

Power in Prayer



Jim Cymbala May 25, 2019

Although the world has made giant strides in comprehending subjects like atomic energy and nuclear fusion, most of us still live with only the slightest understanding of the most ancient, dynamic source of power there is — the power that comes from prayer. In fact, we have not yet begun to experience the infinite power and possibility that becomes available when we call on the name of the Lord.

The book of Judges records a dark period in Israel's history. Though God had given the land of Canaan to them exactly as he promised, the Israelites repeatedly turned their back on his instructions, failing to fully possess the land as he had ordered. Instead of driving out the Canaanites, the Israelites intermarried with them and before long they were worshiping Canaan's false idols, a practice God had solemnly warned against.

"After Ehud died, the Israelites once again did evil in the eyes of the Lord. So the Lord sold them into the hands of Jabin, a king of Canaan ... Because he had cruelly oppressed the Israelites for twenty years, they cried to the Lord for help" (Judges 4:1-3).

For twenty years this oppression continued unabated, which meant that none of Israel's young people had ever tasted freedom. Exploitation and hardship was a way of life for everyone — until one special day something changed. In utter desperation, Israel called on the name of the Lord and their prayer began a breakthrough that changed everything.

God sent a prophetic word to a judge in Israel named Deborah. Under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, Deborah delivered a message to a man named Barak that the Lord was going to deliver the enemy into his hands: "Go! This is the day the Lord has given Sisera into your hands. Has not the Lord gone ahead of you?" (4:14). Twenty miserable years of servitude to the Canaanites would be ended if Barak would be obedient —and he was! "At Barak's advance, the Lord routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword" (4:15).

We need a lot more Baraks today who will break through in prayer and then obey God's leading so that cruel captivities can be overturned.

Jim Cymbala began the Brooklyn Tabernacle with less than twenty members in a small, rundown building in a difficult part of the city. A native of Brooklyn, he is a longtime friend of both David and Gary Wilkerson.

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