

## Pray and Never Give Up Daniel 10:1-14

A family lived in a remote valley without electricity, but one day they decide to connect their home to the grid. Two months later the electric company thought that the family might be having problems because they were not using much electricity. They sent an employee to check it out and when he got there he asked. *"You are not using much electricity is there a problem?" "Oh, no," they replied, "We are quite pleased with your services. The reason is that we only turn on the electric lights every night to see how to light our candles and then we switch them off again."* Why would they have electricity if they weren't going to use it?!

This family believed in the benefits of electricity and the promises of the electric company when they told them about it. That's why they made an effort to get it but obviously did not understand the potential of having electricity in their home and how it could radically change their lives, so they used its power sparingly.

There are people who use prayer very much the same way. They believe in prayer, they know of the promises God has made, they've even read and heard stories about answered prayers, but they use prayer's power scarcely. Many don't understand how prayer works and many believe that it doesn't really matter whether they pray or not. Others think that if God knows everything, then He knows what they need, and therefore, there is no need to pray. Unfortunately too many only pray as a last resort after all of their other efforts have failed, but in their heart they don't view prayer as making that big of an impact on the decisions they make every day.

But if we look at the life of Daniel we discover that he valued prayer. He prayed three times a day, he prayed alone in his room and prayed with his friends, he prayed in the pit with lions (some only pray when they are surrounded by lions), he prayed for wisdom and guidance, he prayed that God would forgive the sins of his people Israel and help them return to their homeland. Daniel was a person who believed in the power of prayer and that's why he prayed all the time and about anything, in public and in private.

In Daniel 10:1-14, we find him struggling in prayer for 21 days because he's troubled by some visions he's had. Many Christians would have trouble praying for 21 days for anything. Most of us give up or forget what we pray very quickly because we want quick answers to prayers and we lack the patience and discipline to seek God and persist in prayer.

However in Luke 18: 1-7 Jesus told his disciples a parable about a widow, to teach that we should always pray and never give up. When do we give up? It is when we ask, ask, ask and it seems that nothing happens. Then we get discouraged and begin to question God and give up praying. It is at this time that Jesus encourages us to continue to pray although it may seem that nothing is happening.

When Jesus commanded the fishermen to cast their nets again was exactly in the same place where they had been fishing all night and didn't catch anything. When they were discouraged and ready to give up, it was at that moment, as they obeyed his command that the miracle happened. Perhaps you are ready to quit and today the Lord wants to encourage you to continue praying and not give up.

The reason why we should always pray and not give up isn't because God is deaf or because it is hard to get His attention. Neither is it because we have to keep bothering Him until He gets tired of listening to us and responds. No, those aren't the reasons. Our text today helps us understand why:

As we said previously Daniel is praying and seeking God and it was then that: **a hand touched me and lifted me, still trembling, to my hands and knees. And the man said to me, "Daniel, you are very precious to God, so listen carefully to what I have to say to you. Stand up, for I have been sent to you."** When he said this to me, I stood up, still trembling. Then he said, **"Don't be afraid, Daniel. Since the first day you began to pray for understanding and to humble yourself before your God, your request has been heard in heaven. I have come in answer to your prayer. (Daniel 10:10-12)**

Let's look together at a couple of things.

a. His prayer was heard from day one but the answer did not come immediately. It was not the first time the Angel said this to Daniel because we read in chapter 9.23: **The moment you began praying, a command was given. And now I am here to tell you what it was, for you are very precious to God. Listen carefully so that you can understand the meaning of your vision.** When we begin to pray we are immediately heard by God and He begins the process of bringing the answer. God watches his servant beginning to pray, He listens and moves because and through Daniel's prayer.

b. The angel was sent in response to Daniel's prayer. If he had not prayed, nothing would have happened. How much doesn't happen because we do not seek God in prayer? God knew what Daniel and the people of Israel needed, but it was not until Daniel prayed that something began to happen. God knows all about you, what you need, your concerns, etc., but until you begin to pray, nothing will happen. Prayer is a seed that must be planted and watered. Every time you and I pray God promptly hears our prayers but also send angels to respond.

Let's read a little more to understand this. Daniel 10:12b-13. **I have come in answer to your prayer. But for twenty-one days the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia blocked my way. Then Michael, one of the archangels, came to help me, and I left him there with the spirit prince of the kingdom of Persia.** Note that from the first day that Daniel prayed, he was heard and an angel was sent in response.

It's kind of like when you're at a theatrical play and the curtain is closed. You don't usually see what takes place but lot's is going on meanwhile the curtain is closed. That's in essence what God is doing here; He's drawing back the curtain so you see what ordinarily would be hidden from your eyes. When Daniel prayed demonic forces rose up (the prince of Persia) and angelic warfare broke out. Ephesians 6.12 says that **we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but against evil rulers and authorities of the unseen world, against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.**

You know what that means?

It means that when you pray you turn loose the very powers of heaven.

It means that when you pray you have the power to battle the very forces of darkness.

It means that when you pray angels are willing to fight to answer your prayers

Hebrews 1:14 teaches that: **angels are only servants—spirits sent to care for people who will inherit salvation.**

Daniel prayed 21 days but the angel was sent the 1st day he prayed, though he didn't arrive until the 21st day. What might have happened had Daniel given up in his prayers? What if he had quit on the 4th day, or the 15th, or the 16th? Would the angel have arrived with his answer? The Bible doesn't say, but the implication is maybe not!! What is NOT happening in your life because you don't persevere in prayer?

In 1986, after I left the army, I became a volunteer in the missionary ship "Doulos" during the three months that the ship ministered in Spain. After I returned to Portugal, I didn't know exactly what to do with my life, but my desire was to serve the Lord. One day I prayed and asked the Lord about my future and in my spirit He told me that I would be back on the ship to serve Him. I didn't exactly understand how this would happen but I continued to pray about it. Weeks later, while asking God for a confirmation, the Lord said that the answer was already given and was on its way. I didn't understand what that meant but at that moment I remembered the story of Daniel. Although I had many unanswered questions I waited and continued to pray while serving in my local church.



A few weeks later, one of the directors of the vessel called me. He had come to Portugal to buy Christian books for the ministry that the ship was going to have in Africa. That was the last day of his visit and he called because several weeks before they had decided to invite me to join the missionary ship, but waited until the last day to call with an invitation. At that time, what God said made sense. He listened to my prayer on the first day I cried to him but the answer only came later. What would have happened if I had given up praying? I found out later that day that the director had called several times and that was the last time he was going to do it, precisely the moment I walked into

my house. Ten seconds changed my life and that was the result of the confidence that God hears us when we begin to pray.

Jesus taught that we should “always pray and not give up” not because God is hard of hearing or because God needs to be pestered into answering our requests, or because God doesn’t want to answer us. NO. Jesus taught us not to give up because, when we pray, our prayers carry weight. Every time you and I pray we unleash more and more power from the throne of God.

- Are you praying for someone in your family to become a Christian? Every prayer you pray puts more and more pressure on that person to listen to God. Keep praying until you get an answer. [George Muller prayed for five of his friends to come to know the Lord. Months later one of them gave his life to Christ. Ten years later, another 2 did the same. But it took 25 years until the fourth accepted Christ as savior. George Muller persevered in prayer until his death and was only after his death that his fifth friend accepted Christ, 52 years after he started to pray!](#) His faith and perseverance were rewarded. Today God encourages you to persevere in prayer for the salvation of those you love.

- Do you pray for your friends in their daily struggles? Every prayer you pray imparts to them more and more power from God

- Do you have difficulties with someone at work? Every prayer you lift up to God’s throne brings God’s power to bear on difficult people and situations.

Prayer is an active ministry, therefore don’t pray for something just once or twice, but do it again and again and again until the answer comes.

1. God is looking for people who are persistent in their prayers. He is looking for people who He can change and through whom He can bring change because of their prayers. He is looking for people who have time for Him.

Verbalize your prayers because demons can’t hear your thoughts. They are not like God, they don’t have all knowledge. Only then will they know that you believe in the power of prayer. Only then will they know if you are convinced of the authority that you have in the name of Jesus.

If I go into my house and turn on the lights I hope for something to happen. If there is no light I don’t say that the electricity doesn’t exist or that it doesn’t work. I try to discover what the problem is. If your prayers are not being answered, do not stop praying but seek to know why.

- It may be that the petition is misguided. Perhaps it is because of sin or wrong motivation on our part. It may be that God will answer later. Perhaps you aren’t ready for the answer and God is waiting for you to be ready. Sometimes He needs to use the problem to change our lives and our hearts. Sometimes He says NO because he has something better.

- It may be that the answer is NO. Quite often we are so blinded that we don’t understand the consequences of what we are asking for. If he answers no, search your heart and begin to pray in a different way.

See, we pray not to change the mind of God but for God to change our lives while we seek Him and wait.

If it seems that God isn’t answering your prayer, don’t stop praying, don’t be discouraged! God’s timing is perfect so you ought to wait patiently for His answer. Connect to Him through prayer. His power is always available; we just have to stay connected to that power so that it might flow toward us and towards the things for which we are praying for.

God wants us to take prayer seriously and not give up as we pray.