

THE  
POWER  
OF PREVAILING  
PRAYER





## **THE POWER OF PREVAILING PRAYER**

**Compiled by Albert Sims**

Fifth Edition

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#### **01 -- PRAYING IS FIGHTING! -- By S. D. Gordon**

There is a great hunger in the heart of God over His world. The great passion in the heart of God is to win His own world back home again. He has given His Own Son that He might win it, and that Son poured out His very life's blood, that through His dying and rising men might come back home. He always uses men in touch with men. Man may be the pathway for leading man back to God, for all whom He will touch, and all whom He can touch.

The greatest power we have in bringing men back, and in bringing in God's plan, is the power of prayer. The greatest thing anybody can do is to pray. It is not the only thing, but it is the chief thing. When the Holy Spirit touches a man's heart and life anew, He always breathes a soft burning passion into his heart; He always draws a man aside into the prayer-place, the secret place of his life in touch with God, and He leads a man to find out this, that all the rest of the life grows out of prayer -- the serving and the doing, all we are and all we attempt to do, grows out of our touch with God.

The thing that the Evil One fears most is prayer. "Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees," is excellent. Satan is not so much afraid of a pure walk, though he fears a pure life lived for God among men; but when we get to our knees he trembles most, for he fears prayer and he hates prayer. He hates Jesus and he fears Him, and he hates the Jesus-man and is afraid of him. When that man comes along to pray, Satan is troubled. If he can keep us from our knees it pleases him very much. It is surprising in how many ways he can keep us from the quiet touch with God in prayer; I mean keep us who are true in our hearts, and yet are kept in so many ways from having a quiet time alone with God.

It is not surprising that there should be hindrances if prayer be what the Book says it is. There are three great hindrances. First, the things in us that break off touch with God, such as sin, anything wrong in the life, selfishness ruling the life, an unforgiving spirit in the heart -- these things break off touch with God; and of course they hinder prayer. Then, second, the lack of skill in praying is a hindrance. Skill comes very easily and very simply to the man who puts his life in touch with God, and goes along daily with the quiet time with the Book, praying as the Spirit teaches him to pray through the Word by the Book-touch.

Then, third, there is the great outside hindrance -- the Evil One has the power to hold the answer back for a while; he has not the power to hold the answer back finally, if somebody understands praying; but this is rather a big "if!" The great thing to place over against that is this: On the one side Satan has the power to hinder prayer for a time; on the other side, prayer is the one thing that overcomes Satan, for that he cannot stand. He can stand a lot of preaching. He does not object to good theological sermons. There are two things he does object to -- the man who puts his whole life in touch with the Lord Jesus, who puts out of his life anything that the Holy Spirit shows ought not to be there; and the man who lives in touch with God. Satan fears that man, and he fears that man most when he prays. Prayer overcomes the Evil One. It is our highest weapon in overcoming him, but prayer can be used only to the full by the man who follows the Master fully. We can and must follow. His grace makes it easy, if we will to follow Him fully, even though the road be rough.

There are two special Scriptures that we aim to bring to you, one from the Old Testament, and one from the New. So I want to bring you into the broad way from the tenth of Daniel in the Old, and then the teaching from the New in the sixth chapter of Ephesians. For Daniel Ten and Ephesians Six are twin chapters, each explaining the other. The Daniel chapter is the illustration of the Ephesian, and the Ephesian chapter is the explanation of the Daniel picture.

This is the story-illustration in Daniel: Daniel is an old man at this time. He is the Premier of the world-power of his day. He is no novice, he is a genius. The world-power of his day is



Babylon, and he controls the affairs there. That is the kind of a man intellectually, in force of will and power. He is an exile, a Hebrew; he has been taken captive as a boy, has been in captivity most of the years of his life, and he is homesick for the homeland of Palestine, heartsick over the plight of his people. He had been reading the prophecy of Jeremiah, and he finds the promise made there that after seventy years his people are to go back, and their captivity end; and the very thought makes his heart beat faster. Go back to the homeland! He does some quick counting -- the time is almost up.

Now notice what this old man does -- he arranges the affairs of the empire, so as to be gone for a time from his office. He takes two or three other congenial spirits who understand about prayer, men of God; and they go down by the river to spend a day in prayer. They pray the whole day from morning till evening, fasting, meditation, and prayer. They are expecting an answer -- these Old Testament intercessors are famous expectors; they always had eyes in their faith -- but there is no answer that comes to them. They go on praying a second day, a third, a fourth, a week, and no answer comes to them. They pray two weeks; no answer! But you cannot befool Daniel like that. He is an old hand at prayer. He has not the least idea about quitting. They pray for twenty full days, no change comes, no answer, nothing at all happens that they know about; but Daniel still goes right on. It is the touchstone of true prayer when you know you are right, and go on until the answer comes. "Men ought always to pray and not to faint," the Master said. The chief thing is prayer. The chief temptation of prayer is to lose heart when the answer does not come; the chief strength of prayer is persistence -- hanging on until the answer comes. The twenty-first day the answer came. There was a visitor from the upper world, a being of Celestial mold, and this is what he says: "Daniel, God heard the first day that you began to pray, your prayer is answered, and I was sent from God's presence direct to you and to give you the word about your prayer, but the Prince of the Power of the Air withstood me, beset me one and twenty days, and then Michael, one of the chief Princes, came to help me, and then I was free to come with this answer which I now come to bring to you from God."

Now notice, this person talking to Daniel was a spirit-being, He is opposed by somebody; therefore the opponent is likewise a spirit-being. This spirit-messenger who opposes God's messenger is from the other camp -- he is from the Enemy's headquarters. That, I think, is clear, and the strange thing is this: that the evil messenger has the power to hold back God's messenger for three full weeks until reinforcements come, and then the messenger of God is free to come with the answer.

There is a scene going on in the spirit-world; here is God's messenger come, a spirit-being; here a spirit-being checking and holding him back, and real conflict going on; and here is another messenger come to help God's messenger in the conflict. All the time there are three or four men down there on their knees praying, and they are concerned about the same thing. The other messenger is trying to hold back the answer to these men's prayer, and this for three weeks, while number one wonders why; but there is the other fact, that this man's praying brings the answer through, past the spirit-opponent up in that spirit realm. That is the Daniel story.

Now if you will turn to Eph. 6:12, you will find the parallel truth to that, and, as I read, will you please keep in mind the Daniel picture, these men on their faces praying by the river, and this spirit scene above the earth where that wrestling match is going on between the spirit beings,

and among them. Now listen! "For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood" -- never against men. Man may oppose you, but the opposition is something far subtler than the man. "Our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities" -- that is a word for an organization of beings. There are a number of principalities in the federation of German States in the German Reich. "Against principalities and powers" -- that is a word likewise for an organization of beings. We speak of the "powers of Europe," the "powers of Asia"; so "principalities and powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the hosts of wicked spirits in the heavenlies" -- not in hell, but in "the heavenly places," somewhere below God's throne; a compact organization of evil spirits, under one who is called the Prince of the Power of the Air, and the Prince of this World.

There is a vast host of evil spirits all around us. They tramp the streets of this town, and every other town and city on this world of ours. They are coming in and out of all the churches and chapels, they are in our homes; they are everywhere -- an innumerable host of evil spirits that are on the earth and round the earth, and concerned only with this earth; and above the earth somewhere is the headquarters of the evil world as of God's world. That is the Foe -- "against principalities and powers and world-rulers of this darkness, the host of wicked spirits in the heavenly places."

Then Paul tells how to overcome the Foe. Please keep the Daniel story in your mind as we go on talking and reading. How is this Foe to be overcome? He explains this by giving a description of a Roman soldier -- the Christian man under the guise of a soldier armed for the conflict. He says "put on the breastplate," and "taking the shield," "the feet shod," "the helmet," and "the sword," all the parts of the armor of the Roman fighting man; and then when he comes to the end of his figure, he ought to say this, "with all fighting, strong fighting!" That would be a proper ending to that figure rhetorically; but Paul is very intense, and when he gets to the end of his figure, he drops the figure, and in place of the word "fighting," he puts in the thing with which in our case the fighting is done -- "with all prayer, praying!" That is to say "praying is fighting, it is spirit fighting." Our fighting is praying! I might put it in this way: the fighting has been done. Our Lord Jesus has worsted the whole evil world. He has made a "show of the principalities and powers openly." He is dragging them behind in His conquering train as those whom He has taken captive. He is Victor over the whole host; and now when we are praying, we are insisting that His victory shall apply where we are praying. Prayer is taking from the Enemy, in Jesus' Name, what we are to take. Prayer overcomes the Evil One.

We ought always to keep three persons in our mind in praying; not two but three: God to whom we pray; the man who prays; and the Evil One against whom we pray. I know you will not misunderstand me when I say, that the whole purpose of prayer is not upward. It is outward. It is not to influence God; it is to influence the Evil One. Our prayers never influence God's purposes. Shall I tell you why? Because everything you ever ask for He has planned to give, and He has planned to give far more than you are asking for. Nobody ever yet has asked for as much as God is planning to give.

All prayer begins in the heart of God. It comes into our hearts. Everything you ever ask for He was planning to give before you thought about it, and He put into your heart the desire for that thing, and the prayer-spirit to ask for it. It all begins yonder in God's heart. It swings down to the



human heart, and if it have only sway there, it swings back again, having done its work down on the circle of this world, which is intersected by the circle of prayer.

The whole driving-power of prayer is towards the Evil One. Prayer does not change God's purpose, I say, but -- if you listen very keenly -- it does change His action; because He works through our human consent. He needs us far more than we have ever guessed or suspected. He needs our love. He needs our prayer. He asks us to pray, and our praying helps Him; and the man on his knees, or the one who is praying in his whole life, gives God the opportunity of doing as otherwise He could not do. Prayer changes God's action, because it gives Him an open way into our lives, and through our lives to those whom we touch.

We ought always to keep three persons, I say, in mind in our praying, and one of the three is Satan. I do not mean the Satan of the poets. I do not mean the being with horns and hoofs and forked tail, such as the artists have sketched out for us. I mean the Satan of this Book. He is a being of great beauty, even great though scarred beauty, a beauty hurt by sin and selfishness, but a being of great beauty and great dignity of position; and he is not chained yet.\* Satan is not chained; he has tremendous power, and as he will force his center towards this earth and towards our mankind, in our praying we ought to keep him in mind.

[\*This chapter was written by S. D. Gordon, and here, I beg to differ with him. His statement is not accurate according to the Scriptures. For in a very real way, according to the Scriptures, Satan is now chained: 2 Peter 2:4 "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;" Jude 1:6 "And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." According to these two divinely inspired Scriptures Satan, being the first angel that sinned, the first angel that kept not his first estate, now bound in "chains of darkness," and "everlasting chains." He can only go as far as Christ allows him to go -- yes, to the full length of his chain, but no farther. -- DVM]

Don't forget Satan when praying; but, second, remember the Lord Jesus, God's Man. Those two had a running fight from the cradle of Bethlehem to Calvary. Through those Nazareth years, in the wilderness, through the three and a half years of His ministry, through Gethsemane, through Calvary, they had a fight, and our Lord Jesus was Victor at every turn. Victor first of all in His life, by obedience; and then Victor in His death by being "obedient even unto death" on the Cross; and then Victor of victors in His resurrection. He is a threefold Victor -- in life, in death, and in the life beyond the death.

The whole purpose of prayer is this -- it is insisting that the Lord Jesus' victory shall come where you prayerfully claim it. He has taken this world. We are to take possession in His Name, it is insisting that His will shall be done in any life where you are concerned. "Thy kingdom come," means the other kingdom go; "Thy will be done," means the other "will" be undone! Victory in this man's life, I take this man here for the Lord Jesus Christ and away from the Power of the Evil One; Thy will in this man, and in this church, and in this problem, in this class in the Sunday-school, these boys, and in this Mission field! That is the real banner of Jesus Christ and standing on the Enemy's territory, and saying, "I will take this in my Victor's Name."

The Evil One will fight. He has power to fight. He will object. He has great objecting power, he is very subtle, he is very sly and cunning, he won't go until he must; therefore prayer must be persisted in. He won't go except from the spot that you claim -- therefore prayer must be definite. You will have to pray persistently and go again seven times, and sometimes seventy times seven, always to pray and not to faint; but not one thing that you ask for shall be withheld, although you will never know the tenth part of the result until the night is gone, and the morning breaks, and the shadows flee away.

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## 02 -- PRAY FOR THE IMPOSSIBLE -- From the Alliance Weekly

These Words belong to the language of faith and the kingdom of Heaven. God loves hard things. There are some business houses that will not deal in trifles, their transactions are only on the wholesale scale. If you want to buy retail you must go into a smaller store, but if you want to have transactions carrying millions, you will have no difficulty in securing their attention. God combines the little and the great. It is His glory to treat the hardest and the mightiest things as mere trifles.

When promising one of His greatest miracles, through the ancient prophet, He added, "This is but a light thing in the eyes of the Lord." When Jesus was about to heal and save the poor paralytic His words were very strange and striking, "Whether it is easier," He asked; but man would have said, "whether it is harder." But the greatest thing was very easy for Him.

All God's greatest acts have been things impossible for any but God. Creation was making a universe out of nothing. Redemption was overcoming a difficulty that was absolutely impossible for any human wisdom or power, to be just and yet the justifier of the ungodly. Of the salvation of the sinner, Christ Himself says, "With man it is impossible, but with God all things are possible." The sanctification of an unholy soul is simply impossible. God Himself has said, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean thing? Not one."

The promise to Abraham, the father of believers, was something impossible. It was when his body was as good as dead that God called him to believe in the birth of a son and then fulfill that promise by giving him Isaac, when he was past age. Israel's deliverance did not come until they had reached the lowest depths of despair and all human hope was dead. The old Hebrew expressed it by a striking proverb, "When the tale of bricks is doubled, then comes Moses." God's hour is the impossible and God's opportunity is man's emergency.

The support of Israel, as a nation, for half a century was a miracle of Providence, and a commentary on the question which staggered Moses is, nothing is too hard for the Lord.

David could not have his kingdom until he was reduced to such a helpless condition that it had to be a miracle of Divine power.

Jehoshaphat's mightiest victory came in the hour when baffled, perplexed and helpless, he could only say, "We have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon Thee."

Hezekiah's healing came after even God had declared that he must die and could not live.

Daniel's wonderful deliverance was accomplished after even Darius had labored till the going down of the sun to find some way of escape for him, and had declared it impossible.

Esther was used of God to save her people even after the decree of doom had gone forth irrevocably from the king, and even he could not take it back.

Jeremiah's mightiest promise came to him when he was shut up in the inner court of the prison, and the Chaldeans were thundering at the gates of the city, and all earthly hope was cut off, then it was that God made him step out before the people and perform the mightiest act of faith of his whole life, and by purchasing the field of Anathoth, as the pledge of the restoration of the land.

One of Christ's sweetest parables is the story of the friend at night, the hour of service past, the house closed, the family in bed, the time too late for any reasonable hope of help, but it was then that the friend proved himself a friend indeed, and rose and gave him as much as he needed.

It was when Paul reached a physical condition of helplessness and self-despair and having the sentence of death in himself that he was able to rise to the very height of faith and victory, and write that wonderful passage in the first chapter of Second Corinthians, "We would not have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia so that we were pressed out of measure above strength insomuch that we despaired even of life; but we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but God who raiseth the dead: who delivereth us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."

Surely, with these examples before us, we need not fear to pray for the impossible; to claim our Master's glorious promise, "If thou canst believe; all things are possible to him that believeth." And again, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say to this mountain, be thou cast into the sea," it will be obeyed and nothing shall be impossible unto you.

Beloved, have you some friend beyond the reach of all human help? Pray for the impossible. Have you a temptation that you have been unable to overcome and that has for many a year baffled, defeated and trampled you in the dust? Pray for the impossible. Have you a physical infirmity beyond the reach of human skill, threatening your life and destroying your usefulness? Pray for the impossible. Have you trials and difficulties in your pathway too hard for you and too difficult for any human power to remove? Nothing is too hard for God, pray for the impossible.

Have you work you long to do for God? Are your resources cramped? Is your strength insufficient? Does it seem too vast for even the highest faith and the strongest hand? God loves a hard work and chooses the weak things to confound the mighty -- pray for the impossible and you yet shall sing with a joyful heart,



"Nothing is too hard for Jesus,  
No man can work like Him."

### Aim For The Impossible

You do not test the resources of God till you try the impossible. -- F. B. Meyer.

God loves with a great love the man whose heart is bursting with a passion for the impossible. -- William Booth.

We have a God who delights in impossibilities. -- Andrew Murray.

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### 03 -- THE POWER OF PREVAILING PRAYER -- From "Praying Clear Through"

Elijah Had the burden; he knew God had placed it upon his heart; hence he must pray clear through -- get the victory -- or lose his grip, When God places a burden upon one's heart there is a crying necessity, there is a demand, and we as channels must let this blessing come through us to the needy ones. An illustration of this:

An honest country mother, who was saved and blessedly sanctified and walked close to God, and who lived much upon her knees, had real, sweet, blessed communion with the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, understood the language of prayer, and had been taught how to linger upon her knees, sat in my audience one night as I preached a sermon on "The Prodigal Son." A burden came upon her heart for the salvation of her drummer boy. She did not know where he was, had not heard from him for some time, but the burden slipped into her soul while we were preaching. The tears flowed from her eyes.

She went home, but could not rest. No sleep, the burden was pressing, growing heavier; something must be done. She could not stand it, so she called her niece. Taking her own lamp, she walked back to the church (a half mile distant), unlocked the church doors, and she and her niece entered God's sanctuary near midnight. She read His promises; she got down at the altar upon her face; she cried; she moaned; she groaned. She knew something was coming. The boy had been placed upon her heart at this time as never before. Her soul was troubled. She cried out, "My God! My God! Hear this broken-hearted mother's prayer. Send the Holy Ghost to my boy just now. Wake him up. Alarm him. Stir him. Show him his lost and undone condition." Two o'clock came, and yet but very little light. She kept at it. She was a wheel horse. She knew all would be lost if she were to let up or let go; no distraction, nothing must call her off of the wires; she must pray through.

Three o'clock came. It grew darker, for the darkest hour is just before day. Seemingly, demons thick and fast gathered about the altar. She raised her face and eyes and hands, crying, "My God! My God! forsake me not. Why is it so dark? Thou knowest this crushing burden. Why did it come? Do not let the enemy defeat my soul. Hear me for Jesus' sake, for my broken heart's sake, for my poor troubled soul's sake." Four o'clock came. It had grown darker; fierce gales were

coming; thunders were pealing; lightnings were flashing; the little bark was tempest-tossed by the angry waves, but she held on to the oars, she kept at it, nothing could daunt her.

The devils out of hell and demons on earth could not deter, could not dismay; she said, "I'll die or have the victory." Five-thirty came. The clouds rifted; the sun came up over the eastern horizon; the blessed Holy Ghost took this broken-hearted, weeping, earnest, honest, sincere mother, who had wrestled, who had real, vital heart agony, who prayed clear through, in His arms, and said, "Your boy is coming home tomorrow, and will be saved."

I had just gotten up, prepared my toilet, and come out on the front gallery, admiring her flower gardens, when she came around the road, waving her bonnet over her head, shouting, crying, laughing, holloaing, "Isn't it wonderful, wonderful, wonderful! God has told my soul -- I know it; the Holy Ghost spoke it; I have the burning witness, the blessed, sweet assurance -- my drummer boy is coming." Her daughters ran out into the yard and threw their arms about their mother, and here came the sanctified father, and what a time we had in that yard that bright morning! What a victory that mother had! She was more than conqueror, her face fairly shone. Eat breakfast? No -- she was supping with Him.

That morning at ten o'clock, while I was preaching, in walked a tall, nicely dressed young man. The good old mother (who always sat in a splint-bottom chair in the "Amen Corner") looked up and saw her drummer boy coming down the aisle. She jumped from that chair, and what shouting! She ran to that boy, threw her arms around him, and here they came to the altar in a long trot. The young man was gloriously saved that morning. I said, "How came you here? What brought you here? How were you impressed to get here?"

He said, "Brother Harney, last night about midnight, I had a nightmare, or rather a peculiar force got hold of me, a power got inside of me. Something said, 'Go home at once,' and I was fearful that mother was sick. I never dreamed of going to the altar, but when I opened the church door and saw the church filled with people, and saw the shining face of my sweet mother, an awful conviction leaped into my soul, and I was willing, yea, more than willing, to go to the altar or do anything to get relief -- to get saved." He said to me, "It was about twelve o'clock when the alarm bells were turning into my soul." Remember, reader, this was the exact time that that saintly, godly mother had gone down upon her knees for her boy.

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#### 04 -- AN EFFECTUAL PRAYER

"No," said the lawyer, "I shan't press your claim against that man; you can get someone else to take your case or you can withdraw it, just as you please."

"Think there isn't any money in it?"

"There would probably be some money in it, but it would, as you know, come from the sale of the little house the man occupies and calls home; but I don't want to meddle with the matter, anyhow."

"Got frightened out of it, eh?"

"No, I wasn't frightened out of it."

"I suppose likely the old fellow begged hard to be let off?"

"Well, yes, he did."

"And you cared, likely?"

"No, I didn't speak a word to him."

"Oh, he did all the talking, did he?"

"Yes."

"And you never said a word?"

"Not a word."

"What in creation did you do?"

"I believe I shed a few tears."

"And the old fellow begged you hard, you say?"

"No, I didn't say so; he didn't speak a word to me."

"Well, may I respectfully inquire whom he did address in your hearing?"

"God Almighty."

"And he took to praying, did he?"

"Not for my benefit, in the least."

The lawyer crossed his right foot over his left knee and began stroking his lower leg up and down, as if to state his case concisely.

"You see, I found the little house easily enough, and knocked at the outer door, which stood ajar; but nobody heard me, so I slipped into the hall, and saw, through the crack of another door just as cozy a sitting-room as there ever was. There on a bed, with her silver head way up high on the pillows, was an old lady, who looked for all the world just as my mother did the last time I ever saw her on earth.

"Well, I was right on the point of knocking, when she said clearly as could be, 'Come, Father, begin; I am ready.' And down on his knees by her side went an old white-haired man, older than his wife, I should judge; and I could not have knocked then for the life of me. Well, he began; first he reminded God that they were still His submissive children, Mother and he; and no matter what He saw fit to bring upon them they shouldn't rebel at His will. Of course, 'twas going to be terribly hard for them to go out homeless in their old age, especially with mother so sick and helpless; but still they'd seen sadder things than ever that would be.

"He reminded God, in the next place, how different all might have been if any one of their boys might have been spared them, then his voice kind of broke, and a thin, white hand stole from under the coverlet, and moved softly over his snowy hair, then he went on to repeat, that nothing could be so sharp as the parting with those three sons -- unless mother and he should be separated. But at last he fell to comforting himself with the fact that the dear Lord knew it was through no fault of their own that Mother and he were threatened with the loss of their dear little home, which meant beggary and the alms-house, a place they prayed to be delivered from entering, if it could be consistent with God's will. And then he fell to quoting a multitude of promises concerning the safety of those who put their trust in the Lord.

"Yes, I should say he begged hard, in fact, it was the most thrilling plea to which I ever listened. And at last he prayed for God's blessing on those who were about to demand justice" -- the lawyer stroked his lower limb in silence for a moment or two, then continued more slowly than before. "And, I believe I'd rather go to the poorhouse tonight, than to stain my heart and hands with the blood of such a prosecution as that."

"Little afraid to defeat the old man's prayer, eh?" queried the client.

"Bless your soul, man, you could not defeat it," roared the lawyer. "It doesn't admit of defeat! I tell you, he left it all subject to the will of God; but he left no doubt as to his own wishes in the matter; claimed that we were told to make known our desires unto God; but of all the pleading I ever heard, that beat all. You see, I was taught that kind of thing myself in my childhood; and why I was sent to hear that prayer I'm sure I don't know, but I hand the case over."

"I wish," said the client, twisting uneasily, "you hadn't told me about the old fellow's prayer."

"Why so?"

"Well, I greatly want the money the place would bring, but was taught the Bible all straight when I was a youngster; and I would hate to run counter to such a harangue as you tell about. I wish you hadn't heard a word of it; and another time I wouldn't listen to petitions not intended for your ears."

The lawyer smiled. "My dear fellow," he said, "you're wrong again; it was intended for my ears, and yours, too, and God Almighty intended it. My old mother used to sing about God's moving in a mysterious way, I remember."

"Well, my mother used to sing about it, too," said the claimant, as he twisted his claim-papers in his fingers. "You can call in, in the morning, if you like, and tell Mother and him the claim has been met."

"In a mysterious way," added the lawyer smiling.

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## 05 -- THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD -- Selected

"I have been traveling for a large wholesale drug company in St. Louis for a number of years, and I have met patrons. On my run in the Southwest, I had one very particular friend whom I will call Brother Benton, because everybody in this section calls him by that name. He nearly always had an order for me, but whether he did or not I always felt better after having made my call, on account of his cheerful ways and pleasant words. I could only see my customers twice a year at best, and I looked forward to my visit to this old customer as one of my best days.

"On one visit I sold him a much larger bill than he ever made before, but I did not hesitate to recommend the house to fill the order. I had learned that he was universally loved and respected in his town as a sincere Christian. He would not keep ardent spirits nor would he hear for one minute of giving space in his house for tobacco in any shape. 'My Bible,' said he, 'condemns both whiskey and tobacco, and I will have nothing to do with them.' No amount of persuading or liberal terms and discounts could induce him to deviate from this rule.

"About six months after I had sold him the large bill, I was notified by the house that the account was unpaid and that I should call as soon as possible and collect it. I hastened over my territory, and called in person to see after the matter. I found a new face behind the counter, and I learned that a short time after I sold the goods my old friend had taken smallpox, and he and his family had been under quarantine for a long time. His sickness had lasted several months, and he was still confined to his home. I did not see him, but he sent me word that the matter would come out all right in the end.

"To make a long story short, he had suffered more losses than he thought, and six months went by, and still the bill was not paid. I wrote to the house and told them the condition of affairs, and they were holding up all proceedings against him.

"Six months went by again, and I was ordered to go at once and collect the account or enter suit. I had but one thing to do, though I confess I had some rebellious thoughts. The night before I arrived at his town, I spent several weary hours rolling and tossing on my bed, trying to contrive some plan to avoid closing out my old friend. He lived some eight miles from the railroad, and I should see him on the morrow. I knew that if I brought suit in all probability others would do the same, and a good man would go to the wall for no fault of his own. While tossing on my bed I must have fallen asleep. I thought that I had called upon my old friend, and we were sitting in his family room, with all his family about him. He turned to me and said: 'We are just about to have our morning prayers, and we shall be glad to have you join with us.' I replied, 'With pleasure.' He announced that he would read the Twenty-third Psalm. He began to read, but I was astonished at

the words I heard. I had learned that Psalm in Sunday-school when a boy, and while I had not read my Bible as much as I should have done, still I will never forget that 'the Lord is my shepherd.' The words were read in a round, clear voice, and my heart rejoiced, although I had never heard it that way before. Here is what he read:

"The Lord is my banker; I shall not fail. He maketh me to lie down on gold mines. He giveth me the combination of His tills. He restoreth my credit. He showeth me how to avoid lawsuits for His name's sake. Yea, though I walk in the very shadow of debt, I will fear no evil; for Thou art with me; Thy silver and gold they rescue me. Thou preparest a way for me in the presence of my collector. Thou fillest my barrels with oil; my measure runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will do business in the name of the Lord.'

"Having read his Scripture he knelt down and prayed. I thought I had never heard such a prayer in all my life. He fairly took my breath from me when he asked his heavenly Father to bless me, his friend.

"With his 'Amen' I awoke with a start. I concluded I would call on my old friend early in the morning at his own home. I arose in time to procure a team and was knocking at his door just as the sun was coming over the eastern horizon. He met me at the door with a hearty handshake, and said: 'Come right in, We are just going to have morning prayers, and we will be glad to have you join us.' He took me into the room and introduced his wife and children. He took up his Bible and said, 'We will read the twenty-third Psalm.' He read in a clear voice, but read it as it is written in the Book. I cannot tell you my feelings and thoughts while he read. We then knelt in prayer, and he humbly made known his wishes, but it did not sound like the one I had heard in my dream, though he appeared to go over the same thought. He told the Lord that he owed me some money, and that it was past due, and he asked that a way might open for him to pay it that very day. He then prayed for me, and while on my knees I resolved that for one time in my life I would disobey orders.

After prayers we both went direct to the drugstore, and as we entered the door a young man met us and said, 'Brother Benton, Father sent me over here this morning to tell you that he would take that house and lot you spoke to him about a few days ago. He told me to hand you this money, and that he would pay the balance on delivery of the deed.' The old man received the rolls of bills and tears began to roll down his cheeks as he turned away. He wrote the young man a receipt for the money and gave it to him.

He then turned to his ledger and began to figure. He turned to me and said, 'Will you please receipt this statement?' I saw that he added the past interest on the bill, I told him I was ordered by the house to remit the interest. He declined to receive it, and said he desired to pay all of his just debts. I took the money and sent it in. The house wrote him a complimentary letter thanking him for the remittance. In a great measure my dream came to pass.

"At the time I was tossing on my bed my old friend was on his knees in his closet, pleading with his Banker for a loan. I am very much gratified to know that he got it, and ever since in all discouragements I apply the Twenty-third Psalm as the remedy."

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## 06 -- A GOD WHO COUNTS

"The hairs of your head are all numbered." -- Luke 12:7

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing?" -- Matt. 10:29

These scripture passages passed through my mind as I watched the sparrows on the lawn; and later on, when I unfastened the long plaits of a friend's hair.

"Just think of it," I said, as she shook out the long, wavy masses over her shoulders, "God counts all these!" Yes, and God is very accurate, too, when it comes to counting money. And then memory brought the following incident to mind:

The continental post had just come in and Edward and Emily Newton were poring over the contents of their many letters, for Mr. Newton was an active, aggressive worker among the Italian and French-speaking people. Presently Mrs. Newton let a letter fall from her hands, exclaiming:

"Edward! whatever shall we do? The rents of two halls are due, and Lorenzo's salary must be paid without delay, and we want [lack] a clear fifty pounds."

"What shall we do, my dear?" said Mr. Newton, looking up from his letters with shining eyes, for they told of progress in the work and of souls saved. "We must do what we always have done, go to our Father and Divine Banker. The silver and gold are His. He has never failed us yet."

"But, Edward, the money ought to go at once, today; and we have not a penny of it."

"Well," he answered, calmly, "if it must go today, He will send it today," and then he added slowly, "'He that spared not His own Son . . . how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things.' Come, dear, let us go to our room, and we will ask our Father to send it without delay. And, of course, we shall get the right amount, for you must remember that God knows how to count."

They were guests in a little country house, and I also was in the house at the same time. Having reached their long, low bedroom, the two windows of which looked out upon the lawn, they closed the door and went into the presence chamber of their Father-Banker to plead for -- just fifty pounds!

Across the passage was another room and at the same hour was kneeling a little old lady -- their hostess. A quaint, little old lady she was, who wore short petticoats, and caps like those of a Quakeress, with the soft, white hair drawn down on each side of her beautiful old face. She was always simply, not to say poorly, dressed. "The less for self, the more for God," was her life-long motto. Economy was the rule in every detail of her household. Her daughters were known laughingly to rebel at some of what they thought to be her "tiresome economies."

Today she was praying, "Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do? Give some help to those dear servants of Thine now under my roof? Yes, Lord! And how much shall I give? Fifty pounds? Yes, Lord."

"Yes: the God who counts dictated the exact sum that the two across the landing were asking for at that very moment!

And so her ever-ready check book was taken out, and a check was written for fifty pounds. And soon the dainty little figure was out on the landing listening to sounds from below. Oh, that was a man's voice, and in prayer, too! And she stood outside their door and, at the first pause, knocked for admittance.

Emily Newton opened the door. "Come in, dear friend, come in!"

"Not just now, my dear; I only came to give you this; it is from the Lord for your work," and gently waving off thanks, she determinedly shut the door, and tripped back to her own room, happy and smiling.

Newton opened the envelope -- and out fell the check for fifty pounds!

"Oh, Edward, here is the exact sum we have been asking for!" cried Emily. "How wonderful!"

"Very gracious, dearest; but not so very wonderful, since He is wonderful. You must not forget that God can count."

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"Here is the account; we must have 20 pounds and 9 pence; where is it to come from?" So said a friend of mine one day, when a bill came in, in connection with the mission with which he was connected. And he, too, prayed, telling his Father the exact amount he needed. Presently the post brought him a letter, and out fell a check for twenty pounds.

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THE END