

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" (Jas. 5:16).

Often intercessors who have to 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 virtually embraced God and He performed miracles in answer to their prayers. Think about Abraham who prayed for prosperity, Hannah who prayed for a son, Moses who literally prayed a path through the Red Sea, 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 fro, 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 boost your faith

- William Carey worked and prayed for seven years before he baptized 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. Consequently almost 20% of Burma had been converted to Christianity.
- Morrison had 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 Mueller began praying for five of his friends. He prayed five years before the first one was converted; for the next one he prayed ten years; for the third one twenty-five years; for the fourth nearly fifty years. The last one was converted after fifty-two years – at George Mueller's funeral.
- George Mueller prayed without making any of his needs known to anyone. He noted down

50 000 answers to prayer. He said that God answered all his prayers. He supported 4 000 orphans by making his needs known to God only.

- 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.
- George Whitefield prayed and more than 1 000 people were converted in one day.
- 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 a cold sweat three times a day. It happened during John Knox's prayer times. Because of his prayer and his life, nearly the whole of Scotland was converted to God. This is one of the times in history when most of the nation came to repentance in a short time. 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 in Chicago in a newspaper and prayed that the Lord would send him to their congregation. Eventually Moody came, preached, and in the following days 400 new members were added to that church. The secret? Someone prayed – Marianne Adlard.
- A crippled lady: 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 in a remarkable way to intercede for others. During the conversation she asked Goforth to take a look at her notebook. She had noted three particular days during which she had a special burden to pray for his meetings. Goforth was overawed when he realized 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 have been reached with the Gospel for the first time by this organization.

Don't become despondent. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective (Jas. 5:16).