



Open Water Ministries

~ 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, I ask You to help me put an end to any scheming or manipulating tendencies that still reside in my soul. I know that this is very grievous to You and damaging to my relationships. I repent for participating in this evil behavior, and I ask You to help me be honest in all my dealings with other people. Help me to curb my anger, hold my tongue, and refrain from speaking words that bring harm. Thank You for forgiving me for past sins. Today I am making a decision to wipe the slate clean regarding anyone who has ever acted unjustly or unfairly with me. In Jesus' name I ask it. Amen.

Sparkling Gems from the Greek.

[Your Beautiful-Phil Wickham](#)

[It Is Well With My Soul-Phil Wickham](#)

[Because Of Your Love-Phil Wickham](#)

[Eden-Phil Wickham](#)

Video's / New Information/ Prayer Requests

[“ Getting Ready For The End Of All Things”](#)

David Wilkerson

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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 BUT AFTER Ehud died the Israelites again did evil in the sight of the Lord. 2 So the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin king of Canaan, who reigned in Hazor. The commander of his army was Sisera, who dwelt in Harosheth-hagoiim [fortress or city of the nations]. 3 Then the Israelites cried to the Lord, for [Jabin] had 900 chariots of iron and had severely oppressed the Israelites for twenty years. 4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, judged Israel at that time. 5 She sat under the palm tree of Deborah between Ramah and Bethel in the hill country of Ephraim, and the Israelites came up to her for judgment. 6 And she sent and called Barak son of Abinoam from Kedesh in Naphtali and said to him, Has not the Lord, the God of Israel, commanded [you], Go, gather your men at Mount Tabor, taking 10,000 men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun? 7 And I will draw out Sisera, the general of Jabin's army, to meet you at the river Kishon with his chariots and his multitude, and I will deliver him into your hand? 8 And Barak said to her, If you will go with me, then I will go; but if you will not go with me, I will not go. 9 And she said, I will surely go with you; nevertheless, the trip you take will not be for your glory, for the Lord will sell Sisera into the hand of a woman. And Deborah arose and went with Barak to Kedesh. [Fulfilled in Judg. 4:22.] 10 And Barak called Zebulun and Naphtali to Kedesh, and he went up with 10,000 men at his heels, and Deborah went up with him. 11 Now Heber the Kenite, of the descendants of Hobab, the father-in-law of Moses, had separated from the Kenites and encamped as far away as the oak in Zaanannim, which is near Kedesh. 12 When it was told Sisera that Barak son of Abinoam had gone up to Mount Tabor, 13 Sisera gathered together all his chariots, even 900 chariots of iron, and all the men who were with him from Harosheth-hagoiim to the river Kishon. 14 And Deborah said to Barak, Up! For this is the day when the Lord has given Sisera into your hand. Is not the Lord gone out before you? So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with 10,000 men following him. 15 And the Lord confused and terrified Sisera and all his chariot drivers and all his army before Barak with the sword. And Sisera alighted from his chariot and fled on foot. 16 But Barak pursued after the chariots and the army to Harosheth-hagoiim, and all the army of Sisera fell by the sword; not a man was left. 17 But Sisera fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite. 18 And Jael went out to meet Sisera and said to him, Turn aside, my lord, turn aside to me; have no fear. So he turned aside to her into the tent, and she covered him with a rug. 19 And he said to her, Give me, I pray you, a little water to drink for I am thirsty. And she opened a skin of milk and gave him a drink and covered him. 20 And he said to her, Stand at the door of the tent, and if any man comes and asks you, Is there any man here? Tell him, No. 21 But Jael, Heber's wife, took a tent pin and a hammer in her hand and went softly to him and drove the pin through his temple and into the ground; for he was in a deep sleep from weariness. So he died. 22 And behold, as Barak pursued Sisera, Jael came out to meet him and said to him, Come, and I will show you the man you seek. And when he came into her tent, behold, Sisera lay dead, and the tent pin was in his temples. 23 So God subdued on that day Jabin king of Canaan before the Israelites. 24 And the hand of the Israelites bore more and more upon Jabin king of Canaan until they had destroyed [him].

Chapter 4

Verse four, or chapter four, verse one; the same old story.

AND the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the LORD, when Ehud was dead. And the LORD sold them into the hand of Jabin the king of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor; the captain of whose host was Sisera, which dwelt in Harosheth of the Gentiles. And the children of Israel cried unto the LORD: for he had nine hundred chariots of iron; and for twenty years he mightily oppressed the children of Israel (Jdg 4:1-3).

So this is up now, Hazor is up about fifteen miles north of the Sea Galilee and in the area above Galilee, actually. And Jabin the king dwelt there. Hazor was a fortified city, a very large city. The ruins are quite large, encompassed a very large area. But he had a powerful army, nine hundred chariots of iron, the Canaanite army. And he oppressed the children of Israel for twenty years. Now, no doubt those that were in the upper area, the tribe of Naphtali and the tribe of Zebulun were most oppressed by him in that upper area of Galilee. Naphtali was all around Galilee and Zebulun was just south of Galilee in the area that is now sort of bordered by Mount Gilboa and Nazareth and Meggido, the plains through there was the territory of Zebulun.

So Barak, there was —well, first of all we're introduced to Deborah, verse six. And Deborah was a prophetess and she judged Israel at that time. So here is a woman who is judging Israel at this particular time who also was a prophetess. There are some men today that would exclude women from any kind of service unto God, but certainly God doesn't exclude them at all, even from important positions such as judging over Israel. And she was gifted as a prophetess and she dwelled between Ramah and Bethel, which is just north of Jerusalem about five miles or so.

And she sent and called Barak the son of Abinoam of Kedeshnaphtali (Jdg 4:6), So of the area of Naphtali, the area around Galilee.

She said to him, Hath not Jehovah God of Israel commanded, say, Go and draw toward mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw to thee to the river of Kishon Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into your hand. Barak said unto her, If you will go with me, then I will go: but if you won't go with me, then I will not go. And she said, I will surely go with thee: notwithstanding the journey that you take shall not be for your honour; for the LORD shall sell Sisera into the hand of a woman (Jdg 4:6-9).

So no wonder God had a woman as judge, and you had those kinds of men in a land that won't do anything unless a woman goes with them, you really don't have real men. And so it was a tragic condition that the land was in when Barak says "Well, I won't go if you don't go with." And so she said, "I'll go but God's gonna give the glory to this whole thing not to you but to a woman." It will come to a woman. God will deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.

So Barak called Zebulun [the tribe people of Zebulun] and Naphtali to Kedesh; [the city that he lived in] and he went up with ten thousand men at his feet: and Deborah went up with him. Now Heber the Kenite, which was of the children of Hobab who was the father in law of Moses, has severed himself from the Kenites, and had pitched his tent in the plain of Zaanaïm, which is by Kedesh (Jdg 4:10-11).

Now, Moses' father-in-law, his family sort of came with the children of Israel but here this guy's sort of a trader. He was a nark, actually informed on the fact that Sisera was there in Mount Tabor with his army. He let them know. And so Sisera came down with his army, the nine hundred chariots and the whole thing.

And Sisera gathered together against them to the river Kishon. And Deborah said unto Barak, Up; for this day, this is the day in which the LORD has delivered Sisera into your hand: has not the LORD gone out from before thee? So Barak went down from mount Tabor, and ten thousand men after him. And the LORD discomfited Sisera, and all of his chariots, and all the host, with the edge of the sword before Barak; so that Sisera got off of his chariot, and fled away on his feet. But Barak pursued after the chariots, and after the host, unto Harosheth of the Gentiles: and all the host of Sisera fell by the edge of the sword; and there was not a man left. Howbeit Sisera fled away on his feet to the tent of Jael the wife of Heber of the Kenite: for there was peace between Jabin the king of Hazor and the house of Heber the Kenite (Jdg 4:13-17).

Now the house of Heber was the family of Moses' father-in-law. So Jael went out because there was peace between Jabin the Canaanite king and the house of Heber. Jael went out to the tent door and Sisera came running up. And so Jael said, "Well, come on into the tent and I will take care of you." And so she covered him with a mantle. And he said, "Give me a drink of water." So she fixed a—she opened the bottle and gave him some milk. And I thought, that's an interesting scripture. Think of how long ago they have bottles of milk. I was really fascinated by that. Now, she gave him a drink and covered him, she gave him a drink of milk and covered him. Of course, milk, good warm milk is sort of a neat thing to drink and go to sleep on.

So he said unto her, Now stand in the door, and if any man comes by and says, Have you seen anybody? tell him No. So Jael Heber's wife took a tent stake, and a hammer, and she came up quietly, and she drove the stake through his temples (Jdg 4:20-21),

Now she was a tough cookie too because she also then cut off his head.

[So that when Barak came up pursuing Sisera,] Jael came out to meet him, and said, Come, and I'll show you the man you are pursuing. So he came into the tent, and there was Sisera with a nail driven through his temples. So God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan and the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they destroyed Jabin the king of Canaan (Jdg 4:22-24).

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

XI. " Purpose In Prayer " EM Bounds

"The deepest need of the Church today is not for any material or external thing, but the deepest need is spiritual. Prayerless work will never bring in the kingdom. We neglect to pray in the prescribed way. We seldom enter the closet and shut the door for a season of prayer. Kingdom interests are pressing on us thick and fast and we must pray. Prayerless giving will never evangelise the world."—Dr. A. J. Gordon

"The great subject of prayer, that comprehensive need of the Christian's life, is intimately bound up in the personal fullness of the Holy Spirit. It is 'by the One Spirit we have access unto the Father' (Eph. 2:18), and by the same Spirit, having entered the audience chamber through the 'new and living way,' we are enabled to pray in the will of God (Rom. 8:15, 26-27; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 6:18; Jude 20-21).

"Here is the secret of prevailing prayer, to pray under a direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, whose petitions for us and through us are always according to the Divine purpose, and hence certain of answer. 'Praying in the Holy Ghost' is but co-operating with the will of God, and such prayer is always victorious. How many Christians there are who cannot pray, and who seek by effort, resolve, joining prayer circles, etc., to cultivate in themselves the "holy art of intercession," and all to no purpose. Here for them and for all is the only secret of a real prayer life—'Be filled with the Spirit,' who is 'the Spirit of grace and supplication.'"—Rev. J. Stuart Holden, M.A.

The preceding chapter closed with the statement that prayer can do anything that God can do. It is a tremendous statement to make, but it is a statement borne out by history and experience. If we are abiding in Christ—and if we abide in Him we are living in obedience to His holy will—and approach God in His name, then there lie open before us the infinite resources of the Divine treasure house.

The man who truly prays gets from God many things denied to the prayerless man. The aim of all real praying is to get the thing prayed for, as the child's cry for bread has for its end the getting of bread. This view removes prayer clean out of the sphere of religious performances. Prayer is not acting a part or going through religious motions. Prayer is neither official nor formal nor ceremonial, but direct, hearty, intense. Prayer is not religious work which must be gone through, and avails because well done. Prayer is the helpless and needy child crying to the compassion of the Father's heart and the bounty and power of a Father's hand. The answer is as sure to come as the Father's heart can be touched and the Father's hand moved. The object of asking is to receive. The aim of seeking is to find. The purpose of knocking is to arouse attention and get in, and this is Christ's iterated and reiterated asseveration that the prayer without doubt will be answered, its end without doubt secured. Not by some round-about way, but by getting the very thing asked for. The value of prayer does not lie in the number of prayers, or the length of prayers, but its value is found in the great truth that we are privileged by our relations to God to unburden our desires and make our requests known to God, and He will relieve by granting our

petitions. The child asks because the parent is in the habit of granting the child's requests. As the children of God we need something and we need it badly, and we go to God for it. Neither the Bible nor the child of God knows anything of that half-infidel declaration, that we are to answer our own prayers. God answers prayer. The true Christian does not pray to stir himself up, but his prayer is the stirring up of himself to take hold of God. The heart of faith knows nothing of that specious scepticism which stays the steps of prayer and chills its ardour by whispering that prayer does not affect God.

D. L. Moody used to tell a story of a little child whose father and mother had died, and who was taken into another family. The first night she asked whether she could pray as she used to do. They said: "Oh, yes!" So she knelt down and prayed as her mother had taught her; and when that was ended, she added a little prayer of her own: "O God, make these people as kind to me as father and mother were." Then she paused and looked up, as if expecting the answer, and then added: "Of course you will." How sweetly simple was that little one's faith! She expected God to answer and "do," and "of course" she got her request, and that is the spirit in which God invites us to approach Him.

In contrast to that incident is the story told of the quaint Yorkshire class leader, Daniel Quorm, who was visiting a friend. One forenoon he came to the friend and said, "I am sorry you have met with such a great disappointment." "Why, no," said the man, "I have not met with any disappointment." "Yes," said Daniel, "you were expecting something remarkable today." "What do you mean?" said the friend. "Why you prayed that you might be kept sweet and gentle all day long. And, by the way things have been going, I see you have been greatly disappointed." "Oh," said the man, "I thought you meant something particular."

Prayer is mighty in its operations, and God never disappoints those who put their trust and confidence in Him. They may have to wait long for the answer, and they may not live to see it, but the prayer of faith never misses its object.

"A friend of mine in Cincinnati had preached his sermon and sank back in his chair, when he felt impelled to make another. appeal," says Dr. J. Wilbur Chapman. "A boy at the back of the church lifted his hand. My friend left the pulpit and went down to him, and said, 'Tell me about yourself.' The boy said, 'I live in New York. I am a prodigal. I have disgraced my father's name and broken my mother's heart. I ran away and told them I would never come back until I became a Christian or they brought me home dead.' That night there went from Cincinnati a letter telling his father and mother that their boy had turned to God. "Seven days later, in a black-bordered envelope, a reply came which read: 'My dear boy, when I got the news that you had received Jesus Christ the sky was overcast; your father was dead.' Then the letter went on to tell how the father had prayed for his prodigal boy with his last breath, and concluded, 'You are a Christian tonight because your old father would not let you go.'" A fourteen-year-old boy was given a task by his father. It so happened that a group of boys came along just then and wiled the boy away with them, and so the work went undone. But the father came home that evening and said, "Frank, did you do the work that I gave you?" "Yes, sir," said Frank. He told an untruth, and his father knew it, but said nothing. It troubled the boy, but he went to bed as usual. Next morning his mother said to him, "Your father did not sleep all last night." "Why didn't he sleep?" asked Frank. His mother said, "He spent the whole night praying for you." This sent the arrow into his heart. He was deeply convicted of his sin, and knew no rest until he had got right with God. Long afterward, when the boy became Bishop Warne, he said that his decision for Christ came from his father's prayer that night. He saw his father keeping his lonely and sorrowful vigil praying for his boy, and it broke his heart. Said he, "I can never be sufficiently grateful to him for that prayer."

An evangelist, much used of God, has put on record that he commenced a series of meetings in a little church of about twenty members who were very cold and dead, and much divided. A little prayer-meeting was kept up by two or three women. "I preached, and closed at eight o'clock," he says. "There was no one to speak or pray. The next evening one man spoke. "The next morning I rode six miles to a minister's study, and knelt in prayer. I went back, and said to the little church: "'If you can make out enough to board me, I will stay until God opens the windows of heaven. God has promised to bless these means, and I believe He will.' "Within ten days there were so many anxious souls that I met one hundred and fifty of them at a time in an inquiry meeting, while Christians were praying in another house of worship. Several hundred, I think, were converted. It is safe to believe God." A mother asked the late John B. Gough to visit her son to win him to Christ. Gough found the young man's mind full of sceptical notions, and impervious to argument. Finally, the young man was asked to pray, just once, for light. He replied: "I do not know anything perfect to whom or to which I could pray." "How about your mother's love?" said the orator. "Isn't that perfect? Hasn't she always stood by you, and been ready to take you in, and care for you, when even your father had really kicked you out?" The young man choked with emotion, and said, "Y-e-s, sir; that is so." "Then pray to Love—it will help you. Will you promise?" He promised. That night the young man prayed in the privacy of his room. He knelt down, closed his eyes, and struggling a moment uttered the words: "O Love." Instantly as by a flash of lightning, the old Bible text came to him: "God is love," and he said, brokenly, "O God!" Then another flash of Divine truth, and a voice said, 'God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son,'" and there, instantly, he exclaimed, "O Christ, Thou incarnation of Divinest love, show me light and truth." It was all over. He was in the light of the most perfect peace. He ran downstairs, adds the narrator of this incident, and told his mother that he was saved. That young man is today an eloquent minister of Jesus Christ.

A water famine was threatened in Hakodate, Japan. Miss Dickerson, of the Methodist Episcopal Girls' School, saw the water supply growing less daily, and in one of the fall months appealed to the Board in New York for help. There was no money on hand, and nothing was done. Miss Dickerson inquired the cost of putting down an artesian well, but found the expense too great to be undertaken. On the evening of December 31st, when the water was almost exhausted, the teachers and the older pupils met to pray for water, though they had no idea how their prayer was to be answered. A couple of days later a letter was received in the New York office which ran something like this: "Philadelphia, January 1st. It is six o'clock in the morning of New Year's Day. All the other members of the family are asleep, but I was awakened with a strange impression that some one, somewhere, is in need of money which the Lord wants me to supply." Enclosed was a cheque for an amount which just covered the cost of the artesian well and the piping of the water into the school buildings. "I have seen God's hand stretched out to heal among the heathen in as mighty wonder-working power as in apostolic

times," once said a well-known minister to the writer. "I was preaching to two thousand famine orphaned girls, at Kedgaum, India, at Ramabai's Mukti (salvation) Mission. A swarm of serpents as venomous and deadly as the reptile that smote Paul, suddenly raided the walled grounds, 'sent of Satan,' Ramabai said, and several of her most beautiful and faithful Christian girls were smitten by them, two of them bitten twice. I saw four of the very flower of her flock in convulsions at once, unconscious and apparently in the agonies of death." Ramabai believes the Bible with an implicit and obedient faith. There were three of us missionaries there. She said: 'We will do just what the Bible says, I want you to minister for their healing according to James 1:14-18.' She led the way into the dormitory where her girls were lying in spasms, and we laid our hands upon their heads and prayed, and anointed them with oil in the name of the Lord. Each of them was healed as soon as anointed and sat up and sang with faces shining. That miracle and marvel among the heathen mightily confirmed the word of the Lord, and was a profound and overpowering proclamation of God."

Some years ago, the record of a wonderful work of grace in connection with one of the stations of the China Inland Mission attracted a good deal of attention. Both the number and spiritual character of the converts had been far greater than at other stations where the consecration of the missionaries had been just as great at the more fruitful place. This rich harvest of souls remained a mystery until Hudson Taylor on a visit to England discovered the secret. At the close of one of his addresses a gentleman came forward to make his acquaintance. In the conversation which followed, Mr. Taylor was surprised at the accurate knowledge the man possessed concerning this inland China station. "But how is it, Mr. Taylor asked, "that you are so conversant with the conditions of that work?" "Oh!" he replied, "the missionary there and I are old college-mates; for years we have regularly corresponded; he has sent me names of enquirers and converts, and these I have daily taken to God in prayer." At last the secret was found! A praying man at home, praying definitely, praying daily, for specific cases among the heathen. That is the real intercessory missionary. Hudson Taylor himself, as all the world knows, was a man who knew how to pray and whose praying was blessed with fruitful answers. In the story of his life, told by Dr. and Mrs. Howard Taylor, we find page after page aglow with answered prayer. On his way out to China for the first time, in 1853, when he was only twenty-one years of age, he had a definite answer to prayer that was a great encouragement to his faith. "They had just come through the Dampier Strait, but were not yet out of sight of the islands. Usually a breeze would spring up after sunset and last until about dawn. The utmost use was made of it, but during the day they lay still with flapping sails, often drifting back and losing a good deal of the advantage gained at night." The story continues in Hudson Taylor's own words: "This happened notably on one occasion when we were in dangerous proximity to the north of New Guinea. Saturday night had brought us to a point some thirty miles off the land, and during the Sunday morning service, which was held on deck, I could not fail to see that the Captain looked troubled and frequently went over to the side of the ship. When the service was ended I learnt from him the cause. A four-knot current was carrying us toward some sunken reefs, and we were already so near that it seemed improbable that we should get through the afternoon in safety. After dinner, the long boat was put out and all hands endeavored, without success, to turn the ship's head from the shore. "After standing together on the deck for some time in silence, the Captain said to me: "Well, we have done everything that can be done. We can only await the result." A thought occurred to me, and I replied: 'No, there is one thing we have not done yet.' "What is that?' he queried. "Four of us on board are Christians. Let us each retire to his own cabin, and in agreed prayer ask the Lord to give us immediately a breeze. He can as easily send it now as at sunset." The Captain complied with this proposal. I went and spoke to the other two men, and after prayer with the carpenter, we all four retired to wait upon God. I had a good but very brief season in prayer, and then felt so satisfied that our request was granted that I could not continue asking, and very soon went up again on deck. The first officer, a godless man, was in charge. I went over and asked him to let down the clews or corners of the mainsail, which had been drawn up in order to lessen the useless flapping of the sail against the rigging.

"What would be the good of that?' he answered roughly. "I told him we had been asking a wind from God; that it was coming immediately; and we were so near the reef by this time that there was not a minute to lose. "With an oath and a look of contempt, he said he would rather see a wind than hear of it. "But while he was speaking I watched his eye, following it up to the royal, and there, sure enough, the corner of the topmost sail was beginning to tremble in the breeze. "Don't you see the wind is coming? Look at the royal!' I exclaimed. "No, it is only a cat's paw,' he rejoined (a mere puff of wind). "Cat's paw or not,' I cried, 'pray let down the mainsail and give us the benefit.' "This he was not slow to do. In another minute the heavy tread of the men on deck brought up the Captain from his cabin to see what was the matter. The breeze had indeed come! In a few minutes we were ploughing our way at six or seven knots an hour through the water ... and though the wind was sometimes unsteady, we did not altogether lose it until after passing the Pelew Islands. "Thus God encouraged me," adds this praying saint, "ere landing on China's shores to bring every variety of need to Him in prayer, and to expect that He would honour the name of the Lord Jesus and give the help each emergency required."

In an address at Cambridge some time ago (reported in "The Life of Faith," April 3rd, 1912), Mr. S. D. Gordon told in his own inimitable way the story of a man in his own country, to illustrate from real life the fact of the reality of prayer, and that it is not mere talking. "This man," said Mr. Gordon, "came of an old New England family, a bit farther back an English family. He was a giant in size, and a keen man mentally, and a university-trained man. He had gone out West to live, and represented a prominent district in our House of Congress, answering to your House of Commons. He was a prominent leader there. He was reared in a Christian family, but he was a sceptic, and used to lecture against Christianity. He told me he was fond, in his lectures, of proving, as he thought, conclusively, that there was no God. That was the type of his infidelity. "One day he told me he was sitting in the Lower House of Congress. It was at the time of a Presidential Election, and when party feeling ran high. One would have thought that was the last place where a man would be likely to think about spiritual things. He said: 'I was sitting in my seat in that crowded House and that heated atmosphere, when a feeling came to me that the God, whose existence I thought I could successfully disprove, was just there above me, looking down on me, and that He was displeased with me, and with the way I was doing. I said to myself, "This is ridiculous, I guess I've been working too hard. I'll go and get a good meal and take a long walk and shake myself, and see if that will take this feeling away.'" He got his extra meal, took a walk, and came back to his seat, but the impression would not be shaken off that God was there and was displeased with him. He went for a walk, day after day, but could never shake the feeling off. Then he went back to his constituency in his State, he said, to arrange matters there. He had the ambition to be the Governor of his State, and his party was the dominant party in the State,

and, as far as such things could be judged, he was in the line to become Governor there, in one of the most dominant States our Central West. He said: 'I went home to fix that thing up as far as I could, and to get ready for it. But I had hardly reached home and exchanged greetings, when my wife, who was an earnest Christian woman, said to me that a few of them had made a little covenant of prayer that I might become a Christian.' He did not want her to know the experience that he had just been going through, and so he said as carelessly as he could, 'When did this thing begin, this praying of yours?' She named the date. Then he did some very quick thinking, and he knew, as he thought back, that it was the day on the calendar when that strange impression came to him for the first time. "He said to me: 'I was tremendously shaken. I wanted to be honest. I was perfectly honest in not believing in God, and I thought I was right. But if what she said was true, then merely as a lawyer sifting his evidence in a case, it would be good evidence that there was really something in their prayer. I was terrifically shaken, and wanted to be honest, and did not know what to do. That same night I went to a little Methodist chapel, and if somebody had known how to talk with me, I think I should have accepted Christ that night.' Then he said that the next night he went back again to that chapel, where meetings were being held each night, and there he kneeled at the altar, and yielded his great strong will to the will of God. Then he said, 'I knew I was to preach,' and he is preaching still in a Western State. That is half of the story. I also talked with his wife—I wanted to put the two halves together, so as to get the bit of teaching in it all—and she told me this. She had been a Christian—what you call a nominal Christian—a strange confusion of terms. Then there came a time when she was led into a full surrender of her life to the Lord Jesus Christ. Then she said, 'At once there came a great intensifying of desire that my husband might be a Christian, and we made that little compact to pray for him—each day until he became a Christian. That night I was kneeling at my bedside before going to rest, praying for my husband, praying very earnestly and then a voice said to me, "Are you willing for the results that will come if your husband is converted?"' The little message was so very distinct that she said she was frightened; she had never had such an experience. But she went on praying still more earnestly, and again there came the quiet voice, 'Are you willing for the consequences?' And again there was a sense of being startled, frightened. But she still went on praying, and wondering what this meant, and a third time the quiet voice came more quietly than ever as she described it, 'Are you willing for the consequences?' "Then she told me she said with great earnestness, 'O God, I am willing for anything Thou dost think good, if only my husband may know Thee, and become a true Christian man.' She said that instantly, when that prayer came from her lips, there came into her heart a wonderful sense of peace, a great peace that she could not explain, a 'peace that passeth understanding,' and from that moment—it was the very night of the covenant, the night when her husband had that first strange experience—the assurance never left her that he would accept Christ. But all those weeks she prayed with the firm assurance that the result was coming. What were the consequences? They were of a kind that I think no one would think small. She was the wife of a man in a very prominent political position; she was the wife of a man who was in the line of becoming the first official of his State, and she officially the first lady socially? of that State, with all the honour that that social standing would imply. Now she is the wife of a Methodist preacher, with her home changed every two or three years, she going from this place to that, a very different social position, and having a very different income that she would otherwise have had. Yet I never met a woman who had more of the wonderful peace of God in her heart and of the light of God in her face, than that woman." And Mr. Gordon's comment on that incident is this: "Now, you can see at once that there was no change in the purpose of God through that prayer. The prayer worked out His purpose; it did not change it. But the woman's surrender gave the opportunity of working out the will that God wanted to work out. If we might give ourselves to Him and learn His will, and use all our strength in learning His will and bending to His will, then we would begin to pray, and there is simply nothing that could resist the tremendous power of the prayer. Oh for more men who will be simple enough to get in touch with God, and give Him the mastery of the whole life, and learn His will, and then give themselves, as Jesus gave Himself, to the sacred service of intercession!"

To the man or woman who is acquainted with God and who knows how to pray, there is nothing remarkable in the answers that come. They are sure of being heard, since they ask in accordance with what they know to be the mind and the will of God. Dr. William Burr, Bishop of Europe in the Methodist Episcopal Church, tells that a few years ago, when he visited their Boys' School in Vienna, he found that although the year was not up, all available funds had been spent. He hesitated to make a special appeal to his friends in America. He counselled with the teachers. They took the matter to God in earnest and continued prayer, believing that He would grant their request. Ten days later Bishop Burr was in Rome, and there came to him a letter from a friend in New York, which read substantially thus: "As I went to my office on Broadway one morning (and the date was the very one on which the teachers were praying), a voice seemed to tell me that you were in need of funds for the Boys' School in Vienna. I very gladly enclose a cheque for the work." The cheque was for the amount needed. There had been no human communication between Vienna and New York. But while they were yet speaking God answered them.

Some time ago there appeared in an English religious weekly the report of an incident narrated by a well-known preacher in the course of an address to children. For the truth of the story he was able to vouch. A child lay sick in a country cottage, and her younger sister heard the doctor say, as he left the house, "Nothing but a miracle can save her." The little girl went to her money-box, took out the few coins it contained, and in perfect simplicity of heart went to shop after shop in the village street, asking, "Please, I want to buy a miracle." From each she came away disappointed. Even the local chemist had to say, "My dear, we don't sell miracles here." But outside his door two men were talking, and had overheard the child's request. One was a great doctor from a London hospital, and he asked her to explain what she wanted. When he understood the need, he hurried with her to the cottage, examined the sick girl and said to the mother: "It is true—only a miracle can save her, and it must be performed at once." He got his instruments, performed the operation, and the patient's life was saved.

D. L. Moody gives this illustration of the power of prayer: "While in Edinburgh, a man was pointed out to me by a friend, who said: 'That man is chairman of the Edinburgh Infidel Club.' I went and sat beside him and said, 'My friend, I am glad to see you in our meeting. Are you concerned about your welfare?'" "I do not believe in any hereafter." "Well, just get down on your knees and let me pray for you." "No, I do not believe in prayer." "I knelt beside him as he sat, and prayed. He made a great deal of sport of it. A year after I met him again. I took him by the hand and said: 'Hasn't God answered my prayer yet?'" "There is no God. If you believe in one who answers prayers, try

your hand on me. "Well, a great many are now praying for you, and God's time will come, and I believe you will be saved yet."

"Some time afterwards I got a letter from a leading barrister in Edinburgh telling me that my infidel friend had come to Christ, and that seventeen of his club men had followed his example.

"I did not know how God would answer prayer, but I knew He would answer. Let us come boldly to God."

Robert Louis Stevenson tells a vivid story of a storm at sea. The passengers below were greatly alarmed, as the waves dashed over the vessel. At last one of them, against orders, crept to the deck, and came to the pilot, who was lashed to the wheel which he was turning without flinching. The pilot caught sight of the terror-stricken man, and gave him a reassuring smile. Below went the passenger, and comforted the others by saying, "I have seen the face of the pilot, and he smiled. All is well."

That is how we feel when through the gateway of prayer we find our way into the Father's presence. We see His face, and we know that all is well, since His hand is on the helm of events, and "even the winds and the waves obey Him." When we live in fellowship with Him, we come with confidence into His presence, asking in the full confidence of receiving and meeting with the justification of our faith.

(Purpose In Prayer; EM Bounds; Chapter 11; 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.)

James 5:13-20 (AMP)

13 Is anyone among you afflicted (ill-treated, suffering evil)? He should pray. Is anyone glad at heart? He should sing praise [to God].

14 Is anyone among you sick? He should call in the church elders (the spiritual guides). And they should pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Lord's name.

15 And the prayer [that is] of faith will save him who is sick, and the Lord will restore him; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

16 Confess to one another therefore your faults (your slips, your false steps, your offenses, your sins) and pray [also] for one another, that you may be healed and restored [to a spiritual tone of mind and heart]. The earnest (heartfelt, continued) prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available [dynamic in its working].

17 Elijah was a human being with a nature such as we have [with feelings, affections, and a constitution like ours]; and he prayed earnestly for it not to rain, and no rain fell on the earth for three years and six months.

18 And [then] he prayed again and the heavens supplied rain and the land produced its crops [as usual].

19 [My] brethren, if anyone among you strays from the Truth and falls into error and another [person] brings him back [to God],

20 Let the [latter] one be sure that whoever turns a sinner from his evil course will save [that one's] soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins [procure the pardon of the many sins committed by the convert].

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 376-378)

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