

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

Parables About Prayer

Last time...the Kingdom of God and the “days” before His kingdom...

Days of the Son of Man, Days of Noah, Days of Lot

Days before His 2nd Coming to earth

This time...Lessons in prayer (context: during those days)

Chronologically, Jesus is headed toward Jerusalem for the final time,
to suffer and die as the Lamb of God, the Father’s sin sacrifice

He will be

- despitefully treated, by Jew and Gentile
- mocked, by Jew and Gentile
- shamed, by Jew and Gentile
- given over to the greatest of all injustices

He will do so willingly,

- to do the Father’s will –
 - to save the lost
 - to make possible the reconciliation of fallen man to the holy God
- to the glory of His Father –
 - for His wisdom 1 Cor 2:6-8
 - for His power 1 Cor 15:50-58

With that context and with God’s perspective, we will be in Luke 18

v1 a parable unto them...always to pray:

In these days of the Son of Man, Noah, and Lot...these last days

Heb 1:1-2a God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in
time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last
days spoken unto us by *his* Son

men should pray and not faint

Who is the “them” to whom Jesus is speaking?

His disciples, to whom Jesus was speaking about the days of His 2nd Coming

The subject/lesson: Prayer, persistent prayer

- pray...to commune with God, to talk with the Father
- always...talking AND listening without ceasing,
not getting discouraged or weary and quitting because of the
difficulties of the times/circumstances

v2-3 a judge...a widow:
2 players in the parable

1. a judge

- one with authority, having the power of life and death
- unjust, wicked
 - had no reverence for God his Maker
 - had no respect for anyone
 - justice and truth are meaningless to him
 - cared only for himself, served only himself

2. a widow

- helpless
- at the mercy of the powerful and wicked

To this wicked and unjust judge come this helpless widow seeking protection
from those mercilessly persecuting her

She came...and kept coming

Her plea/prayer: very brief, simple, and direct, not long and “flowery”/eloquent
with no explanations of the circumstances (none needed)

v4-5 not for a while...weary me:

The wicked and unjust judge does not care in the very least about the widow,
he cares only for himself

So...for a while...he just blows her off

But she kept coming and coming, showing no signs of ever stopping

So...with his self-interest at heart and even boasting of his wickedness...

he “helps” the widow in order to get rid of her and to be done with this
nuisance

The widow wore the judge out – she never quit while he got weary and stopped
his unjust inaction

v6 Hear what the unjust judge said:

This is a parable, this is NOT an allegory,
a symbolic reference to equate one person/thing with another person/thing

The unjust judge must not be equated with the just God/Judge

We are to understand the principle, not the particulars,
not equating either the unjust judge or the widow with anyone

v7 shall not God avenge:

If a tirelessly persistent and helpless widow can wear out a powerful, wicked, and unjust judge so that he is willing to help her,
how much more will the Almighty, just, and righteous Judge help/protect His own children

- who are under attack in this world that hates Him and them
- who tirelessly, without ceasing, cry out to Him for help

though He bear long with them:

bear long: be patient with, longsuffering

Who is “them”?

1. His children...God is patient with their weaknesses and is longsuffering of their carnality (Gal 5:16-17, justifying their favorite sin and keep going around the same mountain) while He is conforming them into the image of His Son (Rom 8:29)
2. His (boastfully) wicked enemies...God is patient with their wickedness and longsuffering with their rebellion (Ezk 18:4, 32; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 Tim 2:4-5; John 3:16)

So much so that He will allow His children to suffer temporarily to eternally save the lost

- Stephen in [Acts 7:54-60](#)
- Paul in [Acts 16:19-34](#)
- Martyrs, all followers in [1 Peter 1:3-7](#)

Jesus is giving very important instruction to equip His disciples/followers, looking forward to the very difficult...and fruitful...years ahead before His 2nd Coming

v8 I tell you...speedily:

“Thus says the Lord”

God Who cannot lie and cannot fail WILL help and protect His children!
And He will do so speedily

We need God’s perspective on “speedily” vs man’s perspective (right now!!!)
The Almighty is working in the lives of innumerable people at the same time in every circumstance;
we cannot see how so we must have faith

He will do everything in the perfect time with perfect wisdom for His perfect eternal will

In the meantime, we are instructed (90 times in Scripture)

- to “wait patiently”, “quietly wait”. “endure”...as He is
- know that His mercy endures forever

when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith:

In the days before His 2nd Coming

- the last days
- the days of the Son of man
- the days of Noah
- the days of Lot
- the Day of the Lord
- Jacob’s Trouble
- The Tribulation – the wrath of God and the unhinged and unrestrained hostility of the world

will the faithful

- persist in prayer or will they get discouraged and give up (v1)?
- hold on to the very end, believing what God has said and not doubting that He does see/hear/care/act?
- have real faith in God and His proclaimed and sudden triumph over evil?

Do we have an example of faith and tireless prayer like this in circumstances like that? (wrath of God and unhinged hostility of the world)

John 18:33 – 19:16 where Jesus is headed

Prophetic Psalms/prayers of David...John 5:39

the Lord’s prayer during His Passion

Ps 38

the Lord’s prayer on the Cross (early)

Ps 40:11-17

the Lord’s prayer on the Cross (later)

Ps 22

v25 the great congregation in Paradise

Abraham’s Bosom (Luke 16:19-31)

the Lord’s prayer on the Cross (near end)

Ps 31

the Lord’s prayer/praise in Paradise

Ps 40:1-16

and after Resurrection

Jesus is our example, His Spirit dwells in us

We can have such faith because Jesus has such faith

So “we” can pray, endure, overcome because Jesus in us has/can!

Gal 2:20

With the faith and prayers of Jesus Christ in mind, we need to bear in mind

Ps 73:12-28

Now, another parable about prayer

v9 unto certain which trusted in themselves:

To whom is Jesus now speaking a parable about prayer?

To filthy rags (Is 64:6)

To the self-righteous, hateful Pharisees, who have apparently returned from their sidebar discussion about what Jesus meant in [Ch 17:20-21](#)

v10 Pharisee...publican:

Two men go to the house of God to pray, two men who are the same (sinners) yet as different as night and day (know it or not)

Pharisee: “holier than thou” man of God, disdainful of the “unholy” others

publican: Jewish tax collector for the Romans, a traitor in the eyes of other Jews

v11-12 The Pharisee:

Where do we suppose the Pharisee went in the house of God?

Front and center, as close to the presence of God as possible,
for he thought he was worthy of being there

There he stood and prayed –

He stood tall, proud, self-deceived, ignorant of the Word of God,
in disagreement with God

He “prays” boastfully of his goodness...
he is full of himself, filled with bluster
all this in his own eyes, compared to the despicable others

He “prays” judgmentally, in judgment of others,
blind to his own sin (e.g. Matt 5:27-28)

He “prayed” with himself...toward himself
a monologue, God is not listening (Is 59:1-2 is unchanged)
4x he says “I”; God is incidental to his prayer

v13 the publican:

As a stark contrast is the publican, hated by men and ashamed before God

He KNOWS he

- is not worthy
- is a sinner
- needs the mercy of God that endures forever

He

- is in agony...Ps 51-like
- offers no excuses for his sin
- is not boasting about anything
- is in complete agreement with God (one accord)
- cries out for his sins to be forgiven

His prayer

- is sincere, not pretentious or proud
- is brief, not eloquent or “flowery”
- is to God and is one God will hear

Is 66:2b to this *man* will I look, *even to him that is* poor and of a
contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word

v14 I tell you:

Thus saith the Lord

This man...justified:

Justified: forgiven, accepted by God

Which man?

The humble, broken, repentant publican,

Matt 5:3-6

Not the proud religious leader

The Pharisee did not confess his sin, was not repentant,
did not ask for God’s forgiveness,
did not receive God’s forgiveness, is still dead in his sin

His prayer is like faith without works/actions...dead

Lessons in Prayer

- Pray with persistence – it is always too soon to give up!
- Pray believing – God does hear/see/care/act!
- Pray with genuine humility, seeing Self as God does
- Need not pray long, “flowery” prayers, droning on and on and waxing eloquently
 - The mind tends to wander to carnal things
 - The self-righteous tend to pray this way
- Pray simply, conversationally (talking AND listening), without ceasing

Why prayers are not answered

- Sin (Is 59:1-2)
- No faith (James 1:2-8)
- Don’t ask or ask with wrong motive (James 4:2-10)

Let us examine our hearts