

## APPROACHING THE LORD IN PRAYER (part 2)

Hebrews 4:16, "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

When looking back into our past, couldn't we all say the Lord has blessed us in so many ways? The sweet psalmist of Israel said in Psalms 126:3, "The LORD hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." One way the Lord blessed me was in having a father who had a hearing ear for his children. I can remember many times going to daddy and needing help, advice and sometimes to just pour my heart out to him in my times of trouble. I always would come to daddy with confidence that he had time for me.

When we consider what the Bible teaches about our Heavenly Father, He is all my daddy was and so much more than any earthly father could be. The Lord has a hearing ear for His children that is based on a greater love than any worldly relationship could conceive. And because of this, every child of grace should feel encouraged to come to Him in their times of need.

In the Old Testament, there are many examples of this Biblical truth. One that stands out clearly is found in the life of Hezekiah, King of Judah. When reading about his life in 2 Kings, 2 Chronicles and the Book of Isaiah, we learn of at least three ways a child of God is able to come to the Lord for help, which are:

(1) Help when dealing with a wicked world (Isaiah chapters 36-38). When Hezekiah began to reign in Jerusalem, he put forth a valiant effort to cleanse the nation of the sin and idolatry that had prevailed before he occupied the throne. According to 2 Chronicles 30:26, there was rejoicing and "great joy in Jerusalem" during this precious time of obedience and revival. But it's a known fact, when people are doing right and serving the Lord, the wicked are not happy. In Isaiah 36 the wicked Assyrians came to conquer the city and mock their King and the Lord. I'm sure Hezekiah and the men of Jerusalem as they beheld the armies of the Assyrians were fearful of the sight and sound of the marching armies, knowing that they had already conquered many nations (including their brethren in Samaria). Hezekiah, in Isaiah 37:14-15, went to the Lord for help. The Lord answered the King's prayer by sending an angel, who destroyed 185,000 of the Assyrians in one night. What a great blessing it is to know that the wicked world can become too big for me, but not for our Father which is in heaven.

(2) Help when dealing with the infirmities and sicknesses of this world (Isaiah chapter 38). Isaiah chapter 38 begins by telling us that "In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death." According to 2 Kings 20:1, Isaiah was sent to the King to inform him that he would die. In Isaiah 38:2, Hezekiah went to his Father in heaven for help. The Lord answered his prayers and added 15 years to Hezekiah's life. The Lord also caused the sun to move backward (sun dial went back 10 degrees, Isa 38:8) to give confirmation to Hezekiah that he would receive this great blessing. What a precious comfort it is in knowing that the Lord's power is above and beyond the power of the sicknesses and infirmities of this world. Praise the Lord, that He is able to answer our prayers in those times of suffering whether it be ours or our brothers and sisters in Christ.

(3) Help in dealing with ourselves and our own shortcomings (2 Chronicles 32:31-33; 2 Kings 20:12-19). After Hezekiah was healed of his infirmities, the princes of Babylon came to visit. When they came, rather than seeking the Lord's wisdom, Hezekiah's own pride controlled the scene. He showed them all the precious things of his house and according to Isaiah 39:2 "there was nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah shewed them not." Isaiah warned the King that his actions would have severe consequences. Isaiah knew the Babylonians would be in need of riches to pay their mercenary armies and would return to Jerusalem for the treasures they had seen. If only

Hezekiah had asked the Lord to help him deal with his pride, he may have made better decisions. When we consider this experience in the life of the king, we should receive much admonition in our own life. There are times when we should hold our tongues, stand still, and call upon the Lord to see what He would have us to do.

Dear child of grace, the above examples are only a few ways in which we can approach our Father for help. I trust that these, as well as all those given to us in scripture, will encourage every child of promise to have boldness and a humble willingness to go to their Heavenly Father in all their times of trouble. Amen!

Elder Ronnie B. Loudermilk