

# **Behold the Lamb!**

## **What it Means to be a Christian**

### **Lesson 6: Prayer; Faith; Victory**

Along with Bible Study, Faith and Prayer is a Vital Part of a Christian's Life. There is a lot to it, but it is not hard to learn. When we have chosen and determined to belong to Jesus, God considers each of us as His little children. He even invites us to call Him, "Our Father, which art in Heaven".

Now some people have not had parents who really loved them, they may even have treated them cruelly, but God is not like that. We can think of Him as the most loving parent we can imagine! When parents love their little ones, they look forward to the time when they learn to talk! At first babies only manage a word or so, but how happy it makes their parents!

Loving parents also want to give good things to their children, but sometimes what the little child wants is not good for them, or even harmful. In that case they have to say "No" and offer the child something better.

Jesus told us about this and here is the promise He gave us. **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?" Matthew 7:7-11.**

Now there is something special we need to know and Jesus tells us about it here: **"And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it." John 14:13, 14.**

If it wasn't for the great sacrifice that Jesus made for us, We would not be able to pray to God or receive any help, or indeed, receive anything good from God. So this is why we say at the end of our prayers, "In Jesus' name, Amen."

Did the Father not love us too? Yes indeed He did, but He had a problem, sin had come between Him and humans; sin means the breaking of God's Holy Law. That Law was based on God's own character of love. The government of all the universe was based on that law. God could not cancel that law to save sinful humans. That law was eternal, and unless some way could be found to pay the debt of the broken law, there was no hope.

Jesus was equal and eternal with the Father, and He was the One who actually was our Creator. We know Him as the Son of God because of what they worked out so that humans could have another chance to decide to obey God and once again become part of God's family. It was decided that Jesus would come to earth as a human and live a perfect life. He would overcome all the temptations we face, and not sin. Then He would give His perfect life as a payment for

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our sins. His death made it possible for God to forgive our sins, and His perfect life makes it possible for us to receive strength from Jesus so we can choose to stop sinning, something we could not do ourselves alone. So when we pray in Jesus' name, that opens the windows of heaven for us and we can receive answers to our prayers! It is only because of that great gift of God that we can be saved or helped.

### Wrong ideas about prayer:

There are religions that believe we will receive answers to our prayers if we say them over and over again. Some think that we receive answers by punishing ourselves, beating our bodies, kneeling on sharp things, or travelling long distances to certain 'holy places'. Some think if they make some kind of offering to God, He will be bribed to do what we want. The Bible does not say this at all. Would a loving parent want his children to do things like that before he would listen to them or help them?

Notice what Jesus said, **"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."** Matthew 6:7. Then Jesus went on to give us the simple prayer we know as the Lord's prayer for an example.

**"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, [sins or wrong-doings]as we forgive our debtors [those who have done wrong things to us]. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen."** Matthew 6:9-13.

We have this example in slightly different words in Luke: **"And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil."** Luke 11:2-4.

We don't always need to just say these same words, but they show us how we can simply ask for what we need as we would ask a loving parent or a close friend. We ask in the name of Jesus and the Father treats us as He would treat His Son.

Some people have been taught that God only hears prayers from certain special people and so we have to get these special people to pray for us. Sometimes these people who claim to be special are known as 'priests' or 'prophets' or have 'ministries'. But the Bible tells us that when Jesus went back to heaven, He became our special High Priest before God for us! **"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. [this tells us that Jesus understands how we feel.] Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."** Hebrews 4:14-16.

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Notice that Jesus invites us to come to Him at a 'throne of grace' where He ministers His great sacrifice for us in heaven. What does 'grace' mean? It means we are given something we don't deserve, something we can't earn or buy in any way. It is given to us in love and mercy because we need it. Because Jesus has paid the price and because of God's promises, we can come with confidence to God in the Name of Jesus and tell Him our needs and God hears us and He will help us!

We can pray to the Father in Jesus' name or we can pray directly to Jesus, but we are not to pray to people or angels, or spirits, and certainly we are not to pray to images, trees, rocks, pictures, places, or other people. Can you imagine a hungry child asking his bowl or dish to give him food? Of course not, he would ask his parent for food. And so we ask our loving Heavenly Father in the name of Jesus to help us, guide us and provide our needs.

### Conditions to Receiving Answers to Our Prayers:

Prayer and faith are closely related, and they need to be studied together. In the prayer of faith there is a divine science. Jesus says, "**What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.**" **Mark 11:24.** He makes it plain that our asking must be according to God's will; we must ask for the things that He has promised, and whatever we receive must be used in doing His will. The conditions met, the promise is certain.

Some prayers we will always receive an answer to. For the pardon of sin, for the Holy Spirit, for a Christlike temper, for wisdom and strength to do His work, for any gift He has promised, we may ask; then we are to believe that we receive, and return thanks to God that we have received.

We need look for no outward evidence of the blessing. The gift is in the promise, and we may go about our work assured that what God has promised He is able to perform, and that the gift, which we already possess, will be realized when we need it most.

To live thus by the word of God means the surrender to Him of the whole life. There will be felt a continual sense of need and dependence, a drawing out of the heart after God. Prayer is a necessity; for it is the life of the soul. Family prayer, public prayer, have their place; but it is secret communion with God that sustains the soul life.

### What is Faith?

Faith is not making ourselves believe something is going to happen, Faith is just believing that God tells the truth to us and means what He says in His Word and that He will not break His promises to us.

Faith is trusting God; believing that He loves us and knows best what is for our good. Thus, instead of our own way, it leads us to choose His way. In place of our ignorance, it accepts His wisdom; in place of our weakness, His strength; in place of our sinfulness, His righteousness.

Our lives, our selves, are already His; faith acknowledges His ownership and accepts its blessings. Truth, uprightness, purity, have been pointed out as secrets of life's success. It is faith that puts us in possession of these principles. Every good impulse or aspiration is the gift of God; faith receives from God the life that alone can produce true growth and efficiency.

How do we exercise faith? To every promise of God there are conditions. If we are willing to do

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His will, all His strength is ours. Whatever gift He promises, is in the promise itself. **"The seed is the word of God." Luke 8:11.** As sure as the tree or plant is in the seed, so sure is the gift of God in His promise. If we receive the promise, we have the gift.

Faith that enables us to receive God's gifts is itself a gift, of which some measure is given to every human being. It grows as it is exercised in taking hold of the word of God. In order to strengthen faith, we must often bring it in contact with God's word.

In the study of the Bible we can learn to see the power of God's word. In the creation of this earth, **"He spake, and it was done; He commanded, and it stood fast." Psalm 33:9, He "calleth those things which be not as though they were." Romans 4:17.** for when He calls them, they are.

### Claiming God's Promises: The ABC's:

**A—Ask: Matthew 7:7. "For any gift He has promised, we may ask."**

**B—Believe: Mark 11:22-24. "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them." We are to believe that we receive."**

**C—Claim: John 11:41. Then we are to "return thanks to God that we have received."**

Why do we return thanks that we have received? Because:

- 1. The word of God is seed. Luke 8:11. "The Seed is the Word of God."**
- 2. The seed contains not merely the component elements of the tree or plant, but the tree itself.**
- 3. Therefore, "If we receive the promise, we have the gift." "The gift is in the promise." "One sentence of Scripture is of more value than ten thousand of man's ideas or arguments."**

So with your Bible, or a promise from the Bible, in your hands say, "I have done as Thou hast said. I Present Thy promise." Remember, the condition to victory is to Ask, Believe, and Claim by receiving, returning thanks we have received. You can even take the Bible or the book of promises right in your hands as you pray.

You and I, though utterly unworthy, may place our fingers right on the promise of a living, true, almighty, wise, loving, and willing God. Then we are to tell Him, there on our knees, that We Believe, and Have Received the gift promised. We can tell Him we know we shall have the fulfillment when we need it most. But now we accept it by simple, living faith.

Arising from our knees we may continue, in our hearts, asking, believing and claiming happily what God has promised. If we are but willing to conform to the conditions:

**"That thy trust may be in the Lord, I have made known to thee this day, even to thee. Have not I written to thee excellent things in counsels and knowledge, That I might make thee know the certainty of the words of truth; that thou mightest answer the words of truth to them that send unto thee?" Proverbs 22:19-21.**

**"If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Luke 11:13.**

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1. Think of God looking for someone to help.

**"For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect [or sincerely fixed] toward him." 2 Chronicles 16:9.**

2. Let us look to Calvary and capture the true picture of God.

**"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Romans 8:32.**

3. Think of God as often giving us something better than we ask.

**"I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known; ... and not forsake them." Isaiah 42:16.**

For us to picture God as saying, "No, period!" is misrepresenting Him. God never says to His believing child, "No, period." He may sometimes say, "No, comma," meaning, "You are not asking for as much as I want to give you!" or "I have something better for you."

**"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us," Ephesians 3:20.**

Here we see a picture of God as being eager to do so much more for us than we ask, that our asking appears pitifully short of what He wants to give us.

4. Think of God as truthful.

**"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" Numbers 23:19.**

"Hebrews 6:18 declares that it is impossible for God to lie.

5. Think of God as powerful enough to bring solutions.

**"By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . For he spake, and it was." Psalm 33:6, 9.**

**"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God." Hebrews 11:3.**

**(1) Romans 4:17, "God, . . . calleth those things which be not as though they were." (2) Psalm 33:9, "He spake, and it was."**

Putting these two passages of Scripture together, it says that anything that does not exist, does exist the moment God's creative word names it. This is our creator God.

6. God requires of us childlike faith.

**"Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3.**

Jesus taught us to offer a prayer that asks, believes, and then actually receives, or claims, the solution without doubting, because what God says, is so, even though our own minds cannot

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comprehend it all.

7. Claiming God's creative promises.

**"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." 2 Peter 1:4.**

**"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10.**

**"Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." John 15:3.**

### Faith and the Fiery Furnace

In the same year that Daniel and his companions entered the service of the king of Babylon, events occurred that severely tested the integrity of these youthful Hebrews and proved before an idolatrous nation the power and faithfulness of the God of Israel.

While King Nebuchadnezzar was looking forward with anxious forebodings to the future, he had a remarkable dream, by which he was greatly troubled, **"and his sleep brake from him." Daniel 2:1.** But although this vision of the night made a deep impression on his mind, he found it impossible to recall the details. He called for his astrologers and magicians, and with promises of great wealth and honor commanded them to tell him his dream and its interpretation. But they said, **"Tell thy servants the dream, and we will shew the interpretation."** verse 4.

The king knew that if they actually had the 'connections to the gods' that they claimed to have, and could really tell the interpretation, they could tell the dream as well. The Lord had in His providence given Nebuchadnezzar this dream, and had caused the details to be forgotten, while the fearful impression was left upon his mind, in order to expose the pretensions of the wise men of Babylon.

The monarch was very angry, and threatened that they should all be slain if, in a given time, the dream was not made known. Daniel and his companions, while they had not been called to the king's court, were to perish with the false prophets. Risking his life, Daniel ventured to enter the presence of the king, begging that time may be granted so that he may show the dream and the interpretation. To this request the monarch agreed.

Now Daniel gathered his three companions, and together they take the matter before God, seeking for wisdom from the Source of light and knowledge. Although they were in the king's court, surrounded with temptation, they did not forget their responsibility to God. They were strongly aware that His providence had placed them where they were; that they were doing His work, meeting the demands of truth and duty. They had confidence toward God. They had turned to Him for strength when in perplexity and danger, and He had been to them an ever-present help.

The servants of God did not plead with Him in vain. They had honored Him, and in the hour of trial He honored them. The secret was revealed to Daniel, and he hastened to request an interview with the king.

The Jewish captive stands before the monarch of the most powerful empire the sun has ever shone upon. The king is in great distress amid all his riches and glory, but the youthful exile is

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peaceful and happy in his God. Now, if ever, is the time for Daniel to exalt himself, to make prominent his own goodness and superior wisdom. But his first effort is to disclaim all honor for himself and to exalt God as the source of wisdom.

**"The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."**

**Daniel 2:27, 28.** The king listens with solemn attention as every particular of the dream is reproduced; and when the interpretation is faithfully given, he feels that he can rely upon it as a divine revelation.

The solemn truths conveyed in this vision of the night made a deep impression on the king's mind, and in humility and awe he fell down and worshiped, saying, **"Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets." verse 47.**

### The Golden Image:

Light, direct from Heaven, had been permitted to shine upon King Nebuchadnezzar, and for a little time he was influenced by the fear of God. But a few years of prosperity filled his heart with pride, and he forgot his acknowledgement of the living God. He resumed to his idol worship with increased zeal and bigotry.

When Daniel had given the king the interpretation of the dream, he told him that he, and his kingdom, Babylon, were represented by the golden head of the image. Then he also told him that his kingdom would be replaced by an inferior one, shown as a silver kingdom. The king did not like the idea that his kingdom would pass away and so he determined to show the world that it would last forever.

From the treasures obtained in war he made a golden image to represent the one that he had seen in his dream, setting it up in the plain of Dura, and commanding all the rulers and the people to worship it, on pain of death. This statue was about ninety feet in height and nine in breadth, and in the eyes of that idol worshipping people it was a most imposing and majestic sight. A proclamation was issued calling upon all the officers of the kingdom to assemble at the dedication of the image, and at the sound of the musical instruments, to bow down and worship it. Should any fail to do this, they were immediately to be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace.

The appointed day has come, and the vast company assembled. The music signal was played and they king felt very proud as he saw all the people worshipping his image. But then word is brought to the king that the three Hebrews, whom he has set over the province of Babylon, refused to worship the image. These are Daniel's three companions, who had been called by the king, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Full of rage, the monarch calls them before him, and pointing to the angry furnace, tells them the punishment that will be theirs if they refuse obedience to his will.

In vain were the king's threats. He could not turn these noble men from their allegiance to the great Ruler of nations. They had learned from the history of their fathers that disobedience to God is dishonor, disaster, and ruin; that the fear of the Lord is not only the beginning of wisdom

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but the foundation of all true prosperity. They look with calmness upon the fiery furnace and the idolatrous throng. They have trusted in God, and He will not fail them now. Their answer is respectful, but decided: **"Be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Daniel 3:18.**

The proud monarch is surrounded by his great men, the officers of the government, and the army that has conquered nations; and all approving him as having the wisdom and power of the gods. In the midst of this imposing display stand the three youthful Hebrews, steadily persisting in their refusal to obey the king's decree. They had been obedient to the laws of Babylon so far as these did not conflict with the claims of God, but they would not be swayed a hair's breadth from the duty they owed to their Creator.

The king's wrath knew no limits. In the very height of his power and glory, to be thus defied by the representatives of a despised and captive race was an insult which his proud spirit could not endure. The fiery furnace had been heated seven times more than usual, and into it were cast the three Hebrew exiles. So furious were the flames, that the men who cast them in were burned to death.

Suddenly the countenance of the king paled with terror. His eyes were fixed upon the glowing flames, and turning to his lords, he said, **"Did not we cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?" verse 24.** The answer was, "True, O king." And now the monarch exclaims, **"Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." verse 25.**

When Christ manifests Himself to the children of men, an unseen power speaks to their souls. They feel themselves to be in the presence of the Infinite One. Before His majesty, kings and nobles tremble, and acknowledge that the living God is above every earthly power.

With feelings of remorse and shame, the king exclaimed, **"Ye servants of the most high God, come forth." verse 26.** And they obeyed, showing themselves unhurt before that vast multitude, not even the smell of fire was upon their garments. This miracle produced a great change in the minds of the people. The great golden image, set up with such display, was forgotten. The king published a decree that any one speaking against the God of these men should be put to death, **"because there is no other God that can deliver after this sort." verse 29.** [Sadly, he had not yet learned that force and threats are not the way God wishes any to worship Him.]

These three Hebrews had genuine sanctification. True Christian principle will not stop to weigh consequences. It does not ask, What will people think of me if I do this? or, How will it affect my worldly prospects if I do that? With the most intense longing the children of God desire to know what He would have them do that their works may glorify Him. The Lord has made ample provision that the hearts and lives of all His followers may be controlled by divine grace, that they may be as burning and shining lights in the world.

These faithful Hebrews had great natural ability, they had enjoyed the highest intellectual culture, and now occupied a position of honor; but all this did not lead them to forget God. Their powers were yielded to the sanctifying influence of divine grace. By their steadfast integrity they showed forth the praises of Him who had called them out of darkness into His



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marvelous light. By their wonderful deliverance, the power and majesty of God were shown before that vast assembly.

Jesus placed Himself by their side in the fiery furnace, and by the glory of His presence convinced the proud king of Babylon that it could be no other than the Son of God. The light of Heaven had been shining forth from Daniel and his companions, until all their associates understood the faith which ennobled their lives and beautified their characters. By the deliverance of His faithful servants, the Lord declares that He will take His stand with the oppressed and overthrow all earthly powers that would trample upon the authority of the God of heaven.

What a lesson is here given to the fainthearted, the hesitant, the cowardly in the cause of God! What encouragement to those who will not be turned aside from duty by threats or peril! These faithful, steadfast young people show sanctification, while they have no thought of claiming the high honor. The amount of good which may be accomplished by unknown but devoted Christians cannot be estimated until the life records shall be made known, when the judgement shall sit and the books be opened.

Christ identifies His interest with this class; He is not ashamed to call them brethren. There should be hundreds where there is now one among us, so closely allied to God, their lives in such close conformity to His will, that they would be bright and shining lights, sanctified wholly, in soul, body, and spirit.

The conflict still goes on between the children of light and the children of darkness. Those who name the name of Christ should shake off the lethargy that enfeebles their efforts, and should meet the important responsibilities that are upon them. All who do this may expect the power of God to be revealed in them. The Son of God, the world's Redeemer, will be represented in their words and in their works, and God's name will be glorified.

As in the days of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, so in the closing period of earth's history the Lord will work mightily in behalf of those who stand steadfastly for the right. He who walked with the Hebrew youth in the fiery furnace will be with His followers wherever they are. His abiding presence will comfort and sustain. In the midst of the time of trouble such as has not been since there was a nation, His chosen ones will stand unmoved. "Satan with all the hosts of evil cannot destroy the weakest of God's saints. Angels that excel in strength will protect them, and in their behalf Jehovah will reveal Himself as a "God of gods," able to save to the uttermost those who have put their trust in Him." *Prophets and Kings*, p. 513.

### The Faith of Daniel in the Lions' Den

When Darius took possession of the throne of Babylon, he at once proceeded to reorganize the government. He **"set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes . . . ; and over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first."** Daniel 6:1, 2. And **"Daniel was preferred above the presidents and princes, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm."** verse 3. The honors bestowed upon Daniel excited the jealousy of the leading men of the kingdom. The presidents and princes sought to find occasion for complaint against him. **"But they could find none occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him."** verse 4.

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What a lesson for all Christians. The keen eyes of jealousy were fixed upon Daniel day after day; their watching was sharpened by hatred; yet not a word or act of his life could they make appear wrong. And still he made no claim to sanctification, but he did that which was infinitely better--he lived a life of faithfulness and consecration.

The more blameless the conduct of Daniel, the greater was the hatred excited against him by his enemies. They were filled with madness, because they could find nothing in his moral character or in the discharge of his duties upon which to base a complaint against him. **"Then said these men, We shall not find any occasion against this Daniel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his God." verse 5.** Three times a day Daniel prayed to the God of heaven. This was the only accusation that could be brought against him.

A scheme was now planned to accomplish his destruction. His enemies assembled at the palace and asked the king to pass a decree that no person in the whole realm should ask anything of either God or man, except of Darius the king, for the space of thirty days, and that any violation of this edict should be punished by casting the offender into the den of lions. The king knew nothing of the hatred of these men toward Daniel, and did not suspect that the decree would in any way injure him. Through flattery they made the monarch believe it would be greatly to his honor to pass such an edict. With a smile of satanic triumph upon their faces, they come forth from the presence of the king, and rejoice together over the snare which they have laid for the servant of God.

When the decree went forth from the king, Daniel knew the purpose of his enemies was to ruin him. But he does not change his course in a single particular. With calmness he performs his accustomed duties, and at the hour of prayer he goes to his chamber, and with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he offers his petitions to the God of heaven. By his course of action he fearlessly declares that no earthly power has the right to come between him and his God and tell him to whom he should or should not pray. Noble man of principle! he stands before the world today a praiseworthy example of Christian boldness and fidelity. He turns to God with all his heart, although he knows that death is the penalty for his devotion.

His adversaries watch him an entire day. Three times he has gone to his chamber, and three times the voice of earnest intercession has been heard. The next morning the complaint is made to the king that Daniel, one of the captives of Judah, has set at defiance his decree. When the monarch heard these words, his eyes were at once opened to see the snare that had been set. He was sorely displeased with himself for having passed such a decree, and labored till the going down of the sun to devise a plan by which Daniel might be delivered. But the prophet's enemies had anticipated this, and they came before the king with these words: "Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king establisheth may be changed.

**"Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God whom thou servest continually, he will deliver thee" (verses 15, 16).** A stone was laid upon the mouth of the den, and sealed with the royal seal. **"Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of musick brought before him: and his sleep went from him" (verse 18).**

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Early in the morning the monarch hastened to the den of lions, and cried, "**Daniel, Oh Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?**" **verse 20.** The voice of the prophet was heard in reply, "**Oh king, live for ever. My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, Oh king, have I done no hurt.**"

**"Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God."** **verses 22, 23.** Thus was the servant of God delivered. And the snare which his enemies had laid for his destruction proved to be their own ruin. At the command of the king they were cast into the den, and instantly devoured by the wild beasts.

### Lessons from Daniel's Prayers

Daniel knew that the prophecy said the time for the captivity in Babylon would be seventy years. As the time drew near for close of the seventy years' captivity, he saw that the time was near when God would give His chosen people another trial; and with fasting, humiliation, and prayer, he pleaded with the God of heaven in behalf of Israel. Notice his prayer:

**"Oh Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping the covenant and mercy to them that love him, and to them that keep his commandments; we have sinned, and have committed iniquity, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgements; neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land."** **Daniel 9:4-6.**

Daniel did not tell the Lord how faithful he was, instead of claiming to be pure and holy, this honored prophet humbly identified himself with the really sinful of Israel. The wisdom which God had imparted to him was as far superior to the wisdom of the great men of the world as the light of the sun shining in the heavens at noonday is brighter than the feeblest star. Yet consider the prayer from this man so highly favored of Heaven. With deep humiliation, with tears and rending of heart, he pleads for himself and for his people. He lays his soul open before God, confessing his own unworthiness and acknowledging the Lord's greatness and majesty.

Daniel's hand of faith is reached upward to grasp the never-failing promises of the Most High. His soul is wrestling in agony. And he has the evidence that his prayer is heard. He knows that victory is his. If we as a people would pray as Daniel prayed, and wrestle as he wrestled, humbling our souls before God, we should receive such answers to our petitions as were granted to Daniel. Hear how he presses his case at the court of heaven:

**"Oh my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name; for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. Oh Lord, hear; Oh Lord, forgive; Oh Lord, hearken and do; defer not; for thine own sake, Oh my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name."** **verses 18, 19.**

## Behold the Lamb

The man of God was praying for the blessing of Heaven upon his people and for a clearer knowledge of the divine will. The burden of his heart was for Israel, who were not truly keeping the law of God. He acknowledges that all their misfortunes have come upon them in consequence of their transgressions of that holy law.

He says, "**We have sinned, we have done wickedly. . . . Because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.**" **verses 15, 16.** The Jews had lost their peculiar, holy character as God's chosen people. "**Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant, and his supplications, and cause thy face to shine upon thy sanctuary that is desolate.**" **verse 17.** Daniel's heart turns with intense longing to the desolate sanctuary of God. He knows that its prosperity can be restored only as Israel shall repent of their transgressions of God's law, and become humble, faithful, and obedient.

As Daniel's prayer is going forth, the angel Gabriel comes sweeping down from the heavenly courts to tell him that his petitions are heard and answered. This mighty angel has been commissioned to give him skill and understanding; to open before him the mysteries of future ages. While earnestly seeking to know and understand the truth, Daniel was brought into communion with Heaven's delegated messenger.

In answer to his petition, Daniel received not only the light and truth which he and his people most needed then, but a view of the great events of the future, even to the advent of the world's Redeemer.

Daniel talked with God. Heaven was opened before him. But the high honors given him were the result of humiliation and earnest seeking. All who believe with the heart the word of God will hunger and thirst for a knowledge of His will. God is the author of truth. He enlightens the darkened understanding and gives to the human mind power to grasp and comprehend the truths which He has revealed. All who humbly seek Him in prayer to know His will, shall receive help.

Jesus promised, "**If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.**" **John 7:17.**