



~ Thought For The Day ~

~gathering from the 4 winds~

“come just as you are”

Refresh, Restore, Rebuild = Healing



Vol. 27 Issue 510

Sept.25, 2012

www.chapel-flock.com

Worship Music

Prayer

Lord, please forgive me for being so harsh and judgmental of other people when they make mistakes or behave in ways that shock me. I know I become judgmental when I forget the mercy and grace that has been extended to me through the years. Therefore, I ask You to help me walk in a constant awareness of all the times I've been loved, forgiven, and accepted in spite of my behavior. Holy Spirit, help me now to be an extension of this same mercy and grace to others who need it from me. In Jesus' name I ask it. Amen.

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1 AND THE Israelites again did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. 2 And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the tribe of the Danites, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren and had no children. 3 And the Angel of the Lord appeared to the woman and said to her, Behold, you are barren and have no children, but you shall become pregnant and bear a son. 4 Therefore beware and drink no wine or strong drink and eat nothing unclean. 5 For behold, you shall become pregnant and bear a son. No razor shall come upon his head, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from birth, and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. 6 Then the woman went and told her husband, saying, A Man of God came to me and his face was like the face of the Angel of God, to be greatly and reverently feared. I did not ask him from where he came, and he did not tell me his name. 7 But he said to me, Behold, you shall become pregnant and bear a son, and now drink no wine or strong drink and eat nothing unclean, for the child shall be a Nazirite to God from birth to the day of his death. 8 Then Manoah entreated the Lord and said, O Lord, let the Man of God whom You sent come again to us and teach us what we shall do with the child that shall be born. 9 And God listened to the voice of Manoah, and the Angel of God came again to the woman as she sat in the field; but Manoah her husband was not with her. 10 And the woman ran in haste and told her husband and said to him, Behold, the Man who came to me the other day has appeared to me. 11 And Manoah arose and went after his wife and came to the Man and said to him, Are you the Man who spoke to this woman? And he said, I am. 12 And Manoah said, Now when your words come true, how shall we manage the child, and what is he to do? 13 And the Angel of the Lord said to Manoah, Let the mother beware of all that I told her. 14 She may not eat of anything that comes from the grapevine, nor drink wine or strong drink nor eat any unclean thing. All that I commanded her let her observe. 15 And Manoah said to the Angel of the Lord, Pray, let us detain you that we may prepare a kid for you. 16 And the Angel of the Lord said to Manoah, Though you detain me, I will not eat of your food, but if you make ready a burnt offering, offer it to the Lord. For Manoah did not know that he was the Angel of the Lord. 17 And Manoah said to the Angel of the Lord, What is your name, so that when your words come true, we may do you honor? 18 And the Angel of the Lord said to him, Why do you ask my name, seeing it is wonderful? 19 So Manoah took the kid with the cereal offering and offered it upon a rock to the Lord, the Angel working wonders, while Manoah and his wife looked on. 20 For when the flame went up toward the heavens from the altar, the Angel of the Lord ascended in the altar flame. And Manoah and his wife looked on, and they fell on their faces to the ground. 21 The Angel of the Lord did not appear again to Manoah or to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was the Angel of the Lord. 22 And Manoah said to his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. 23 But his [sensible] wife said to him, If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have received a burnt offering and a cereal offering from our hands, nor have shown us all these things or now have announced such things as these. 24 And the woman [in due time] bore a son and called his name Samson; and the child grew and the Lord blessed him. 25 And the Spirit of the Lord began to move him at times in Mahaneh-dan [the camp of Dan] between Zorah and Eshtaol.

[Now, again] The children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the LORD; and the LORD delivered them into the hands of the Philistines for forty years. There was a certain man from Zorah, he was of the tribe of Dan, and his name was Manoah; and his wife was barren (Jdg 13:1-2),

And one day she was out in the field and an angel of the Lord visited her there in the field. And told her that she was going to become pregnant, she was going to bare a son and through her son God was going to begin delivering the children of Israel from the Philistines.

Now the angel said, "The son is to be dedicated unto God. You're not to allow a razor to come to his head." A Nazirite vow, not cutting your hair. Also he was not to drink any wine, strong drink, anything that came from the vine for he was to be a Nazirite from his birth, dedicated his life. His life was to be dedicated unto God, a commitment of his life to God. Well, she was all excited. She ran and she told her husband about this man that met her in the field, told her that she was going to become pregnant and have a son and that she was not to shave his hair and not give him any wine or strong drink.

And he said, "What did he look like? And what did he tell you?" And he said, "Oh God, if it's really you that appeared, appear again so we can get some further instructions what we are to do with this child."

So she was out in the field again and the angel of the Lord appeared again. And she said, "Would you mind waiting here. My husband wants to meet you." So she ran and got her husband and said, "The man who appeared to me in the beginning is here again." So Manoah came running up and said, "I just, you know, I heard the story and I didn't know what to do. I just wanted to know, you know, a little bit more instructions. She was sort of excited and I wanna make sure I got the, you know, the instructions straight. How we're suppose to raise this kid and what we're supposed to do with him and all, and tell me again." So the angel repeated he said, "Just like I told her. Don't give him any wine, anything that comes from the vine, don't cut his hair. He is to be a Nazirite, dedicated unto God."

And so Manoah said, "Look, I want—" well he wanted to—

Manoah said to the angel of the LORD, [verse fifteen] I pray thee, let us detain you, until we have made ready a kid for thee. And the angel of the LORD said unto Manoah, Though you detain me, I will not eat of thy bread: and if you offer a burnt offering, you must offer it unto the LORD. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the LORD. So Manoah said unto the angel of the LORD, What is your name, so that when your sayings come to pass that we might honour you. And the angel of the LORD said unto him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret? (Jdg 13:15-18)

That word secret, in the Hebrew, is actually wonderful. "Why you ask me my name seeing it is wonderful?" So Manoah took the kid with a meal offering, and he offered it on a rock unto the LORD: and the angel of the LORD did wondrously; while Manoah and his wife looked on (Jdg 13:19).

For while the fire was coming up, the angel stepped into the fire and descended up to heaven And Manoah fell on his face and said "Oh, we're gonna be wiped out. We saw an angel of the Lord face to face."

And his wife said, "Hey, what do you mean? If God wanted to wipe us out why would he tell us we're gonna have a baby and all this and give us all these promises."

And so he said, "Well, I guess you're right." So the level head prevailed of Manoah's wife.

So she bare a son, called his name Samson: and the child grew, and the LORD blessed him. And the Spirit of the LORD began to move him in times in the camp of Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol (Jdg 13:24-25).

And so, the valley of Zorah and Eshtaol are actually eight miles from Jerusalem towards Tel Aviv. And that it is a very beautiful fertile valley through there. It was part of the inheritance of the tribe of Dan. And so this is where he grew up and God's Spirit began to move on him at various times. (Through The Bible C-2000 Series; Chuck Smith; Bible Commentaries; 1979-1986)

X. OUR LORD'S MODEL PRAYER

"What satisfaction must it be to learn from God Himself with what words and in what manner, He would have us pray to Him so as not to pray in vain! We do not sufficiently consider the value of this prayer; the respect and attention which it requires; the preference to be given to it; its fulness and perfection; the frequent use we should make of it; and the spirit which we should bring with it. 'Lord, teach us how to pray.'"—Adam Clark

Jesus gives us the pattern prayer in what is commonly known as "The Lord's Prayer." In this model, perfect prayer He gives us a law form to be followed, and yet one to be filled in and enlarged as we may decide when we pray. The outlines and form are complete, yet it is but an outline, with many a blank, which our needs and convictions are to fill in.

Christ puts words on our lips, words which are to be uttered by holy lives. Words belong to the life of prayer. Wordless prayers are like human spirits; pure and high they may be, but too ethereal and impalpable for earthly conflicts and earthly needs and uses. We must have spirits clothed in flesh and blood, and our prayers must be likewise clothed in words to give them point and power, a local habitation, and a name.

This lesson of "The Lord's Prayer," drawn forth by the request of the disciples, "Lord, teach us to pray," has something in form and verbiage like the prayer sections of the Sermon on the Mount. It is the same great lesson of praying to "Our Father which art in Heaven," and is one of insistent importunity. No prayer lesson would be complete without it. It belongs to the first and last lessons in prayer. God's Fatherhood gives shape, value and confidence to all our praying.

He teaches us that to hallow God's name is the first and the greatest of prayers. A desire for the glorious coming and the glorious establishment of God's glorious kingdom follows in value and in sequence the hallowing of God's name. He who really hallows God's name will hail the coming of the Kingdom of God, and will labour and pray to bring that kingdom to pass and to establish it. Christ's pupils in the school of prayer are to be taught diligently to hallow God's name, to work for God's kingdom, and to do God's will perfectly, completely and gladly, as it is done in Heaven.

Prayer engages the highest interest and secures the highest glory of God. God's name, God's kingdom and God's will are all in it. Without prayer His name is profaned, His kingdom fails, and His will is decried and opposed. God's will can be done on earth as it is done in Heaven. God's will done on earth makes earth like Heaven. Importunate praying is the mighty energy which establishes God's will on earth as it is established in Heaven.

He is still teaching us that prayer sanctifies and makes hopeful and sweet our daily toil for daily bread. Forgiveness of sins is to be sought by prayer, and the great prayer plea we are to make for forgiveness is that we have forgiven all those who have sinned against us. It involves love for our enemies so far as to pray for them, to bless them and not curse them, and to pardon their offences against us whatever those offences may be.

We are to pray, "Lead us not into temptation," that is, that while we thus pray, the tempter and the temptation are to be watched against, resisted and prayed against.

All these things He had laid down in this law of prayer, but many a simple lesson of comment, expansion, and expression He adds to His statute law.

In this prayer He teaches His disciples, so familiar to thousands in this day who learned it at their mother's knees in childhood, the words are so childlike that children find their instruction, edification and comfort in them as they kneel and pray. The most glowing mystic and the most careful thinker finds each his own language in these simple words of prayer. Beautiful and revered as these words are, they are our words for solace, help and learning.

He led the way in prayer that we might follow His footsteps. Matchless leader in matchless praying! Lord, teach us to pray as Thou didst Thyself pray! How marked the contrast between the Sacerdotal Prayer and this "Lord's Prayer," this copy for praying He gave to His disciples as the first elements of prayer. How simple and childlike! No one has ever approached in composition a prayer so simple in its petitions and yet so comprehensive in all of its requests.

How these simple elements of prayer as given by our Lord commend themselves to us! This prayer is for us as well as for those to whom it was first given. It is for the child in the A-B-C of prayer, and it is for the graduate of the highest institutions of learning. It is a personal prayer, reaching to all our needs and covering all our sins. It is the highest form of prayer for others. As the scholar can never in all his after studies or learning dispense with his A B C, and as the alphabet gives form, colour and expression to all after learning, impregnating all and grounding all, so the learner in Christ can never dispense with the Lord's Prayer. But he may make it form the basis of his higher praying, this intercession for others in the Sacerdotal Prayer.

The Lord's Prayer is ours by our mother's knee and fits us in all the stages of a joyous Christian Life. The Sacerdotal Prayer is ours also in the stages and office of our royal priesthood as intercessors before God. Here we have oneness with God, deep spiritual unity, and unswerving loyalty to God, living and praying to glorify God.

XI. OUR LORD'S SACERDOTAL PRAYER

"Jesus closes His life with inimitable calmness, confidence and sublimity. 'I have glorified Thee; I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do.' The annals of earth have nothing comparable to it in real security and sublimity. May we come to our end thus, in supreme loyalty to Christ."—Edward Bounds

We come now to consider our Lord's Sacerdotal Prayer, as found recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel.

Obedience to the Father and abiding in the Father, these belong to the Son, and these belong to us, as partners with Christ in His Divine work of intercession. How tenderly and with what pathos and how absorbingly He prays for His disciples! "I pray for them; I pray not for the world." What a pattern of prayerfulness for God's people! For God's people are God's cause, God's Church and God's Kingdom. Pray for God's people, for their unity, their sanctification, and their glorification. How the subject of their unity pressed upon Him! These walls of separation, these alienations, these riven circles of God's family, and these warring tribes of ecclesiastics—how He is torn and bleeds and suffers afresh at the sight of these divisions! Unity—that is the great burden of that remarkable Sacerdotal Prayer. "That they may be one, even as we are one." The spiritual oneness of God's people—that is the heritage of God's glory to them, transmitted by Christ to His Church.

First of all, in this prayer, Jesus prays for Himself, not now the suppliant as in Gethsemane, not weakness, but strength now. There is not now the pressure of darkness and of hell, but passing for the time over the fearful interim, He asks that He may be glorified, and that His exalted glory may secure glory to His Father. His sublime loyalty and fidelity to God are declared, that fidelity to God which is of the very essence of interceding prayer. Our devoted lives pray. Our unswerving loyalty to God are eloquent pleas to Him and give access and confidence in our advocacy. This prayer is gemmed, but its walls are adamant. What profound and granite truths! What fathomless mysteries! What deep and rich experiences do such statements as these involve:

"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.

"And all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them.

"And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them.

"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."

Let us stop and ask, have we eternal life? Do we know God experimentally, consciously, and do we know Him really and personally? Do we know Jesus Christ as a person, and as a personal Saviour? Do we know Him by a heart acquaintance, and know Him well? This, this only, is eternal life. And is Jesus glorified in us? Let us continue this personal inquiry. Do our lives prove His divinity? And does Jesus shine brighter because of us? Are we opaque or transparent bodies, and do we darken or reflect His pure light? Once more let us ask: Do we seek God's glory? Do we seek glory where Christ sought it? "Glorify thou me with thy own self." Do we esteem the presence and the possession of God our most excellent glory and our supreme good?

How closely does He bind Himself and His Father to His people! His heart centers upon them in this high hour of holy communion with His Father.

"I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.

"Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee.

"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me.

"I pray for them; I pray not for the world; but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine.

"And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them."

He prays also for keeping for these disciples. Not only were they to be chosen, elected and possessed, but were to be kept by the Father's watchful eyes and by the Father's omnipotent hand. "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

He prays that they might be kept by the Holy Father, in all holiness by the power of His Name. He asks that His people may be kept from sin, from all sin, from sin in the concrete and sin in the abstract, from sin in all its shapes of evil, from all sin in this world. He prays that they might not only be fit and ready for Heaven, but ready and fit for earth, for its sweetest privileges, its sternest duties, its deepest sorrows, and its richest joys; ready for all of its trials, consolations and triumphs. "I pray not that thou shouldst take them out of the world, but that thou shouldst keep them from the evil."

He prays that they may be kept from the world's greatest evil, which is sin. He desires that they may be kept from the guilt, the power, the pollution and the punishment of sin. The Revised Version makes it read, "That thou shouldst keep them from the evil one." Kept from the devil, so that he might not touch them, nor find them, nor have a place in them; that they might be all owned, possessed, filled and guarded by God. "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

He places us in the arms of His Father, on the boom of His Father, and in the heart of His Father. He calls God into service, puts Him to the front, and places us under His Father's closer keeping, under His Father's shadow, and under the covert of His Father's wing. The Father's rod and staff are for our security, for our comfort, for our refuge, for our strength and guidance.

These disciples were not to be taken out of the world, but kept from its evil, its monster evil, which is itself. "This present evil world." How the world seduces, dazzles, and deludes the children of men! His disciples are chosen out of the world, out of the world's bustle and earthliness, out of its all-devouring greed of gain, out of its money-desire, money-love, and money-toil. Earth draws and holds as if it was made out of gold and not out of dirt; as though it was covered with diamonds and not with graves.

"They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Not only from sin and Satan were they to be kept, but also from the soil, stain and the taint of worldliness, as Christ was free from it. Their relation to Christ was not only to free them from the world's defiling taint, its unhallowed love, and its criminal friendships, but the world's hatred would inevitably follow their Christ-likeness. No result so necessarily and universally follows its cause as this. "The world hath hated them because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world."

How solemn and almost awful the repetition of the declaration, "They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." How pronounced, radical and eternal was our Lord Christ's divorce from the world! How pronounced, radical and eternal is that of our Lord's true followers from the world! The world hates the disciple as it hated his Lord, and will crucify the disciple just as it crucified his Lord. How pertinent the question, have we the Christ unworldliness? Does the world hate us as it hated our Lord? Are His words fulfilled in us?

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

"If ye were of the world, the world would love his own; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

He puts Himself before us clear cut as the full portraiture of an unworldly Christian. Here is our changeless pattern. "They are not of the world even as I am not of the world." We must be cut after this pattern.

The subject of their unity pressed upon Him. Note how He called His Father's attention to it, and see how He pleaded for this unity of His followers: "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

Again He returns to it as He sees the great crowds flocking to His standard as the ages pass on:

"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.

"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one.

"I in them and thou in me that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."

Notice how intently His heart was set on this unity. What shameful history, and what bloody annals has this lack of unity written for God's Church! These walls of separations, these alienations, these riven circles of God's family, these warring tribes of men, and these internecine fratricidal wars! He looks ahead and sees how Christ is torn, how He bleeds and suffers afresh in all these sad things of the future. The unity of God's people was to be the heritage of God's glory promised to them. Division and strife are the devil's bequest to the Church, a heritage of failure, weakness, shame and woe.

The oneness of God's people was to be the one credential to the world of the divinity of Christ's mission on earth. Let us ask in all candor, are we praying for this unity as Christ prayed for it? Are we seeking the peace, the welfare, the glory, the might and the divinity of God's cause as it is found in the unity of God's people?

Going back again, note, please, how He puts Himself as the exponent and the pattern of this unworldliness which He prays may possess His disciples. He sends them into the world just as His Father sent Him into the world. He expects them to be and do, just as He was and as He did for His Father. He sought the sanctification of His disciples that they might be wholly devoted to God and purified from all sin. He desired in them a holy life and a holy work for God. He devoted Himself to death in order that they might be devoted in life to God. For a true sanctification He prayed, a real, whole, and thorough sanctification, embracing soul, body and mind, for time and eternity. With Him the word itself had much to do with their true sanctification. "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified by the truth."

Entire devotedness was to be the type of their sanctification. His prayer for their sanctification marks the pathway to full sanctification. Prayer is that pathway. All the ascending steps to that lofty position of entire sanctification are steps of prayer, increasing prayerfulness in spirit and increasing prayerfulness in fact. "Pray without ceasing" is the imperative prelude to "the very God of peace sanctify you wholly." And prayer is but the continued interlude and doxology of this rich grace in the heart: "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it."

We can only meet our full responsibilities and fulfill our high mission when we go forth sanctified as Christ our Lord was sanctified. He sends us into the world just as His Father sent Him into the world. He expects us to be as He was, to do as He did, and to glorify the Father just as He glorified the Father.

What longings He had to have us with Him in Heaven: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." What response do our truant hearts make to this earnest, loving, Christly longing? Are we as eager for Heaven as He is to have us there? How calm, how majestic and how authoritative is His "I will"!

He closes His life with inimitable calmness, confidence and sublimity. "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

The annals of earth have nothing comparable to it in real serenity and sublimity. May we come to our end thus in supreme loyalty to Christ.

("The Reality Of Prayer" ; EM Bounds; Chapter 10, 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.)

Psalm 100:1-5 (AMP)

1 MAKE A joyful noise to the Lord, all you lands!

2 Serve the Lord with gladness! Come before His presence with singing!

3 Know (perceive, recognize, and understand with approval) that the Lord is God! It is He Who has made us, not we ourselves [and we are His]! We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

4 Enter into His gates with thanksgiving and a thank offering and into His courts with praise! Be thankful and say so to Him, bless and affectionately praise His name!

5 For the Lord is good; His mercy and loving-kindness are everlasting, His faithfulness and truth endure to all generations.

(Amplified Bible; Joyce Meyers; 2006; Faith Words; Scripture; Commentaries; pages 393-396)

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