

The Recompense of Prayer

by Samuel Chadwick

The sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer in our lives, highlighting its value in revealing God's will, granting power, and fostering fellowship.

Scripture: Exodus 17:11, Exodus 33:20, Exodus 34:29, Psalm 91:1, James 5:16

Topics: "Private Prayer", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

Samuel Chadwick preaches on the power and importance of private prayer, emphasizing that God rewards those who seek Him in secret. He explores the transformative nature of prayer, highlighting how it changes individuals and brings revelation, power, and fellowship with God. Using Moses as an example, Chadwick illustrates how the mount of God symbolizes a place of sanctity, revelation, power, and communion with the Almighty.

Transcript

"Thy Father which seeth in secret shall recompense thee." Our Lord did not hesitate to associate recompense with prayer, and who can measure the blessings that come through the avenue of prayer? Those who deny that prayer changes things, or effects any wonders of deliverance and help, are among the first to exalt its influence upon the soul that prays. The value of a daily habit of withdrawal and hallowed seclusion is beyond exaggeration. The contemplation of the unseen, the attempt to think in terms of the Eternal, and the honest endeavor of the soul to enter in communion with God in themselves redeem life from all that is fitful, fretful, and futile. Apart altogether from specific blessings, the sheer influence of a daily habit of private prayer is incalculable. I propose to consider three, maybe four, examples.

It has been said that the mountains of the Bible well repay the climber, and no life is richer in mountain scenes than that of Moses. For forty years he had wandered among their solitary heights, feeding his flock and grappling with the great problems of his people and their God. He had been schooled in all the learning of the Egyptians, but when God wanted to instruct him, He took him from the valley into the mount. It was amid the silence of the everlasting hills that the polished courtier and distinguished scholar was fitted for the work of delivering and guiding the people of God. His service began and ended in the mount. On the eve of every new development, and on every critical occasion, God called him, and he went up. Whenever the burden of his charge oppressed him, he hastened to seek God in the mount. What he found in those ascents is still the wonder of the world.

The mount of God was a privileged place of peculiar sanctity. God had commanded that it should be fenced, lest the cattle should trample it. "Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it." The people were not permitted to approach. Even priests and elders must stop at the boundary. No companionship was allowed. The most trusted and intimate had to be left to tarry while the servant of God went alone into the Holy Place. The Lord commanded him to get ready and come up early in the morning. God wants man at his best. All these instructions of the Pentateuch anticipate the Sermon on the Mount. There is a very special sense in which God dwells in the secret place. He is in secret: He seeth in secret. God wants us in the mount. Come. away! Come up! Come up early! Before daybreak Jesus and Moses were alone with God. Let us go up with Moses, that we may learn what he found in the mount of God.

The Place of Revelation

Moses found God in the mount. Read the story in the third chapter of Exodus. After forty years of exile for his championship of God's people, the shepherd-prince found the God of Israel. He was not a stranger to Him in Egypt. He had renounced the privileges and pleasures of a royal palace and cast in his lot with the afflicted people of his race. He had given proof of his zeal for the Most High, but he had never had a personal revelation of Him till he found Him that day in the mount. There is much outer-court service in the Lord's temple. Many serve and suffer for Him who never enter the Holy Place where the Most High dwells between the Cherubim. It is there He reveals Himself as nowhere else. He manifests Himself to those who pray in secret as He cannot to those who have no inner sanctuary of the soul.

Moses found himself where he found his God. It was not a pleasant discovery; it seldom is. He was a disappointed reformer. He had made great sacrifices for Israel, and he found them resentful of his interference, jealous of his motives, distrustful of his purpose. For forty years he had brooded over a wicked king, a spiritless and ungrateful people. He nursed his grievance with the resignation of a martyr and the despondency of a disappointed leader. "Put thy hand into thy bosom," commanded the Voice out of the fire; and, lo, it was leprous, white as snow! That was a startling surprise for him. He had thought the other people were leprous, but neither his own heart nor hands were clean. That is the kind of discovery men make in the mount of God, and that is one reason we are so reluctant to ascend. He discovered other things besides leprosy. He found himself. He found latent powers. He found his vocation. He found that a stick he had carried daily was a symbol and instrument of Divine power. God discovers us to ourselves when He reveals Himself to us.

Moses found the will of God in the mount. It was there he received the law. After forty days alone with God he brought heaven's laws to earth on two tables of stone. Those laws remain to this day the foundation of all righteous government among men. After centuries of progress they are still the basis of civilization.

He not only received the Commandments which were to be the corner stones of good government for all time; he also received directions concerning local and personal details. See the minute instructions for the building of the tabernacle. No trifle is overlooked. Nails and fringes, tong and snuffers are all included. Every detail was designed in the mount. Every pattern was divinely fixed and approved. The way to the mount is still open. The divine pattern of each life is still to be seen in the secret place of the Most High God. The humblest follower of Jesus may know the Divine Will at first hand. It is every man's privilege to be fully assured in the will of God. The Divine attention to detail is amazing. Nothing is too trivial for Omniscience. Come straight to God. Do not bother other people. Lay all questions naked before Him, and He will make it plain to you what is His will. When God speaks, His speech is easily understood. All questions of the plain should be settled in the mount, and where there is certainty in the mount there will

be victory on the levels and in the valleys.

The Place of Power

There is a wonderful story in Exodus 17. It was Israel's first battle. The Amalekites Came against them in Rephidim. Joshua commanded the hosts of Israel, and Moses went up into the mount to pray. The fluctuations of the battle were astonishing. In turns the opposing hosts prevailed, until it was found that the issue of the battle was. not with the fighters in the field, but with the intercessors in the mount. It was the weaponless hand of prayer that ruled the battle. "And it came to pass, when Moses held up his' hand, that Israel prevailed: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed." Is it necessary to point the moral of the tale? Power is the recompense of prayer. It takes us long to learn that prayer is more important than organization, more powerful than armies, more influential than wealth, and mightier than all learning. Prevailing prayer makes men invincible. They who prevail in the secret place of the Most High cannot be beaten anywhere. All things are possible to secret prayer.

The Place of Fellowship

In the mount the Lord spake unto Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend. Like Abraham, Moses was admitted to the friendship of God. He did not come simply to plead petitions and receive orders. He was there for communion on a common basis of fellowship. The inner chamber is an audience chamber where the soul enters into friendly intercourse and mutual interchange. It is a place for listening as well as for speech. The most important part of prayer is not what we say to God, but what God says to us. It is no place for hurry. The soul must be still and wait before the Lord.

The mount is the place of intercession. There is a moving story in Exodus 32: 9-14 of how Moses pleaded for Israel. He stepped into the breach. God looks for men who will stand in the gap (Ezekiel 22: 30). God encourages us to speak for others and to plead for them. He suffers entreaty. How daring was Abraham's faith! With what audacity Moses stepped into the breach and urged the plea for Israel! With what passion Paul pleaded for his kinsmen according to the flesh! We are commanded to pray one for another, and who can tell what blessings come to men through intercession?

It was in the mount Moses saw God's glory. It is a vision of the secret place. It was in the mount that Jesus was transfigured. The glory seen is also shared. Prayer transfigures. Moses came down from the mount all aglow with the glory, but "he wist not that the skin of his face shone." That is the secret of radiant humility. "As Jesus prayed, he was transfigured before them." Glory is the recompense of prayer. The Lord who calls His servant into the mount sends him down. Peter wanted to stay. We go up that we may go down. There are golden images, senseless and wicked passions, enslaved and misguided people, distracted fathers and devil-torn sons and daughters that need the vision and the power of God. Come up! Go down! God wants us in the mount and He wants us in the valley. Moses died in the mount. Those who go up and down at God's bidding are sure to end in going up to come down no more.

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