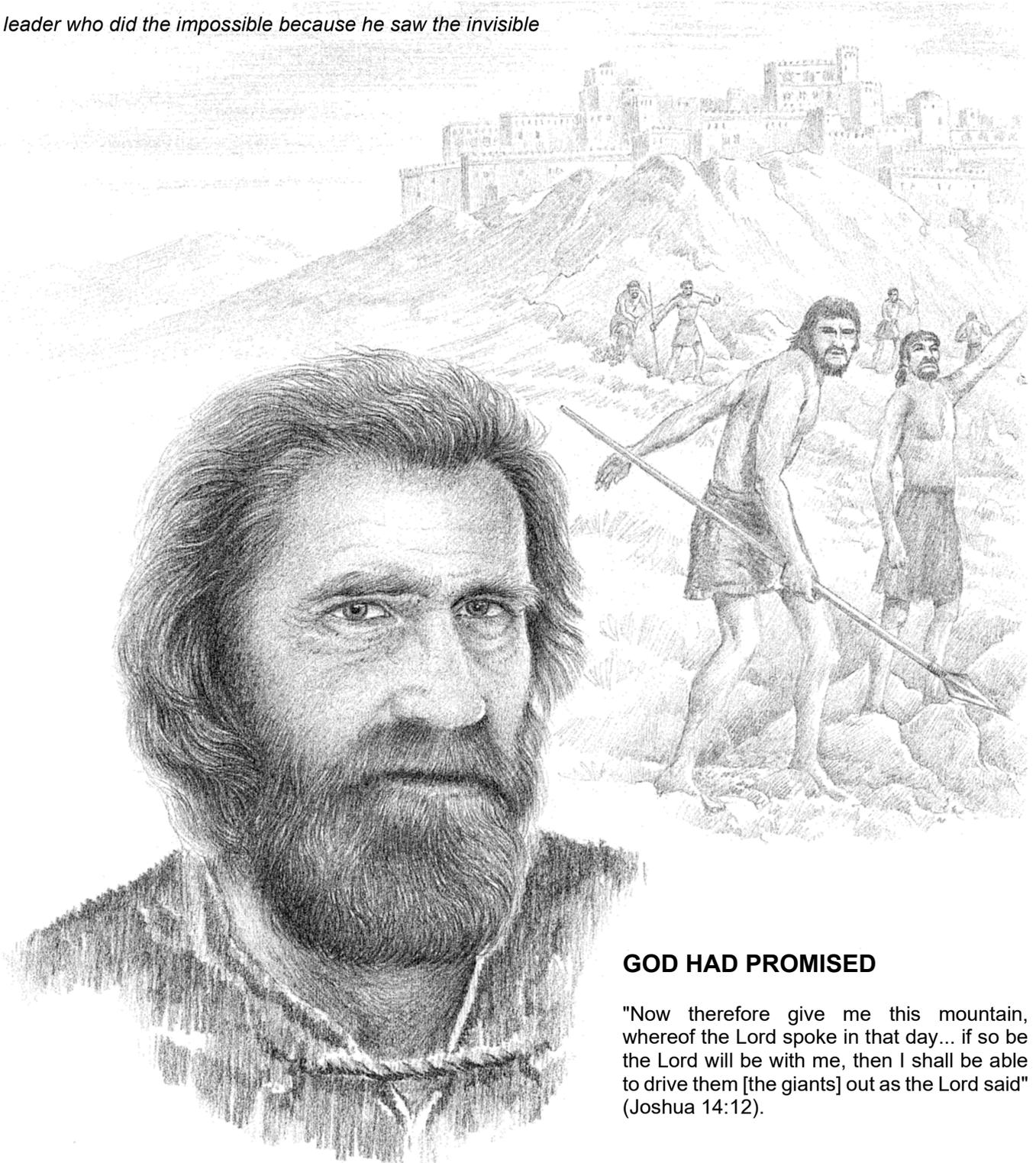


GOD'S BLESSING OF LEARNING THE PRINCIPLES OF PRAYING FOR MONEY

LESSON 18

CALEB

A leader who did the impossible because he saw the invisible



GOD HAD PROMISED

"Now therefore give me this mountain, whereof the Lord spoke in that day... if so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them [the giants] out as the Lord said" (Joshua 14:12).

GOD'S BLESSING OF LEARNING THE PRINCIPLES OF PRAYING FOR MONEY

PRAYING FOR THE INVISIBLE

"And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he hears us: And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him" (1 John 5:14-15).



GOD'S PROVISION REQUIRES SPIRITUAL WARFARE

"Hebron therefore became the inheritance of Caleb... because that he wholly followed the Lord God of Israel" (Joshua 14:14).



DO YOU KNOW HOW TO PRAY FOR FUNDS?

PERSONAL EVALUATION:

TRUE / FALSE

1. God promises that whatever we ask of Him in believing prayer we shall receive.
2. If we are in debt, we can expect God to provide funds supernaturally if we fervently pray for them.
3. One of the reasons that God may not answer our prayer is that we have broken a vow to Him.
4. In praying for provisions, God expects us to first display generous actions and attitudes toward others.
5. If God gives us needed provisions in answer to prayer, we can assume that our plans are in God's will.
6. When we give money to God, we should not expect money in return.
7. We can usually anticipate the people or circumstances that God will use to provide what we ask for.
8. Praying in the name of Jesus means that we end each prayer with the words "in Jesus' name."
9. Receiving unexpected provision from God is a by-product of first investing in the lives of others.
10. If God does not give us the items which we pray for, we can assume that His answer is "no."
11. An effective basis of appeal is to explain to God how our goals will be hindered if we do not receive that for which we are praying.
12. If we really want something from God for ourselves, we must earnestly desire it.
13. If we need provisions from God, we should only ask one time and then trust Him to work it out.
14. In this present day, it is not appropriate to use a "fleece" like Gideon did to determine God's will.
15. If we pray for one amount of money and God provides a lesser amount, we should continue praying for the remainder.
16. We demonstrate faith by moving forward on a program and then praying for God to supply the needed funds.

TOTAL CORRECT

EVALUATION SCORE:

16-15 correct =
14-12 correct =
11-8 correct =
7-0 correct =



BASIC PRINCIPLES OF PRAYING FOR MONEY

WE MUST BE IN "RIGHT STANDING" WITH GOD

God gives rain, sunshine, breath, and health to the non-Christian as well as to the Christian. However, the first words of the Lord's prayer must be true before we can expect God to hear special petitions. He must be *our* Father who is in heaven.

We become members of His family by faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for our personal salvation. Only then are we in "right standing."

OUR REQUEST MUST BE BASED ON THE NAME OF CHRIST

We do not expect to buy shoes at a restaurant, nor would we expect to find pizza sold in a shoe store.

When Christ taught us to pray in His name, He was referring to the character and the functions for which His name stands.

For example, He is the light of the world and in Him is no darkness at all. (See I John 1:5.) If we ask Him to bless a "shady" business deal He will have no part of it. Instead of blessing such a transaction, He will expose it, because that is what the light does to whatever it touches.

Our request for bread, however, is consistent with His name because He is the bread of life. (See John 6:35.) Christ the Son is the full expression of His heavenly Father.

WE MUST BASE OUR APPEAL ON GUARDING GOD'S REPUTATION

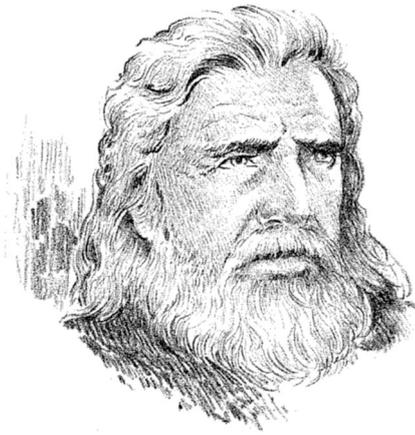
When we pray for money or provision, we must clearly explain to God how His reputation will be benefited if we receive it and damaged if we do not.

This is the meaning of the second phrase in the prayer which Christ taught: *"...Hallowed be thy name"* (Matthew 6:9).

God is committed to protecting His own reputation. When the Syrians lost a battle to Israel, their officers concluded, *"...Their gods are gods of the hills; therefore they were stronger than we; but let us fight against them in the plain, and surely we shall be stronger than they"* (1 Kings 20:23).

When they said that, God replied, *"...Because the Syrians have said, The Lord is God of the hills, but he is not God of the valleys, therefore will I deliver all this great multitude into thine hand, and ye shall know that I am the Lord"* (1 Kings 20:28).

When we pray for God to provide, we must base our petition on His will as it is clearly revealed in His Word. We must give Him an opportunity to provide before we move ahead with a financial venture. It is wrong to enter into a financial obligation and then ask God or others to provide the money so that God's reputation will not be damaged.



Moses effectively appealed to God not to destroy the nation of Israel because doing so would damage His reputation.

"Lest the land whence thou brought us out say, Because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them, and because he hated them, he hath brought them out to slay them in the wilderness" (Deuteronomy 9:28).

The real test of this appeal is whether we are desiring to protect God's reputation or our own reputation.

For example, if we buy a car that we cannot afford, God is not going to protect His reputation by providing the money for our payments. In fact, it will protect His reputation if we were to sell the car and buy one which we can afford.

THE AUTHORITY OF OUR APPEAL MUST BE GOD'S WORD

The correct application of God's name and character is understood by rightly dividing the Word of God. *"...For thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name" (Psalm 138:2).*

One of the names of Jesus is "Counselor". Thus, we can rightfully pray for counsel in making a business decision. However, the Scripture gives precise direction on how to get that counsel:

- *"...The commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes" (Psalm 19:8).*
- *"Hearken unto thy father that begat thee, and despise not thy mother when she is old" (Proverbs 23:22).*



Nehemiah successfully appealed to God and the king for all that he needed to rebuild the walls. He based his prayer on a clear promise in God's Word.

"Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commanded thy servant Moses, saying If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments... yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen... Now these are thy servants and thy people, whom thou hast redeemed by thy great power, and by thy strong hand" (Nehemiah 1:8-10).

OUR APPEAL MUST FULFILL THE CLEAR WILL OF GOD

"...Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10).

When we understand God's will in relation to our money, possessions, priorities, and attitudes, we will have a clear basis for effective praying.

For example, it is God's will that we move toward holiness of life. (See 1 Thessalonians 4:3.) However, if we ask for money or possessions that will hinder Godly living, we are not praying according to His will.

God's will is that we learn patience, and patience comes through tribulation. (See Romans 5:1-4.) It is also God's will that we give thanks in all things. (See 1 Thessalonians 5:18.)

Therefore, if we pray for God to remove a situation that He has designed to teach us patience, we are not praying according to God's will.



Daniel discerned that it was God's will for His people to return to the Promised Land. This was the basis of his successful prayer.

"...I Daniel understood by books the number of the years... in the

desolations of Jerusalem... Now therefore, O our God, hear the prayer of thy servant... O my God, incline thine ear, and hear; open thine eyes, and behold our desolations, and the city which is called by thy name: for we do not present our supplications before thee for our righteousnesses, but for thy great mercies. O Lord, hear; O Lord, forgive; O Lord, hearken and do; defer not, for thine own sake, O my God: for thy city and thy people are called by thy name" (Daniel 9:2, 17-19).

WE MUST SEPARATE BASIC NEEDS FROM PROJECT FUNDS

God has promised to provide for our food and clothing. However, sometimes a Christian will presumptuously enter into a major financial obligation and then expect God to provide the necessary funds for it. When God then provides any funds for food or clothing, this provision is looked upon as evidence of His approval of the entire obligation.

In reality, God is only reassuring that Christian that He loves him and that he is His child. Sometimes God's goodness is even for the purpose of bringing that Christian to repentance. (See Romans 2:4.)

Paul made a very clear separation between funds for personal living and funds for public ministry. We must do the same.

Paul established that he had the Scriptural right to receive money from his ministry. However, to avoid any criticism, he purposed not to receive those funds because he knew that his doing so would hinder the Gospel. (See I Corinthians 9:9-14.) He knew that it was God who called him to his ministry and that it would be

wrong to start a ministry for the purpose of supporting himself. Therefore, Paul wanted to avoid any hint of wrong motives.

WE MUST FOLLOW SCRIPTURAL PRINCIPLES IN OBTAINING FUNDS

God makes direct application of harvest laws to the obtaining of special funds. *"...He which sows sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which sows bountifully shall reap also bountifully" (11 Corinthians 9:6).*

- Sowing must come before reaping.

Paul invested his life and God's Word in the churches which he established. Years later they gave gifts to him so that he could continue his ministry with others. (See Philippians 4:10.)

Christ healed and taught the multitudes. As a response to transformed lives, various disciples ministered to Him from their resources. (See Mark 15:41; Luke 8:3.)

Before a Christian can expect financial support, he must have effectively sown in the hearts and lives of many people.

- Reaping requires patience.

There is a significant time period between sowing the seed and reaping the harvest. During that period the sower cannot be sure of the results. In fact, he goes through the death of a vision, yet he has hope of fruit for his labor. (See John 12:24.) *"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days" (Ecclesiastes 11:1).*

- The size of the harvest is determined by the quality of the soil and the quality and quantity of the seed.

A farmer's entire success depends upon his knowledge of when, how, and where to plant seed. Each harvest becomes his "report card."

Similarly, God has called and ordained us that we should go forth and bear much fruit, and that our fruit should remain. (See John 15:8, 16.)

Even a widow's support by the church is to be based on her wide sowing of ministry in the lives of others. *"Well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work" (I Timothy 5:10).*

WE MUST NOT LIMIT GOD'S WAYS OF PROVIDING

It is very easy for us to try to anticipate how God is going to supply the funds or items that we need.

The disappointing results will be a wrong focus on people, a temptation to show favoritism, and a resentment when we are disappointed by the people to whom we were looking for assistance. *"...He that follows after vain persons shall have poverty enough" (Proverbs 28:19). "My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons" (James 2:1).*

God's desire to supply through unexpected sources gives further meaning to His instruction in Luke 6:33-35: *"And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same... Do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great..."*

God wants our focus to remain on Him for all of our provisions. For this reason, He will often provide what we need through totally unexpected sources. If He provides less than what we ask, we should re-examine our needs.

IF WE GIVE MONEY, WE MUST NOT EXPECT MONEY IN RETURN

Many Christians have been disillusioned by giving an amount of money to God and expecting that He will give money back.

They have seen or heard that He did it for others, and since God is no respecter of persons, they assumed that He would also do it for them.

The problem is that they saw God's actions but did not understand His ways. God's way is to return to us in like kind as we have given.

By giving to God we do not sow money — we sow faith; therefore, we will reap greater faith. Faith is a spiritual ability to discern what God intends to do in and through our lives. By faith Noah built an ark, and by faith Moses rejected Egypt. (See Hebrews 11.)

It may be that God will provide funds, but we should not count on them. Instead of funds,

THE CHURCH THAT SURPRISED AN ENTIRE COMMUNITY



When a pastor and his wife came to serve a newly-formed congregation, they learned that a building committee had been formed and the congregation had already voted to borrow \$650,000 to build their first building.

The pastor encouraged the people to trust God to provide a church building without borrowing.

The people cautiously agreed to follow his plan. On a given day they totaled the amount which each family could give in cash.

The total was announced. It was only \$21,000! The people were discouraged; however, the pastor assured them, "God has tested our faith, now He will test our obedience."

A few weeks later, a visitor approached the pastor and asked, "Could you use a church?"

The visitor explained, "I bought some land and it has a very good church on it. If you can move it, you can have it free."

The cost of moving the church was \$21,000!

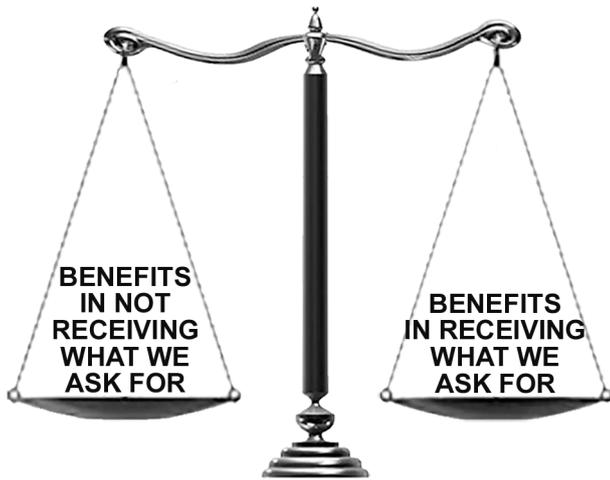
Not only was the congregation given a church building, but the entire community was given a powerful message of a miracle-working God.

He may provide the actual items we need, new or used. God caused the shoes of the Israelites to last for forty years, and He gave them manna every morning.

TO RECEIVE FUNDS, WE MUST NOT SEEK OUR OWN WILL

It is all too easy for us to use human effort to try to accomplish God's work. The net result is conflict and discouragement.

In order to seek God's will and not our own, we must balance our expectations.



When we have just as many reasons for thanking God for not receiving something as we have for receiving something, then we are free to allow God to perform His perfect will.



George Mueller founded many orphanages in England during the 1800's. His underlying purpose was to demonstrate to Christians how God could provide funds in direct answer to prayer. He received millions of dollars in this way.

GEORGE MUELLER'S METHODS FOR DETERMINING THE WILL OF GOD

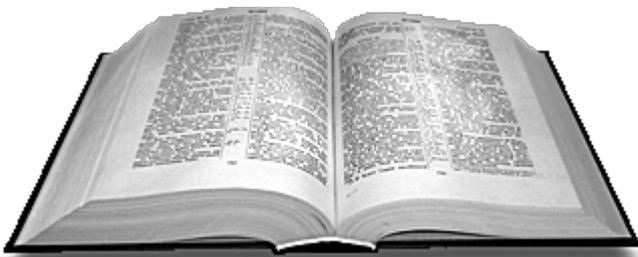
1. I seek to get my heart into such a state that it has no will of its own in a given matter. When you're ready to do the Lord's will, whatever it may be, nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome.
2. Having done this, I don't leave the result to feeling or simply impression. If I do so, I leave myself liable to great delusion.
3. I seek the will of the Spirit of God through, or in connection with, God's Word. The Spirit and the Word must be combined. If I look to the Spirit alone without the Word, I lay myself open to great delusions also. If the Spirit guides us, He'll do it according to the Scriptures, not contrary to them.
4. Next, I take into account providential circumstances. These often plainly indicate God's will in connection with His Word and Spirit.
5. I ask God in prayer to reveal His will to me.
6. Thus, through prayer, the study of the Word, and reflection, I come to a deliberate judgment, according to the best of my ability and knowledge.

If my mind is thus at peace, and continues after two or three more petitions, I proceed accordingly.

I have found this method always effective in trivial or important issues.

KNOW WHY GOD DOES NOT ANSWER PRAYER

REASONS	NAMES OF CHRIST	EXPLANATORY SCRIPTURES
1. Breaking a vow	Truth	<i>Ecclesiastes 5:4-6; Malachi 2:13-16</i>
2. Dishonoring parents	Counselor	<i>Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:1-3</i>
3. Secret sin	Light	<i>Psalms 66:18; Proverbs 15:29</i>
4. Pride	Lamb of God	<i>Psalms 10:17; James 4:6</i>
5. Lustful motives	Holiness	<i>James 4:1-4; Galatians 5:17</i>
6. Desiring to be rich	Savior	<i>Proverbs 28:22; Job 31:7-8</i>
7. Committing adultery	Love	<i>Proverbs 5:10; Job 31:9-12</i>
8. Unbelief	The Way	<i>Matthew 13:58; Luke 17:19</i>
9. Unforgiving spirit	Redeemer	<i>Matthew 6:14-15; Matthew 5:7</i>
10. Repaying evil for good	Prince of Peace	<i>Proverbs 17:13; Proverbs 28:10</i>



Personal Commitment to Pray Scripturally for Provisions

In order to glorify God and to strengthen the faith of my family, I will begin and maintain a prayer journal listing our requests on one side and God's answers on the other side.

I will also remove any known hindrances to God's answering prayer.

Date _____

Signature _____

WHO WAS SUCCESSFUL IN APPEALING TO GOD?

Match each statement with the right person.

1. I was able to save a whole nation because I reminded God that His reputation would be damaged if the nation was destroyed.

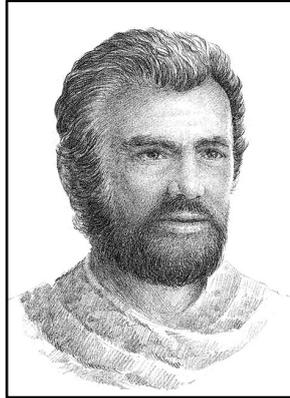
2. God answered my appeal for funds to rebuild. I based my prayer on a promise that I found in God's Word.

3. I prayed that God would prosper His people by bringing a remnant back to their promised land. My prayer was based on what I discerned from Scripture to be God's will.

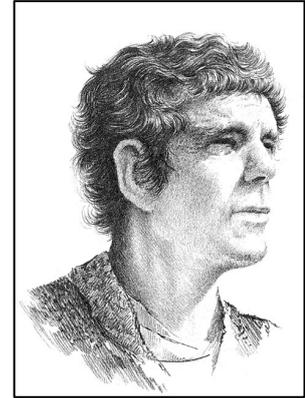
4. God answered my prayers for personal funds and ministry funds through the people in whose lives I had invested God's Word.

5. I asked the Lord about a need for paying taxes. He supplied the money in a very unusual way. He had me catch a fish and get a coin out of its mouth.

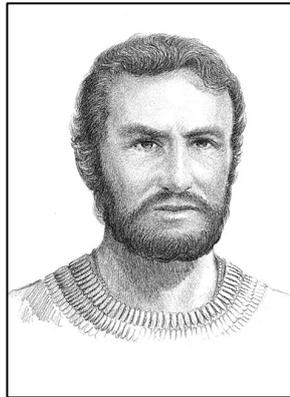
6. I appealed to God for a son. After many years, I came to the place of having no will of my own. Following this, God supernaturally gave me a son.



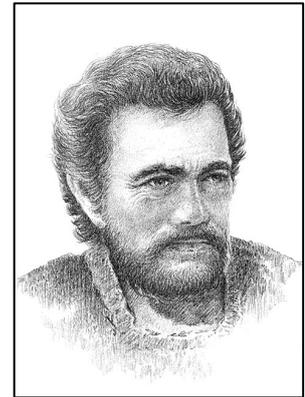
A. Daniel
(See *Daniel 9:2-19.*)



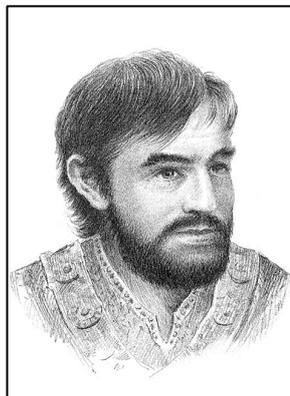
B. Peter
(See *Matthew 17:24-27.*)



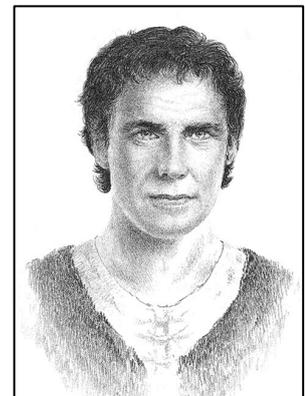
C. Moses
(See *Deuteronomy 9:25-28.*)



D. Nehemiah
(See *Nehemiah 1:6-10.*)



E. Abraham
(See *Genesis 21:1-8.*)



F. Paul
(See *Philippians 4:10.*)

WHAT DO WE LEARN FROM PRAYERS THAT GOD DID NOT ANSWER?

Match each prayer with the lesson it teaches.

1. **ESAU**

He prayed to recover the birthright which he had sold to his brother. "...*He found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears*" (Hebrews 12:17).

2. **BALAAM**

He prayed for permission to go with King Balak and curse the nation of Israel. God refused him on two separate occasions. (See Numbers 22.)

3. **KING SAUL**

He prayed for direction in battle, but God did not answer him; so he disguised himself and went to consult a witch. (See I Samuel 28:7-25.)

4. **KING DAVID**

He prayed for three years that God would end a famine. Finally, God told him that He could not answer his prayer because King Saul had murdered the Gibeonites. (See II Samuel 21:1-9.)

5. **THE RICH MAN**

He prayed that God would send a messenger to warn his relatives of the torments of hell. God explained that if they rejected the Scriptures, they would not believe any messenger. (See Luke 16:19-31.)

6. **PAUL**

He prayed three times that God would remove a thorn in his flesh. God explained that the thorn was given to him for a purpose. (See II Corinthians 12:7-10.)

A. A physical infirmity is not only a mark of God's ownership but a means of receiving more of His grace. God's grace is of eternal value because it provides the desire and the power to do His will. A humiliating infirmity conquers pride.

B. Before God answers prayer, full restitution must be made. The need for restitution may go back many years, even to the sins of others who preceded us.

C. God has provided clear warning through His Word. Those who reject the Scriptures harden their hearts to any further teaching from God. Even if He displays a miracle, those who reject the Scriptures will not believe.

D. Decisions have lasting consequences. Many are irreversible. That is why early training and reverence for God are so vital. Without them, the things of this world become more important than the things of God.

E. If we seek counsel from God but have envy and hatred in our heart, God will not hear us. If we seek any other means of direction, we only add to our confusion and judgment.

F. When God clearly says "no" once, we should accept it as being final. If we ask again, He may give us the desire of our hearts but send leanness into our souls.

DO YOU KNOW THE PRINCIPLES OF PRAYING FOR PROVISION?

Match each word or phrase to its most precise definition.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1. Right standing | A. Appealing on the authority of what God has said |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2. The name of Christ | B. Not expecting money if we give money to God |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 3. God's reputation | C. Forcing God to give after we have indebted ourselves |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4. God's Word | D. Avoiding the dangers of guessing how God will provide |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5. God's will | E. Basing our prayers on Christ's character and attributes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 6. Separating funds | F. Allowing God to direct through specific circumstances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 7. Laws of the harvest | G. Balancing expectations so we can thank God for "yes" or "no " |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 8. Unexpected sources | H. Making sure that we are members of God's family |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9. Sowing faith | I. Explaining how our request will protect God's name |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. No will of our own | J. Receiving based on the quality and quantity of giving |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Tempting God | K. Discerning whether God is showing love or direction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. A fleece | L. Asking God to fulfill the goals that we know He has |

