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~gathering from the 4 winds~

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Worship Music

[One More Time-Katinas](#)

[Thank You-Katinas](#)

[Breathe-Katinas](#)

[You Are-Katinas](#)

Prayer

Lord, help me to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ and to never allow the unkind, cruel spirit of religion to operate in me. Help me also to love those who operate in this mean spirit and to counter their attitude with the love of Jesus Christ. And, Lord, when I am confronted by godless unbelievers, give me the wisdom to demonstrate the love of Jesus to them in a way that will touch their hearts. Both the religious and the irreligious need Jesus, so show me how to be an instrument of life to both types of people when I encounter them along the way, in Jesus' name. Amen....

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

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1 THEN SAMUEL took the vial of oil and poured it on Saul's head and kissed him and said, Has not the Lord anointed you to be prince over His heritage Israel? 2 When you have left me today, you will meet two men by Rachel's tomb in the territory of Benjamin at Zelzah, and they will say to you, The donkeys you sought are found. And your father has quit caring about them and is anxious for you, asking, What shall I do about my son? 3 Then you will go on from there and you will come to the oak of Tabor, and three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there, one carrying three kids, another carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a skin bottle of wine. 4 They will greet you and give you two loaves of bread, which you shall accept from their hand. 5 After that you will come to the hill of God, where the garrison of the Philistines is; and when you come to the city, you will meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre before them, prophesying. 6 Then the Spirit of the Lord will come upon you mightily, and you will show yourself to be a prophet with them; and you will be turned into another man. 7 When these signs meet you, do whatever you find to be done, for God is with you. 8 You shall go down before me to Gilgal; and behold, I will come down to you to offer burnt offerings and to sacrifice peace offerings. You shall wait seven days until I come to you and show you what you shall do. 9 And when [Saul] had turned his back to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart, and all these signs came to pass that day. 10 When they came to the hill [Gibeah], behold, a band of prophets met him; and the Spirit of God came mightily upon him, and he spoke under divine inspiration among them. 11 And when all who knew Saul before saw that he spoke by inspiration among the [schooled] prophets, the people said one to another, What has come over [him, who is nobody but] the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets? 12 One from that same place answered, But who is the father of the others? So it became a proverb, Is Saul also among the prophets? 13 When [Saul] had ended his inspired speaking, he went to the high place. 14 Saul's uncle said to him and to his servant, Where did you go? And Saul said, To look for the donkeys, and when we found them nowhere, we went to Samuel. 15 Saul's uncle said, Tell me, what did Samuel say to you? 16 And Saul said to his uncle, He told us plainly that the donkeys were found. But of the matter of the kingdom of which Samuel spoke he told him nothing. 17 And Samuel called the people together to the Lord at Mizpah 18 And said to the Israelites, Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: It was I Who brought up Israel out of Egypt and delivered you out of the hands of the Egyptians and of all the kingdoms that oppressed you. 19 But you have this day rejected your God, Who Himself saves you from all your calamities and distresses; and you have said to Him, No! Set a king over us. So now present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your thousands. 20 And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken [probably by lot]. 21 When he had caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the family of Matri was taken. And Saul son of Kish was taken. But when they looked for him, he could not be found. 22 Therefore they inquired of the Lord further, if the man would yet come back. And the Lord answered, Behold, he has hidden himself among the baggage. 23 They ran and brought him from there. And when he stood among the people, he was a head taller than any of them. 24 And Samuel said to all the people, Do you see him whom the Lord has chosen, that none like him is among all the people? And all the people shouted and said, Long live the king! 25 Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom [defining the position of the king in relation to God and to the people], and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away, each one to his home. 26 Saul also went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of valiant men whose hearts God had touched. 27 But some worthless fellows said, How can this man save us? And they despised him and brought him no gift. But he held his peace and was as if deaf.

Chapter 10

Samuel took a vial of oil, and he poured it over Saul, over his head, and he kissed him, and he said, Is it not because the Lord has anointed thee to be captain over his inheritance? Now when you depart from me today, when you get by Rachel's tomb, you're going to see two men; and they will say to you, The donkeys that you were looking for have been found: and, your father's no longer worried about the donkeys, but he's worried about you. Then as you go on forward from there, you're gonna come to the plain of Tabor, and there you're gonna meet three men that are going up to God to Bethel, and one is carrying three kids, and another's carrying three loaves of bread, and another carrying a bottle of wine: They're gonna greet you, they're gonna give you to loaves of bread; which you shall receive. And then when you come to the hill of God, where the garrison of the Philistines are: it shall come to pass, that when you're come near the city, that you shall meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a harp, and a pipe, and a harp, before them; and they shall prophesy: And the spirit of the Lord will come upon thee, and thou shalt prophesy with them, and shall be turned into another man. And so let it be, when these signs are come to thee, that you do as occasion serve thee; for God is with thee (1Sa 10:1-7).

So here the prophet is laying out, it's the trip for him. "When you go out, when you get to Rachel's tomb, there will be a couple fellows there that are gonna tell you, 'Hey man the donkeys that you're looking for were found. Your dad's really worried about you. He doesn't know what's happened to you.' As you go on a little further, you're gonna meet three men that are going up to Bethel to worship God. One will have three goats, one will have three loaves of bread, and the other will have a jug of wine. They're gonna offer you a couple loaves of bread, take them. Then when you go just a little further, when you get near the city, there's gonna be a bunch of prophets coming down. They're gonna have some instruments, they're gonna be playing and singing. As you join them God's Spirit is going to come upon you. You're gonna be changed into another man. So at that time do as the occasion seems best, for the Lord is with you."

And you will go down before me to Gilgal; to offer the burnt offerings, and to sacrifice offerings and the peace offerings: and seven days shalt you wait, till I come to thee, and shew thee what you're to do. And so it was, that when he had turned his from Samuel, God gave him another heart: and all of those signs came to pass that day. And when they came near the hill, behold, a company of prophets met him; and the spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. And it came to pass, when all that knew him beforetime saw that, behold, he was prophesying before the prophets, the people said one to another, What is this that's come to the son of Kish? is Saul among the prophets? And one of the same place answered and said, But who is their father? Therefore it became proverb, Is Saul among the prophets? And when he had made an end of prophesying, he came to the high place. And Saul's uncle said

to him, and to his servant, Where in the world did you go? And he said, To seek the donkeys: and when we saw that they were no where, we came to Samuel. And Saul's uncle said, Tell me, what did Samuel say to you. And Saul said to his uncle, He told us plainly that the donkeys had been found. But Saul didn't reveal to his uncle the other things that Samuel had said about him being the choice of God and the people, to be the king. And so Samuel called the people together before the Lord there at Mizpeh; And he said to the children of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I brought up Israel out of Egypt, delivered you out of the hand of the Egyptians, out of the hand of all of the kingdoms, of those that oppressed you: And you have this day rejected your God, who himself saved you out of all your adversities and your tribulations; and you have said unto him, Nay, but set a king over us. Now therefore present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes, and by your thousands. And when Samuel had caused all the tribes of Israel to come near, the tribe of Benjamin was taken. When he caused the tribe of Benjamin to come near by their families, the families of Matri were taken, and Saul the son of Kish was taken: and when they sought him, he could not be found. Therefore he inquired of the Lord further, if the man should yet come thither. And the Lord answered, Behold, he's hid himself over there in the stuff (1Sa 10:8-22).

Now the time has come to present to Israel their king. All of the children of Israel are gathered at Mizpeh, this great day, the coronation of the king. And so Samuel is out there, big ceremonies, and he has the various tribes pass forth. And he takes the tribe of Benjamin. He has the families of Benjamin pass forth. He takes the family of Matri. Then out of the family of Matri, he takes Saul, and he says, "All right you're king. Where is he?"

So he says, "Lord what's going on here? What's happening?" Lord said, "Oh the guy's hid himself over there in the stuff."

So they went over there in the stuff and they got Saul out: and they fetched him: and when he stood among the people, he was higher than any of the people from his shoulders upward. [He just stood out in the crowd.] And Samuel said to all the people, See ye him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like unto him among all the people? And the people shouted, and said, God save the king. Then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord. And Samuel sent all the people away every man to his house. And Saul went home to Gibeah; and there went with him a band of men, whose hearts God had touched. But the children of Belial said, How shall this man save us? And they despised him, and did not bring him any presents. But he held his peace (1Sa 10:23-27).

Now there are a couple of things here in this latter portion that interest me and fascinate me. Number one is that anointing of Saul where the Spirit of God came upon him, and he turned into another man, a real kind of conversion kind of an experience. God's Spirit upon him, and his prophesying, and the heart was changed, a real work of God within his life.

The second thing that interests me is that there went with him a band of men whose hearts God had touched. This scripture always excites me because of its potential. Not that I'm a chauvinist, but I think that there's nothing more exciting and fraught with possibility than to get a bunch of men whose hearts have been touched by God. To me the potential of a band of men, hearts touched by God, is just incomprehensible. What God can do when He touches the hearts of men!

Now for a long time, Christianity was looked on as almost a sissy, effeminate thing. The women were usually those who were committed to the Lord and trying to drag their husbands along. But that isn't God's order. God intended that the man be the head and spiritual leader in the house, of spiritual things. Now if the man isn't then I believe that the woman needs to take that place. But that is not God's divine order. It is God's divine order that the man lead the house in spiritual things. How strong and how blessed is the house where the man assumes the spiritual role of leadership.

But with the church there was sort of an effeminate idea involved in Christianity. Even the ministers talked and acted like a bunch of sissies. You know they sought to be so proper and sweet, and sissified, that it gave Christianity sort of an effeminate kind of a feel to it.

I believe that Jesus Christ challenges the manhood of a man. I think that one of the greatest challenges to any man to really assert the fullness of his manhood is to commit your life completely and fully to following Jesus Christ. I think that's one of the most manly things you can do. I think it's powerful. I think it's dynamic. When you get a bunch of fellows together, who have really committed their lives to Jesus Christ, whose hearts have really been touched by God, you've got a potential of turning the world upside down. Men fully committed unto the Lord, unto Jesus Christ, what an exciting potential.

Thus, we see that Saul has many advantages. Comes from a good home, security, love, he knows his dad's gonna be worried about him when he doesn't show up. The natural physique, handsome, big all means nothing compared with the Spirit of God coming upon his life, and anointing him, changing his heart, turning him into another man. Then God puts around him a bunch of fellows who are just turned on for God. A band of men whose hearts God had touched. You have now here the potential of marvelous things for God. You've got all the ingredients that you need for a real spiritual explosion. But we'll go on and see how it fizzled and why it fizzled.

When we were kids it used to be we could have legalized firecrackers here in California. We used to light the Black Panthers because they were good loud ones. But every once in awhile, you know, you set the firecracker in the tin can, and you light the fuse, and you go back and you'd wait, and you'd wait, and you'd wait, no explosion, a fizzler. Course we learned when we were kids that you can take the fizzler, break it in two, pour the powder out, light the powder and as it starts to shoot out, if you stop it, gets your foot ajar, but you can really make the thing explode. But we used to always be disappointed with those fizzlers, had the potential, they'd blow and that tin can didn't do anything, fizzled out.

I look at some people's lives again, and you see that potential. You see all the ingredients are there, fizzlers. They never make it. What a disappointment the fizzlers are. God help us not to be fizzlers. That's your lesson for tonight.

Shall we stand?

I pray that God will be with you this week, bless you at your work, that He'll give you wisdom and guidance. That His love will just really flow through your life in those difficult and adverse circumstances. May the Spirit of God rest upon you, the anointing of His Spirit and power. May you become the man God wants you to be, doing the work God wants you to do for the glory of Jesus Christ. (Through The Bible; C2000 series; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries; 1979-1986)

XX. A PRAYING PULPIT BEGETS A PRAYING PEW

"I judge that my prayer is more than the devil himself; if it were otherwise, Luther would have fared differently long before this. Yet men will not see and acknowledge the great wonders or miracles God works in my behalf. If I should neglect prayer but a single day, I should lose a great deal of the fire of faith."--Martin Luther

Only glimpses of the great importance of prayer could the apostles get before Pentecost. But the Spirit coming and filling on Pentecost elevated prayer to its vital and all-commanding position in the gospel of Christ. The call now of prayer to every saint is the Spirit's loudest and most exigent call. Sainthood's piety is made, refined, perfected, by prayer. The gospel moves with slow and timid pace when the saints are not at their prayers early and late and long.

Where are the Christly leaders who can teach the modern saints how to pray and put them at it? Do we know we are raising up a prayerless set of saints? Where are the apostolic leaders who can put God's people to praying? Let them come to the front and do the work, and it will be the greatest work which can be done. An increase of educational facilities and a great increase of money force will be the direst curse to religion if they are not sanctified by more and better praying than we are doing. More praying will not come as a matter of course. The campaign for the twentieth or thirtieth century fund will not help our praying but hinder if we are not careful. Nothing but a specific effort from a praying leadership will avail. The chief ones must lead in the apostolic effort to radicate the vital importance and fact of prayer in the heart and life of the Church. None but praying leaders can have praying followers. Praying apostles will beget praying saints. A praying pulpit will beget praying pews. We do greatly need some body who can set the saints to this business of praying. We are not a generation of praying saints. Non-praying saints are a beggarly gang of saints who have neither the ardor nor the beauty nor the power of saints. Who will restore this breach? The greatest will he be of reformers and apostles, who can set the Church to praying.

We put it as our most sober judgment that the great need of the Church in this and all ages is men of such commanding faith, of such unsullied holiness, of such marked spiritual vigor and consuming zeal, that their prayers, faith, lives, and ministry will be of such a radical and aggressive form as to work spiritual revolutions which will form eras in individual and Church life.

We do not mean men who get up sensational stirs by novel devices, nor those who attract by a pleasing entertainment; but men who can stir things, and work revolutions by the preaching of God's Word and by the power of the Holy Ghost, revolutions which change the whole current of things.

Natural ability and educational advantages do not figure as factors in this matter; but capacity for faith, the ability to pray, the power of thorough consecration, the ability of self-littleness, an absolute losing of one's self in God's glory, and an ever-present and insatiable yearning and seeking after all the fullness of God--men who can set the Church ablaze for God; not in a noisy, showy way, but with an intense and quiet heat that melts and moves everything for God.

God can work wonders if he can get a suitable man. Men can work wonders if they can get God to lead them. The full endowment of the spirit that turned the world upside down would be eminently useful in these latter days. Men who can stir things mightily for God, whose spiritual revolutions change the whole aspect of things, are the universal need of the Church.

The Church has never been without these men; they adorn its history; they are the standing miracles of the divinity of the Church; their example and history are an unailing inspiration and blessing. An increase in their number and power should be our prayer.

That which has been done in spiritual matters can be done again, and be better done. This was Christ's view. He said "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." The past has not exhausted the possibilities nor the demands for doing great things for God. The Church that is dependent on its past history for its miracles of power and grace is a fallen Church.

God wants elect men--men out of whom self and the world have gone by a severe crucifixion, by a bankruptcy which has so totally ruined self and the world that there is neither hope nor desire of recovery; men who by this insolvency and crucifixion have turned toward God perfect hearts.

Let us pray ardently that God's promise to prayer may be more than realized.

("Power Through Prayer" ; EM Bounds; Chapter 20 ; 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.)

“ Praying and Praying Men ” EM Bounds (Public Domain)

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I. PRAYING SAINTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENTS

"The Holy Spirit will give to the praying saint the brightness of an immortal hope, the music of a deathless song, in His baptism and communion with the heart, He will give sweeter and more enlarged visions of heaven until the taste for other things will pall, and other visions will grow dim and distant. He will put notes of other worlds in human hearts until all earth's music is discord and songless."—Rev. E. M. Bounds

Old Testament history is filled with accounts of praying saints. The leaders of Israel in those early days were noted for their praying habits. Prayer is the one thing which stands out prominently in their lives.

To begin with, note the incident in Joshua 10, where the very heavenly bodies were made subject to prayer. A prolonged battle was on between the Israelites and their enemies, and when night was rapidly coming on, and it was discovered that a few more hours of daylight were needful to ensure victory for the Lord's hosts, Joshua, that sturdy man of God, stepped into the breach, with prayer. The sun was too rapidly declining in the west for God's people to reap the full fruits of a noted victory, and Joshua, seeing how much depended upon the occasion, cried out in the sight and in the hearing of Israel, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gideon, and thou moon in the Valley of Ajalon." And the sun actually stood still and the moon stopped on her course at the command of this praying man of God, till the Lord's people had avenged themselves upon the Lord's enemies.

Jacob was not a strict pattern of righteousness, prior to his all-night praying. Yet he was a man of prayer and believed in the God of prayer. So we find him swift to call upon God in prayer when he was in trouble. He was fleeing from home fearing Esau, on his way to the home of Laban, a kinsman. As night came on, he lighted on a certain place to refresh himself with sleep, and as he slept he had a wonderful dream in which he saw the angels of God ascending and descending on a ladder which stretched from earth to heaven. It was no wonder when he awoke he was constrained to exclaim, "Surely the Lord is in this place and I knew it not."

Then it was he entered into a very definite covenant with Almighty God, and in prayer vowed a vow unto the Lord, saying, "If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; and shall the Lord be my God, and this stone which I have set for a pillar shall be God's house; and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give one-tenth unto thee." With a deep sense of his utter dependence upon God, and desiring above all the help of God, Jacob conditioned his prayer for protection, blessing and guidance by a solemn vow. Thus Jacob supported his prayer to God by a vow.

Twenty years had passed while Jacob tarried at the house of Laban, and he had married two of his daughters and God had given him children. He had increased largely in wealth, and he resolved to leave that place and return home to where he had been reared. Nearing home it occurred to him that he must meet his brother Esau, whose anger had not abated notwithstanding the passage of many years. God, however, had said to him, "Return to thy father's house and to thy kindred, and I will be with thee." In this dire emergency doubtless God's promise and his vow made long ago came to his mind, and he took himself to an all-night season of prayer. Here comes to our notice that strange, inexplicable incident of the angel struggling with Jacob all night long, till Jacob at last obtained the victory. "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." And then and there, in answer to his earnest, pressing and importunate praying, he was richly blessed personally and his name was changed. But even more than that, God went ahead of Jacob's desire, and strangely moved upon the angry nature of Esau, and lo and behold, when Jacob met him next day, Esau's anger had entirely abated, and he vied with Jacob in showing kindness to his brother who had wronged him. No explanation of this remarkable change in the heart of Esau is satisfactory which leaves out prayer.

Samuel, the mighty intercessor in Israel and a man of God, was the product of his mother's prayer. Hannah is a memorable example of the nature and benefits of importunate praying. No son had been born to her and she yearned for a man child. Her whole soul was in her desire. So she went to the house of worship, where Eli, the priest of God, was, and staggering under the weight of which bore down on her heart she was beside herself and seemed to be really intoxicated. Her desires were too intense for articulation. "She poured out her soul in prayer before the Lord." Insuperable natural difficulties were in the way, but she "multiplied her praying," as the passage means, till her God-lightened heart and her bright face recorded the answer to her prayers, and Samuel was hers by a conscious faith and a nation was restored by faith.

Samuel was born in answer to the vowful prayer of Hannah, for the solemn covenant which she made with God if He would grant her request must not be left out of the account in investigating this incident of a praying woman and the answer she received. It is suggestive in James 5:15 that "The prayer of faith shall save the sick," the word translated means a vow. So that prayer in its highest form of faith is that prayer which carries the whole man as a sacrificial offering. Thus devoting the whole man himself, and his all, to God in a definite, intelligent vow, never to be broken, in a quenchless and impassioned desire for heaven—such an attitude of self-devotement to God mightily helps praying. Samson is somewhat of a paradox when we examine his religious character. But amid all his faults, which were grave in the extreme, he knew the God who hears prayer and he knew how to talk to God.

No farness to which Israel had gone, no depth to which Israel had fallen, no chains however iron with which Israel was bound but that their cry to God easily spanned the distance, fathomed the depths, and broke the chains. It was the lesson they were ever learning and always forgetting, that prayer always brought God to their deliverance, and that there was nothing too hard for God to do for His people. We find all of God's saints in straits at different times in some way or another. Their straits are, however, often the heralds of their great triumphs. But for whatever cause their straits come, or of what kind soever, there is no strait of any degree of direness or from any source whatsoever of any nature whatsoever, from which prayer could not extricate them. The great strength of Samson does not relieve him nor extricate him out of his straits. Read what the Scriptures say:

"And when he came unto Lehi, the Philistines shouted against him; and the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, and the cords that were upon his arms became as flax that was burnt with fire, and his bands loosed from off his hands.

"And he found a new jawbone of an ass, and put forth his hand, and took it, and slew a thousand men therewith.

"And Samson said, With the jawbone of an ass, heaps upon heaps, with the jawbone of an ass have I slain a thousand men.

"And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking, that he cast away the jawbone out of his hand, and called that place Ramath-Lehi.

"And he was sore athirst, and called on the Lord, and said, Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of thy servant, and now shall I die of thirst, and fall into the hand of the uncircumcised?

"But God clave a hollow place that was in the jaw, and there came water thereout; and when he had drunk, his spirit came again and he revived."

We have another incident in the case of this strange Old Testament character, showing how, when in great straits, their minds involuntarily turned to God in prayer. However irregular in life they were, however far from God they departed, however sinful they might be when trouble came upon these men, they invariably called upon God for deliverance, and, as a rule, when they repented God heard their cries and granted their requests. This incident comes at the close of Samson's life, and shows us how his life ended.

Read the record as found in Judges 16. Samson had formed an alliance with Delilah, a heathen woman, and she, in connivance with the Philistines, sought to discover the source of his immense strength. Three successive times she failed, and at last by her persistence and womanly arts persuaded Samson to divulge to her the wonderful secret. So in an unsuspecting hour he disclosed to her the fact that the source of his strength was in his hair which had never been cut; and she deprived him of his great physical power by cutting off his hair. She called for the Philistines, and they came and put out his eyes and otherwise mistreated him.

On an occasion when the Philistines were gathered together to offer a great sacrifice to Dagon, their idol god, they called for Samson to make sport for them. And the following is the account as he stood there presumably the laughing-stock of these enemies of his and of God.

"And Samson said unto the lad that held him by the hand, Suffer me that I may feel the pillars whereupon the house standeth, that I may lean upon them.

"Now the house was full of men and women; and all the lords of the Philistines were there; and there were upon the roof about three thousand men and women, that beheld while Samson made sport.

"And Samson called unto the Lord and said, O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, my God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes. And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars upon which the house stood, and on which it was borne up, of the one with his right hand and of the other with his left.

"And Samson said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon the lords, and upon all the people that were there within. So the dead which he slew at his death were more than they which he slew in his life."

II. PRAYING SAINTS OF THE OLD TESTAMENTS (Continued)

"Bishop Lambeth and Wainwright had a great M. E. Mission in Osaka, Japan. One day the order came from high up that no more meetings would be allowed in the city by Protestants. Lambeth and Wainwright did all they could but the high officials were obstinate and unrelenting. They then retired to the room of prayer. Supper time came and the Japanese girl came to summon them to their meal, but she fell under the power of prayer. Mrs. Lambeth came to find what the matter was and fell under the same power. They then rose and went to the mission hall and opened it: and at once commenced meeting. God fell upon the assembly and two of the sons of the city officials came to the altar and were saved. Next morning one of the officials in authority came to the mission and said, "Go on with your meetings, you will not be interrupted." The Osaka daily paper came out with box car letters saying, 'THE CHRISTIAN'S GOD CAME TO TOWN LAST NIGHT.'"—Rev. H. C. Morrison.

Jonah, the man who prayed in the fish's belly, brings to view another remarkable instance of these Old Testament worthies who were given to prayer. This man Jonah, a prophet of the Lord, was a fugitive from God and from the place of duty. He had been sent on a mission of warning to wicked Nineveh, and had been commanded to cry out against them, "for their wickedness is come up before me," said God. But Jonah, through fear or otherwise, declined to obey God, and took passage on a ship for Tarshish, fleeing from God. He seems to have overlooked the plain fact that the same God who had sent him on that alarming mission had His eye upon him as he hid himself on board that vessel. A storm arose as the vessel was on its way to Tarshish, and it was decided to throw Jonah overboard in order to appease God and to avert the destruction of the boat and of all on board. But God was there as He had been with Jonah from the beginning. He had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, in order to arrest him, to defeat him in his flight from the post of duty, and to save Jonah that he might help to carry out the purposes of God.

It was Jonah who was in the fish's belly, in that great strait, and passing through a strange experience, who called upon God, who heard him and caused the fish to vomit him out on dry land. What possible force could rescue him from this fearful place? He seemed hopelessly lost, in "the belly of hell," as good as dead and damned. But he prays—what else can he do? And this is just what he had been accustomed to do when in trouble before.

"I cried by reason of my affliction unto the Lord, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardst my voice."

And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

Like others he joined prayer to a vow he had made, for he says in his prayer, "But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord."

Prayer was the mighty force which brought Jonah from "the belly of hell." Prayer, mighty prayer, has secured the end. Prayer brought God to the rescue of unfaithful Jonah, despite his sin of fleeing from duty, and God could not deny his prayer. Nothing is too hard for prayer because nothing is too hard for God.

That answered prayer of Jonah in the fish's belly in its mighty results became an Old Testament type of the miraculous power displayed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Our Lord puts His seal of truth upon the fact of Jonah's prayer and resurrection.

Nothing can be simpler than these cases of God's mighty deliverance. Nothing is plainer than that prayer has to do with God directly and simply. Nothing is clearer than that prayer has its only worth and significance in the great fact that God hears and answers prayer. This the Old Testament saints strongly believed. It is the one fact that stands out continuously and prominently in their lives. They were essentially men of prayer.

How greatly we need a school to teach the art of praying! This simplest of all arts and mightiest of all forces is ever in danger of being forgotten or depraved. The further we get away from our mother's knees, the further do we get away from the true art of praying. All our after-schooling and our after-teachers unteach us the lessons of prayer. Men prayed well in Old Testament times because they were simple men and lived in simple times. They were childlike, lived in childlike times and had childlike faith.

In citing the Old Testament saints noted for their praying habits, by no means must David be overlooked, a man who preeminently was a man of prayer. With him prayer was a habit, for we hear him say, "Evening and morning and at noon will I pray and cry aloud." Prayer with the Sweet Psalmist of Israel was no strange occupation. He knew the way to God and was often found in that way. It is no wonder

we hear his call so dear and impressive, "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." He knew God as the one being who could answer prayer: "O thou that hearest prayer, to thee shall all flesh come."

When God smote the child born of Bathsheba, because David had by his grievous sins given occasion of the enemies of God to blaspheme, it is no surprise that we find him engaged in a week's prayer, asking God for the life of the child. The habit of his life asserted itself in this great emergency in his home, and we find him fasting and praying for the child to recover. The fact that God denied his request does not at all affect the question of David's habit of praying. Even though he did not receive what he asked for, his faith in God was not in the least affected. The fact is that while God did not give him the life of that baby boy, He afterward gave him another son, even Solomon. So that possibly the latter son was a far great blessing to him than would have been the child for whom he prayed.

In close connection with this season of prayer, we must not overlook David's penitential praying when Nathan, by command of God, uncovered David's two great sins of adultery and murder. At once David acknowledged his wickedness, saying unto Nathan, "I have sinned." And as showing his deep grief over his sin, his heart-broken spirit, and his genuine repentance, it is only necessary to read Psalm 51 where confession of sin, deep humiliation and prayer are the chief ingredients of the Psalm.

David knew where to find a sin-pardoning God, and was received back again and had the joys of salvation restored to him by earnest, sincere, penitential praying. Thus are all sinners brought into the divine favor, thus do they find pardon, and thus do they find a new heart.

The entire Book of Psalms brings prayer to the front, and prayer fairly bristles before our eyes as we read this devotional book of the Scriptures.

Nor must even Solomon be overlooked in the famous catalogue of men who prayed in Old Testament times. Whatever their faults, they did not forget the God who hears prayer nor did they cease to seek the God of prayer. While this wise man in his later life departed from God, and his sun set under a cloud, we find him praying at the commencement of his reign.

Solomon went to Gibeon to offer sacrifice, which always meant that prayer went in close companionship with sacrifice, and while there, the Lord appeared to Solomon in a vision by night, saying unto him, "Ask what I shall give thee." The sequel shows the material out of which Solomon's character was formed. What was his request?

"O Lord my God, thou hast made thy servant king instead of my father; and I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or to come in. "And thy servant is in the midst of thy people which thou hast chosen, a great people, that cannot be numbered nor counted for multitude. "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this thy so great a people?"

We do not wonder that it is recorded as a result of such praying: "And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. "And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thy enemies, but has asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment;

"Behold I have done according to thy word; Lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. "Also I have given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches and honor; so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days." What praying was this! What self-deprecation and simplicity! "I am but a little child." How he specified the one thing needful! And see how much more he received than that for which he asked!

Take the remarkable prayer at the dedication of the temple. Possibly this is the longest recorded prayer in God's Word. How comprehensive, pointed, intensive, it is! Solomon could not afford to lay the foundations of God's house in anything else but in prayer. And God heard this prayer as he heard him before, "And when Solomon had made an end of his praying, the fire came down from heaven, and the glory of the Lord filled the house," thus God attested the acceptance of this house of worship and of Solomon, the praying king.

The list of these Old Testament saints given to prayer grows as we proceed, and is too long to notice at length all of them. But the name of Isaiah, the great evangelical prophet, and that of Jeremiah, the weeping prophet, must not be left out of the account. Still others might be mentioned. These are sufficient, and with their names we may close the list. Let careful readers of the Old Scriptures keep the prayer question in mind, and they will see how great a place prayer occupied in the minds and lives of the men of those early days.

("Prayer and Praying Men" ; EM Bounds; Chapter 1-2 ; 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.)

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