devil from hijacking blessings and favor. This prayer watch sets our day before it begins. This is an opportunity to set things in place before the devil and his demons have a chance to ruin it. Accidents, deaths, thefts, job loss, and any other acts of the devil can

be stopped during this watch when intercessors obey the voice of the Lord and fill the morning with powerful prayers.

#### Time for Declaring God's Word

This is a time for angelic activity or intervention and a time for blessings from heaven. When we pray, the Lord hears our prayers and sends His angels to work on our behalf. Consecrate all the work for the day and pray for protection for God's people throughout the day. "You will make your prayer to Him, He will hear you, and you will pay your vows. You will also declare a thing and it will be established for you; so light will shine on your ways" (Job 22:27-28).

Prayer Decrees for this prayer watch:

Father, in Jesus' Name...

You have gone before me to prepare my way, to make the crooked way straight, and to make the rough way smooth. Father, I entrust my work to You and You cause my plans to succeed and everything I set my hands to do prospers (Proverbs 16:3). Father, today I have favor with all who look upon me and Your favor makes a circle around me, enclosing me and covering me like a shield. You will work out Your plans for my life because Your faithful love endures forever. I enforce Your plans and purpose for my life over and against the plans and purpose of Satan. Satan, the blood of Jesus is against you. You have no authority over my life. No weapon that is used against me will succeed, and anyone who speaks against me will be proven wrong because my vindication comes from God (Isaiah 54:17). You will defeat my enemies; they will come against me but scatter before me in seven directions! (Deuteronomy 28:7)

Fifth Watch (The Early Morning Watch from 6:00 A.M. – 9:00 A.M.)

Time that God strengthens Christians (Acts 2:15; Psalm 2:7-9)

The spiritual significance of sunrise is having Jesus Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords, rise over us (Malachi 4:2). During this watch, pray for such issues as healing in your body, relationships, family, government, and the economy.

Time for the Holy Spirit to prepare us for service (2 Corinthians 9:30; Ephesians 4:12)

Acts 2:15 says it was the "third hour of the day" (or 9:00 A.M.) when the Holy Spirit descended in the Upper Room on the day of Pentecost to equip the 120 disciples for service. Regular work schedules usually begin between the hours of 6:00 A.M. and 9:00 A.M. As you step out, ask the Holy Spirit to equip you for the day.

Prayer Decrees for this watch:

Father, in the name of Jesus...

This day I entrust my work to You and I know my plans will work out well because I can do everything You ask me to with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power.

(Philippians 4:13; Proverbs 16:3)

Because I reverence Your Name, Your goodness shines on me like the sun with healing in its rays. (Malachi 4:2)

I praise You and never forget how kind You are to me! You forgive all my sins and heal all my sicknesses. You save me from the grave and surround me with loving-kindness and tender mercies. (Psalm 103:2- 4)

I plead the Blood of Jesus over myself. I cover my body, mind, emotions and spirit with the Blood of Jesus. I plead the Blood of Jesus against physical, mental and emotional abuse. I plead the Blood of Jesus against any diseases, viruses or illnesses that would try to overtake me. I release the healing virtue of Jesus Christ into my body. I curse at the root every attack upon my health. Jehovah-Rophe healed me and keeps me in perfect health all the days of my life. I plead the Blood of Jesus against calamities, catastrophes and any hidden dangers that would try to come against me. Through the Blood of Jesus, I have been redeemed out of the hands of the devil.

Sixth Watch (9:00 A.M. to 12:00 P.M.)

Time to see God's promises fulfilled

This is a time to watch for the Word of the Lord to be fulfilled in your life. This is also the time to receive the supply of all resources needed for every project God has assigned you to fulfill (Exodus 12:35-36). This was the time that the Israelites got everything that they had to use to build the Tabernacle in the wilderness. Pray for the provision to accomplish whatever God wants you to do.

Time to reflect on the power of the Cross (healing, prosperity, forgiveness, strength)

During this time, Christ was sentenced and crucified at the third hour, or 9:00 A.M. (Mark 15:25, Matthew 27:45). After having been on the Cross for three hours, darkness came upon the face of the earth at 12:00 P.M. and continued until 3:00 P.M., when the period of darkness ended. Because of Christ's crucifixion, we must crucify the deeds of our flesh according to Romans 8:12-15. We must take up our cross and commit ourselves to Jesus Christ.

Prayer Decrees for this prayer watch:

Father, in Jesus' Name...

I entrust my work to You this day and I know my plans will work out well. I can do everything You ask me to with the help of Christ who gives me the strength and power. (Philippians 4:13; Proverbs 16:3)

Because I reverence Your Name, Your goodness shines on me like the sun with healing in its rays. (Malachi 4:2)

I praise You and never forget how kind You are to me! You forgive all my sins and heal all my sicknesses. You save me from the grave, and You surround me with loving-kindness and tender mercies. (Psalm 103:2-4)

I give myself completely to You, as a living person who has been raised from the dead, and I offer myself as a tool in Your hands for Your good purposes.

The Seventh Watch (12:00 P.M. to 3:00 P.M.)

Midday is an hour of rest and a time to seek the Lord. During this watch, Christ was on the Cross atoning for the sins of the world and restoration man's relationship with God. Additionally, Peter had a vision of the clean and the unclean animals which God used to let Peter know that God was including the Gentiles in His redemptive plan. Also, it was during this watch that Daniel always went home to pray.

Unfortunately, this is also the time for destruction to run rampant in our nation.

Time of the Secret Place of the Most High (Psalm 91:1)

It is very important to pray in line with Acts 10:9 and Psalm 91:5,6, 14. This is the time to pray to "dwell in the secret place of the Most High, abiding under the shadow of the Almighty," and making the Most High your habitation. Pray and cut off all satanic arrows that are released at this time so that they will not get you or your family.

Time of letting your light shine brighter (Proverbs 4:18)

The midday is the beginning of the sixth hour (12:00 P.M.) This is the time when the sun is at its fullest and brightest. Pray that your life would be bright. This is also the time to pray to not be led into any temptation, trap or snare of the enemy.

Prayer Decrees for this prayer watch:

Father, because Christ lives in me, His light shines through me, and I live so that people will see the good things I do and praise You in heaven. (Matthews 5:16)

Father, I live within Your shadow and You shelter me. You are the God who is above all gods. You alone are my refuge and place of safety. You are my God and I trust You. Father, You will rescue me from every trap and protect me from deadly disease. You cover me with Your feathers and shelter me with Your wings. Your faithful promises are my armor and protection. I will not be afraid of the terrors of the night nor the arrow that flies in the day. I will not dread the disease that stalks in darkness nor the disaster that strikes at midday. Father, You said, You will rescue those who love You and protect those who trust in Your name. When they call on You, You will answer. You will be with me in trouble and will rescue and honor me. You will reward me with a long life and give me Your salvation.

Eighth Watch (3:00 P.M. – 6:00 P.M.)

The Hour of Dying to Self and Rejoicing in the Power of Jesus Christ

Jesus Christ died on the cross during this watch. (3:00 P.M.) He took on the sins of man so that we can be reconciled to God through His Blood. Those who accept Jesus' sacrifice can now live a triumphant life through Him and are allowed to come boldly before the throne of God the Father. As Jesus died and was resurrected, so the Bible calls us to die to self and live for Christ. The Apostle Paul said in Galatians 2:20 (NIV), "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." After His resurrection, Jesus Christ gave us power to live a life of victory and the authority to accomplish God's will here on earth: "Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20, NIV).

Prayer Decrees for this prayer watch:

Father, in the name of Jesus, I have been crucified with Christ: and I myself no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. (Galatians 2:20)

I give myself completely to You. I am a tool in Your hands, to be used for Your good purposes. Sin has no power over me because I am no longer tied to the law where sin enslaves me, but I am free under Your favor and mercy. (Galatians 2:20; Romans 6: 13-14)

You have made me what I am. You have created me in Christ Jesus to live a life filled with good works that You have prepared for me to do. (Ephesians 2:10)

You have begun a good work within me and You will continue to help me grow in Your grace until Your task within me is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns. (Philippians 1:6)