



# The power of individual prayer

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*Get alone with God. Be quiet long enough for Him to talk. Pray until you are prayed through and prayed out; until you have prayed about every problem. Then when God has settled your problems let Him give you the new vision. Stay in His presence until you can see things through His eyes until you can see what He wants you to see. He will speak to you about hindrances and obstacles that you never dreamt existed. He will show you what the problem is if you wait long enough. Therefore, don't be impatient at the delay but pray continuously. Delay is not denial. (Oswald J Smith)*

*"The prayer of a (one) righteous man is powerful and effective"* (James 5:16). Often people who pray alone because they are unable to join a prayer group, become dejected and stop praying because they believe that their prayers hardly make a difference. However, exactly the opposite is true. The accounts of prayer in the Bible are the stories of individuals who laid hold of God and He performed miracles in answer to their prayers.

Think about Abraham who prayed for posterity, Hannah who prayed for a son, Moses who prayed and the Red Sea opened, Daniel who sat in the den of lions, David who prayed when Saul was tracking him down, Elijah who prayed for fire from heaven, king Hezekiah who prayed for an added fifteen years to his life and Nehemiah who prayed that God would allow him to go and help his people. *The eyes of the Lord daily run to and from throughout the entire world to powerfully support anyone whose heart is fully committed to Him* (2 Chron. 16:9).

## **Note the following examples. May they increase your faith!**

- William Carey worked and prayed for seven years before he baptised the first convert in India.
- Adoniram Judson had been in Burma for seven years before he won his first disciple for Christ. Judson had seven fixed prayer times a day and his prayers greatly moved the nation. It changed the destiny of hundreds of thousand in that nation.
- Robert Morrison (missionary to China) worked and prayed for seven years before the first Chinese was converted.
- Robert Moffat had to pray and work and wait for seven years before he could see the first signs of the movement of the Holy Spirit in Bechuanaland (Botswana).
- Henry Richards had worked and prayed for seven years in the Congo (Zaire) before the first person was converted.
- George Muller began praying for the salvation of five of his friends. He prayed six years before the first one was converted; 11 years before the next one was converted; the third one took twenty-five years and he prayed nearly fifty years before the fourth one was converted. The last friend was only converted after fifty-two years... at George Muller's funeral.

- George Muller prayed without making any of his needs known to anyone. During his life he wrote down 50 000 answers to prayer. He said that God answered all his prayers. He supported orphans just by making his needs known to God alone.
- Elijah prayed and God withheld rain for three years and six months. He prayed again and God sent rain. Elijah prayed and God lit his offering with fire from heaven. He prayed and the people turned back to God.
- Hannah prayed that God would give her a son and He gave Samuel to her.
- King Asa called to the Lord when half a million Kushites advanced upon him and the Lord defeated the enemy.
- John Knox prayed and it is said that the Queen of Scotland broke out in cold sweat three times a day. It happened during John Knox's prayer times. In an encounter with the Queen, Knox once said to her: "Madame the sphere of my service supercedes the sphere of your service."
- Marianne Adlard was a bedridden girl. She had a burden for her congregation. She read about D.L. Moody of Chicago in a newspaper and prayed that the Lord would send him to their congregation. Eventually Moody came, preached and in the days that followed 400 new members were added to that church. The secret? Someone prayed: Marianne Adlard.
- Jonathan Goforth experienced a remarkable working of the Holy Spirit in Manchuria during the year of 1909. The secret? Someone was praying. Goforth visited London during that same year. He was taken to a crippled lady who was used by God in a remarkable way to intercede for others. During the conversation she asked Goforth to take a look at her notebook. She referred to three particular days during which she had a special burden to pray for his meetings. Goforth was overawed when he realised that those were the three days during which he became aware of the mighty working of the Holy Spirit in Manchuria.
- Hudson Taylor prayed and the China Inland Mission was founded. Millions of people in the interior of China were reached with the gospel for the first time by this organisation.

With all these testimonies fresh in our minds, let us not become despondent in our prayers, because *“The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective”* (James 5:16).