

THE POWER OF PRAYER

I. INTRODUCTION:

In this final lesson we wish to emphasize the power of prayer. We shall notice first of all some false or erroneous theories regarding the power or efficacy of prayer. Next we shall note God's promises of an answer, and then some examples of prayers which demonstrate its effectiveness.

II. DISCUSSION:

A. Some erroneous theories regarding the efficacy of prayer:

1. God is unchangeable, therefore prayer has no effect.
 - a) This is the Calvinist concept regarding prayer.
 - b) God has answered prayer before, so IF HE IS UNCHANGEABLE in the sense of this argument it means He is still answering prayers today!
2. Being Omniscient, God already knows our needs; therefore, prayer is useless. He is a God of love and will make provision without prayer. [By the same token God was Omniscient in Bible times and yet He told people to pray to Him then ... **and He answered their prayers!**]
3. Miracles have ceased and God cannot answer prayers without performing a miracle!
 - a) There's no allowance or place at all for the providence of God in this theory.
 - b) It's **based on a false assumption**, so **it's an entirely false argument!** James 5:17-18; 5:14-15; Luke 23:34; Matt.6:11.
4. Only benefit from prayer is psychological -- no direct answer from God.
 - a) If this were true then the heathen would get as much benefit from praying to his idol as we do from praying to God. Acts 17:24-29.
 - b) Why not just pray to a fence post -- it cannot answer, either?

B. God promises He will answer -- why just stand up and bold-facedly deny this?

1. Matt.7:7-11 (also Luke 11:5-13)
2. Matt.21:22 (also Mark 11:24).
3. James 5:16.
4. I John 5:14-15. See also lesson 8.

C. Some examples which **demonstrate the effectiveness** of prayer:

1. Abraham's prayer for Sodom -- Gen.18:20-23.
2. Abraham's servant's prayer regarding selection of Isaac's wife -- Gen.24:12-15.
3. Moses' prayer for Israel, concerning the golden calf -- Exod.32:11-14; see also Deut.9:20, 26-29.
4. Hannah's prayer for a son -- I Sam.1:1-28.
5. Jonah's prayer for deliverance -- Jonah 2:1-10.
6. The thief on the cross -- Luke 23:39-45.

7. Prayer for boldness in speaking the word -- Acts 4:24-31.
8. Prayer for Peter in prison -- Acts 12:5, 12.
9. The prayers of Cornelius -- Acts 10:1-48.
10. Elijah's prayers:
 - a) For rain -- James 5:16-18; I Kings 17, 18.
 - b) At Mount Carmel -- I Kings 18:36-38.

III. CONCLUSION:

The POWER of prayer is GOD! His power has been abundantly demonstrated in both the physical and spiritual realms. The gospel is His power, His saving power. Obedience to that gospel converts and transforms men. Prayer is a part of our obedience to that gospel. It is a great privilege we have as a result of our obedience. It is through the means of prayer that Christians may avail themselves of God's pardoning power, His protective powers, His comforting power, His power to strengthen, His delivering power and on we could go! It is enough to stagger the imagination!

Let us always be aware of and always confident of, the power and efficacy of prayer as expressed in each "Amen", which interpreted is "SO BE IT" or "LET IT BE SO". With God, "Amen" means "***IT IS AND SHALL BE SO!***"