

Prayer!

Great Britain's Seven National Days of Prayer during World War II.

The Supernatural Events Resulting From National Prayer - The big features of the 1939-45 war were the **seven national days of prayer** and the dramatic events which followed each one. They saved Britain from disaster.

Of seven separate days of prayer called by King and Parliament in the six years of war, **three were held within the first twelve months** – March 27, Aug. 11, Sep. 8, 1940 because **the situation was known to be so desperate**. In gratitude for deliverance after the war, the government **passed a law making Christian teaching in schools compulsory**. Now it is difficult to get permission even to mention the name of Christ, and many children lack ethical and moral teaching. The results in our community life are obvious. Yes, Britain was in a desperate situation.

1. The first National Day of Prayer was **called for by King George VI on March 27th, 1940**. The miracle took place during the week following. Most people have heard **how the English Channel was absolutely calm all the days during which thousands of private boats and yachts, including my father-in-law's boat, went to and fro rescuing from the sands of Dunkirk 338,000 men of the British Expeditionary Army, leaving only 12,000 sadly to become prisoners or killed.**

2. The second Day of Prayer was on Sunday, August 11th, 1940. This was a national youth call to prayer. The King had called all the young people to pray.

The Answer - Britain could not know that within the week that followed, the overweight Nazi, Air Field Marshall Goering, commenced the first stage in the Battle of Britain. It failed. **The relatively small British force of Spitfires and Hurricanes shot down 180 Nazi bombers over South-east England. The rate of interception excelled by far anything that could be expected or explained by radar,** said our air commander.

3. The next national Day of Prayer was **only a month later on September 8th, 1940. Calling for another Day of Prayer so soon showed how desperate** Parliament knew the situation to be.

The answer again was immediate and it was during this period that people in the streets began to see angels in the sky. **A more determined Nazi air attack was made by sending five fighter planes to accompany every single bomber during the week following. Yet against all odds, as many as 185 Nazi planes were shot down.** Goering, the Nazi commander, expected success and in anticipation Hitler had prepared invasion barges at Bremen. **But a terrific storm in the channel and North Sea blew away those invasion barges.** The result was that the invasion of Britain was postponed. This was vital, for it gave Britain more time to manufacture armaments to re-equip our depleted forces.

4. The next National Day of Prayer was **only six months later**. It was called by King and parliament for March 23rd, 1941. The guidance of God must have been evident, for we did not know at the time that this was Hitler's next date for invading Britain.

The following events, which followed the fourth National Day of Prayer:

1. **A great earthquake created waves with terrific gales which blew Nazi ships 80 miles off course.**
2. That same week, **Yugoslavia** which had surrendered to Hitler **changed its mind and organised resistance.**
3. **Ethiopia was liberated from Mussolini, Hitler's co-partner.**
4. The **British Navy fought the Italian fleet** in the Mediterranean. **Italy lost many cruisers and destroyers and their newest battleship was badly damaged.** There was **no damage** to the British Navy, and no men were lost.

5. The **Ethiopian ports were liberated.** Haile Selassie, Ethiopia's Christian Emperor, said when no help was coming, **'Then I put my cause into God's hands'.**

6. **Hitler changed his plans entirely as a result of the submarine earthquake. He gave up invading Britain,** and against all the advice of his generals, he turned his attention eastwards to invade Russia.

This was a turning point in the war. We learned later that Hitler had put off the invasion of Britain four times. **It is not enough for an army or a nation to have a vague faith in God. It is not enough for us to rest content that our commanders are godly, and that God's flag is publicly flown. Faith in God is useless until it governs action.**

The Bible Tells Us to Pray!

1Ti 2:1-4 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, [2] for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness

and reverence. [3] For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, [4] who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Watch and Pray!

What a privilege to pray - To Whom? We now have access to the Throne of Grace! - Mat 27:50-51 And Jesus cried out again with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit. [51] Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom

Per His Invitation -

Heb. 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Heb. 10:19-22 Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, [20] by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, [21] and having a High Priest over the house of God, [22] let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Pray whole heartedly or with a whole heart:

Psa 119:2 Blessed are those who keep His testimonies, Who seek Him with the whole heart!

Psa 119:10 With my whole heart I have sought You; Oh, let me not wander from Your commandments!

Psa 119:58 I entreated Your favor with my whole heart; Be merciful to me according to Your word.

Psa 119:145 I cry out with my whole heart; Hear me, O LORD! I will keep Your statutes.

Prayer is a Battle- the enemy doesn't want you to pray!!!

Prayer is work! – because prayer is the truest weapon in our spiritual battle arsenal, it's work! Yes, prayer is work! But it's so effective! The most effective weapon we have been given!

It's a sin not to pray! - Isa 12:23 Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.

Of what does prayer consist? What are its essential elements? What do we find in the prayers in the Bible?

1 ADDRESS

2 THANK AND PRAISE THE LORD FOR HIS MERCIES, HIS GRACE, HIS FAITHFULNESS

3 COME IN ALL HUMILITY

4 CONFESS YOUR SIN

5 MAXIMIZE GOD'S MERCIES

6 MINIMIZE YOUR PROBLEM IN HIS LIGHT

7 PLEAD/STAND ON THE PROMISES OF GOD

8 PRAY AND PERSEVERE IN FAITH AND EXPECTANCY

9 PRAY THAT HIS WILL AND NOT MINE, BE DONE

This morning we want to look closely at two prayers in our “Prayer Book” – the Bible!!!

#1 - The first one we will examine is found in Matthew 15 of the Syro-Phoenician Woman - a wonderful example of the showing of faith in prayer! -

MATTHEW 15:21-28 - THE SYRO-PHOENICIAN WOMAN SHOWS HER FAITH! (An example of what to do when prayer is not answered - Short, powerful, much perseverance, humble, full of faith, fervent, modest, respectful, rational, relying only on the mercy of God, persevering) – in 34 words – receives “O woman, great is your faith”!

Syro-Phoenician Woman:

Have mercy on me, - How proper is this prayer --so many excellent aspects to it!

- It is short;
- humble;
- full of faith;

- fervent;
- modest;
- respectful;
- rational;
- relying only on the mercy of God;
- persevering.

Mat 15:22-28 And behold, a woman of Canaan came from that region and cried out to Him, saying, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David! My daughter is severely demon-possessed." [23] But He answered her not a word (Take comfort if your prayers have not yet been answered! There are times when even though we pray with great faith to the Lord and He intends to answer, He waits awhile! Was the answer not forthcoming because of her not having a need? That her approach to the Lord was incorrect? That she was not praying in earnest? In fervency? With no faith? - NO).

And His disciples came and urged Him, saying, "Send her away, for she cries out after us." [24] But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. (Now in addition to not being answered the first time; here in response to the second request, she is rebuked! – Would you have given up?)" [25] Then she came and worshiped Him, saying, "Lord, help me!" (Persevere! Persevere! He always knows and does what is best for us! Drawing out your faith, even maybe seemingly ignoring or rebuking, or maybe even allowing you to be put to death!! But there is a reason! He knows and does what is just and right! But no matter what you see, don't give up trusting, asking, seeking and knocking, even if you have not yet obtained the joy that you long for!! Throw yourself on Him and persevere, depending even when you cannot yet rejoice in what you see!)

[26] But He answered and said, "It is not good to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs." [27] And she said, "Yes, Lord, yet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table." (There is sure to be abundance of bread on Your table; an abundance for the children that there will be crumbs to throw on the floor for the dogs, and the children will not be deprived even if the dogs are fed.' The woman thought Jesus kept so good a table that all that she needed would only be a crumb in comparison; - remember, what she wanted was to have the devil cast out of her daughter. It was a very great thing to her, but she had such a high esteem of Christ, that she said, 'It is nothing to Him, it is only a crumb for Christ to give.')

[28] Then Jesus answered and said to her, "O woman, great is your faith! (what prevailing faith – in only 34 words, Jesus refers to her as a woman having great faith—the only time in the Bible!) Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour.

She won the victory by believing in Him. This is an example of prevailing faith. If we are to have victory like her, we too, must exhibit faith!

#2 - Next we'll examine the prayer of our Lord and Savior's Prayer in the Garden!! - such a tremendous example – Not my will but Thy will be done!

Matthew 26:36-46 – THE PRAYER IN THE GARDEN – Ask others to pray "Watch and Pray"; Pray alone with the Father, Not My will by Thy Will be done!!

THE PRAYER IN THE GARDEN

Can you pray for an hour? Do you pray for an hour (or more) each day?

Mat 26:36-47 Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to the disciples, "Sit here while I go and pray over there." [37] And He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and He began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed. [38] Then He said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here and watch with Me. [39] He went a little farther and fell on His face, (it was a prayer prayed in all humility) and prayed, saying, "O My Father (prayed as a child to His Father), if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will." [40] Then He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "What! Could you not watch with Me one hour? [41] Watch and pray, lest you enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." [42] Again, a second time, He went away and prayed, saying, "O My Father, if this cup cannot pass away from Me unless I drink it, Your will be done. (It was a prayer of resignation to His will – not My will)" [43] And He came and found them asleep again, for their eyes were heavy. [44] So He left them, went away again, and prayed the third time (It was a persevering prayer), saying the same words. [45] Then He came to His disciples and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting?"

Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. [46] Rise, let us be going. See, My betrayer is at hand."

Matthew 26:41 – WATCH AND PRAY!

**HERE WE BEGIN TO SEE THE PRICE THAT HE PAID FOR YOUR SIN AND MINE!
OH, MAY WE ACCEPT THE CUP OF SALVATION WITH TREMBLING! MAY WE HATE OUR SIN!
MAY WE OFFER THANKSGIVING FROM OUR HEARTS AND FROM OUR LIPS!**

WHEN IN CRISIS:

PRAY; ASK OTHERS TO PRAY; BEING SURE TO ALSO PRAY ALONE; WILLINGLY SUBMIT TO THE FATHER'S WILL!

Believer, we must be in solitary prayer, especially in times of trial. Family prayer, social prayer, prayer in the Church, will not suffice. These are very precious, but the best prayer time will be in your private devotions, where no ear hears but God's.

- Nevertheless, not my will, but Your will be done! -
- Yield to Him, and God yields.
- Let it be as God wills, and God will determine what's best!
- Be content to leave your prayer in His hands! He knows when to give, how to give, what to give, and what to withhold.
- So plead in all earnestness, with expectancy and anticipation, yet with humility and resignation, rejoicing in what He will do.
- You will surely prevail!!

***Luke 18:1-8** Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart, -- The context here is His second coming!*

We need to Watch and Pray. To be ready! Jesus is coming soon! In these "last days" how are we to live? What signs should we be especially watchful and about? THE KINGDOM OF GOD ON EARTH!!!! -- ARE YOU READY?

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS COMING BACK TO THE EARTH SOON, — HIS SECOND COMING - THIS TIME FOR EXECUTING HIS WRATH AND HIS PERFECT JUDGMENT

TO DO AWAY WITH SIN, THE WICKEDNESS, AND THOSE WHO STAND FOR SUCH THINGS - IN LIGHT OF THIS, WHAT ARE WE TO DO?

LET US CONSIDER THE NEARNESS OF HIS SECOND COMING BY LOOKING AT THE SIGNS IN THE BIBLE

THE SERIOUSNESS OF NOT PAYING ATTENTION TO WHAT THE BIBLE SAID:

Jesus Weeps over Jerusalem

***Luke 19:41-42** Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, [42] saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes.*

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE SIGNS? SHOULD THERE BE AN URGENCY IN OUR LIVES TO GET THE GOSPEL OUT - TO GO ALL OUT IN OUR MINISTRIES – TO PRAY!!?

1. **MT 24 - PARABLE OF THE FIG TREE - ISRAEL ESTABLISHED AS A NATION - MAY 14, 1948 - THIS GENERATION WILL NOT PASS AWAY - 70 YEARS IN PS 91. – 2018; 100 YEARS IN GENESIS 15:16 - 2048**
2. ***LUKE 21:29-33** Then He spoke to them a parable: "Look at the fig tree, and all the trees. [30] *When they are already budding, you see and know for yourselves that summer is now near.* [31] *So you also, when you see these things happening, know that the kingdom of God is near.* [32] *Assuredly, I say to you, this generation will by no means pass away till all things take place.* [33] *Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.**
3. **Other trees! (begun in 1948) World Council of Churches; European Union (Europe to fall apart to 10 countries – Daniel -feet of iron and clay); Transistor/computer; Red China (Kings of the East);**

4. *1 Thess. 5:1-2 But concerning the times and the seasons, brethren, you have no need that I should write to you. [2] For you yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night.*
Dan 2:21 And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding.
5. **AS IN THE DAYS OF NOAH - EATING AND DRINKING - 120 YEARS - 1 & 2 PETER SPEAK OF NOAH PREACHING RIGHTEOUSNESS IN THOSE DAYS! THE PEOPLE WERE WARNED TO REPENT TO TURN**
6. **MANY EARTHQUAKES - LUKE SPEAKS OF "DISTRESS OF NATIONS WITH PERPLEXITY" IN CH. 21:25**
7. **THE FLAUNTING OF SIN - PERVERSITY - AS IN THE DAYS OF SODOM AND GOMORRA**
8. **THE KILLING OF UNBORN CHILDREN - THE CHILDREN PASSING THROUGH THE FIRE - TODAY'S ABORTION PRACTICES**

WE HAVE MANY REASONS TO EXPECT HIS RETURN - 2000 YEARS AGO THE DISCIPLES WERE EXPECTING - **JESUS SAID MEN OUGHT ALWAYS TO PRAY!** THROUGH THE AGES THE CHURCH HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED TO BE READY.

WHETHER OR NOT JESUS COMES FOR HIS CHURCH WITHIN THE NEXT 1-2 YEARS OR SO, WE DON'T KNOW, **BUT WE DO KNOW THAT THE DAYS ON EARTH FOR EACH AND EVERY PERSON ARE NUMBERED -SO IN A SENSE IT REALLY ISN'T NECESSARY TO KNOW THE DATE NOR THE HOUR. WE NEED TO PRAY FOR THE LOST AS LONG AS THEY HAVE BREATH OR THAT WE HAVE BREATH-RIGHT?**

SO HE'S COMING SOON, WE KNOW, EITHER FOR HIS CHURCH AND ALL BELIEVERS AT ONCE OR HE'S COMING FOR YOU AND ME, ONE AT A TIME! SAME DESTINATION FOR EVER - HIDDEN IN CHRIST FROM THE COMING JUDGMENT AND BEING WITH OUR LORD JESUS FOREVER MORE!

MAY WE ALL FERVENTLY AND PASSIONATELY "WATCH AND PRAY"!
MAY WE BE READY!

SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER -- William Bradbury – Maranatha Singers

1. *Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer! That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne Make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief, My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare, By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*
2. *Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer! Thy wings shall my petition bear
To Him whose truth and faithfulness Engage the waiting soul to bless.
And since He bids me seek His face, Believe His Word and trust His grace,
I'll cast on Him my every care, And wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer!*
3. *Sweet hour of prayer! sweet hour of prayer! That calls me from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne Make all my wants and wishes known.
In seasons of distress and grief, My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare, By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*