



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



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Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, help me recognize and respect my gifts and limitations. Forgive me for the times I've been too prideful to admit I was in over my head and as a result did an inferior job. I'm so sorry I didn't step out of the way so someone else who was gifted for the job could take my place. Help me specialize in those areas where I feel confident that I will be a blessing. Teach me to embrace and appreciate those who are more gifted than I am in other areas, in Jesus' name. Amen.....

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If you have a prayer request...please e-mail it to us so we can pray for you...or a person.....

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1 NOW THESE are the kings of the land whom the Israelites defeated and whose land they took possession of east of the Jordan, from the river Arnon to Mount Hermon, and all the Arabah eastward: 2 Sihon king of the Amorites, who dwelt in Heshbon, and ruled from Aroer on the edge of the Valley of the [river] Arnon, and from the middle of the valley as far as the river Jabbok, the boundary of the Ammonites, including half of Gilead; 3 And the Arabah to the Sea of Chinneroth eastward, and in the direction of Beth-jeshimoth, to the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt [or Dead] Sea, southward to the foot of the slopes of Pisgah. 4 And Og king of Bashan, one of the remnant of the Rephaim, who lived at Ashtaroth and at Edrei, 5 And ruled over Mount Hermon and Salecah and all of Bashan to the boundary of the Geshurites and the Maacathites, and over half of Gilead to the boundary of Sihon king of Heshbon. 6 These Moses the servant of the Lord and the Israelites defeated; and Moses the servant of the Lord gave their land for a possession to the Reubenites, the Gadites, and the half-tribe of Manasseh. 7 These are the kings of the land whom Joshua and the Israelites defeated on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-gad in the Valley of Lebanon to Mount Halak, which rises toward Seir. Joshua gave their land to the tribes of Israel for a possession according to their allotments, 8 In the hill country, in the lowland, in the Arabah, on the slopes, in the wilderness, and in the Negeb—the lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites: 9 The king of Jericho, one; the king of Ai, which is beside Bethel, one; 10 The king of Jerusalem, one; the king of Hebron, one; 11 The king of Jarmuth, one; the king of Lachish, one; 12 The king of Eglon, one; the king of Gezer, one; 13 The king of Debir, one; the king of Geder, one; 14 The king of Hormah, one; the king of Arad, one; 15 The king of Libnah, one; the king of Adullam, one; 16 The king of Makedah, one; the king of Bethel, one; 17 The king of Tappuah, one; the king of Hopher, one; 18 The king of Aphek, one; the king of Lasharon, one; 19 The king of Madon, one; the king of Hazor, one; 20 The king of Shimron-meron, one; the king of Achshaph, one; 21 The king of Taanach, one; the king of Megiddo, one; 22 The king of Kedesh, one; the king of Jokneam in Carmel, one; 23 The king of Dor in the heights of Dor, one; the king of Goim in Gilgal, one; 24 The king of Tirzah, one. In all, thirty-one kings.

Chapter 12

Now that was a tragedy that they did leave unconquered territory, because they left it, it did become a problem later on to them. Now in chapter eleven it gives a list of the names of the kings that were in this land that they destroyed, or that they, that they had come against. So chapter twelve gives you a roster of the kings that they defeated.

(Through The Bible C-2000 Series; 1979-1986; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries)

III. ABRAHAM, THE MAN OF PRAYER

"Oh for determined men and women, who will rise early and really burn out for God. Oh for a faith that will sweep into heaven with the early dawning of the morning and have ships from a shoreless sea loaded in the soul's harbor ere the ordinary laborer has knocked the dew from his scythe or the huckster has turned from his pallet of straw to spread nature's treasures of fruit before the early buyers."—Rev. Homer W. Hodge.

Abraham, the friend of God, was a striking illustration of one of the Old Testament saints who believed strongly in prayer. Abraham was not a shadowy figure by any means. In the simplicity and dimness of the patriarchal dispensation, as illustrated by him, we learn the worth of prayer, as well as discover its antiquity. The fact is, prayer reaches back to the first ages of man on earth. We see how the energy of prayer is absolutely required in the simplest as well as in the most complex dispensations of God's grace. When we study Abraham's character, we find that after his call to go out into an unknown country, on his journey with his family and his household servants, wherever he tarried by the way for the night or longer, he always erected an altar, and "called upon the name of the Lord." And this man of faith and prayer was one of the first to erect a family altar, around which to gather his household and offer the sacrifices of worship, of praise and of prayer. These altars built by Abraham were, first of all, essentially altars about which he gathered his household, as distinguished from secret prayer.

As God's revelations became fuller and more perfect, Abraham's prayerfulness increased, and it was at one of these spiritual eras that "Abraham fell on his face and God talked with him." On still another occasion we find this man, "the father of the faithful," on his face before God, astonished almost to incredulity at the purposes and revelations of Almighty God to him in promising him a son in his old age, and the wonderful engagements which God made concerning his promised son.

Even Ishmael's destiny is shaped by Abraham's prayer when he prayed, "O that Ishmael might live before thee!"

What a remarkable story is that of Abraham's standing before God repeating his intercessions for the wicked city of Sodom, the home of his nephew Lot, doomed by God's decision to destroy it! Sodom's fate was for a while stayed by Abraham's praying, and was almost entirely relieved by the humility and insistence of the praying of this man who believed strongly in prayer and who knew how to pray. No other recourse was opened to Abraham to save Sodom but prayer. Perhaps the failure to ultimately rescue Sodom from her doom of destruction was due to Abraham's optimistic view of the spiritual condition of things in that city. It might have been possible,—who knows?—that if Abraham had entreated God once more, and asked Him to spare the city if even one righteous man was found there, for Lot's sake, He might have heeded Abraham's request.

Note another instance in the life of Abraham as showing how he was a man of prayer and had power with God. Abraham had journeyed to and was sojourning in Gerar. Fearing that Abimelech might kill him and appropriate Sarah his wife to his own lustful uses, he deceived Abimelech by claiming that Sarah was his sister. God appeared unto Abimelech in a dream and warned him not to touch Sarah, telling him that she was the wife of Abraham, and not his sister. Then he said unto Abimelech, "Now restore therefore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live." And the conclusion of the incident is thus recorded: "So Abraham prayed unto God, and God healed Abimelech and his wife, and his maid servants, and they bare children.

For the Lord had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, his wife."

This was a case somewhat on the line of that of Job at the close of his fearful experience and his terrible trials, when his friends, not understanding Job, neither comprehending God's dealings with this servant of His, falsely charged Job with being in sin as the cause of all his troubles. God said to these friends of Job, "My servant Job shall pray for you, for him will I accept. And the Lord turned the captivity of Job when he had prayed for his friends."

Almighty God knew His servant Job as a man of prayer, and He could afford to send these friends of Job to him to pray in order to carry out and fulfill His plans and purposes.

It was Abraham's rule to stand before the Lord in prayer. His life was surcharged with prayer and Abraham's dispensation was sanctified by prayer. For wherever he halted in his pilgrimage, prayer was his inseparable accompaniment. Side by side with the altar of sacrifice was the altar of prayer. He got up early in the morning to the place where he stood before the Lord in prayer.

IV. MOSES, THE MIGHTY INTERCESSOR

"Intercessory Prayer is a powerful means of grace to the praying man. Martyn observes that at times of inward dryness and depression, he had often found a delightful revival in the act of praying for others for their conversion, or sanctification, or prosperity in the work of the Lord. His dealings with God for them about these gifts and blessings were for himself the divinely natural channel of a renewed insight into his own part and lot in Christ, into Christ as his own rest and power, into the "perfect freedom" of an entire yielding of himself to his Master for His work."—Bishop Handley C. G. Moule.

Prayer unites with the purposes of God and lays itself out to secure those purposes. How often would the wise and benign will of God fail in its rich and beneficent ends by the sins of the people if prayer had not come in to arrest wrath and make the promise sure! Israel as a nation would have met their just destruction and their just fate after their apostasy with the golden calf had it not been for the interposition and unfainting importunity of Moses' forty days' and forty nights' praying!

Marvelous was the effect of the character of Moses by his marvelous praying. His near and sublime intercourse with God in the giving of the law worked no transfiguration of character like the tireless praying of those forty days in prayer with God. It was when he came down from that long struggle of prayer that his face shone with such dazzling brightness. Our mounts of transfiguration and the heavenly shining in character and conduct are born of seasons of wrestling prayer. All-night praying has changed many a Jacob, the supplanter, into Israel, a prince, who has power with God and with men.

No mission was more majestic in purpose and results than that of Moses, and none was more responsible, diligent and difficult. In it we are taught the sublime ministry and rule of prayer. Not only is it the medium of supply and support, but it is a compassionate agency through which the pitying long-suffering of God has an outflow. Prayer is a medium to restrain God's wrath, that mercy might rejoice against judgment.

Moses himself and his mission were the creation of prayer. Thus it is recorded: "When Jacob was come into Egypt, and your fathers cried unto the Lord, then the Lord sent Moses and Aaron, who brought your fathers out of Egypt, and made them dwell in this place." This is the genesis of the great movement for the deliverance of the Hebrews from Egyptian bondage.

The great movements of God have had their origin and energy in and were shaped by prayers of men. Prayer has directly to deal with God. Other ends, collateral and incidental, are secured by prayer, but mainly, almost solely, prayer has to deal with God. He is pleased to order His policy, and base His action on the prayers of His saints. Prayer influences God greatly. Moses cannot do God's great work, though God-commissioned, without praying much. Moses cannot govern God's people and carry out the divine plans, without having his censer filled full of the incense of prayer. The work of God cannot be done without the fire and fragrance are always burning, ascending and perfuming.

Moses' prayers are often found relieving the terrible stroke of God's wrath. Four times were the prayers of Moses solicited by Pharaoh to relieve him of the fearful stroke of God's wrath. "Entreat the Lord," most earnestly begged Pharaoh of Moses, while the loathsome frogs were upon him. And "Moses cried unto the Lord because of the frogs which God had brought against the land of Egypt, and the Lord did according to the word of Moses." When the grievous plague of flies had corrupted the whole land, Pharaoh again piteously cried out to Moses, "Entreat for me." Moses went out from Pharaoh and entreated the Lord, and the Lord again did according to the word of Moses. The mighty thunderings and hail in their alarming and destructive fury extorted from this wicked king the very same earnest appeal to Moses, "Entreat the Lord." And Moses went out from the city into privacy, and alone with Almighty God, he "spread abroad his hands unto the Lord, and the thunderings and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured out upon the earth."

Though Moses was the man of law, yet with him prayer asserted its mighty force. With him, as in the more spiritual dispensation, it is Moses accepts at its full face value the foundation principle of praying that prayer has to do with God. With Abraham we saw this dearly and strongly enunciated. With Moses it is dearer and stronger still if possible. It declared that prayer affected God, that God was influenced in His conduct by prayer, and that God hears and answer prayer even when the hearing and answering might change His conduct and reverse His action. Stronger than all other laws, and more inflexible than any other decree, is the decree, "Call upon me and I will answer you."ould have been said, "My house is the house of prayer."

Moses lived near God, and had the freest and most unhindered and boldest access to God, but this, instead of abating the necessity of prayer, made it more necessary, obvious and powerful. Familiarity and closeness to God gives relish, frequency, point and potency to prayer. Those who know God the best are the richest and most powerful in prayer. Little acquaintance with God, and strangeness and coldness to Him, make prayer a rare and feeble thing.

There were conditions of extremity to which Moses was reduced which prayer did not relieve, but there is no position of extremity which baffles God, when prayer pats God into the matter.

Moses' mission was a divine one. It was ordered, directed and planned by God. The more there is of God in a movement, the more there is of prayer, conspicuous and controlling. Moses' prayer rule of the church illustrates the necessity of courage and persistence in prayer. For forty days and forty nights was Moses pressing his prayer for the salvation of the Lord's people. So intense was his concern for them which accompanied his long season of praying, that bodily infirmities and appetites were retired. How strangely the prayers of a righteous man affect God is evident from the exclamation of God to Moses, "Now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation." The presence of such an influence over God fills us with astonishment, awe and fear. How lofty, bold and devoted must be such a pleader!

Read this from the divine record:

"And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold!" Yet now if thou wilt forgive their sin—and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written." And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. "Therefore now go, and lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee. Behold my angel shall go before thee." The rebellion of Korah was the occasion of God's anger flaming out against the whole congregation of Israel, who sympathized with these rebels. Again Moses appears on the stage of action, this time having Aaron to join him in intercession for these sinners against God. But it only shows that in a serious time like this Moses knew to whom to go for relief, and was encouraged to pray that God would stay His wrath and spare Israel. Here is what is said about the matter: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, saying, "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them in a moment." And they fell on their faces, and said, O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh, shall one man sin, and wilt thou be wroth with all the congregation?" The assumption, pride and rebellion of Miriam, sister of Moses, in which she had the presence and sympathy of Aaron, put the praying and the spirit of Moses in the noblest and most amiable light. Because of her sin God smote her with leprosy. But Moses made tender and earnest intercession for his sister who had so grievously offended God, and his prayer saved her from the fearful and incurable malady. The record is intensely interesting, and follows just here: "And the anger of the Lord was kindled against them and the cloud departed from off the tabernacle and behold, Miriam became leprous, white as snow; and Aaron looked upon Miriam, and behold she was leprous." And Aaron said unto Moses, Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin unto us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned." Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb." And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her, O God, I beseech thee." And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received again." The murmurings of the children of Israel furnished conditions which called into play the full forces of prayer. They impressively bring out the intercessory feature of prayer and disclose Moses in his great office as an intercessor before God in behalf of others. It was at Marah, where the waters were bitter and the people grievously murmured against Moses and God. Here is the Scripture account: "And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah; for they were bitter; therefore the name of it was called Marah." And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? "And Moses cried unto the Lord; and the Lord showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet; there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them." How many of the bitter places of the earth have been sweetened by prayer the records of eternity alone will disclose. Again at Taberah the people complained, and God became angry with them, and Moses came again to the front and stepped into the breach and prayed for them. Here is the brief account: "And when the people complained, it displeased the Lord; and the Lord heard it; and his anger was kindled; and the fire of the Lord burnt among them, and consumed them that were in the uttermost part of the camp." And the people cried unto Moses, and when unto the Lord, the fire was quenched." Moses got what he asked for. His praying was specific and God's answer was likewise specific. Always was he heard by Almighty God when prayed, and always was he answered by God. Once the answer was not specific. He had prayed to go into Canaan. The answer came but not what he asked for. He was given a vision of the Promised Land, but he was not allowed to go over Jordan into that land of promise. It was a prayer on the order of Paul's when he prayed three times for the removal of the thorn in the flesh. But the thorn was not removed. Grace, however, was vouchsafed which made the thorn a blessing. It must not be thought that because Psalm 90 is incorporated with what is known as the "Psalms of David," that David was the author of it. By general consent it is attributed to Moses, and it gives us a sample of the praying of this giver of the law of God to the people. It is a prayer worth studying. It is sacred to us because it has been the requiem uttered over our dead for years that are past and gone. It has blessed the grave of many a sleeping saint. But its very familiarity may cause us to lose its full meaning. Wise will we be if we digest it, not for the dead, but for the living, that it may teach us how to live, how to pray while living, and how to die. "So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. Establish thou the work of our hands, yea, the work of our hands establish thou it."

V. ELIJAH, THE PRAYING PROPHET

"I have known men," says Goodwin—it must have been himself—who came to God for nothing else but just to come to Him, they so loved Him. They scorned to soil Him and themselves with any other errand than just purely to be alone with Him in His presence. Friendship is best kept up, even among men, by frequent visits; and the more free and defecate those frequent visits are, and the less occasioned by business, or necessity, or custom they are, the more friendly and welcome they are."—Rev. Alexander Whyte

Elijah is preeminently the elder of the prophets. The crown, the throne and the scepter are his. His garments are white with flame. He seems exalted in his fiery and prayerful nature, as a being seemingly superhuman, but the New Testament places him alongside of us as man of like nature with us. Instead of placing himself outside the sphere of humanity, in the marvelous results of his praying, it points to him as an example to be imitated and as inspiration to stimulate us. To pray like Elijah, and to have results like Elijah, is the crying need of the times. Elijah had learned the lesson of prayer, and had graduated in that divine school ere we know him. Somewhere in the secret places, on mountain or in plain, he had been alone with God, an intercessor against the debasing idolatry of Ahab. Mightily had his prayers prevailed with God. How confidently and well assured were the answers to his praying. He had been talking with God about vengeance. He was the embodiment of his times. Those times were times of vengeance. The intercessor was not to be clothed with an olive branch with its fillet of wood, the symbol of a suppliant for mercy, but with fire, the symbol of justice and the messenger of wrath. How abruptly does he come before us in the presence of Ahab! Well assured and with holy boldness does he declare before the astonished, cowering king his message of fearful import, a message gained by his earnest praying,—“in praying he prayed that it might not rain,” and God did not deny his prayer. “As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word.” The secret of his praying and the character of the man are found in the words, “Before whom I stand.” We are here reminded of Gabriel’s words to Zacharias in informing this priest of the coming of a son to him and his wife in their old age: “I am Gabriel that standeth in the presence of God.” The archangel Gabriel had scarcely more unflinching devotion, more courage, and more readiness of obedience, and more jealousy of God’s honor, than Elijah. What projecting power do we see in his prayer! “And it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.” What omnipotent forces which can command the powers of nature! “Not dew nor rain.” What man is this who dares utter such a claim or assert such a power? If his claim be false, he is a fanatic or a madman. If his claim be true, he has stayed the benevolent arm of Omnipotence, and put himself, by God’s leave, in God’s place. The accursed and burnt-up land and the fiery, rainless and dewless days and nights, attest the truth of his saying, and prove the sternness, strength, firmness and passion of the man who holds back the clouds and stays the blessed visitation of the rain. Elijah is his name, and this attests the truth of that name, “My God is Jehovah.” His prayers have the power to stay the benignant course of nature. He stands in God’s stead in this matter. The sober, passionless, unimaginative James, the brother of our Lord, in his Epistle, says to us: “See what prayer can do, by Elijah! Pray as Elijah prayed. Let the righteous man put forth to its fullest extent the energy of prayer. Let saints and sinners, angels and devils, see and feel the mighty potencies of prayer. See how the prayer of a good man has power and influence, and avails with God!” No sham praying was that of Elijah, no mere performance, no spiritless, soulless, official praying was it. Elijah was in Elijah’s praying. The whole man, with all his fiery forces, was in it. Almighty God to him was real. Prayer to him was the means of projecting God in full force on the world, in order to vindicate His name, establish His own being, to avenge His blasphemed name and violated law, and to vindicate His servants. Instead of “prayed earnestly,” in James 5:17, the Revised Version has it, “In his prayer he prayed,” or “with prayer he prayed.” That is, with all the combined energies of prayer he prayed. Elijah’s praying was strong, insistent, and resistless in its elements of power. Feeble praying secures no results and brings neither glory to God nor good to man. Elijah learned new and higher lessons of prayer while hidden away by God and with God when he was by the brook Cherith. He was doubtless communing with God while Ahab was searching all lands for him. After a while he was ordered to Sarepta, where God had commanded a widow to sustain him. He went there for the widow’s good as well as for his own. A benefit to Elijah and a signal good to the widow were the results of Elijah’s going. While this woman provided for him, he provided for the woman. Elijah’s prayers did more for the woman than the woman’s hospitality did for Elijah. Great trials awaited the widow and great sorrows too. Her widowhood and her poverty tell of her struggles and her sorrows. Elijah was there to relieve her poverty and to assuage her griefs. Here is the interesting account: “And it came to pass that after these things, the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was sore, that there was no breath left in him.” And she said unto Elijah, What have I do to with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance and to slay my son?” And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up into a loft, where he abode, and laid him upon his own bed.” And he cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, hast thou also brought evil upon the widow with whom I sojourn by slaying her son?” And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto the Lord, and said, O Lord my God, I pray thee let this child’s soul come into him again.” And the Lord heard the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the child came into him again, and he revived.” And Elijah took the child and brought him down out of the chamber into the house, and delivered him unto his mother. And Elijah said, See, thy son liveth.” And the woman said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth.” Elijah’s prayer enters regions where prayer had never gone before. The awful, mysterious and powerful regions of the dead are now invaded by the presence and demands of prayer. Jesus Christ refers to Elijah’s going to this widow as mainly, if not solely, for her good. Elijah’s presence and praying keep the woman from starving and brings her son back from death. Surely no sorrow is like the bitterness of the loss of an only son. With what assured confidence Elijah faces the conditions! There is no hesitancy in his actions, and there is no pause in his faith. He takes the dead son to his own room, and alone with God he makes the issue. In that room God meets him and the struggle is with God alone. The struggle is too intense and too sacred for companionship or for spectator. The prayer is made to God and the issue is with God. The child has been taken by God, and God rules in the realms of death. In His hands are the issues of life and death. Elijah believed that God had taken the child’s spirit, and that God could as well restore that spirit. God answered Elijah’s prayer. The answer was the proof of Elijah’s mission from God, and of the truth of God’s Word. The dead child brought to life was a sure conviction of this truth: “Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth. Answers to prayer are the evidences of the being of God and of the truth of His Word. The immortal test of Elijah made in the presence of an apostate king, and in the face of a backslidden nation and an idolatrous priesthood on Mount Carmel, is a sublime exhibition of faith and prayer. In the contest the prophets of Baal had failed. No fire from heaven falls from heaven in answer to their frantic cries. Elijah, in great quietness of spirit and with confident assurance, calls Israel to him. He repairs the wasted altar of God, the altar of sacrifice and of prayer, and puts the pieces of the bullock in order on the altar. He then uses every preventive against any charge of deception. Every thing is flooded with water. Then Elijah prays a model prayer, remarkable for its clearness, its simplicity and its utmost candor. It is noted for its brevity and its faith. Read the account given in the Scriptures: “And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet

came near and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again."Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench."And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces; and they said, The Lord, he is God; The Lord, he is God."Elijah had been dealing directly with God as before. True prayer always deals with God. This prayer of Elijah was to determine the existence of the true God, and the answer direct from God settles the question. The answer is also the credentials of Elijah's divine mission and the evidence that God deals with men. If we had more of Elijah's praying, marvels would not be the marvels that they are now to us. God would not be so strange, so far away in being and so feeble in action. Everything is tame and feeble because our praying is so tame and feeble. God said to Elijah, "Go show thyself to Ahab, and I will send rain on the earth." Elijah acted promptly on the divine order, and showed himself to Ahab. He had made his issue with Ahab, Israel and Baal. The whole current of national feeling had turned back to God. The day was fading into the evening shades. No rain had come. But Elijah did not fold his arms and say the promise had failed, but gave point and fulfillment to the promise. Here is the Scripture record with the result given: "And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink, for there is a sound of abundance of rain." So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel. And he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees. "And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times." And it came to pass at the seventh time that he said, Behold there riseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. "And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode and went to Jezreel. "And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah. "Then it was, as James records, "And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit." Elijah's importunate, fiery praying and God's promise brought the rain. Prayer carries the promise to its gracious fulfillment. It takes persistent and persevering prayer to give to the promise its largest and most gracious results. In this instance it was expectant prayer, watchful of results, looking for the answer. Elijah had the answer in the small cloud like a man's hand. He had the inward assurance of the answer even before he had the rain. How Elijah's praying shames our feeble praying! His praying brought things to pass. It vindicated the existence and being of God, brought conviction to dull and sluggish consciences, and proved that God was still God in the nation. Elijah's praying turned a whole nation back to God, ordered the moving of the clouds, and directed the falling of the rain. It called down fire from heaven to prove the existence of God or to destroy God's enemies. The praying of the Elder Prophet of Israel was clothed in his robes of fire. The golden crown was on his head, and his censer was full and fragrant with the flame, the melody and the perfume of prayer. What wonderful power clothed him on this occasion! It was no wonder that Elisha cried out as he saw this fiery prophet of the Lord enter the chariot for his heavenly ride, "My father! my father! The chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" But chariots and armies could not begin to do as much for Israel as did this praying Elijah. Prayers are omnipotent forces, worldwide and heaven-reaching. Where are the praying ones of modern times of fiery faith who can incense Elijah's prayers? We need at this time rulers in the Church who can add to the force, flame and fragrance of Elijah's praying by their own prayers. Elijah could touch nothing but by prayer. God was with him mightily because he was mighty in prayer. In the contest with the prophets of Baal, he makes the issue clearly and positively to determine the true God, as one to be made by prayer. Does God live? Is the Bible a revelation from Him? How often in these days are those questions rising? How often do they need to be settled? An appeal by prayer is the only settlement to them. Where is the trouble? Not in God, but in our praying. The proof of God and of His being is that He answers prayer. It takes the faith and prayer of Elijah to settle the question. Where are the Elijahs in the Church of the present day? Where are the men of like passions as he, who can pray as he prayed? We have thousands of men of like passions, but where are the men of like praying as he was? Notice with what calm, assured confidence he stakes the issue and builds the altar. How calm and pointed is his prayer on that occasion!

Instead of such praying being out of the range of New Testament principles and moderation, this very praying of Elijah is pressed as an example to be imitated and as an illustration of what prayer can do when performed by the right men in the right way. Elijah's results could be secured if we had more Elijah men to do the praying.

Elijah prayed really, truly and earnestly. How much of praying there is at the present time which is not real praying, but is a mere shell, shucks, and mere words! Much of it might well be termed non-praying. The world is full of such praying. It goes nowhere, it avails nothing, it brings no returns. In fact, no returns nor results are expected.

The requisites of true prayer are the requisites of scriptural, vital, personal religion. They are the requisites of real religious service in this life. Primary among these requisites is that in serving, we serve. So in praying, we must pray. Truth and heart reality, these are the core, the substance, the sum, the heart of prayer. There are no possibilities in prayer without we really pray in all simplicity, reality and trueness. Prayerless praying—how common, how popular, how delusive and vain!

(Prayer And Praying Man; EM Bounds; Chapter 3-5; Edward McKendree Bounds (August 15, 1835 – August 24, 1913) was a clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and author of eleven books, nine of which focused on the subject of prayer.)

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 340-341)

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