

4-28-19 Message **SPREAD IT BEFORE THE LORD**

This next week is national day of prayer week. We will be spending a little extra time in prayer this next Wednesday.

The National Day of Prayer was created in 1952 by a joint resolution of Congress and signed into law by President Harry S. Truman. In 1988, the law was unanimously amended by both the House and Senate to designate the first Thursday of May as a day of national prayer. President Ronald Reagan signed it into law on Thursday, May 5, 1988,

As we think about prayer this week, I thought it good to preach a message that I preached many years ago about the prayer of Hezekiah when he was going through a very trying time in the nations history. The armies of Assyria, and the mighty king Sennacherib had invaded the land and encompassed Jerusalem. It was during this most trying time in his life that he prayed to the Lord for deliverance and God heard his prayer and miraculously intervened.

I believe that prayer is the most powerful and neglected tool of the Church and Christians in general.

When Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.." He meant that and it still rings true today. Is there anything too hard for Jesus to do? He is still a miracle working God. He still has all power. He can do the impossible.

I remember years ago Mary Warner was going through terrible health problems, she asked me if I would re-preach the message. I could not find the notes to the message so I just remembered the text and the title of the message and preached it. It is, as far as I can remember the only message anyone every requested I re-preach.

The Text I preached from was Isaiah 37:14 so I will once again preach from this text:

Isaiah 37:14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

Isaiah 37:15 And Hezekiah prayed unto the LORD, saying,

Isaiah 37:16 O LORD of hosts, God of Israel, that dwellest between the cherubims, thou art the God, even thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth.

Isaiah 37:17 Incline thine ear, O LORD, and hear; open thine eyes, O LORD, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God.

Isaiah 37:18 Of a truth, LORD, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the nations, and their countries,

Isaiah 37:19 And have cast their gods into the fire: for they were no gods, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them.

Isaiah 37:20 Now therefore, O LORD our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art the LORD, even thou only.

Isaiah 37:21 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, Whereas thou hast prayed to me against Sennacherib king of Assyria:

Isaiah 37:22 This is the word which the LORD hath spoken concerning him; The virgin, the daughter of Zion, hath despised thee, and laughed thee to scorn; the daughter of Jerusalem hath shaken her head at thee.

Isaiah 37:23 Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voice, and lifted up thine eyes on high? even against the Holy One of Israel.

Isaiah 37:24 By thy servants hast thou reproached the Lord, and hast said, By the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the sides of Lebanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars thereof, and the choice fir trees thereof: and I will enter into the height of his border, and the forest of his Carmel.

Isaiah 37:25 I have digged, and drunk water; and with the sole of my feet have I dried up all the rivers of the besieged places.

Isaiah 37:26 Hast thou not heard long ago, how I have done it; and of ancient times, that I have formed it? now have I brought it to pass, that thou shouldst be to lay waste defenced cities into ruinous heaps.

Isaiah 37:27 Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded: they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up.

Isaiah 37:28 But I know thy abode, and thy going out, and thy coming in, and thy rage against me.

Isaiah 37:29 Because thy rage against me, and thy tumult, is come up into mine ears, therefore will I put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

Isaiah 37:33 Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it.

Isaiah 37:34 By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD.

Isaiah 37:35 For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

Isaiah 37:36 Then the angel of the LORD went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

Isaiah 37:37 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

Isaiah 37:38 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Armenia: and Esar-haddon his son reigned in his stead.

Here we have this account of one of the greatest trials Hezekiah ever faced.

Sennacherib was the world power of his day. He already conquered the northern tribes and took them into captivity. They conquered and subjected all the other nations around Israel. In fact secular historians uncovered a record of his exploits and translated his writings off of a six sided hexagonal stone prism. Referred to as Sennacherib's Prism..

It is inscribed with the following words:

"Fear of my greatness terrified Hezekiah. He sent to me tribute: 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, precious stones, ivory, and all sorts of gifts, including women from his palace."

This confirms the biblical account given in 2 kings 18:13-15, exact amount is confirmed on the stone pillar.

On Sennacherib's prism, he says this of Hezekiah:

"As for the king of Judah, Hezekiah, who had not submitted to my authority, I besieged and captured forty-six of his fortified cities, along with many smaller towns, taken in battle with my battering rams. I took as plunder 200,150 people, both small and great, male and female, along with a great number of animals including horses, mules, donkeys, camels, oxen, and sheep. As for Hezekiah, I shut him up like a caged bird in his royal city of Jerusalem. I then constructed a series of fortresses around him, and I did not allow anyone to come out of the city gates. His towns which I captured I gave to the kings of Ashod, Ekron, and Gaza."

Notice he never says he took the city which again verifies the biblical account.

Also mentioned on that Prism was Berodoch-baladam the king of Babylon who sent Hezekiah a present after he was recovered of his sickness and God answered his prayer to be delivered from Sennacherib's siege. (see II Kings 20:12)

**I. WHEN HEZEKIAH SPREAD HIS PETITION BEFORE THE LORD,
NOTICE WHERE HE TOOK THE LETTER AND PETITION
HE DID THIS IN A CERTAIN PLACE, GOD'S HOUSE IN PARTICULAR.**

Note how Hezekiah took the letter to the house of God and prayed before the altar. I BELIEVE HE SPREAD IT ON THE ALTAR BEFORE THE LORD.

1. He took his burden to God's house.

God's house ought to be a special place of prayer and supplication.

I love praying in this place and I am so glad that we have made our church a house of prayer.

We need to maintain an atmosphere of Holiness and prayer in this place.

Why didn't Hezekiah just pray in his house?
Why didn't he go out to the woods to pray?
Why didn't he go to a friend's house and pray?

For years God's people have found that the place that God's people have chosen to congregate has always been a special place of prayer for his people.

David, when he went to the threshing floor of Araunah, and sensed the power of answered prayer there, he said this is the place where I will build a house for the Lord. That became the site of the temple where Hezekiah took this letter of accusation and spread it before the Lord.

Solomon also prayed that God's ear would be attentive to the prayers made in the place continually. Jesus even declared that his house should be called a house of prayer (I Kings 8:29)

1KI 8:29 That thine eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place of which thou hast said, My name shall be there: that thou mayest hearken unto the prayer which thy servant shall make toward this place.

2. Notice: He took his Burden to the Altar of God's house.

The Altar is a special place of prayer and always had been a special place to pray.
The Altar is to be a special place of prayer.

In I Samuel:

Hannah prayed for a child at the altar and the Lord brought Samuel into the world.
Samson's Parents prayed for a child and received their answer.

When the angel appeared to Cornelius the Angel said, "your prayers are come up for a memorial before God.."

What great endeavor has ever been accomplished in the Bible without prayer?

Jesus started out his ministry by going into the wilderness and praying 40 days and nights.

The Altar as always been a special place of prayer for God's people.

II. HE SPREAD HIS IMPOSSIBLE PROBLEM BEFORE THE LORD.

God delights in doing the impossible.
No human way possible that Hezekiah could make it without the Lord.

Here he faces a world power.

God's people were only a remnant of what they used to be.

The nation is holding on for dear life held up in Jerusalem.

Note what the accusation that Sennacherib cast at him:

Isaiah 37:10 Thus shall ye speak to Hezekiah king of Judah, saying, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be given into the hand of the king of Assyria.

Isaiah 37:11 Behold, thou hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done to all lands by destroying them utterly; and shalt thou be delivered?

Isaiah 37:12 Have the gods of the nations delivered them which my fathers have destroyed, as Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the children of Eden which were in Telassar?

Isaiah 37:13 Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arphad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah?

Isaiah 37:14 And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the LORD, and spread it before the LORD.

There are so many people that doubt the ability of our God to do anything for us. They will try to discourage us from trusting in the Lord.

Don't be deceived they will say to you, "Your God is not going to help you.."

The accusation that many throw out at you is "God only helps those who help themselves.." I hate when people say that!

WE SERVE A GOD WHO IS ABLE TO DO GREAT THINGS.
WE SERVE A GOD WHO WE CAN TRUST TO DO GREAT THINGS.

It is not that God can't do great things for us.
It is that we never trust him to do great things for us.

Why don't we trust. Him.

What is that problem that is perplexing you? SPREAD IT BEFORE THE LORD.
What is it that is troubling you? SPEAD IT BEFORE THE LORD!

James 4:2 Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not.

John 16:23 And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.
John 16:24 Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

SPREAD IT BEFORE THE LORD.

III. WHEN WE SPREAD OUR PETITIONS BEFORE THE LORD. GOD WILL ANSWER OUR REQUESTS. IN HIS WAY.

Romans 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?
Romans 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Why does God bring these trials and difficulties before us?
Sometimes we would never pray fervently if we do not face problems.

The Bible actually says that we should press upon God in prayer.

Luke 18:2 Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man:

Luke 18:3 And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary.

Luke 18:4 And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man;

Luke 18:5 Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.

Luke 18:6 And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith.

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

Luke 18:8 I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?

Luke 11:5 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;

Luke 11:6 For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him?

Luke 11:7 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.

Luke 11:8 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.

Luke 11:9 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.

Luke 11:10 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened.

Luke 11:11 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?

Luke 11:12 Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?

Luke 11:13 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?

According to the Bible, God wants to answer our prayers.
God wants to see us rejoice in answered prayers.

IV. WHAT WE NEED TODAY IS AN OLD FASHIONED CALL TO THE ALTAR TO SPREAD OUR PETITIONS BEFORE THE LORD.

What problems are you facing this year?	SPREAD THESE BEFORE HE LORD..
What is your vision for serving God?	SPREAD THESE BEFORE THE LORD..
What impossible tasks seem to be set before you?	SPREAD THESE BEFORE THE LORD
What burdens are you carrying today?	SPREAD THESE BEFORE THE LORD..

Hezekiah went publicly to the temple.
Hezekiah knelt before the Altar.
Hezekiah spread this letter before the Altar.

We talk about having a day of prayer, in our nation. The theme for this year's day of prayer is "LOVE ONE ANOTHER.." That sounds like a great theme. But an even greater theme would be "Let's all Love God With All Our Hearts. How can we love one another unless we learn to love God? God is love! Love is of God. How can we love one another without loving God?"

4-28-19 Prayer Message **HINDRANCES TO PRAYER**

Intro:

John 15:4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me.

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

I. HOW DO WE GET OUR PRAYERS ANSWERED? WE DO SO BY LETTING CHRIST'S WORD ABIDE IN US? AND BELIEVING IT! Faith comes by hearing the Word of God.

The Power of Answered Prayer Is Wrapped Up In Understanding The Word Of God.

John 15:7 If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Jesus used an incident concerning a fig tree to illustrate the power of faith and prayer.

Matthew 21:18 Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered.

Matthew 21:19 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.

Matthew 21:20 And when the disciples saw it, they marvelled, saying, How soon is the fig tree withered away!

Matthew 21:21 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.

Matthew 21:22 And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Faith and Prayer Go Hand In Hand.

True Faith is developed as we hear the word of God and believe it.

Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

As we understand the word of God more, we also understand what to pray for more. As we walk in faith on a daily basis we gain favor with God and even the things we desire are things that will please and glorify Him.

Faith comes by hearing and by hearing the word of God.

II. PRAYING AMIS AN BE A HINDRANCE TO PRAYERS. WHAT IS IT TO PRAY AMISS?

James 4:3 Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts.

To pray amiss is to pray something that you want in the flesh, something carnal, something that pleases you and not God. Consume it upon your lusts. Our lusts are our carnal desires and worldly pleasures.

Sometimes it is not even our particular prayer list that will cause us to pray amiss. Sometimes it is just our ignorance.

As we pray contrary to the word of God and the will of God, we will not receive the things we pray.

Sometimes we pray contrary to the will of God not because of sin but because of ignorance.

Paul prayed three times to be healed but it was not the will of God for him to be healed. God spoke to Paul and told him it was contrary to his will for him to be healed.

How is it that we confuse our will and desires with the will of God.

Jesus prayed, not my will but thine be done. We don't often pray that prayer. We are like little selfish children, who want their way always.

NOTE:

II Corinthians 12:7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

II Corinthians 12:8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

II Corinthians 12:9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

II Corinthians 12:10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

When Peter tried to get Jesus from going to the cross He rebuked him and called him Satan.

Peter didn't want Jesus to go to the cross and die. Peter wanted Jesus to sit on the throne and be exalted. That was Peter's will. Jesus had to rebuke him for that. Peter was ignorant of the will of God.

Note what John Gill says about consuming it upon your lusts:

Verse 3. Ye ask, and receive not,... Some there were that did ask of God the blessings of his goodness and providence, and yet these were not bestowed on them; the reason was, because ye ask amiss; not in the faith of a divine promise; nor with thankfulness for past mercies; nor with submission to the will of God; nor with a right end, to do good to others, and to make

use of what might be bestowed, for the honour of God, and the interest of Christ: but that ye may consume it upon your lusts; indulge to intemperance and luxury; as the man that had much goods laid up for many years did, to the neglect of his own soul, [Luke 12:19](#) or the rich man, who spent all upon his back and his belly, and took no notice of Lazarus at his gate; [Luke 16:19](#).

III. NOT ONLY DOES LACK OF FAITH AND OUR OWN CARNALITY BECOME A HINDERANCE TO OUR PRAYERS BUT ALSO PLAIN OLD SIN CAN HINDER OUR PRAYERS.

Psalms 66:18 If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me:

Sins:

Rebellion: Like King Saul. It became a hindrance to his prayers

Bitterness and unforgiveness will hinder our prayers:

Mark 11:24 Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.

Mark 11:25 And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.

Mark 11:26 But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.

Unforgiveness and bitterness in our hearts will cause hindrances to our prayer.

Notice the warning to husbands about bitterness towards their wives:

1 Peter 3:7 Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life; that your prayers be not hindered.

Remember the sin of Achan caused God to curse Israel:

Some other sin:

Joshua 7:19 And Joshua said unto Achan, My son, give, I pray thee, glory to the LORD God of Israel, and make confession unto him; and tell me now what thou hast done; hide it not from me.

Joshua 7:20 And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done:

Joshua 7:21 When I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of fifty shekels weight, then I coveted them, and took them; and, behold, they are hid in the earth in the midst of my tent, and the silver under it.

Joshua 7:22 So Joshua sent messengers, and they ran unto the tent; and, behold, it was hid in his tent, and the silver under it.

Joshua 7:23 And they took them out of the midst of the tent, and brought them unto Joshua, and unto all the children of Israel, and laid them out before the LORD.

Joshua 7:24 And Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, and the silver, and the garment, and the wedge of gold, and his sons, and his daughters, and his oxen, and his

asses, and his sheep, and his tent, and all that he had: and they brought them unto the valley of Achor.

Joshua 7:25 And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? the LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones.

Joshua 7:26 And they raised over him a great heap of stones unto this day. So the LORD turned from the fierceness of his anger. Wherefore the name of that place was called, The valley of Achor, unto this day.

Notice David's prayer after he sinned

Psalms 51:1 {To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bath-sheba.} Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

Psalms 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.

Psalms 51:3 For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.

Psalms 51:4 Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

Psalms 51:5 Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Psalms 51:6 Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Psalms 51:7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Psalms 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice.

Psalms 51:9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.

Psalms 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Psalms 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.

Psalms 51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

Psalms 51:13 Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee.

Psalms 51:14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

Psalms 51:15 O Lord, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise.

Psalms 51:16 For thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: thou delightest not in burnt offering.

Psalms 51:17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Psalms 51:18 Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Psalms 51:19 Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

Because of the sin of Achan, the prayers of nation were hindered.

Because of David's sin his prayer life could have been hindered.

King Saul got to a point where God no longer answered his prayers because of his rebellion.

Sin can destroy our prayer life.

This Wednesday we have a special prayer service let us prepare for this by sanctifying our hearts to the Lord and making preparation.

Think about the power of prayer.
Think about the neglect in our life where we do not avail ourselves of this power.
Think about what God can accomplish if we just got a handle on this.
The good Lord help us to be a people of prayer.

Let me encourage you to come out to our special prayer meeting this Wednesday.