



A Spiritual Encouragement Message November 3, 2020

Pray and Keep the Faith by Oscar Velazquez

Luke is the only gospel writer who recorded parables of Jesus related to prayer.

Luke wrote three parables of Jesus related to prayer, one is found in Luke 11:5-13 and two are found in Luke 18:1-14. Let's read and learn from the one found in Luke 18:1-8.

"And he told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart. He said, "In a certain city there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected man. And there was a widow in that city who kept coming to him and saying, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' For a while he refused, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow keeps bothering me, I will give her justice, so that she will not beat me down by her continual coming.'" And the Lord said, "Hear what the unrighteous judge says. And will not God give justice to his elect, who cry to him day and night? Will he delay long over them? I tell you, he will give justice to them speedily. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on earth?" (Luke 18:1-8 ESV).

Verse one above, is an introduction to the parable added by Luke or his source (Lk.1:1-4). However, Luke's understanding of the focus of the parable is surely superior to any other commentary about it. Luke revealed and specified two facts. One is that we are individually responsible to satisfy our own need to communicate with our Father. The second focus of Luke was on our tendency to lose heart.

In verse two, we see two middle eastern ways to demand something from people. But with a corrupt judge none of those ways would work. Nobody could approach him asking "for the love of God help me," because he did not fear God. Also nobody could approach him saying "dear judge," or "your excellency judge," or "your honor please." That would not work either because no sense of honor existed in him to which they could appeal approaching him.

In verse three, we see a widow in need of justice. A Widow in the Bible was the most vulnerable adult person in society. On top of that, Jewish women did not usually go before courts, men did. When women went, it meant that they were alone in the world. The widow did not appear to stand a chance for a favorable solution going before the corrupt unsensible judge with her demand. That widow was in a worse situation than we could ever be, but she did not lose heart.

In verse four and five, we see that the widow insisted persistently taking advantage of her culture. In middle eastern culture women are allowed to do things that men can't do. Like for example the women at the cross, when the men disciples all ran away in fear to hide, except for John because he was young, he was accompanying his mother and he was also known to the high priest (Mt.26:56, 27:56, Jn.19:25-27,18:1516).

In verses six and seven, we see a contrast, comparing between the unsensible unriches judge and the merciful God of justice. We also see a contrast between the unfair situation of the widow before the unjust judge and our blessed situation of chosen ones before our loving God. Unlike the poor widow before the unjust judge, we approach God in prayer in a relationship of love and trust.

In verse eight, Luke wrote that Jesus answered His two questions from verse seven, but Jesus also asked another question that is for us to answer as well. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth? The parable ends with the nostalgic hope of the Son of God to be able to find faith on earth when He comes back.

There is a huge realistic conscience about the weakness of us as believers.

Will He find faith in those who for a lifetime pray asking for all kinds of help when we are in different sources of needs?

Do you have more trust and faith in God than the widow had in the unjust judge?

Do you pray to God more than she insisted on going before the unrighteous judge?

The fact is that we expect so much from God, but how much can he expect from us?

How much can He actually count on us?

Don't lose heart, pray more and keep the faith until He comes back for us.