

The Wednesday Word, July 8, 2020: A Praying People

Christians have the privilege of being a people who can talk to and worship God. The way to God's throne has been opened by the blood of the precious saviour. Is it any wonder then that the Lord tells us to call upon Him in the day of trouble and He will deliver us (Psalm 50:15). We are also encouraged to cast our burden upon the Lord and He shall sustain us: He shall never allow the righteous to be moved (Psalm 55:22). The Apostle Paul also instructs us that the antidote to worry is prayer. He writes, "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let our requests be made known unto God ..." (Philippians 4: 6-7).

The Lord's people are a praying people.

When Jacob feared Esau, he prayed (Genesis 32:9).

When Moses found the people ready to stone him, he prayed (Exodus 17:4).

When Israel was defeated at Ai, Joshua prayed (Joshua 7:6-7).

When the Philistines attacked at Keilah, David prayed (1 Samuel 23:1-2)

When Hezekiah received the letter from Sennacherib, he "spread it out before the Lord." In other words, he prayed (2 Kings 19:14).

When Peter was in prison, prayer was made in the Church without ceasing for him.

When he was thrown in prison at Philippi, Paul prayed (Acts 16:25).

Our Saviour Jesus prayed for 40 days in the wilderness (Matthew 4).

He rose up early to pray (Mark 1:35).

He sometimes prayed all night (Luke 6:12-13).

Before the ordeal of the cross, He prayed (Matthew 26:36).

And no wonder for it was prophesied that He would be a man of prayer (Psalm 109:4).

All roadblocks to the throne have been removed. And what and Whom do we see on the Throne of God? We see a Lamb. What an encouragement to pray! Who has ever been afraid of a Lamb? As our Lamb, the Lord Jesus, even though He is enthroned in power, is tender and overflowing with love for His people. Behold the Lamb of God who has already taken away the sins of His people. May we talk to and worship Him. Who amongst us can be afraid to draw near to Him? Even the most timid amongst us cannot fear to go to Him.

New believers may not know much about prayer, but they know this, they want to pray. When Paul became a believer, it was said, "Behold he prays" (Acts 9:11). I like Spurgeon's observation about this fact. He said,

"These words are the hall-mark of genuine conversion. "Behold, he prays" is a better witness of a man's conversion than, "Behold, he sings," or, "Behold, he reads the Scripture," or, "Behold, he preaches." These things may be admirably done by men who are not regenerate; but if in God's sense of the term, a man really *prays*, we may know that he has passed from death to life. True prayer is a reliable evidence of spiritual quickening: the Holy Spirit has put spiritual life into the heart of the man who prays, for prayer is the breath of heavenly life."

The unsaved, unlike believers, have no time to set apart to enjoy fellowship with the Lord in prayer. This is well illustrated by the story of a godless seaman who was in a boat fishing with his companions when a storm came up. It seemed the boat was going to sink. His companions

then begged him to offer a prayer; but he objected, saying it was years since he had prayed or entered a church. But finally, upon their insistence, he made this prayer: "O Lord, I have not asked you for anything for fifteen years, and if you deliver us out of this storm and bring us safely to land again, I promise that I will not bother you again for another fifteen!"

Ah well, what else do you expect from a pig but a grunt?

And that's the Gospel Truth!