

## **The Wednesday Word, March 22, 2023: Persistence in Prayer**

In Luke 18:1-8 the Lord Jesus gives us some wonderful instruction on prayer. In this passage, the Master tells a parable to inform us that, when we pray, we are not to lose heart but to be persistent in asking.

To illustrate this truth, He tells a story of a Judge in a certain town who neither feared God nor regarded man. There was also a widow in the same town who kept coming to him and begging him to '*Vindicate me against my adversary.*' She evidently had been wronged by someone and continually pleaded with the Judge to punish the one who had wronged her. For some time, the Judge refused to do anything about her situation but eventually said to himself, 'I neither fear God nor respect man, but because this woman continually bothers me, I will grant her request, lest by her constant coming to me, she exhausts me.'

The Lord then continues, saying "Listen to what the unjust judge says. And shall God not vindicate His own chosen ones who cry to Him day and night, even though he seem to wait for long? But when the Son of Man comes will he find faith on earth?"

In this story, we are introduced to two characters.

(1) The Judge. He was clearly not a Jewish judge. According to Barclay's Study Notes, all ordinary Jewish disputes were taken before the elders, and not into the public courts at all. If under Jewish law, a matter was taken to arbitration, one man could not constitute a court. There were always three judges, one chosen by the plaintiff, one by the defendant, and one independently appointed.

This judge was one of the paid magistrates appointed either by Herod or by the Romans. Such judges were notorious. Unless a plaintiff had the influence and money to bribe his way to a verdict, he had no hope of ever getting his case settled.'

(2) The widow. This dear lady was poor and defenseless. It was obvious that she was without resources and, had no hope of ever getting justice from such a magistrate. But she had one weapon ... '**PERSISTENCE** ...' and in the end her persistence won the day.

We, as believers, need to have persistence in our prayer life. We need to learn to always pray without giving up. (1 Thessalonians 5:17). Persistent prayer is a commitment to hold on till we see our prayers answered. And God will always answer, He will either say yes or say no. Jesus believed in persistence in prayer. He, on another occasion, instructed us to, "*Ask and it shall be given to you; seek and you shall find; knock and the door shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he that seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door shall be opened.* (Matthew 7:7). Literally, we are to keep on asking, keep on seeking and keep on knocking. From the Master, we learn that we should pray all the time and not just when we are in trouble.

Many times, in the Gospels, Jesus went up to the mountain to pray. He was persistent. Humanly speaking, one of the reasons Jesus succeeded in His ministry was because of the time He spent in prayer. Although He was God, while on earth, He operated as a man and did the things that people do, apart from sin.

In our passage, Jesus is saying, "If, in the end, an unjust and greedy judge can be wearied into giving a widow woman justice, how much more will God, who is a loving Father, give his children what they need."

May we never grow weary in prayer and may our faith never falter.

And that's the Gospel Truth!