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MORE POWER TO YOU

Who says you can't
move mountains?

INTERCESSORY PRAYER

How it works and what it can do

FIXED DETERMINATION

The secret to getting results from God

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India
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PERSONALLY SPEAKING

Life is filled with difficulties and challenges, and at one time or another we all find ourselves in some particularly desperate situation. These desperate situations cause us to turn to God for help, but that's often when we feel that our own prayers are inadequate. Sometimes that's because we're out of practice, sometimes it's because we think we don't have as much faith as we need, sometimes it's because we feel undeserving of the Lord's help, and sometimes we fear that even our most heartfelt prayers will fall short. It's at times like that when we most appreciate the love and concern and prayers of others.

And it works both ways. Being there for others in their times of need and putting our love and concern into action by praying for them are two of the truest and most effective ways in which we can live the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

But praying for others is not only the *right* thing to do, it's also the *smart* thing. Worrying about the situation will get us nowhere. Taking matters into our own hands won't get us much further. But taking the situation to God in prayer will get us "impossible" results, for nothing is impossible for God (Luke 1:37) and "all things are possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23).

Nothing else we can do for another costs so little or goes so far as prayer. Of course when we pray, God may show us that there is something more we can do to help relieve the situation, but our first and immediate response to any problem should be to pray. Let's remember that the next time a loved one or neighbor needs our prayers—and, as Jesus taught, our neighbor is anyone who needs our help.

Keith Phillips

For the *Activated* family

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EDITOR
Keith Phillips

DESIGN
Giselle LeFavre

ILLUSTRATIONS
Etienne Morel

PRODUCTION
Francisco Lopez

MORE POWER TO YOU

Have you ever wondered if your prayers really make a difference? Most people do at one time or another, especially if they've been praying long and hard for a breakthrough in a certain situation but haven't seen the desired result. The next time your faith in prayer gets tested, consider this:

IN A FACTORY, AN ELONGATED STEEL BAR WEIGHING 500 LBS (ABOUT 225 KG) WAS SUSPENDED BY A CHAIN. NEAR IT, AN AVERAGE-SIZE CORK WAS SUSPENDED BY A SILK THREAD. "WHEN WE COME BACK TO THIS SPOT LATER," A TOUR GUIDE TOLD A GROUP OF SIGHTSEERS, "YOU WILL SEE SOMETHING THAT IS SEEMINGLY IMPOSSIBLE. THIS CORK WILL HAVE SET THIS STEEL BAR IN MOTION." THE GUIDE SET IN MOTION A MECHANISM WHEREBY THE CORK TAPPED GENTLY AND REPEATEDLY AGAINST THE STEEL BAR, WHICH REMAINED MOTIONLESS. THE VISITORS WATCHED FOR A MINUTE OR TWO AS THE CORK STRUCK THE IRON BAR WITH PENDULUM-LIKE REGULARITY, THEN THEY MOVED ON. TEN MINUTES LATER, THE BAR WAS VIBRATING SLIGHTLY, AND WHEN THE TOUR GROUP RETURNED AT THE END OF AN HOUR, THE HEAVY BAR WAS SWINGING LIKE THE PENDULUM OF A CLOCK.

So the next time you feel you aren't exerting a feather's weight of influence on others through your prayers, remember the cork. God hears and answers every prayer in His time and as He knows best, but sometimes you must be patient. Often people and situations don't change overnight, even after we have prayed. But if you will be like the cork, your love and prayers will eventually prevail. Every prayer you pray is like another tap of the cork. It may not appear to make a difference, but over time it will all add up and bring the victory.

What if the cork had taken one look at the steel bar and decided it was no use—the bar

wasn't going to budge? Or what if the cork had struck the bar once or twice and given up? What if it had tried to do it at its own pace, and had gotten out of the rhythm that the one who set it in motion knew was needed?

You must not get discouraged when your prayers don't seem to be having any effect, or try to take matters into your own hands. The secret of the cork's success was simply doing its part and keeping at it. *You* can't change the person or situation you are praying for. Only *God* can do that. Your part is to pray and keep praying—to keep giving it one more tap in the right direction. The results will come in God's time. •

In prayer you align yourselves to the purpose and power of God and He is able to do things through you that He couldn't do otherwise. This is an open universe, where some things are left open, contingent upon our doing them. If we do not do them, they will never be done. God has left certain things to prayer—things that will never be done except as we pray.

DR. E. STANLEY JONES

FIXED

BY VIRGINIA BRANDT BERG

DETERMINATION

FOR YEARS I NEARLY ALWAYS CLOSED MY *MEDITATION MOMENTS* RADIO SHOW WITH THE WORDS "GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE, AND PRAYER CHANGES THINGS!" SOMEONE WROTE IN AND SAID, "I DON'T FIND THOSE WORDS IN THE BIBLE."

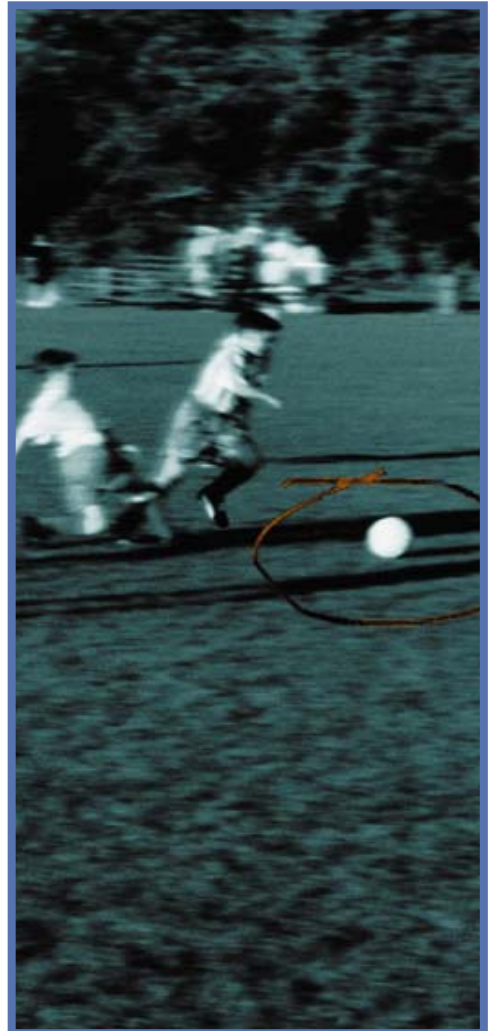
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O, THEY'RE NOT IN THE BIBLE, but they're certainly Scriptural and express an important truth.

If prayer doesn't change things, then let's quit praying. But if prayer *does* change things, then we ought to devote more time to prayer, for all around us there are many things that need changing. If prayer does change things, then let's get busy praying and change the things that need changing! Just think what could happen if you really believe that! Jesus said, "If you can believe, *all* things are possible" (Mark 9:23). If you've prayed and things haven't changed, then this little talk is just for you.

Years ago a common expression amongst Christians was "praying through." Praying through meant that you kept praying until you had received a definite assurance that God had heard the prayer and would take action. Perhaps you've felt that assurance at times—that you didn't need to pray any more, because you were sure that God had heard your prayer, the matter was in His hands now, and He would work it out as He knew best.

The Bible is full of accounts of those who prayed through, particularly King David in the book of Psalms. I get a thrill in my soul whenever David emerges from prayer and comes out with a bold expression of assurance: "The Lord has heard my prayer!"



At the beginning of one psalm, when David began to pray, he was almost in despair over some great trouble, but it wasn't long before he came away declaring, "Blessed be the Lord, because He has heard the voice of my supplications! My heart trusted in Him, and I am helped; therefore my heart greatly rejoices" (Psalm 28:6-7).

Another time David was discouraged about himself almost to the point of despair, but he poured out his heart to the Lord and came away with the sweet assurance: "The Lord has heard the voice of my weeping. The Lord will receive my prayer" (Psalm 6:8-9). And another time David comes away from prayer with the words, "Certainly God has heard me; He has attended to the voice of my prayer" (Psalm 66:19).

That assurance became so fixed in David's heart and mind that he began one psalm with the words, "I love the Lord, because He has heard my voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore I will call upon Him as long as I live" (Psalm 116:1-2). He knew God was going to hear and answer even before he prayed.

Years ago I was injured in a terrible accident, which left me a total invalid. Paralyzed from the waist down, I was mostly confined to bed for five years. I also had life-threatening heart and lung problems, and suffered various other side effects from numerous unsuccessful operations to try to restore the use of my legs. It was this fixed determination—that praying through—that brought the fullness of faith for the great deliverance, the miracle healing, that I needed.

Through Jesus Christ you too can have your prayers answered just as wonderfully. Hold on to His promises. "If you ask anything in My name, I will

do it" (John 14:14). "Whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you" (John 16:23). Have this fixed determination. "I'm going to hold on until the answer comes." Don't give up!

How badly do you want your prayer answered? Are you willing to meet this condition, this fixed determination, or will you let delays discourage you and cause you to give up, or allow obstacles to block your way to victory, or let others' doubts frustrate and foil your faith? There are many ways of meeting a crisis, but only one way guarantees victory, and that is to pray straight through it.

The Bible says, "Let us not grow weary while doing good"—in this case, praying for an important need—"for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart" (Galatians 6:9).

May your faith be strengthened as you think of King David and others in the Bible who through this fixed determination brought down the walls of Jericho, marched through the Red Sea as by dry ground, and wrought many other miracles. (Hebrews chapter 11 contains quite a list!)

Take God's promises and march straight through any difficulty, saying like the saints of old, "I'm determined that nothing shall cheat me out of what God has promised me in His Word!"

Pray through, my friend, with this fixed determination that you're not going to give up. There are many reasons why God does not always answer immediately or in the way we expect, but He does eventually answer every prayer that's prayed in full faith. Do you want your prayers answered badly enough to keep praying until God assures you He's going to answer? Then you won't be disappointed, because God is still on the throne, and prayer *does* change things! •

HOW BADLY DO YOU WANT YOUR PRAYER ANSWERED?

THE BEST YOU CAN DO THING FOR OTHERS

GOD HAS HIS REASONS for allowing problems in life, and one of the main reasons is to teach us to pray. He lets us come to the end of our rope, the end of our strength and what we think we can do to solve the problem at hand, so we will realize that *He* is the One who has got to do it and then pray for *Him* to work, by His power.

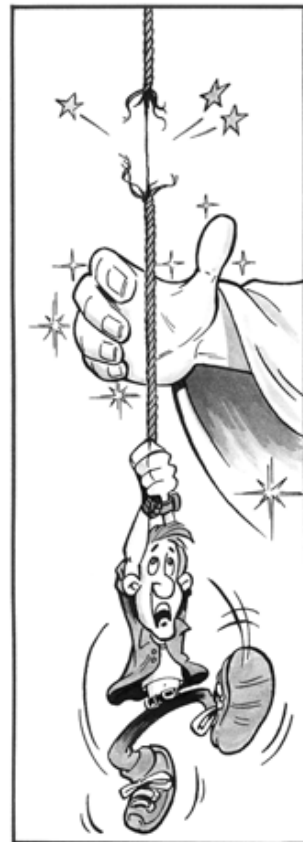
If there's something we can do to help the situation and we ask Him what that is and how to go about it, He will show us and help us do it. But in the end, the thing that will help more than anything and without which all our labors are incomplete is prayer—to pray for *Him* to do the work in the *spirit*.

He's the only One who can change hearts and minds. He's the only One who can bring people to the point where they're willing to change or do whatever's necessary to make progress or fix the problem. So the best thing we can do to help people in problem situations is to pray for them. We can't do the miracle that's needed, but the Lord can. Our prayers move His hand and make things happen in the spiritual realm that change things in our physical realm. Praying for the person or situation not only helps to set things up for the miracle

to happen, but it gives us peace of mind that we've done the best thing we could possibly do. When we commit things to the Lord in prayer, then we can trust that whatever happens is in His hands and under His control.

People don't fully realize how important prayer is, especially people who are by nature accomplishment oriented. It's all the harder for them to pray and not always be trying to do something in the physical. We need to understand and believe that only God can work in the spirit to change people and situations, and the best thing we can do to help God help others is to pray for them. If we don't pray, He often has to wait before He can bring about the needed change. His Word says, "You do not have because you do not ask" (James 4:2). Prayer is a very mysterious spiritual phenomenon. It's impossible to fully understand how the Lord chooses to work, how He chooses to answer prayer, why some prayers are answered quicker than others, or why He does an obvious miracle in one situation and not in another. We can't expect to know everything about God's business, but we can be sure that we have His ear and that our prayers have a big effect. •

**People don't
fully realize
how important
prayer is**



BY DAVID BRANDT BERG

THE FOLLOWING IS FROM A TALK RANDY MEDINA GAVE TO A GROUP OF FRIENDS FOUR YEARS AFTER BEING DIAGNOSED WITH LATE-STAGE CIRRHOSIS OF THE LIVER—THE RESULT OF HAVING CONTRACTED HEPATITIS C ABOUT 30 YEARS EARLIER—AND ABOUT TWO AND A HALF YEARS AFTER RECEIVING A LIVER TRANSPLANT.

The love gift of prayer

BY RANDY MEDINA

I SORT OF LIVE IN A BUBBLE NOW. Over the past four years, I've spent a total of one year and three months in hospitals. My immune system is shot, so I can't be around anybody that's sick. If I come down with even a slight fever, I have to go back to the hospital. I tire easily and need a lot of care. Every morning I pray, "Lord, keep me another day." But I'm happy to be alive! Even if the Lord never heals me completely, I'm happy.

That hasn't always been the case, though. There have been times since I've been sick when I told Jesus I couldn't take the pain any longer, times when I prayed, "Lord, please take me home to Heaven." But here I am! I don't know what the Lord has in store for me, but He must have more for me to do because I'm still here. I also know I'm still here because of the prayers of others.

I can't have many visitors, but I do get a lot of phone calls and email, mostly from people who are praying for me. At one point I started receiving phone calls and email from people all over the country—people I didn't even know. Someone would phone and say, "I'm calling for the prayer chain in Pomona, California. We just want to let you know that we're praying for you," or I'd get an email saying, "Our prayer chain here in Chicago is praying for you." *Who are these people, I wondered. And how do they know about me?*

I found out later that my brother had started asking everyone he could think of to pray for me, and it spread from there. Every time he knew my condition had taken a turn for the worse, he would first phone the nearest community of The Family and ask that they put an updated prayer request for me on The Family's worldwide prayer list.

Then he would phone a church or two, asking them to also pray for me. Before long, the whole country was praying for me, as well as members from The Family all around the world.

My brother has organized another prayer chain himself. Every time he meets people who say they believe in prayer, he asks if they want to be part of a prayer chain for me. If they say yes, he gets their phone number or email address and adds them to his list. Whenever I'm especially in need of prayer, he calls all these people or sends them an email note, and they pray for me.

Knowing that friends and even strangers are praying for me has not only kept me alive these last four years, but their love in doing that for me helps me feel the Lord's love in a very special way. •

RANDY MEDINA WENT TO HIS HEAVENLY REWARD IN MARCH 2004, AFTER PERSONALLY WINNING MANY HUNDREDS TO JESUS AND SERVING HIM FAITHFULLY IN THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL FOR OVER 30 YEARS.

Intercessory prayer

How it works

what it can do

WHEN YOU OPERATE IN THE REALM OF FAITH, YOU'RE OPERATING IN THE SPIRIT WORLD WHERE THE IMPOSSIBLE TAKES PLACE.

WHEN JESUS' DISCIPLES ASKED HIM to teach them to pray, He taught them the prayer that we now know as the Lord's Prayer. Just 66 words long, it is possibly the most comprehensive and powerful general prayer ever. There is a lot more to learn, however, about this marvelous and mysterious thing called prayer, and Jesus is more than happy to answer our questions. Here are His answers, received in prophecy, to some common questions about how prayer works—particularly intercessory prayer, which is when we pray for others.



Q: I've heard it said that prayer isn't the least we can do for someone else, but the most. If that's true, how so?

Jesus: Prayer may seem a small thing. Usually it doesn't take much of your time and involves little physical effort, but if you knew the dynamics of prayer and the effect your prayers have in the spiritual realm, you would understand that prayer is indeed the greatest help you can be to another. People equate action with *doing* something. But they must realize that praying *is* action—the most efficient and powerful kind of action.

When you pray you're operating in the realm of faith. You're operating in the spirit world where miracles are born, where the impossible takes place. Sometimes you can be My hands or feet or mouth to help relieve the problem with physical action, but the greatest

work takes place in the spirit, and that's where your prayers come in.

Your prayers move My hand to work on behalf of the one for whom you are praying. I have promised, "Ask and you will receive" (Matthew 7:7). When you ask in faith, I not only bring about the desired results, but I do far greater things than you could possibly do yourself. It doesn't make sense logically, and it goes against human nature to not try to fix problems yourself when they arise, but the more you pray, the more you will see Me remove obstacles and change hearts and situations, and the more your faith in Me and the power of prayer will grow.

I'm waiting to move mountains on your behalf, so don't hold back. The needs that you and others have are great, but they

are not too great for Me. Let loose your prayers, and stand back and watch Me work. Your prayers and My power are an unbeatable force!

Q: Why do some prayers seem to go unanswered, particularly prayers for some of the most desperate situations?

Jesus: There are a number of reasons why some prayers aren't answered immediately. Sometimes the conditions aren't yet right to bring about the best result. Sometimes the people involved need to learn lessons or grow in areas they wouldn't be able to if the problem were solved too quickly or easily. Sometimes it's due to a lack of faith on the part of those praying. But often it's due to a lack of desperation.

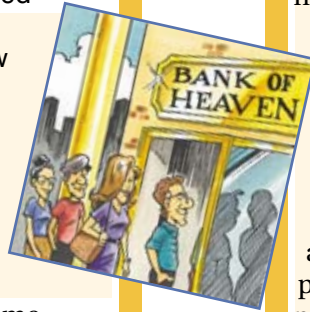
Prayers are answered in direct proportion to the intensity with which they are prayed. If you were trying to move a heavy object, you would summon all your physical strength. The same is true of prayer. The bigger and more "impossible" the problem, the more focused and fervent you must be in mind and spirit when you pray. Desperate situations call for desperate prayer.

Q: If You've promised to answer every prayer as You know best, does it really matter how many people pray for a certain situation? Isn't one person's prayer enough?

Jesus: Using the same analogy of trying to move a very heavy object, when the object is too heavy for you alone, even when you use all your strength, you call on others to help you. As you unite and push together in prayer, as you all direct your spiritual energy in the same direction, your prayers become that much more effective.

Q: Are both personal prayers—prayers by the person in need—and prayers from others needed?

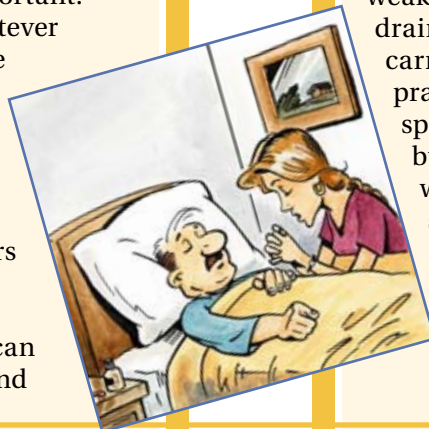
Jesus: Both personal prayers and prayers from others are important. When, for whatever reason, you are the only one aware of a particular situation and you're not able to call on others for support in prayer, your prayers alone can turn the tide and



help win the victory. There are times, however, when you need others to pray with you. It's reassuring to know you're not fighting the battle alone, but it's important that you pray as well, since personal prayer also wields great power.

Sometimes those who need My help aren't even aware that they do. They either can't see the problem, don't realize how serious it is, or don't know how real I am or how ready, willing, and able I am to help, so they don't turn to Me like they should. In these situations, others' prayers can set things in motion in the spirit and get things moving in the right direction. Often the person's own faith will eventually come into play, but in the meantime, the faith and prayers of others are vital.

Other times those who need prayer may be too weak physically or too drained spiritually to carry the burden of prayer alone. Their spirit might be willing, but their flesh is weak. If they are very sick or in great pain, for example, they may need others to help them pray. Or if they are strong in body but



PEOPLE EQUATE ACTION WITH DOING SOMETHING. BUT THEY MUST REALIZE THAT PRAYING IS ACTION—THE MOST EFFICIENT AND POWERFUL KIND OF ACTION.

their faith is at a low ebb, they also need others to pray with them.

The one involved in the battle is like a soldier in the midst of the fray. He is the one in direct combat, but his success also depends on the support of his fellow soldiers behind the line of battle. So it is with prayer. Other people praying are like reinforcements. The person in need can pray and I will answer that prayer, but when others pray too, it's doubly effective.

Q: How can I become more effective in my prayers for others?

Jesus: When a need is near and dear to your heart, when you are moved inside for a loved one in need or desperately desire for Me to intervene in a certain situation, then you pray fervently and frequently. And when *you* are moved, it moves Me to work on the behalf of the one for whom you are praying, or to rectify the situation. Conversely, when you are not personally touched by a certain need, it is easier for you to brush it aside and either fail to pray or pray halfheartedly.

Empathy makes all the difference, so ask Me to give you the gift of empathy. Then you will pray as though you were the one

suffering sickness, financial need, or whatever the problem may be. You will pray as though it were your child, your loved one, or your family that needs My miraculous intervention, and I will hear and answer.

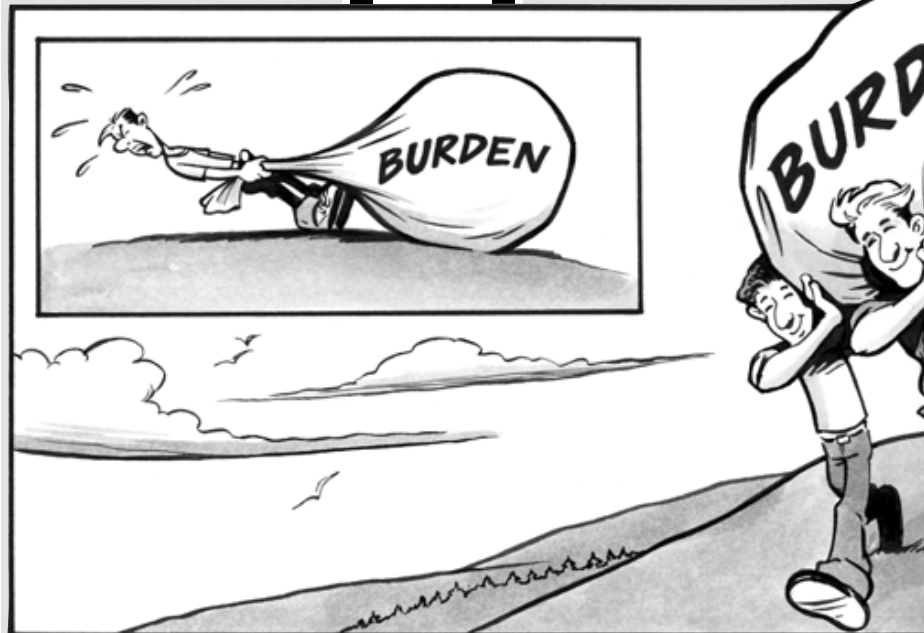
Q: Why is it that it often seems easier to have faith when praying for others than when praying for myself?

Jesus: Many people are limited in their faith when praying for something themselves. They may have great faith when praying for others, but when they have a need, they either feel unworthy of My help or are afraid of appearing selfish, so they

either don't ask or pray weak prayers. When someone else prays for them or their situation, it's often more powerful because the other person is able to pray with full faith.

Intercessory prayer works like a bank account that more than one person can deposit into and withdraw from. When you pray for someone else, it's like depositing into the account, which the person for whom you are praying can then draw from. As long as everyone is faithful with his or her deposits, there will be plenty in the account to meet any need that arises.

Q: Do our prayers for others have an effect even when we don't know enough



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about the situation to pray for You to take a specific course of action?

Jesus: When you express love and concern by praying for others, I can even answer requests that you haven't yet been able to put into words. Even when you may not know what to pray for specifically, I do. As the apostle Paul explained, I live to make intercession for you according to the will of God (Hebrews 7:25; Romans 8:27). As you beseech Me for others, as you express love and concern, as you acknowledge your dependence on Me and commit people and situations to Me, I will bring about the best

possible outcome, even if you can't see at the time what that may be.

Not knowing all the facts can sometimes work to your advantage, because the "facts" often undermine faith. The simple fact that overrides all others is that nothing is impossible for Me. Through your blind faith in standing on that promise and asking Me to intervene and do a specific thing, I am often able to move more speedily and do mightier miracles than if all I had to work with were the prayers of the one immersed in the problem, whose faith is hindered by the "facts."

Q: Intercessory prayer is mainly for the benefit of others, of course, but does it also benefit the one praying?

Jesus: Praying for other people is putting your love into action in the spirit. You're not only thinking of them and wanting to help, but you're *doing* something about it. Your love for them obliges you to call on Me for help, and I step in and do what you need done but can't do yourself.

One of the most beautiful results of praying for other people is that it helps you become less self-centered. It helps

you form the good habit of thinking more of others than yourself. It gives you more love for those for whom you're praying and others in general, because it focuses on their needs.

Intercessory prayer is largely a sacrificial service. It is taking your time and giving it to others by petitioning Me for their needs. It's unselfish giving, but there are also dividends for the one praying. "Give, and it will be given to you" (Luke 6:38). As you pour out your heart to Me in prayer for others and their situations, I will in turn care for you. That's My rule in giving—the more you give, the more you will receive.

It will also strengthen your faith in My ability to answer prayer and help you learn to depend more on Me. Your heart is touched, you want to help others in need, you ask Me to come to their rescue, and when I do, it encourages your spirit and increases your faith.

You will also become more Christlike—more filled with My love and more in tune with Me—so people will see more of Me in you.

Praying for others will have a positive effect on you in every way. Your blessings will be numerous! •





We are also given the **assurance** that during the Great Tribulation “the people who know their God shall be **strong**, and carry out great **exploits**.”



A VISION OF THE FUTURE

a vision of the future

BY JOSEPH CANDEL

In 552 BC, the HEBREW PROPHET DANIEL foretold a war between the Greeks and Persians, and its outcome. Part 1 of this article, which appeared in last month's *Activated* magazine, explained how that prophecy was fulfilled in 333 BC, exactly as predicted.

Other parts of this same vision received by Daniel foretold other events farther in the future, events of the Endtime, the time in which we are now living. This is where we now resume our study of Daniel chapter 8.

Vision: “Out of one of them [the kingdoms into which Alexander the Great's empire fractured after his death] came a little horn which grew exceedingly great toward the south, toward the east, and toward the Glorious Land” (Daniel 8:9).

Interpretation: The angelic messenger who showed Daniel this vision made it unmistakably clear that this “little horn” was to arise in the time of the end by saying so three times—in verses 17, 19, and 23.

We know from a number of other scriptures, such as Daniel 7:8, that this “little horn” is the soon coming world dictator known as the Antichrist. There is much in the Bible describing this man and his rule and reign, even though his reign is short—only seven years (Daniel 9:27).

“In the latter time of their kingdom [the Endtime, just prior to Jesus' return], when the transgressors have reached their fullness, a king shall arise, having fierce features, who understands sinister schemes” (Daniel 8:23).

At this point, where the Antichrist comes from is one of the great Endtime mysteries, but keep a watch on Egypt and Russia.

Here Daniel refers to the Antichrist as “a king having fierce features,” and in Daniel 11:21 as a “vile person.” In 2 Thessalonians 2:3,8, the apostle Paul calls him the “son of perdition” and “the lawless one” (or “the wicked one,” in other translations). In the book of Revelation he is the final embodiment of “the Beast.”

It’s not exactly clear in this passage or other scriptures which geographical part of Alexander’s empire the Antichrist will come from. Some people have speculated that he will come out of Egypt because of the three directions of his expansion—“toward the south [Africa], toward the east [the Mideast and possibly Asia], and toward the Glorious Land.” To Jewish prophets like Daniel, the Glorious Land could only mean Israel. The Scriptures also make it clear that the Antichrist will eventually invade Israel (Ezekiel chapter 38; Daniel 11:40–43).

In other passages of scripture, however, the Antichrist is referred to as “the king of the north” (Ezekiel 38:14–16; Daniel 11:40–43). In Ezekiel 38:2, the Antichrist is called “Gog” of the land of Magog. He is the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and the place called Tubal, where he is said to come from. “Ros” or “Rus” is the name of the people who settled around the Volga River and from which the word “Russia” is derived.

How can the Antichrist possibly come from Egypt, yet eventually come from the north—Russia? Perhaps he comes from Egypt or has some strong connection to Egypt, but rises to power in Russia.

At this point, where the Antichrist comes from is one of the great Endtime mysteries. Now we can see only the shadows and shapes of things to come, but keep a watch on Egypt and Russia.

Vision: “And it [the little horn, the Antichrist] grew up to the host of heaven; and it cast down some of the host and some of the stars to the ground, and trampled them” (Daniel 8:10).

Interpretation: Because of the context and what we know from other scriptures, it’s clear that this is talking about the Antichrist’s campaign to wipe out true believers in God—the “holy people” of verse 24—during the last half of his rule, the 3½-year period known as the Great Tribulation.

“His power shall be mighty, but not by his own power; he shall destroy fearfully, and shall prosper and thrive; he shall destroy the mighty, and also the holy people” (Daniel 8:24).

In Revelation 12:9 and 13:2 we find out that the Antichrist gets his power from Satan. We also know from other scriptures that the Antichrist will speak “great things and blasphemies” (Revelation 13:5), try to change times and laws (Daniel 7:25), officially abolish all religion except worship of himself, persecute believers of all faiths (2 Thessalonians 2:3–4), corrupt with flattery (Daniel 11:32), and make war with the people of God and overcome them for 3½ years (Revelation 13:7).

It’s not *all* bad news for the followers of God, though. We are also given the assurance that during the Great Tribulation “the people who know their God shall be strong, and carry out great exploits, and those of the people who understand shall instruct many” (Daniel 11:32–33). The people of the world who hate the Antichrist’s dictatorship are going to be desperate for the truth, and those who know God’s Word are going to teach and encourage millions. In spite of all that the Devil’s forces will do to try to stop them, millions of God’s children will keep going for God till the very end (1 Thessalonians 4:16–17).

Vision: “He [the Antichrist] even exalted himself as high as the Prince of the host; and by him the daily sacrifices were taken away, and the place of His sanctuary was cast down” (Daniel 8:11).

Interpretation: The Prince of the host (and the Prince of princes in verse 25) is either God or Jesus. 2 Thessalonians 2:4 confirms this where it says that the Antichrist “exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped.”

“By him [the Antichrist] the daily sacrifice was taken away.” “Daily sacrifice” refers to ritual animal sacrifices carried out in the Jewish Temple in Jerusalem, a practice that has been suspended since the second Temple was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD. It appears, however, that some time between now and the Great Tribulation, the Jews will finally be able to rebuild their Temple on Jerusalem’s Mount Moriah and reinstitute animal sacrifices on its altar. But in the middle of the Antichrist’s seven-year reign, when he exalts himself above all religions, he will bring an end to this practice (Daniel 9:27; 11:31; Matthew 24:15,21).

Then, in that holy place, the Temple area, the world government will erect some kind of “living” (probably computer-controlled) image of the Antichrist. This is the “abomination of desolation” that both Daniel and Jesus spoke of (Daniel 11:31; 12:11; Matthew 24:15). The Antichrist will then demand that the whole world worship his image or be killed (Revelation 13:14–18).

“The place of His sanctuary was cast down.” It doesn’t seem that the Antichrist is going to destroy the Temple, but rather occupy it himself, because we are told in 2 Thessalonians 2:4 that he “sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” So “cast down” apparently means that the Temple will no longer be sacred; it will be desecrated or “polluted” (Daniel 11:31) by the abominable Image of the Beast.

**The Antichrist
and his
forces will be
vanquished
once and for all
in the Battle of
Armageddon.**

Vision: “Because of transgression, an army was given over to the horn to oppose the daily sacrifices; and he cast truth down to the ground. He did all this and prospered” (Daniel 8:12).

Interpretation: “Army” (or “host,” as the King James Version [KJV] renders it) may refer to the Antichrist’s followers in general, not only his army or police force (Daniel 11:31).

“And he cast truth down to the ground.” The ultimate fulfillment of this will be when the Antichrist demands that the whole world worship him as God, but anti-God, anti-Christ propaganda is already rampant in the world today, particularly in the mass media. “As you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour [Endtime]” (1 John 2:18).

“Through his cunning he shall cause deceit (or “craft” in the KJV) to prosper under his rule; and he shall exalt himself in his heart. He shall destroy many in their prosperity. He shall even rise against the Prince of princes; but he shall be broken without human means” (Daniel 8:25).

The Antichrist is going to be full of pride and try to exalt himself above every other world leader that ever lived, even claiming to be God (Daniel 11:36–37; 2 Thessalonians 2:4).

“He shall even rise against the Prince of princes: but he shall be broken without human means.” The Antichrist is even going to try to fight God, Jesus Christ, and the army of Heaven (Revelation 17:12–14), but the Antichrist and his forces will be totally vanquished in the Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 16:12–16; 19:11–21). That will be the unhappy end of them, but the happy beginning for all who have received and sided with Jesus! •

If you haven’t yet met Jesus or received His forgiveness and gift of eternal life, you can do so right now by praying the following:

Thank You, Jesus, for paying the price for my mistakes and wrongs, so I can be forgiven. I ask You now, dear Jesus, to please come into my heart, forgive me, and give me Your gift of eternal life. Amen.

PRAYER

POWER

FEEDING READING

There is great power in united prayer.

Matthew 18:19–20
Acts 1:13–14
Acts 4:23–31
Acts 12:12

Sometimes it's best to pray in private.

Matthew 6:6
Mark 1:35
Mark 6:46
Luke 5:16

Sometimes it's necessary to "watch" in prayer.

Matthew 26:40–41
Luke 6:12
Acts 12:5
Ephesians 6:18

Cultivate the habit of praying always, about everything.

1 Chronicles 16:11
Proverbs 3:6
Luke 18:1
1 Thessalonians 5:17

Fervent, wholehearted prayer gets optimum results.

Jeremiah 29:13
Lamentations 2:19
Luke 22:44
Hebrews 4:16
James 5:16b

Be persistent.

Genesis 18:23–32
Genesis 32:24–28
Luke 11:5–10
Luke 18:1–8a
Ephesians 6:18

Challenge God to keep His word and answer prayer.

2 Kings 2:14
Isaiah 45:11b

Do you often forget to pray, or don't know where to start or how to go about it when you do remember? It takes a while for prayer to become a habit, but it's a habit that's worth cultivating because it can solve so many problems—sometimes before they happen. If your prayer times need a jump-start, these tips should help.

Keep a prayer list.

Whenever you become aware that someone or some situation needs prayer, write it down. Carry your list with you, put it in yoWur notebook or agenda, or post it somewhere you'll be sure to see it at a good time. Then, as each prayer is answered, thank the Lord and mark that item off your list.

Establish regular prayer times.

Regularity is a key to forming any good habit. Short times of prayer throughout the day may work better than one longer stretch, because shorter times are usually more doable. Plus the more often you pray, the easier it will be to form the important habit of praying about every decision and committing every activity to the Lord. Find what works for you and stick with it.

Have prayer promises handy.

God has made hundreds of promises to us in His Word, and He likes for us to hold Him to those promises. "Ask and it will be given you" (Matthew 7:7), for example. As you read and study the Bible, mark promises that stand out to you, or compile them into a list.

Find a place conducive to prayer.

When possible, find a quiet, distraction-free spot. God looks at the position of your heart, not the position of your body, so get comfortable enough to focus—but not so comfortable you fall asleep.

Begin your prayer by praising and thanking God for His goodness.

"Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving" (Psalm 95:2).

Tailor your prayer to the situation.

Some situations call for longer, more fervent, or more frequent prayer than others. It's always important to be specific and definite.

Join forces.

Pray with others when possible, or ask others to pray separately for the need at hand. It can be humbling to pray with others if you're not accustomed to doing so, but you'll soon find that it's as inspiring and faith-building as it is effective.



How faith works

**FROM
JESUS
WITH
LOVE**

If faith no larger than a mustard seed can move a mountain (Matthew 17:20), you figure that your faith must be small indeed, because your prayers seem to go unanswered. That can be disheartening, I know, but it shouldn't stop you from asking Me for a miracle when you need one.

There are a couple of things you should know about faith: First, it's not something you can earn or muster up yourself, but it's a gift from your heavenly Father. Second, like a muscle, faith needs nourishment and exercise to grow. That spiritual nourishment comes from reading and absorbing God's Word. You exercise your faith by acting on it. So nourish and put your faith to work daily through your prayers and actions.

You don't have to wait till you feel you have strong faith to begin receiving My help, though. If you need results now but feel you don't have enough faith to warrant them, ask Me to increase your faith. Be like the man in the Bible who begged Me to heal his son, who could not hear or speak. The man had every reason to doubt that things could ever be different, and he did. He knew that his faith was weak, so when I asked him if he believed I could heal his son, he replied, "Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief." The moment he confessed his inadequacy and asked for My help, he received both faith and the miracle—his son was instantly healed!