

Message Three

The Prayer That Expresses God's Will

Scripture Reading: Eph. 6:18; Ezek. 36:37; Isa. 62:6-7; 1 John 5:14-16a; Matt. 6:5-6, 9-15; 26:39

I. In the universe there are three wills: the divine will, the satanic will, and the human will; God wants man's will to be joined to Him and be one with Him so that man may express and echo His will back to Him in prayer for His good pleasure—Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 6:10; 7:21; 26:39; Phil. 2:13:

- A. The tree of life represents God with His divine will, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil represents Satan with his satanic will, and Adam represents man with his human will; we have lost many spiritual blessings because we have not expressed God's will, according to the principle of the tree of life, through our prayers—Gen. 2:9.
- B. A genuine man of prayer is one whose desires are fully blended into God's desires and whose thoughts are fully one with God's thoughts; he is a man in whom God's desires are imprinted, a man of revelation whose heart is a duplication of God's heart—1 Sam. 2:35; 3:21; 12:23.
- C. Prayers that originate from our needs to satisfy our own lust may be answered by God, but they have no spiritual value, and we will become weak before His eyes and unpleasing to Him—Psa. 106:14-15; cf. Num. 11:18-35.
- D. Only the prayers that are initiated by God and echo what He has initiated have any spiritual value; we must learn to pray this kind of prayer—Eph. 6:18; Ezek. 36:37; Isa. 62:6-7; 1 John 5:14-16a.
- E. When we come to the Lord in prayer, we need to allow the Spirit to mingle our desires with His desires, lead our thoughts into His thoughts, and imprint His desires and thoughts into us; then the prayers that we utter to God with His inward desires will be precious, weighty, and valuable to Him and will cause Satan to suffer loss—Rom. 8:26-27; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:2, 12; Mark 9:28-29; Eph. 6:10-20.
- F. The real meaning of prayer and of all spiritual work is that they consist of four steps:
 - 1. God intends to do something according to His will.
 - 2. He reveals His will to us through the Spirit for us to know His will.
 - 3. We return and echo His will back to Him through prayer.
 - 4. God accomplishes His work according to His will.
- G. God needs man to exercise his spirit with his resurrected will to pray according to God's divine will for Christ to be manifested and enjoyed by us, for the Body life to be practiced by us, and for the Body of Christ to be built up through us—Heb. 10:5-10; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 1:4-6, 9, 11, 22b-23; 3:16-19; 4:16.
- H. We have to pray according to God's desire and His will for the fulfillment of His economy; then we have the assurance that we have received what we have prayed for—Mark 11:22-26.

II. Hannah's prayer was an echo, a speaking out, of the heart's desire of God; it was a human cooperation with the divine move for the carrying out of God's eternal economy—1 Sam. 1:10-20:

- A. God could motivate Hannah as a person who was one with Him on the line of life; the line of life is a line that brings forth Christ for the enjoyment of God's people, that on earth God may have His kingdom, which is the church as the Body of Christ, the very organism of the Triune God—John 10:10; Matt. 16:18-19; Rom. 14:17-18; Eph. 1:22-23.

- B. As long as God can gain a person who is one with Him on the line of life, He has a way on earth; Hannah's prayer indicates that God's move with His answer to Hannah's prayer was to produce a Nazarite who was absolute for the fulfilling of God's desire—1 Sam. 1:19—2:11.

III. Elijah, “a man of like feeling with us,...prayed in prayer”—James 5:17 (lit):

- A. A prayer from the Lord was given to Elijah, in which he prayed; he prayed in the prayer given to him by the Lord for the accomplishing of His will.
- B. He did not pray in his feeling, thought, intention, or mood, or in any kind of motivation, arising from circumstances or situations, to fulfill his own purpose.

IV. Daniel was a man of prayer who was joined to God's desire through God's word; only those who join themselves to God's word to pray prayers of God's economy can be of real use to God—Eph. 6:17-18; Dan. 9:2-3, 17:

- A. The highest expression of a man who cooperates with God is in prayer; such a man is a man of preciousness to God, even preciousness itself—10:11, 19; 9:23.
- B. Daniel depended on prayer to do what man could not do, and he depended on prayer to understand what man could not understand—2:14-23; 6:10; 10:1-21.

V. Abraham lived in intimate fellowship with God and became God's friend; even before the incarnation, Jehovah as Christ appeared to Abraham in human form, with a human body, and communed with him on a human level—Gen. 13:18; 18:1-2, 13-15, 22; James 2:23; 2 Chron. 20:7; Isa. 41:8:

- A. The glorious intercession that Abraham made before God was a human, intimate conversation between two friends, an intimate talk according to the unveiling of God's heart's desire—Gen. 18:1-33; Rom. 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:1, 8; Matt. 6:6.
- B. As Abraham was enjoying sweet fellowship with God, he received a revelation from Him regarding the birth of Isaac and the destruction of Sodom—Gen. 18:9-22:
 - 1. This shows that God's intention is to work Christ into us, to bring Christ forth through us, and to destroy the “Sodom” in our home life, our work life, and our Christian and church life—Gal. 1:15-16; 2:20; 4:19; 1 Cor. 5:7-8.
 - 2. In our intimate fellowship with God, we receive the revelation that all the impossibilities become possibilities with Christ—Gen. 18:14-15; 21:2-7; Luke 18:27.
- C. God revealed to Abraham His intention to destroy Sodom, because He was seeking an intercessor—Gen. 18:17-22; cf. Heb. 7:25; Isa. 59:16; Ezek. 22:30.
- D. Genesis 18 presents a clear revelation of the basic principles of intercession:
 - 1. The proper intercession is not initiated by man but by God's revelation; thus, it expresses God's desire and carries out God's will—vv. 17, 20-21; 19:27-29; Psa. 27:4-8; Heb. 4:16; 7:25.
 - 2. Apparently, Abraham was interceding for Sodom; actually, he was interceding for Lot by implication (Gen. 14:12; 18:23; 19:1, 27-29), showing that we should intercede for God's people who have drifted into the world.
 - 3. Intercession is an intimate conversation with God according to the inward intention of His heart; for this we must learn to linger in the presence of God—18:22-33.
 - 4. Intercession is according to God's righteous way; in Abraham's intercession for Lot, he did not beg God according to His love and grace; he challenged God according to His righteous way—vv. 23-25; Rom. 1:17.
 - 5. Abraham's intercession did not terminate with his speaking but with God's, showing that genuine intercession is God's speaking in our speaking—Gen. 18:33; Rom. 8:26-27.

VI. The pattern of prayer that the Lord taught the disciples in Matthew 6 is the prayer that expresses God's will—vv. 9-15:

- A. The principle of prayer is to pray in secret to be seen by our Father who sees in secret; we need to pray to the Lord, worship the Lord, contact the Lord, and fellowship with the Lord in a secret way—vv. 5-6:
 - 1. The thing that frustrates us the most from growing in life is the self, and the self enjoys doing things in public display for the glory of men—John 5:44; 12:43.
 - 2. If we live by the Father's hidden life, we may pray much, but others will not know how much we have prayed—Isa. 45:15.
- B. Matthew 6:9-13 is the Lord's instruction to us to "pray in this way" to "our Father who is in the heavens" (v. 9a); this pattern of prayer can be divided into three sections:
 - 1. The three basic prayers concerning God are related to the Divine Trinity; "Your name be sanctified" is related mainly to the Father; "Your kingdom come," to the Son; and "Your will be done," to the Spirit—vv. 9b-10a:
 - a. This is being fulfilled in this age, and it will be ultimately fulfilled in the kingdom age when the name of God will be excellent in all the earth, the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of Christ, and the will of God will be accomplished—Psa. 8:1; Rev. 11:15.
 - b. After the rebellion of Satan and the fall of man, Christ came to bring the heavenly rule to earth so that the earth could be recovered for God's interest, so that the will of God could be done on earth as in heaven (Matt. 6:10b); the kingdom people must pray for this until the earth is fully recovered for God's will in the coming kingdom age.
 - 2. The three requests concerning our need are protective prayers: "Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not bring us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one"—vv. 11-13a:
 - a. *Daily bread* indicates a living that is by faith; we should live by faith, on the Father's daily supply.
 - b. The kingdom people should ask the Father to forgive their debts, their failures, their trespasses, as they forgive their debtors to maintain peace (by the arbitrating peace of Christ); we have to clear up any separating factors between us and God and between us and others—vv. 14-15; Col. 3:15.
 - c. Because we know our weakness, we should ask the Father not to bring us into temptation but to deliver us from the evil one, the devil, and from the evil that is out of him (by being filled with the Spirit)—John 17:15; Eph. 5:16-18; 6:13.
 - 3. The prayer to the Father concludes with three reverent praises as extolling prayers: "For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen"—the kingdom is of the Son, which is the realm in which God exercises His power, and the power is of the Spirit, which carries out God's intention so that the Father may have His corporate expression in glory—Matt. 6:13b:
 - a. Thus, the pattern of the Lord's prayer begins with the Divine Trinity and ends with the Divine Trinity.
 - b. It also begins with God the Father and ends with God the Father; God the Father is the beginning and the end, the Alpha and the Omega.
- C. Such a critical prayer increases our seeking of the kingdom of the heavens as the Father's heart's desire and affords us our need of the divine supply of grace to fulfill all the supreme and strict requirements of the kingdom of the heavens for God's good pleasure.