

WEEK 6 — OUTLINE

The Prayer of the Age to Fulfill God's Economy and the Sacrifice of Praise to Display Christ's Victory

Scripture Reading: Acts 2:36; Eph. 1:19-23; Psa. 22:3; 119:164; Heb. 13:15; 2 Chron. 20:20-22

« DAY 1 »

I. The prayer of the age is the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ, as the one new man, the prayer that exercises the authority of Christ as the ascended Lord and Head of the Body to fulfill God's economy; to enter into this kind of prayer, we need a heavenly vision to see something that is far beyond our natural concept (Eph. 1:17):

A. We need to see the meaning of the ascension of Christ:

1. The ascension of Christ indicates that the entire work of redemption has been completely accomplished (Heb. 1:3; 10:12).
2. The ascension of Christ indicates that the lordship of Christ has been established (Acts 2:36):
 - a. Everything that the Lord has obtained and attained is being transmitted "to the church" (Eph. 1:19-23; 3:20-21).
 - b. We need to see the heavenly fact that Christ has been exalted by God, established as the Lord of the universe, and made Head over all things to the church; all things are under His feet, and everything that He has obtained and attained is being transmitted to the church, which is His Body (1:22-23).

B. We need to see the church's position as the Body of Christ; because the church is the Body of Christ, the position of the church is exactly the same as that of Christ; since the Body is one with the Head, the position of the Body is exactly the same as that of the Head (1 Cor. 12:12, 27; Eph. 5:30).

C. We need to see the authority of the church as the Body of Christ:

1. The authority of the Body is the authority of the Head exercised by the Body.
2. As the church, the Body of Christ, we need to assume the authority of Christ (Matt. 28:18b-19a; Luke 10:19).

« DAY 2 »

D. We need to see the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ:

1. This kind of prayer is not the prayer of individual believers but the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ; physically, we may be praying in our room only by ourselves, but spiritually, we are one with the Body (cf. 1 Kings 8:48).
2. In this kind of prayer, we do not beg the Lord to do something for us; instead, we claim what the Lord has obtained and attained:
 - a. Christ has obtained the lordship and the headship; He is the Lord and the Head over all things to the church.
 - b. Christ has attained the highest place in the universe; He has been raised from the dead and is seated at God's right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule, authority, power, and lordship in the universe (Eph. 1:20-21).
3. When we pray according to what the Lord has obtained in ascension, we may pray, "Lord, we do not go along with the present situation; as Your Body, we take the ground of Your ascension and claim Your lordship over the present situation."
4. When we pray according to what the Lord has attained in ascension, we should simply declare who we are and where we are; we are in the Body, the Body is in the Head, and the Head is transcendent; if we have the vision that we are the Body of the Head and that the Head is now transcendent, we will take the ground to claim what the Lord has attained and tell all the negative things, "Do not bother me. Go to the lake of fire! I am transcendent. You cannot touch me. You are under my feet."

« DAY 3 »

5. Because the Body is one with the Head in the heavens, the Body has the authority to bind and loose what has already been bound and loosed in the heavens (Matt. 16:19; 18:18).
6. The church is built upon a rock, and this rock is the ascended Christ; as a result, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church (16:18).

E. To fully enter into this kind of prayer and be able to exercise the

authority given by the Head to the Body, there are two things that we must realize:

1. We must realize that we are members of the Body, and we must live, act, and move in the Body; as an example, imprisonment did not isolate Paul from the Body of Christ or cut him off from the supply of the Body (Phil. 1:19).
2. In our daily life we must always put off the old man and put on the new man by being renewed in the spirit of our mind; the new man is composed of the Head with the Body, Christ with the church (Eph. 4:22-24; 2:15-16).

F. “We need to see the vision of the ascended Christ and learn to pray the prayer of authority. For two thousand years these matters have been neglected, but we believe that in these last days the Lord is going to recover them. Too often we do not take the ground of Christ’s ascension and claim what He has obtained and attained. Nevertheless, we believe that the Lord will recover this lost ground. This is the highest peak, the highest mountain of the good land. In these last days the Lord will recover this highest peak, this highest mountain. We must realize the facts, take the ground, and claim what the Head has obtained and attained. This is the prevailing prayer of the church. This is the prayer of the age” (The Collected Works of Witness Lee, 1963, vol. 1, p. 165).

« DAY 4 »

II. Praise is the highest work carried out by God’s children:

A. The highest expression of a saint’s spiritual life is his praise to God.

B. God’s throne is the highest point in the universe, yet He sits “enthroned / Upon the praises of Israel” (Psa. 22:3).

C. God’s name and even God Himself are exalted through praise:

1. David praised God seven times a day; the Christian life soars through praises; to praise is to transcend everything to touch the Lord (119:164).
2. David appointed Levites to play instruments to commemorate, thank, and praise God before the Ark of the Covenant of God (1 Chron. 16:4-6).
3. When Solomon completed the building of Jehovah’s temple, the priests brought the Ark of the Covenant of Jehovah into the Holy of Holies; when the

priests came out of the Holy Place, the Levites stood beside the altar, sounded the trumpets, and sang with cymbals, harps, and lyres; together they sounded praise to God, and at that moment the glory of Jehovah filled His house (2 Chron. 5:7, 12-14).

4. We should praise the Lord all our life; we should sing praises to our God (Psa. 146:2; Hymns, #717, #124, #166).
5. When we, the many sons of God, meet as the church and praise the Father, the firstborn Son sings hymns of praise to the Father in our singing (Heb. 2:12).

D. “Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name” (13:15):

1. The book of Psalms is, in fact, a book of praise in the Old Testament; however, the Psalms contain chapters not only of praises but also of sufferings; God wants His people to know that the praising ones are the very ones who have been led through trying situations and whose feelings have been wounded, yet God perfected praises out of these ones (8:1-2; 84:4-6; 42:7, 11; 45:1-2).
2. The loudest praise comes very often from the ones who are passing through hardships, adverse environments, and downtrodden feelings; this kind of praise is most pleasing to God and is blessed by Him (cf. 23:4).

« DAY 5 »

3. The nature of praise is an offering, a sacrifice; in other words, praise comes from pain, suffering, and loss; God desires His children to praise Him through everything and in every situation (Heb. 13:15).

E. Praise is the way to display Christ’s victory and overcome spiritual attacks:

1. The ultimate goal of Satan is to stop all praises to God; prayer signifies spiritual warfare, but praise signifies spiritual victory; whenever we praise, Satan flees.
2. “About midnight Paul and Silas, while praying, sang hymns of praise to God; and the prisoners were listening to them” (Acts 16:25):
 - a. Paul and Silas offered the sacrifice of praise in the jail; the wounds on their bodies were not yet healed, their pain was not soothed, their feet were in the stocks, and they were shut in an inner jail of the Roman Empire.
 - b. What was there to be joyful about? What was there to sing about? But there were two persons with transcendent spirits, who had surpassed everything; when they praised in such a way, the doors of the jail opened, the chains fell off,

and even the jailer and his whole family were saved in a joyful way (vv. 19-34).

« DAY 6 »

- c. Whenever you run out of strength to pray and you find your spirit heavily oppressed, wounded, or sagging, praise Him; if you cannot pray, try to praise.
 - d. When you encounter unusual circumstances and problems and are bewildered and feel like collapsing, just remember one thing: “Why not praise?”; if you offer your praise at that moment, God’s Spirit will operate in you, open all the doors, and break all the chains.
3. “They rose up early in the morning and went out to the wilderness of Tekoa. And as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood up and said, Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem. Believe in Jehovah your God, and you will be established; believe in His prophets, and you will succeed. And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever. And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck” (2 Chron. 20:20-22):
- a. Please note the words when they began; this means that at the very moment when everyone was singing praises to Jehovah, He rose up to smite the Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir; nothing moves the Lord’s hand as quickly as praise.
 - b. Every time you encounter a problem, you should pray for mercy that you would stop manipulating and plotting and that you would learn the lesson of praising instead; much warfare can be won by praise.
 - c. Praise will last for eternity; it will never cease (Rev. 5:8-14; 7:9-12; 14:1-3; 15:2-4; 19:1-8; cf. 21:6; 22:20).
 - d. A person who praises God transcends everything; he overcomes continually by his praise; this is a principle, and this is also a fact.
 - e. To praise is to glorify God; God is worthy of all glory; may God gain abundant praises from His children.

« WEEK 6 — DAY 1 »

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 1:22-23 And He subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all.

Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified.

The prevailing prayer of the church...is the prayer of the age. In these days we need to learn something concerning prevailing prayer. As Christians we may know something concerning prayer, but in the Scriptures, especially in the New Testament, there is one kind of prayer that is far beyond our human concept. To enter into this kind of prayer, we need a heavenly vision.

The first main point of this heavenly vision is the ascension of Christ. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, p. 159)

Today's Reading

The ascension of Christ indicates that the Lord's redemptive work is fully complete. After the Lord ascended to the heavens, He sat down at the right hand of God (Heb. 1:3; 10:12). Here, to sit down means to rest. When someone sits down, it means that everything that he had to do has been finished and accomplished. When someone has nothing more to do, he sits down to rest. The fact that the Lord is in the heavens sitting down at the right hand of God means that He has done everything that He had to do.

The ascension of Christ indicates that the lordship of Christ has been established. The lordship of Christ was established by the ascension of Christ. Generally speaking, all believers recognize that Christ is the Lord...Today the Lord Christ is not merely the Lord who created the universe. The Lord Christ today is also God who was incarnated to be a man. Today there is a man in the heavens who has been exalted and established to be the Lord of the universe.

On the day of Pentecost Peter declared, “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made Him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you have crucified” (Acts 2:36). The apostle Paul also tells us that God “subjected all things under His feet and gave Him to be Head over all things” (Eph. 1:22). This is very different from our natural concept.

Moreover, Ephesians 1:22 tells us that Christ was given to be Head over all things “to the church.” Everything that the Lord has obtained and attained is not only for Himself but is also to the church. This means that everything that He has obtained and attained is being transmitted to the church. We need to see a heavenly vision of this heavenly fact. The enemy—the devil and his evil spirits—knows this much better than we do. The evil forces know what it means for Christ to be made Lord. Therefore, we need to realize this fact and to genuinely see it. We need to see the heavenly fact that Christ has been exalted by God, established as Lord of the universe, and made Head over all things to the church. All things are under His feet, and everything that He has obtained and attained is being transmitted to the church, which is His Body (v. 23).

The second main point [of this heavenly vision] is the position of the church as the Body of Christ. Because the church is the Body of Christ, the position of the church is exactly the same as that of Christ. Wherever the Head is, the Body also must be. Whatever the Head has, the Body also must have. In addition, we need to realize that we are members of the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:27; Eph. 5:30). Since the Body is identified with the Head, the position of the Body is exactly the same as that of the Head.

The third main point...concerns the authority of the Body. I specifically use the word authority rather than the word power or even the word right. What is the authority of the Body? The authority of the Body is the authority of the Head exercised by the Body. Thus, the authority of the Body is the authority of the Head....As the church, the Body of Christ, we need to assume the authority of Christ. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 159-161)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 153-157

« WEEK 6 — DAY 2 »

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 1:20-22 Which He caused to operate in Christ in raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenlies, far above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name that is named not only in this age but also in that which is to come;...and gave Him to be Head over all things to the church.

The fourth main point [of the heavenly vision] is the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ. This kind of prayer is not the prayer of individual believers but the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ. This kind of prayer may be unfamiliar to us. We may know nothing about it because this kind of prayer is not something that we naturally consider. This is prayer that is based on the fact that we have the position and authority of Christ. In this kind of prayer we do not beg the Lord to do something for us. Instead, we claim what the Lord has obtained and attained. However, to pray in this way, we must have some realization of what the Lord has obtained and attained. Christ has obtained the lordship and the headship; He is the Lord, the Head over all things. The lordship and the headship are the most important aspects of what the Lord has obtained. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, p. 162)

Today's Reading

Once we realize what the Lord has obtained, we need to apply it. Actually, it is very simple to exercise the lordship and the headship of Christ...When you meet [a brother], you may sense that his condition and position are not right with the Lord. As a result, you may become burdened to pray for him. In this situation there are two ways you can pray. One way is...the way taken by most believers when praying for others. In this general way you may go to the Lord and tell Him, "Lord, this brother is in a poor condition. Lord, be merciful to him. Do something with him. Work within his spirit." This is the general way to pray for someone. However, there is another way to pray. This way is very special and may seem

strange to us. It is not an ordinary way of praying; rather, it is an extraordinary way. In this way of prayer you are bold with the Lord. You may go to the Lord and say, “Lord, here is a brother who is still not under Your headship. I do not agree with this. I do not go along with this kind of situation. Lord, I am standing up to proclaim Your lordship and to claim it over this situation.” We can pray in this same way for a sinner: “Lord, Your lordship must be exercised over this person. Lord, I claim this.” We need to realize the difference between the general way of prayer and this second way of prayer.

In this second way of prayer we touch the authority of Christ. We must see, however, that we can never pray in this way by ourselves. This does not mean that we must always physically gather together with a few other brothers. Physically, you may be praying in your room by yourself, but spiritually, you are one with the Body. When you are alone in your room, sometimes you may choose not to use the pronoun I; instead, you may use the pronoun we, praying, “Lord, we do not go along with the present situation. As Your Body, we take the ground of Your ascension and claim Your lordship over the present situation.” This is a different kind of prayer. This is not prayer that begs the Lord to do something for you; this is prayer that claims what the Lord has obtained.

In these days we need to learn to pray by claiming what the Lord has obtained. We also need to learn how to exercise what the Lord has attained, because the Lord has not only obtained to the highest extent; He has also attained to the highest height. Suppose, for example, that you become ill. If you have the vision of what the Lord has obtained and attained, when you are in this situation, you will pray, “Lord, You are the transcendent One. You have been exalted to the heaven of heavens. Lord, we are Your Body. We are sitting with You in the heavenlies. All things have been subjected under Your feet, and therefore all things are also under our feet. This little sickness is included in ‘all things,’ so this little sickness also must be under my feet. I am now transcendent with You.” Do you see the difference between this kind of prayer and the way in which we generally pray? (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 162-163)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 159-166

« WEEK 6 — DAY 3 »

Morning Nourishment

Matt. 16:19 I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of the heavens, and whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in the heavens, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in the heavens.

18:18 Truly I say to you, Whatever you bind on the earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on the earth shall have been loosed in heaven.

If we have the vision that we are the Body of the Head and that the Head has ascended to the heavens and is now transcendent, we will take the ground and claim what the Lord has attained. We will simply claim, proclaim, and declare to the sickness, “Do not trouble me; you are under my feet!” We can deal with sins, weakness, and worldliness in the same way. We should not deal with these things like a beggar. We can tell all these negative things, “Do not bother me. Go to the lake of fire! I am transcendent. You cannot touch me. You are under my feet.” Whenever the devil hears this kind of prayer, he runs away. We should simply declare who we are and where we are. We are in the Body, the Body is in the Head, and the Head is transcendent. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, p. 164)

Today's Reading

On August 10, 1945, the Japanese army declared their willingness to surrender to the Allied forces in World War II. Before that day China had been under Japanese occupation, and many of the Chinese people had been treated very badly. However, on the day of the Japanese surrender, even the Chinese children gained the authority to claim victory. A few hours prior to the surrender, they had been very frightened, but once the surrender had been announced, they could claim what had been won for them. Once the victory had been obtained, they could take the ground and claim victory. In the same way, we can claim what the Lord has already obtained and attained for us.

Since the Body shares the authority of the Head, the Lord told His disciples that whatever they bound on earth would have been bound in heaven, and whatever they loosed on earth would have been loosed in heaven (Matt. 16:19; 18:18). When we pray with the authority of the Body, anything that we loose on the earth will be something that has already been loosed in the heavens, and anything that we bind on the earth will be something that has already been bound in the heavens. Because the Body is one with the Head in the heavens, the Body has the authority to bind or loose what has already been bound or loosed in the heavens.

The church is built upon a rock, and this rock is the ascended Christ. As a result, the gates of Hades cannot prevail against the church (16:18). We have the ground over Hades. Thus, we must learn to pray, exercising the authority that has been assigned to the Body by the Head.

To fully enter into this kind of prayer, there are two additional things that we must realize. First, we must realize that we are members of the Body, and we must live, act, and move in the Body. Second, in our daily life we must always put on the new man (Eph. 4:24). The new man is composed of the Head with the Body, Christ with the church (2:15-16). On the negative side, we need to put off the old man, and on the positive side, we need to put on the new man. By living in the Body and putting on the new man, we will be able to exercise the authority given to the Body by the Head.

We need to see the vision of the ascended Christ and learn to pray the prayer of authority. For two thousand years these matters have been neglected, but we believe that in these last days the Lord is going to recover them. Too often we do not take the ground of Christ's ascension and claim what He has obtained and attained. Nevertheless, we believe that the Lord will recover this lost ground. This is the highest peak, the highest mountain of the good land. In these last days the Lord will recover this highest peak, this highest mountain. We must realize the facts, take the ground, and claim what the Head has obtained and attained. This is the prevailing prayer of the church. This is the prayer of the age. (CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 164-165)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1963, vol. 1, pp. 157-166

« WEEK 6 — DAY 4 »

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 22:3 But You are holy, You who sit enthroned upon the praises of Israel.

8:2 Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings You have established strength because of Your adversaries, to stop the enemy and the avenger.

Matt. 21:16 ...Have you never read, “Out of the mouth of infants and sucklings You have perfected praise”?

Praise is the highest work carried out by God’s children. We can say that the highest expression of a saint’s spiritual life is his praise to God. God’s throne is the highest point in the universe, yet He sits “enthroned upon the praises of Israel” (Psa. 22:3). God’s name and even God Himself are exalted through praise. (CWWN, vol. 48, “Messages for Building Up New Believers (1),” p. 247)

[Hebrews 2:12] is the firstborn Son’s praising of the Father within the Father’s many sons in the church meetings. When we, the many sons of God, meet as the church and praise the Father, the firstborn Son praises the Father in our praising...He praises within us and with us through our praising. In our singing He sings hymns of praise to the Father. If then we do not sing, how can He sing? The more we sing to the Father, the more we enjoy His presence, His moving, His anointing, and His life-imparting within us. (Heb. 2:12, footnote 3)

Today’s Reading

David said in a psalm that he prayed to God three times a day (Psa. 55:17). Yet in another psalm, he said that he praised God seven times a day (119:164). David was inspired by the Holy Spirit when he acknowledged the importance of praising. He prayed only three times a day, but he praised seven times a day. Furthermore, he appointed Levites to play psalteries and harps to exalt, thank, and praise God before the Ark of the Covenant of God (1 Chron. 16:4-6). When Solomon completed the building of Jehovah’s temple, the priests carried the Ark of the Covenant into the

Holy of Holies. When the priests came out of the Holy Place, the Levites stood beside the altar, sounded the trumpets, and sang with cymbals, psalteries, and harps. Together they sounded praises to God. At that moment, the glory of Jehovah filled His house (2 Chron. 5:12-14). Both David and Solomon touched God's heart and offered up sacrifices of praise that were pleasing to God. Jehovah is enthroned upon the praises of Israel [Psa. 22:3]. We should praise the Lord all our life.

The Christian life soars through praises. To praise is to transcend everything to touch the Lord...We should not murmur against heaven when we are under trials. We should soar above the trials. Once we praise, we are above the trials.

The Bible pays much attention to praise....The book of Psalms is full of praises. The book of Psalms is in fact a book of praise in the Old Testament. Many praises are quoted from Psalms.

However, the Psalms contain chapters not only of praises but also of suffering. God wants His people to know that the praising ones are the very ones who have been led through trying situations and whose feelings have been wounded. These psalms show us men led by God through shadows of darkness. They were rejected, slandered, and persecuted. "All Your waves and Your billows / Pass over me" (42:7). Yet God perfected praises out of these ones. Words of praise do not always come from the mouths of the smooth-sailing ones. They come much more from those who are under discipline and trial. In the Psalms we can touch the most wounded feelings, and in the Psalms we also can find the greatest and highest praises. God uses many hardships, difficulties, and slanders to create praises in His people. He causes them to learn through difficult circumstances to become praising persons before the Lord.

The happiest persons are not always the ones who have the loudest praise. The loudest praise comes very often from the ones who are passing through hardships. This kind of praise is most pleasing to God and is blessed by Him. (CWWN, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," pp. 247, 257, 247-248)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," ch. 16

« WEEK 6 — DAY 5 »

Morning Nourishment

Heb. 13:15 Through Him then let us offer up a sacrifice of praise continually to God, that is, the fruit of lips confessing His name.

Acts 16:25 And about midnight Paul and Silas, while praying, sang hymns of praise to God; and the prisoners were listening to them.

In the eyes of God...the nature of praise is an offering, a sacrifice [Heb. 13:15]. In other words, praise comes from pain and suffering...What is a sacrifice? A sacrifice is an offering...The bull and the lamb are yours. When you offer them up, you are sacrificing them. To offer up something does not mean to gain anything; it means to suffer a loss. When a person offers up his praise, he is losing something; he is offering a sacrifice to God...God wants His children to praise Him in the midst of their sufferings. We should not praise only when there is gain. Although praise offered as a result of gain is praise, it cannot be considered an offering. The principle of offering is based on loss...God wants us to praise Him in the midst of our loss. This makes a real offering. (CWWN, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," pp. 248-249)

Today's Reading

Praising is the way to overcome spiritual attacks. Many people say that Satan is afraid of the prayers of God's children; he flees whenever God's children kneel down to pray. This is why he often attacks God's children and frustrates them from praying. This is a common attack. But we will point out another fact: Satan's greatest attacks are not aimed at prayers; his greatest attacks are aimed at praise. This does not mean that Satan does not attack prayers. The moment a Christian prays, Satan begins to attack. It is very easy to talk to people, but the moment one prays, Satan comes with problems. He will make one feel that it is hard to pray. This is a fact. But Satan does not attack just prayer; he also attacks the praise of God's children. The ultimate goal of Satan is to stop all praises to God. Prayer is a warfare, but praise is a victory. Prayer signifies spiritual warfare, but

praise signifies spiritual victory. Whenever we praise, Satan flees. Therefore, Satan hates our praising the most. He will use all his strength to stop our praising. God's children are foolish if they stop praising when they suffer under adverse environments and downtrodden feelings. But as they come to know God more, they will find that even a Philippian jail can become a place of songs (Acts 16:25). Paul and Silas were praising God inside the jail cell. Their praise broke loose all the jail doors...and the chains broke. The jailer believed in the Lord on that day, and his whole family was saved in a joyful way (16:19-34). Paul and Silas offered the sacrifice of praise in the jail. The wounds on their bodies were not yet healed; their pain was not soothed. Their feet were in the stocks, and they were shut in an inner jail of the Roman Empire. What was there to be joyful about? What was there to sing about? But there were two persons with transcendent spirits, who had surpassed everything. They saw that God was still sitting in the heavens; He had not changed at all. They themselves might have changed, their environment might have changed, their feelings might have changed, and their bodies might have been suffering, but God was still sitting on the throne. He was still worthy of their blessings. Our brothers, Paul and Silas, were praying, singing, and praising God. This kind of praise, which arises out of pain and loss, is a sacrifice of praise. This kind of praise is a victory.

When you pray, you are still in the midst of your situation. But when you praise, you soar above your situation. While you are praying and pleading, you are bound by your affairs; you are not out of them. The more you plead, the more you find yourself bound and pressed....Paul and Silas...were brought by God to the point where the jail, the shame, and the pain were no longer a problem to them. They could praise God. When they praised in such a way, the doors of the jail opened, the chains fell off, and even the jailer was saved. (CWWN, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," pp. 250-251)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," ch. 16

« WEEK 6 — DAY 6 »

Morning Nourishment

2 Chron. 20:21-22 And when he had taken counsel with the people, he appointed them to sing to Jehovah and give thanks in holy array as they went out before the army and say, Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever. And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir, who were coming out against Judah; and they were struck.

Whenever you run out of strength to pray and you find your spirit heavily oppressed, wounded, or sagging, praise Him. If you cannot pray, try to praise. We invariably think that we should pray when the burden is heavy and praise when the burden is over...There are times when the burden is so heavy that you cannot pray. That is the time for you to praise. We do not praise when there is no burden; we praise when the burden becomes too heavy. When you encounter unusual circumstances and problems and are bewildered and feel like collapsing, just remember one thing, "Why not praise?" Here is a golden opportunity. If you offer your praise at that moment, God's Spirit will operate in you, open all the doors, and break all the chains. (CWWN, vol. 48, "Messages for Building Up New Believers (1)," p. 252)

Today's Reading

Let us look at 2 Chronicles 20:20-22....The nation of Judah was coming to an end at the time of Jehoshaphat's rule. It was very weak; everything was in a state of shambles. The Moabites, Ammonites, and the people of Mount Seir came to invade Judah. Judah was completely in despair; they felt that defeat was certain. Jehoshaphat was a revived king and a God-fearing person...seeking after God. He told Judah to believe in God. What did he do? He appointed singers to sing praises to Jehovah. He also asked these ones to praise the beauty of holiness and to walk out before the army and say, "Give thanks to Jehovah, for His lovingkindness endures forever" [v. 21].

Please note the words when they began in the following verse. It is a very precious word. “And when they began to shout in song and to praise, Jehovah set ambushes for the children of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir” [v. 22]. When they began means at that very moment. When everyone was singing praises to Jehovah, He rose to strike the Ammonites, Moabites, and the people of Mount Seir. Nothing moves the Lord’s hand as quickly as praise. Prayer is not the fastest way to move the Lord’s hand; praise is the fastest way....We need to pray, and we need to pray every day. However, we can overcome many things only by praising.

New believers should not think that they have to pass through many years before they can learn the lesson of praise. They should realize that they can start praising immediately. Every time you encounter a problem, you should pray for mercy that you would stop manipulating and plotting and that you would learn the lesson of praising instead. Much warfare can be won by praise. Many battles are lost because of the lack of praise. If you believe in God, you can tell the Lord in the midst of your problems, “I praise Your name. You are higher than everything. You are stronger than everything. Your lovingkindness endures forever!” A person who praises God transcends everything. He overcomes continually by his praise. This is a principle, and this is also a fact.

Finally, in Psalm 50:23 God says, “Whoever offers a sacrifice of thanksgiving glorifies Me.” Here, the word thanksgiving can also be translated as “praise.” The Lord is waiting for our praises. Nothing can glorify our God as praises can. One day, all the prayers, works, prophesying, and labor will be over....Praise will last for eternity; it will never cease.

Today we have to learn to believe that the Lord is good and that He is never wrong, even though we cannot always understand what He is doing. If we believe, we will praise. Our praises are His glory. To praise is to glorify God. God is worthy of all glory. May God gain abundant praises from His children. (CWWN, vol. 48, “Messages for Building Up New Believers (1),” pp. 253-255, 258-259)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 48, “Messages for Building Up New Believers (1),” ch. 16

« WEEK 6 — HYMN

Hymns, #124

1

Praise Him! praise Him! Christ is Victor!
He has won the victory!
Sin is judged, old Adam finished,
Full redemption now we see!
Vanquished all the evil powers
Through the Cross triumphantly!

2

Praise Him! Christ is resurrected!
God hath raised Him from the dead!
All the pow'r of death is swallowed,
Man from death to life is led!
Broken through are hell and darkness
And His pow'r exhibited!

3

Praise Him! Christ hath now ascended!
God hath raised Him to the throne!
Far above all rule and power,
He the highest name doth own!
All authority receiving
Till His foe is overthrown!

4

Hallelujah, Christ the Victor
Triumphed on Mount Calvary!
Hallelujah, resurrected,
He displays His victory!
Hallelujah, now ascended,
He shall reign eternally!

