

THE PARABLE OF THE UNJUST JUDGE

BIBLE TEXT : Luke 18:1-8

LESSON 180 Senior Course

MEMORY VERSE: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:7).

BIBLE TEXT in King James Version

Luke 18:1-8

¹ And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint;

² Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

³ And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

⁴ And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

⁵ Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

⁶ And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

⁷ And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?

⁸ I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

BIBLE REFERENCES:

I Admonition to Pray

1 The parable of the unjust judge, and similar cases, were told by Jesus to illustrate the great importance of prayer, Luke 18:1-8;

Luke 11:5-13

⁵ And he said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves;

⁶ For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

⁷ And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give thee.

⁸ I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him, because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth.

⁹ And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

¹⁰ For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

¹¹ If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? or if *he ask* a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent?

¹² Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

¹³ 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?

Matthew 15:22-28

²² And, behold, a woman of Canaan came out of the same coasts, and cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, *thou* Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.

²³ But he answered her not a word. And his disciples came and besought him, saying, Send her away; for she crieth after us.

²⁴ But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

²⁵ Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me.

²⁶ But he answered and said, It is not meet to take the children's bread, and to cast *it* to dogs.

²⁷ And she said, Truth, Lord: yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their masters' table.

²⁸ Then Jesus answered and said unto her, O woman, great *is* thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour.

2 Persistency in prayer to God brings the answer to our petitions, Luke 18:2-7;

1 Kings 3:16-27

¹⁶ Then came there two women, *that were* harlots, unto the king, and stood before him.

¹⁷ And the one woman said, O my lord, I and this woman dwell in one house; and I was delivered of a child with her in the house.

¹⁸ And it came to pass the third day after that I was delivered, that this woman was delivered also: and we *were* together; *there was* no stranger with us in the house, save we two in the house.

¹⁹ And this woman's child died in the night; because she overlaid it.

²⁰ And she arose at midnight, and took my son from

beside me, while thine handmaid slept, and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child in my bosom.

²¹ And when I rose in the morning to give my child suck, behold, it was dead: but when I had considered it in the morning, behold, it was not my son, which I did bear.

²² And the other woman said, Nay; but the living *is* my son, and the dead *is* thy son. And this said, No; but the dead *is* thy son, and the living *is* my son. Thus they spake before the king.

²³ Then said the king, The one saith, This *is* my son that liveth, and thy son *is* the dead: and the other saith, Nay; but thy son *is* the dead, and my son *is* the living.

²⁴ And the king said, Bring me a sword. And they brought a sword before the king.

²⁵ And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.

²⁶ Then spake the woman whose the living child *was* unto the king, for her bowels yearned upon her son, and she said, O my lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it. But the other said, Let it be neither mine nor thine, *but* divide *it*.

²⁷ Then the king answered and said, Give her the living child, and in no wise slay it: she *is* the mother thereof.

Daniel 10:2

² In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.

Daniel 10:10-12

¹⁰ And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands.

¹¹ And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.

¹² Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.

- 3 We are to pray and not faint despite any opposition encountered, Luke 18:1;

Luke 21:36

³⁶ Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man.

Nehemiah 4:7-9

⁷ But it came to pass, *that* when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, *and* that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth,

⁸ And conspired all of them together to come *and* to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it.

⁹ Nevertheless we made our prayer unto our God, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.

1 Chronicles 16:11

¹¹ Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually.

Matthew 26:41

⁴¹ Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed *is* willing, but the flesh *is* weak.

Ephesians 6:18

¹⁸ Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

1 Thessalonians 5:17

¹⁷ Pray without ceasing.

II The Prayer of Faith

- 1 Persistency in prayer must be coupled with faith that God can and does hear our prayer, and will answer, Luke 18:3;

John 4:46-53

⁴⁶ So Jesus came again into Cana of Galilee, where he

made the water wine. And there was a certain nobleman, whose son was sick at Capernaum.

⁴⁷ When he heard that Jesus was come out of Judaea into Galilee, he went unto him, and besought him that he would come down, and heal his son: for he was at the point of death.

⁴⁸ Then said Jesus unto him, Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.

⁴⁹ The nobleman saith unto him, Sir, come down ere my child die.

⁵⁰ Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way.

⁵¹ And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told *him*, saying, Thy son liveth.

⁵² Then enquired he of them the hour when he began to amend. And they said unto him, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him.

⁵³ So the father knew that *it was* at the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house.

Matthew 8:2-3

² And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.

³ And Jesus put forth *his* hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed.

Matthew 8:5-10

⁵ And when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto him a centurion, beseeching him,

⁶ And saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented.

⁷ And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him.

⁸ The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed.

⁹ For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this *man*, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth *it*.

¹⁰ When Jesus heard *it*, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

Matthew 21:18-22

¹⁸ Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

¹⁹ And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away.

²⁰ And when the disciples saw *it*, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

²¹ Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily I say unto you, If ye have faith, and doubt not, ye shall not only do this *which is done* to the fig tree, but also if ye shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; it shall be done.

²² And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

1 John 5:14-15

¹⁴ And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

¹⁵ And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

2 Jesus asked the question, "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8;

Matthew 24:9-13

⁹ Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake.

¹⁰ And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another.

¹¹ And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many.

¹² And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold.

¹³ But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.

Matthew 24:24

²⁴ For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

1 Thessalonians 5:1-8

¹ But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you.

² For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.

³ For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.

⁴ But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.

⁵ Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness.

⁶ Therefore let us not sleep, as *do* others; but let us watch and be sober.

⁷ For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that be drunken are drunken in the night.

⁸ But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation.

Hebrews 10:23-25

²³ Let us hold fast the profession of *our* faith without wavering; (for he *is* faithful that promised;)

²⁴ And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:

²⁵ Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some *is*; but exhorting *one another*: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.

James 5:7-11

⁷ Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain.

⁸ Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.

⁹ Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.

¹⁰ Take, my brethren, the prophets, who have spoken in the name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction, and of patience.

¹¹ Behold, we count them happy which endure. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.

NOTES:

Pray and Not Faint

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint"; that was the advice of Jesus. From this advice we understand that it is necessary and urgent that we pray much; and when praying, that we do not tire and faint.

The truth is that prevailing prayer is the hardest kind of work. It is work that the flesh never seems to accustom itself to, and work to which the spirit and soul of man must be trained with much discipline and effort. Yet there is no labor from which a man will reap richer dividends. The soul that prays the prayer of faith is drinking from the Fountain of Living Waters, Jesus Christ, and shall receive eternal life for *h/s* efforts.

It was to encourage men to prevail, and to persist in prayer until they received an answer from God, that Jesus told the parable of the unjust judge. There was a widow who had been wronged. She desired justice, but, as is too often the case, because she was a widow she was unable to defend herself in her rights. Consequently she desired the judge who had jurisdiction over the case to carry out the function of his office in her behalf.

This judge was an unjust judge and feared neither God nor man. He cared not at all if his oath of office was upheld. Too many times do men who hold high political office use the authority with which they are vested to obtain for themselves illicit riches and gains, without regard for the people who suffer as a result of this selfishness. So it was with this man; he had no fear of reprisal from God or man, and as such was heartless to any pleas for justice that might be made to him. It was to him the widow made her plea that she be avenged of her adversary.

Reward of Perseverance

The unjust judge continually refused the widow her request. Having no other alternative, she persisted in her demands that he avenge her. Then, untouched by her need, unmoved by the duty of his office, without regard for public opinion of himself, and without fear of God, he decided that the widow was a continual disturbance to him; and for no more apparent reason than his selfish desire to be left alone, he granted her request. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily" (Luke 18:7,8). Such is the promise of Jesus that no prevailing prayer made to God shall go unheeded.

The widow had her petition granted on no other basis than her persistency in coming to the unjust judge. Therefore, if sheer persistency gained the widow the granting of her petition, how much more shall we have our requests answered when we pray to a righteous God!

Prevailing Prayer

We are fighting against spiritual enemies that do their best to impede, to block, to discourage, and to destroy all who seek God through the medium of prayer. The Bible bears ample evidence that the power of Satan, and evil in general, is arrayed against those who pray to God in faith. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. . . . Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians 6:12,18). "The whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John 5:19). This state of affairs coupled with the powers of evil are Jesus' reasons for stressing the necessity of agonizing, prevailing prayer to God until we receive an answer.

We are not only to pray but to persevere in prayer, for we shall surely become discouraged and quit if we are not determined to prevail with God. It has been the experience of all God's saints that at times they have had to agonize and prevail with God until the answer came.

Daniel sought the face of God in behalf of his people, in accordance with the will of God, but was obstructed in his prayers by Satan for a period of three weeks, until God gave him an answer (**Daniel 10:1-13** ¹ In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing *was* true, but the time appointed *was* long; and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision. ² In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks. ³ I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were

fulfilled. ⁴ And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel; ⁵ Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins *were* girded with fine gold of Uphaz: ⁶ His body also *was* like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude. ⁷ And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves. ⁸ Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. ⁹ Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. ¹⁰ And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and *upon* the palms of my hands. ¹¹ And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling. ¹² Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia).

Jacob once prayed all night through, until the break of day, and his thigh was thrown out of place with the intensity of his praying. Nevertheless Jacob persisted, and prevailed with God until he received an answer to his prayer (**Genesis 32:24-26** ²⁴ And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. ²⁵ And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. ²⁶ And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me).

Blind Bartimeus, a beggar, once cried aloud to Jesus as He passed by. The spectators around Jesus bade the beggar keep quiet; but he cried aloud the more, until Jesus stopped and granted his wish, that he would receive his sight (**Mark 10:46-52** ⁴⁶ And they came to Jericho: and as he went out of Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people, blind Bartimaeus, the son of Timaeus, sat by the highway side begging. ⁴⁷ And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, *thou* Son of David, have mercy on me. ⁴⁸ And many charged him that he should hold his peace: but he cried the more a great deal, *Thou* Son of David, have mercy on me. ⁴⁹ And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they call the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth thee. ⁵⁰ And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus. ⁵¹ And Jesus answered and said unto him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said unto him, Lord, that I might receive my sight. ⁵² And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way).

After the resurrection of Christ, two of His disciples met Him on the road to Emmaus They did not recognize Him, and began to tell Him of the happenings to Christ in the past few days. In their conversation He drew them out about their belief of Him When He assayed to go on, they constrained Jesus to tarry and abide with them, which He did. Their insistence that Jesus should tarry with them was the deciding factor that made Jesus stay and sup with them.

From these examples we are to learn that we should pray with such determination and perseverance that no difficulty or circumstance will deter us from our desired end.

Evidence of Faith

After Jesus related the parable of the unjust judge for the purpose of encouraging men to pray, He asked the question: "When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

We know what the Bible definition of faith is: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). Faith is not an effervescent fantasy that no one can grasp, but is a factual and tangible evidence of God: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). This is what Jesus will be looking for in the hearts of men when He returns to earth again. Faith in God! Will He find it? We know from the Bible He will not find much faith.

"And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; but the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30).

Such will be the condition of the majority of the people in the world when Jesus comes again. They will have no faith in God, no regard for the teachings and principles of the Bible. Theirs will be only blind, selfish, and sinful lives. The preponderance of public opinion and men's ways will be a strong deterrent to many who would live godly in Christ Jesus. In those days, then, it will be only the one who has a great determination to keep his faith in God who will be able to pray with success.

That soul who is not fully persuaded in his heart that God is, and that God will answer sooner or later, will be unable to hold out against the pressure of sin in the last days. Do we have faith? Then we shall be praying to God every day. He that has faith prays because he believes God will answer his prayers. Our persevering prayer and faith are complementary, and we cannot have the one without the other.

"Men ought always to pray, and not to faint" is the admonition Jesus gave to all; and is the more for us in these days just prior to His return to earth again. God is able and willing to keep His people pure and holy if they will pray in faith, regardless of all unfavorable circumstances and obstacles that would hinder them in living Christian lives.

QUESTIONS

- 1 Why did the unjust judge answer the widow's plea?
- 2 Who is the Righteous Judge?
- 3 Who is resisting the prayers of God's people?
- 4 Why should we be persistent in praying?
- 5 Why will there be a lack of faith in men's hearts in the last days?
- 6 What two things are complementary to each other?
- 7 Define faith.