

THE BIBLE VIEW

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Volume: 811 May 24, 2021

Theme: Prayer

Answered Prayer

H. A. Ironsides

"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Phil. 4:6-7

We need to realize that our God takes a Fatherly interest in every detail of our lives and bids us bring everything to Him in prayer. Nothing is too small for His concern and nothing is too great for His power.

Years ago, the Free Kirk of Scotland was holding a church meeting in Aberdeen and worshippers were flocking in from all nearby towns to take part in the services. An aged man was on his way to the city on foot when he was overtaken by a young theological student. The two walked on in company. Despite the difference in their ages, they had much in common and so they enjoyed chatting together as they walked.

At noontime, they turned aside to a grassy field and sat down to eat the lunch, which each had brought with him, but first giving God thanks for His gracious provision. Afterward, the aged pilgrim suggested they pray together before continuing their journey. The young theologian was embarrassed, but agreed, asking that the elderly man should pray first, which he did. Addressing God as His Father in all simplicity, the older man poured out his heart in thanksgiving, and then uttered three specific requests.

He reminded the Lord that he was very hard of hearing, and if he did not get a seat up in the front, he would get little out of the sermon that evening. He asked that a seat be kept for him near enough to the pulpit, so he could get the benefit of the message. Secondly, he told the Lord that his shoes were badly worn and not fit for city streets. He pleaded for a new pair, though he had not the "silver" to purchase them. Last of all, he asked for a place to stay for the night, as he knew no one in Aberdeen and did not know where to look for accommodations.

By this time, the student's eyes were wide open as he looked upon the old man with mingled disgust and amazement, thinking it the height of impertinence to burden God with such trivialities. When his turn came to pray, he delivered an eloquent, carefully composed discourse, which amazed his older companion, who saw in it nothing that showed the young man's needs to God.

They reached the church just as the people were crowding in. It was soon clear that there was no longer even standing room left. The student thought, "Now we shall see what becomes of his presumptuous prayers. He will see that God has more to do than to use His time saving a seat for a poor, old countryman.

However, someone came out, and the old man was just able to squeeze inside the door, where he stood with his hand up to his ear, trying to hear what was going on. Just then, a young lady in a front pew turned and saw him. She called a sexton and said, "My father told me to hold our pew for him until time for the sermon, then, if he did not get here, to give it to someone else. Evidently, he has been detained. Will you please go back and bring up that old man who has his hand to his ear and is standing just inside the door?" In a few moments, petition number one was fully answered.

Now, in Scotland, some folks always kneel for prayer as the minister leads. Others reverently rise to their feet. The old man was the kneeling kind, and the young woman stood. As she looked down, she could not help observing the worn soles on the feet of the kneeling worshipper. Her father was a shoe-dealer! At the close of the service, she delicately approached the subject of the need of a better pair of shoes and asked if she might take him to her father's store, though closed for the night, and present him with a pair. Her offer was accepted as graciously as it was made. Petition number two was answered.

At the store, the lady inquired where he was to stay for the night. In all simplicity, he answered, "I dinna know yet. My Father has a room for me, but He has not told me whar it is."

Puzzled for a moment, she exclaimed, "Oh, you mean your Father — God! Well, I believe we have that room for you. We were saving our guestroom for the Rev. Blank, but a telegram came this morning saying he could not come, so now you must just come home with me and be our guest." And so, the third petition was granted.

The next day the student inquired as to the outcome of the prayer and was astonished to find that God had heard and answered each plea. He is never too busy to heed the cries of His needy people. What we all require is more confidence in His love and more earnestness and directness in prayer.

"Why wish upon a star, when you can pray to the one who created them."

For What Do You Listen?

Robert G. Lee

A naturalist, walking with his friend through the busy streets of a great city, paused and asked, "Do you hear the cricket?"

"Of course not," laughed his friend. "You could never hear a cricket with all this roar of traffic."

"But, I hear a cricket," persisted the naturalist, and, turning over a stone, he uncovered the insect.

"Did you hear that cricket chirping above the noise of the street?" asked his friend in astonishment.

"Certainly," said the naturalist. "I spend my time listening to nature, whether I am in the forest, the field, or the town. Everyone hears that for which he is listening." Taking a coin from his pocket, he dropped it on the pavement, and each passer-by put his hand in his pocket to see if he was the one who had dropped it.

For what are you listening? God or gold? Your ears are tuned to listen for something, even as the receiving set is tuned to receive the program from a distant radio station. God's ears are tuned to hear our prayers. Are ours tuned to hear His commands?

“Pray without ceasing, because Satan is preying without ceasing.”

Just You and Jesus

Bill Brinkworth

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.”

1 Timothy 2:5

What wonderful news it must have been to the Jews, who were used to Old Testament worship when they first learned they could go to God themselves in prayer. Before Jesus' death on the cross, they had to have priests go to God as middlemen for them. After the sacrificial death of Christ, they could enter the “Holiest of Holies,” the closest place any could be to God, by themselves through their prayers (1 Timothy 2:1).

However, then and even today, there are still many that believe they cannot go to God themselves. These folks still, if they realize it or not, are attempting to worship the way it was done in Old Testament times. Some go to a “priest” in a confessional and tell him their sins. With his words, and doing what he tells them to do, they believe he can order their sins forgiven. They trust the “priest” to be their mediator between them and God. Some pray to the dead, some even deceased biblical characters, in hopes that a “saint” can be the middleman between them and God to have their sins forgiven or requests granted.

Sincere as those people are, what they are doing is contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures. 1 Timothy 2:5 tells us there is only one mediator between us and God, and that is Jesus Christ.

We no longer have to present a perfect, unblemished animal sacrifice for the high priest to take through the temple's curtain to the Holiest of Holies, as in the Old Testament. When Christ died, God ripped the veil in two from the top to the bottom. Now any believer can go to God in prayer through Jesus Christ.

Telling a person, be it priest, parent, or any other person, one's sins will not remove the consequences of one's iniquity from God's memory. Those people may want to help, but they too are sinners in need of the Mediator. Going to anyone else other than Christ to meet a need in one's life or receive help from God will not result in God answering one's prayers. The only one that is qualified to go to the Father on our behalf is His Son, Jesus. He is the only mediator between God and man.

“Well, my friend, today we have a Mediator. The Lord Jesus Christ has come. He has one hand in the hand of Deity because He is God. He can save to the uttermost because He is God, and He has paid the price for our salvation. He is a Mediator because He has also become a man. He can hold my hand; He understands me. He understands you. You can go to Him, and He will not be upset with you. He will not lose His temper or strike you or hurt you in any way... He still loves you and wants to put His arm around you.”

— J. Vernon McGee

Be Grateful for . . .

What God has already done for you!

“O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people.”

Psalm 105:1

For His mercy in not giving us what we deserve.

“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever.” Ps. 118:29

For everything!

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

1 Thes. 5:18

“Count your blessings, not your problems.”