

## 20:20 Vision Ministries -- Devotions by Roger Browning Week 3 (January 12-18, 2014)

Last week, I shared some of the verses and techniques that have helped me develop a consistent prayer life. I have struggled with this for a long time, and I suspect that many of you have as well. We will continue to explore passages on prayer in this week's studies.

### **Sunday** -- January 12

*What other nation is so great as to have their gods near them the way the Lord our God is near us whenever we pray to Him? (Deuteronomy 4:7)*

Moses asks a great question in today's verse, but he also gives us a wonderful truth that should encourage us to get on our knees before God. Can you feel the presence of God whenever you pray? Here are a few related questions that may help you to experience His presence more consistently: Do you ask Him to come down to your level since you cannot get up to His? Do you come to the Father only in the Name and righteousness of Jesus? Do you wait upon Him as you begin your prayer or do you start immediately to present your requests to Him? Do you really believe that God answers prayers? I'm sure you can add some questions of your own, but these are enough to help you strengthen your personal prayer life.

### **Monday** -- January 13

*Therefore let everyone who is Godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. (Psalm 32:6)*

This verse contains a warning as well as a wonderful promise. **The warning is this:** Difficult times are coming on the planet earth, so we need to make wise use of the time we have left. We are currently living in the **Day of Grace**, a time when "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Romans 10:13). Those who have received Jesus into their lives (the Godly) need to pray for salvation for those who have not, because someday soon God will call His Church home in **The Rapture** and the lost will face **The Great Tribulation**. **The wonderful promise is this:** True believers will not get in over our heads, because the Lord will teach us His truth, protect us from the coming apostasy (turning away), and bring us to Heaven prior to the tribulation. The world has chosen the deep waters of sin. Be sure that you choose the deep waters of faith to protect you!

### **Tuesday** -- January 14

*Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:12-13)*

Any promise that begins with the word, "then," will alert you that you need to know the previous verse. In this passage, God tells the Jews and **you** that He has "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (v. 11). Isn't this enough to motivate you to come often into His presence? God is not going to condemn you (see Romans 8:1). He wants to spend quality time with you so that you will understand the joys and promises that are available in Christ Jesus. I usually quote Jeremiah 29:11-14 during my morning prayer because of the wonderful promises included in this great passage. Take a little time and memorize the words; then, take enough time to truly believe the promises!

**Wednesday** -- January 15

*"I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of Him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord." (1 Samuel 1:27-28)*

What a beautiful testimony this is from the lips of Hannah, a previously barren woman! How I wish that every new baby arrived to hear these words from his/her parents. The subject of abortion would no longer be debated in our prosperous nation. How I wish that everyone could understand that no life is created in the womb without God's knowledge and permission. Planned Parenthood and abortion clinics would go out of business overnight. For those of you beyond your childbearing years, use this verse to pray for your children daily and trust the Lord to save them (Acts 16:31) and to give them what they need to draw closer to Him (see Matthew 7:7-12 & James 4:8). Then relax! The Master is in charge!

**Thursday** -- January 16

*After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord made him prosperous again and gave him twice as much as he had before. (Job 42:10)*

This verse should motivate us to **intercede** for others in our prayers. You probably know the story of Job and the undeserved loss of his health and wealth. You may also know that the three friends who came to comfort him brought him more grief than comfort (see Job 16:2). Job griped and complained throughout the entire Book of Job until the Lord spoke to him **out of a storm** and straightened out his self-righteous thinking (see Job 38:1). God commanded the three friends to allow His disgruntled servant to pray for them (42:8). Could you humble yourself enough to allow someone that you have been criticizing to pray for you? Can God trust you to pray for your critics? It was only **after this prayer** that the Lord blessed Job once again. Do you get the message concerning your own intercessory prayers?

**Friday** -- January 17

*From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the Lord his God. (Jonah 2:1)*

This verse answers two excuses we may use for not praying regularly: 1) We are not living in obedience to everything we currently know, so we don't deserve to come into His presence, and 2) We are not in a good place to call out to God. Jonah knew and loved God, but he was running away from the call of the Lord to go to Nineveh and offer salvation to the enemies of the Jews (1:1-3). You probably know that he convinced the sailors to throw him overboard to his death so that they could be saved from the storm (1:12-16). Maybe you know that "the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah" (1:17). What I want you to learn today is this: No matter where you are or what you have done, God delights in hearing from you! He will clean up your life if you trust Him enough to come into His presence.

**Saturday** -- January 18

*For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and His ears are attentive to their prayer, . . . (1 Peter 3:12a)*

This is one of the wonderful promises that I want you to claim today. You may say that you are not **righteous**, but the word includes all who have been truly saved by the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. You are "holy and blameless in His sight" (Ephesians 1:4). God is watching you and listening for you to call upon Him! He will allow you to handle your problems on your own if you insist, but He is waiting patiently for you to give them to Him. Are you willing to trust Him with your problems as well as your every need? Can you set times aside to come often into His presence? You will find blessings that go beyond what you can ask or imagine (see Ephesians 3:20).