

## **KINGDOM ATMOSPHERE PRT 9**

This morning we are continuing with our teaching on **PREVAILING PRAYER (e): LESSONS FROM PRAYERS OF THE BIBLE.**

In the previous 4 weeks we looked at

- **Lessons from Abraham's prayer for Sodom**
- **Lessons from Moses' prayer for an idolatrous Israel**
- **Lessons from Moses' tent meeting with God**

*2 Chronicles 20:1 And it happened after this the sons of Moab, and the sons of Ammon came in, and with them others besides the Ammonites, to battle against Jehoshaphat.*

- The reality of the matter is that life does not happen in a straight line – in your endeavor to move from point A to point B, you will go through valleys, you will cross rivers, you will fight battles. Jehoshaphat had just restored God's law in the land of Judah and one would ordinarily think that all should go well for him for his commitment to Jehovah, but alas the opposite happened. Sometimes your battles are as a result of your godly exploits in the spirit.
- This situation begs us to ask a number of questions; what do you do when you are facing the battle of your life, what do you do when you are at the verge of losing your health, what do you do when your child is sick, what do you do when your marriage is on the rocks?
- We can learn one or two things from the story of king Jehoshaphat and this morning we are looking at lessons from this king.
- **Lessons from Jehoshaphat's prayer for victory**
- In the scriptures we have read, we find Jehoshaphat, king of Judah under siege and was facing probably his last day on the throne.
- One day, you will find yourself under such conditions – the majority of people in these circumstances will consider prayer, just like king Jehoshaphat.

*2 Chronicles 20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek Jehovah, and called for a fast throughout all Judah.*

- Take note – the king feared and set himself to seek Jehovah.
- I have realized that many people seek the Lord when there is pressure around them but very few of them get to see results from those prayers.

**4.1 Prevailing prayer is only possible when it comes from a place of habit and lifestyle.**

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- Why is this the case? If you have never used a tool before, the first time you use it, you are bound to struggle with it. You are not sure about how it works; you are not sure of the type of results it will give you.
- Prayer is a tool for spiritual warfare – if you have never used prayer before and have seen it work, it will be a challenge to use it in times of crisis.
- King Jehoshaphat had it in his blood to seek the Lord – seeking the Lord was his way of life and when you are under pressure, you easily fall back to what you are used to doing (habits of life).
- Let's back track a little bit in order to discover what was king Jehoshaphat's habit:

*2 Chronicles 17:3 And Jehovah was with Jehoshaphat because he walked in the first ways of his father David and did not seek to Baals. 4 But he looked to the God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.*

*2 Chronicles 17:6 And his heart was lifted up in the ways of Jehovah. And he took away the high places and Asherahs out of Judah.*

*2 Chronicles 18:4 And Jehoshaphat said to the king of Israel, Please inquire at the Word of Jehovah today. 5 And the king of Israel gathered four hundred men of the prophets and said to them, Shall we go to Ramoth-gilead to battle, or shall I wait? And they said, Go up, for God will deliver it into the king's hand. 6 But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not a prophet of Jehovah here besides, so that we might ask of Him?*

- Clearly this man had grown to trust prayer and in the ability of God. When trouble came, he went straight to what worked for him before.
- The bible teaches us to pray always – this speaks of a lifestyle of prayer.

*Romans 12:12 Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.*

*Ephesians 6:18 Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints...*

*Colossians 4:2 Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving.*

- Prayer is like a muscle – the more it is used the stronger it becomes, the stronger it is, the better its response when pressure is applied on it.

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- If you have not been exercising your biceps, don't try to compete with guys from cross fit – you will hurt yourself.

### **4.2 Every battle requires a different level of prayer intensity**

- Saints, your fore means business – the enemy does not come to negotiate and he intends to leave no prisoners behind. You need to gird yourself with an intensity of prayer when facing certain battles.

- Its time to shift your prayer gears – what you are facing requires your attention in prayer.

*2 Chronicles 20:3 And Jehoshaphat feared and set himself to seek Jehovah, and called for a fast throughout all Judah. 4 And Judah gathered themselves to ask of Jehovah. Even out of all the cities of Judah they came to seek Jehovah.*

- This man had prayed by himself, this man had simply prayed before and things happened. But what he was facing, required a different bout of energy and intensity. What was he facing?

*2 Chronicles 20: 2Then some men came and told Jehoshaphat, "A vast army is coming against you from Edom, from beyond the Sea; they are already in Hazazon-tamar" (that is, En-gedi).*

- Let me ask you a question; what are you facing right now in your life?
- How did the king increase the intensity of prayer?
- He declared a fast
- Andrew Murray puts it this way: "Prayer is reaching out after the unseen; fasting is letting go of all that is seen and temporal. Fasting helps express, deepen, confirm the resolution that we are ready to sacrifice anything, even ourselves to attain what we seek for the kingdom of God."
- Prayer and fasting is a sign of our desire and hunger to seek God. And in seeking Him, we place less importance in our daily routines of finding food and momentary physical pleasures. Through prayer and fasting, we develop a passion for God that supersedes everything else
- This will not be an exhaustive teaching on fasting but I am here to highlight that fasting is way of increasing the intensity of prayer in your life.
- When do you fast?
  - when you are seeking the direction of the Lord,
  - when you haven't received an answer to your prayer
  - When you seek for deliverance (breaking the yoke of bondage)

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- On behalf of a friend who is under a heavy burden (to receive insight into their situation or for their deliverance from oppression)
- The Bible tells of many powerful times of spiritual fasting:
  - Moses fasted while preparing to receive the Ten Commandments (Deuteronomy 9:9-18)
  - Elijah fasted when he was in physical danger from Jezebel (1 Kings 19:4-8)
  - Esther fasted for the safety of the Jews (Esther 4:15-17)
  - Daniel fasted when he needed revelation and an answer to prayer (Daniel 10:1-3)
  - Jesus fasted before embarking on His earthly ministry (Matthew 4:1-2).
- There was a time when the disciples failed to deliver a demon possessed boy and Jesus attributed to their failure to a lack of faith and intensity in prayer.

*Matthew 17:19 Then the disciples came to Jesus apart, and said, Why could we not cast him out? 20 And Jesus said to them, Because of your unbelief. For truly I say to you, If you have faith like a grain of mustard seed, you shall say to this mountain, Move from here to there. And it shall move. And nothing shall be impossible to you. 21 However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.*

Some interesting facts about fasting

- Fasting breaks you, resulting in a humble you – when God wants to work in you and through you, He looks for a broken you.
- Fasting is painful and that pain squeezes self out of you. If you have noted, fasting makes you tired.
- Fasting makes you accessible to heaven's input and suggestions.
- Fasting does not change God but changes you
- Fasting starves fleshly appetites but feeds spiritual appetites