

Prayer And Faith

Job 21:15 [NIV] *“Who is the Almighty, that we should serve him? What would we gain by praying to him?”*

This disdainful remark was made by a wicked sceptic [v7]. The whole tone of the remark shows that it is meant to be rhetorical. The doubter believed the question to have no answer.

James 5:15-16 [King James] *“And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”*

Here is the formula for effective prayer. The little preposition “of” joins prayer and faith together.

People may, and often do, pray without faith, though this is not true prayer, but it is unthinkable that righteous people of faith do not pray.

Faith and true prayer are like two sides of the same coin.

The many benefits which faith brings to its possessors that are listed in Hebrews chapter eleven are also the benefits prayer brings when the two are linked.

Hebrews 11:3 [NIV] *“By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God’s command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.”*

By faith and prayer God reveals Himself as our Creator and Sustainer.

Hebrews 11:4 [NIV] *“By faith Abel offered God a better sacrifice than Cain did. By faith he was commended as a righteous man, when God spoke well of his offerings. And by faith he still speaks, even though he is dead.”*

By faith and prayer God accepts our service and sacrifice of our lives for others.

We also understand the salvation that the sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ [John 1:29, 36] brings to us.

Hebrews 11:8-10 [NIV] *“By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going. By faith he made his home in the promised land like a stranger in a foreign country; he lived in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city with foundations, whose architect and builder is God.”*

Through faith and prayer we receive guidance in this life and are given understanding of our inheritance with our Saviour Jesus Christ. [Romans 8:16-17]

Hebrews 11:13-16 [NIV] *“All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country of their own. If they had been thinking of the country they had left, they would have had opportunity to return. Instead, they were longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.”*

Through faith and prayer we are given a glimpse of the wonderful world tomorrow that God is preparing for His created children.

This is the hope we can hold on to through physical death.

It makes a wonderful study and meditation to continue to see what faith linked with prayer can bring to us as it did to all who are listed in this chapter of God's Word, the Christian Bible.

Hebrews 11:39-40 [NIV] *“These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect.”*

All who pray with faith are among those who continue this same list through every generation.

What profit is there in prayer?

Much, in every way.

Luke 18:27 [NIV] *“Jesus replied, ‘What is impossible with men is possible with God.’”*

Whatever God can do, faith can do and whatever faith can do, prayer can do when it is offered in faith.

Prayer engages the omnipotent God and brings Him into our human affairs.

Each generation has to prove all that prayer can do for and through believing men and women.

If we desire to have great faith we must put to work the little faith we have with sincere selfless prayer.

Note that I said *“selfless prayer.”*

Matthew 6:33 [NIV] *“But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”*

If our prayers are directed towards the bringing to others the understanding of what God has planned for all humanity, then all our physical needs will be provided.

Matthew 6:9-11 [NIV] *“This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread.’”*

Our worship of God and the coming of His Kingdom and His Will on earth should come before our request for daily physical needs.

Dare today to trust God for something small that would further His Will on earth, and we will eventually trust God for things that are bordering on miraculous.

James 4:3-4 [NIV] *“When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures. You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred towards God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God.”*

If our prayers are only directed towards our own needs we cannot ask in faith expecting to receive, because we are seeking what this world desires.

Philippians 4:11-13 [NIV] *“I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have*

plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.”

Paul learnt contentment, indicating that his prayers were away from himself.

Read and meditate on how God used such a man as Paul who expressed great faith in God and prayed to God with the right motive.

The world situation is such that nothing less than God can straighten it out. Let us not fail this world and disappoint God by failing to pray, “Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as in heaven.”