

“LORD, TEACH US TO PRAY”

What a wonderful privilege it is to be able to enter into **the presence of the living God!** To have the **confidence** in Him to be able to take **anything to Him, to talk to Him** about it, **to pour your heart out to Him, to thank Him** for what he has done for **and to worship Him** for Who He is. This is available to every child of God – yet how we must confess that we fail in this very thing! Prayer is the expression of our need to have Him in our lives on a daily basis. Paul said **“Having obtained help of God, I continue unto this day.”** Hebrews speaks of **“The throne of grace”** and promises **“Grace to help in a time of need.”**

The Church of the living God began with prayer, (Acts 1, vs 14 & Acts 2 – verse 42)– **“They continued . . . in prayer”**, and her progress or decline has always been marked by her continuance or decline in this wonderful privilege. To introduce this wonderful subject to us we would like to call our attention to a number of references in the book of Acts.

1. Acts Chapter 1 – vs 24 One must be chosen to take the place of Judas – What do we see the disciples doing? **“And they prayed”**
2. Acts Chapter 4 – vs 24 Difficulties have arisen and the disciples are threatened by the authorities - What is the remedy? **“They lifted up their voice to God with one accord”** and witness the results of this prayer in verse 31 – **“And when they had prayed, the place was shaken . . . and they spake the Word with boldness!”**
3. When the difficulties arise in Chapter 6, vs 4 the seven men are chosen but the apostles say – **“We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word.”**
4. Acts Chapter 7 – vs 57 & 58 As Stephen’s life ends in his testimony of God against this rebellious nation, he is found **“calling upon God”** and **“he kneeled down saying Lord lay not this sin to their charge.”**
5. Acts Chapter 9 - Ananias is given directions as to how to locate Saul of Tarsus. He is given no physical description, no detail about his person, clothing, robes, etc., but he is simply told the home where he is staying and this detail in particular - **“Behold he prayeth!”**
6. Acts Chapter 9 – vs 40. The account of Dorcas – **“And Peter kneeled down and prayed . . . and she opened her eyes”**

7. Acts Chapter 10 - vs 1 & 4 **“Cornelius . . . prayed to God always. Thy prayers. . . . are come up for a memorial before God.”** As God prepares Cornelius to meet Peter, he is also preparing Peter to meet Cornelius - **“Peter went up on the housetop to pray!”**
8. Chapter 12 – vs 5 **“Peter was kept . . . but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.”**
9. Chapter 16 – vs 25 **“And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God”**
10. Chapter 20 – vs 36 Having met with the Ephesian elders and given them instructions for the time following his departure, **“He kneeled down and prayed with them all.”**
11. Chapter 27 – vs 35 Having born testimony to the living God, and and His care for them, he instructs them to eat **“And when he had thus spoken, he took bread and gave thanks to God in the presence of them all.”**
12. Chapter 28 – vs 8 After the shipwreck, Paul is introduced to the father of Publius who was sick - **“To whom Paul entered in and prayed . . . and healed him.”**

We have looked at obedience to His Word and faithfulness to Him over the last many years at WYC and at EBC. Those whom we have looked at in Acts show to us how **natural** prayer was to them. When ever there was a difficulty **they prayed!!** This year we purpose to look at incidents in the lives of men and women in the Old and the New Testament whereby **prayer in particular** is seen as that which changed the circumstances that His people were going through or changed the people to fit the circumstances that He allowed them to endure. God intends prayer should have this effect in our lives. Perhaps we will see in a practical way what our Lord Jesus means when he says in Luke 18 – vs 1:

“Men ought always to pray and not to faint!”

HANNAH'S PRAYER

1ST SAMUEL CHAPTER 1

What a trial for this godly sister. She wanted a child so much – but “the Lord had shut up her womb.” And her husband was not a lot of help in his comments of verse 8. But at least he took knowledge of her present condition. This is an example of a personal crisis and what a wonderful example Hannah sets before us.

- 1. Did she allow her state of soul to control her life? Discuss**
- 2. What did she do instead of blaming the Lord for the problem?**
- 3. Discuss the promise she made unto the Lord in verse 11.**
- 4. What did she do in verse 12?**
- 5. Discuss the last part of verse 15 – “I have poured out my soul before the Lord.”**
- 6. Although Eli was not a faithful priest, still he was in that position and he tells her – “Go in peace ... the Lord grant thee thy petition.”**
- 7. Let’s look for her response in verses 18 and 19–what does it tell you?**
- 8. Discuss verse 27 - “For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath granted my petition.”**
- 9. What about her vow? Look at the first word of verse 28 and verse 19 of Chapter 2 - “”His mother made him a little coat and brought it to him from year to year.”**

SOLOMON'S PRAYER

1ST KINGS 3 – VS 5-14

What an invitation was given to Solomon! “Ask what I shall give thee.” What would we have asked for? Would we have asked for that which would have made us a better servant for the Lord? How much of our prayer life relates to our service for Him and his people? The needs are great today and we are a failing people but our God knows our hearts and is ready to grant what will make us better servants for His Name sake. What a faithful God we have!

1. Lets look at what Solomon says about himself – he is a _____.
2. He sees himself as a little child – “I know not how to go out or come In.” Discuss
3. What kind of people are God’s people? - Discuss
4. Let’s talk about the request that Solomon makes – “Give thy servant an understanding heart.” Discuss
5. Why does he want this kind of heart? Discuss
6. Discuss verses 11 and 12. What did the Lord give him?
7. Now let’s discuss what the Lord gave him that he did not ask for”
8. Discuss verse 14 – “If thou wilt walk in my ways . . then I will . .

ELIJAH

1ST KINGS 17 - JAMES 5 VS 16 /18

Elijah lived in a very difficult day. Failure was rampant! The King was a wicked man as well as his wife. All outward testimony for the God of Israel seemed to have vanished from the face of the earth. It would have been very easy to have quit – just to acknowledge that failure and ruin were the characteristics of the day and we could not alter the course of a failing people. But no – this was a man of faith and a man of prayer. We are not allowed to hear his prayer when he asked God that the rain be stopped – we just have the record of his doing so in James 5. But we do have the record of his holy boldness in going before the wicked King Ahab in our chapter in 1st Kings.

1. Discuss the words used in verse 16 – “Effectual and fervent”
2. What kind of a man was Elijah? Discuss
3. In what way was Elijah different from you and I as seen in verse 17?
4. What do you know about the history of this man?
5. What do we learn about the God of Elijah in 1st Kings 17 – vs 1?
6. What was Elijah’s relationship to this God?
7. Would the God of Israel support Elijah?
8. What other characteristics of Elijah appear before us in these verses?
9. Was Elijah prepared to suffer with the consequences of his prayer?
10. After the great contest between the God of Israel and Baal – what actually caused it to rain again – James 5 – vs 18.

JEHOSHAPHAT

2ND CHRONICLES 20

We come now to a situation that faced the people of God and not just a servant of God – but God doesn’t change!! He is always faithful! He can be depended upon every time – all the time – come what may! What a wonderful lesson for us to learn early in our Christian life. Jehoshaphat was much like you and I – he had known failure in his life which a complete reading of 2nd Chronicles 17, 18 and 19 will reveal. But he is brought back to fear God as we find in Chapter 20. A time of crisis was upon them.

1. How did he meet the crisis in verses 3 & 4? Discuss three areas.
2. Discuss the “Greatness of God” as seen in verses 6 & 7.
3. Discuss the “Promise of God” as seen in verse 9.
4. Discuss the “Problem of Judah” in verses 10 & 11.
5. Discuss the “Prayer to God” in verse 12.
6. Discuss the “People of God” who were involved in this - vs 13?
7. Discuss the “Assurance of God” as seen in vs 15.
8. Discuss the “Salvation of God” as seen in vs 16 & 17.
9. Discuss the response of Jehoshaphat & Judah in vs 18.

PETER

Acts 12 vs 1 to 19

We come now to our final lesson on prayer. We could have chosen many other passages but in this last study, I believe we can really see ourselves in so many ways. It was no pleasant time for the followers of our Lord Jesus. Herod killed James, the brother of John with the sword and because it pleased the Jews he took Peter also.

1. Lets divide verse five (5) into two parts. The first part tells us what Herod and the soldiers were doing – and the second part tells us what the Church was doing. Discuss
2. Verse 6 - Peter slept and the soldiers kept!! Discuss
3. Verse 7 - deals with a very important subject. The Lord provides what we cannot provide (Light), he takes care of what Peter could not take care of (Chains – Iron gate) but he does not carry Peter, he does not gird Peter, he does not put his sandals on him or put his garment about him - and the word to Peter is the word for us – “Follow me.” Discuss
4. When does the angel of the Lord leave – Discuss
5. What a wonderful thing for Peter to go to the home of John Mark and find them praying for him! Are our prayer meetings like this?
6. Discuss the possibilities they present to this young girl in verse 15.
7. Discuss verse 16 - “But Peter continued knocking” and “They were astonished.”

