



## Praying Cynthia's Way

### Validation

A Personal Story – December 2016, revised June 25, 2021

*Validate* – to uphold; to assert to be true; to declare something to be well-grounded on principles or evidence; sound; inferred according to the rules of logic; or able to withstand criticism or objection.<sup>1</sup>

In 2014 I partnered with Rabbi and Cynthia Schneider of *Discovering the Jewish Jesus* to print our *Hebrew Names of God Art Card Collection* for them as a gift for their supporters. Two years later, Cynthia called to see if we could meet to partner on a few things. I was so excited! However, that afternoon, my dear friends from Peru were arriving, and I would be occupied for the next 10 days!

So, I invited Cynthia for breakfast that very morning. She came and we talked for hours about leading a retreat together, something I loved to do! I warmly remember that day and the subsequent retreat in Psalm 4 with the theme – *From Confined to Spacious*.<sup>2</sup>

I am embarrassed to share (but for the sake of teaching) that when Cynthia arrived that morning, I was struggling with a good bit of fear. You see, a woman in my Bible study group had come home from a cruise loaded with parasites from bed bug bites. She found only one specialist... in Arizona! My friend's terrible affliction had given me fear that my friends from Peru would bring bugs into my house from their travels through Lima and other airport terminals. I confessed this distracting fear to Cynthia. Can you imagine? She did not even know me! Why didn't I just keep my mouth shut?

Then, Cynthia began to pray. She asked the Lord to protect our house from bugs. She prayed for the Lord's cleansing and protection. She never once prayed that my fear would go away. Her prayer was an affirmation of my struggle with no judgment of my fear. Her validation and unhurriedness in prayer taught me a valuable lesson that day. Since then, I have heard Cynthia pray this way in many situations.

One of our inclinations when praying for others is to give advice in the form of prayer, such as, "I pray that Beth Ann would give You her fear and allow You to give her peace." Do you see the difference? We should avoid giving instruction during prayer.

(Sometimes, *fear* is simply *legitimate concern* in the form of a warning; other times fear is an instrument of the enemy. Either way, it is important to pray by the Holy Spirit's lead and not by our desire to instruct.)

**When we pray, we ask the Holy Spirit to come, minister, heal, and speak His heart to us.** He can say whatever He likes. He can advise or comfort. Our part is to call on Him as we come alongside our friend.

### *The end of the story*

My friends arrived that afternoon with eager smiles and shiny, new suitcases, and I was at peace.

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<sup>1</sup> Definitions taken from the Webster's New World College Dictionary, Fourth Edition

<sup>2</sup> You can find the Psalm 4 Retreat Leaders Guide and Handouts at [ShaleFragments.com](http://ShaleFragments.com) and have your own retreat!