

# STUDY NOTES ON THE PARABLE OF THE PLEADING WIDOW: -

- Jesus gave this parable for the express purpose to teach His followers to be persistent in their prayers to God, and not to faint or lose heart.

Luke 18:1: - “And he spake a parable unto them *to this end*, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint.”

- Jesus then tells the parable of an aggrieved widow, who persistently asks an unrighteous judge, to avenge her on her adversary. The judge refuses for a time, despite the widow’s continued pleading. But after a while, he finally relents, not from a sense of justice, but to be free of this widow’s continuous pleading.

Luke 18:2 – 5: - “Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.”

- Of course, Jesus describes this Judge as being unjust or unrighteous. The Scriptures give specific counsel on how judges are to conduct themselves, particularly, in defending the poor, the widow and the powerless in their causes.

Exodus 23:6: - “Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause.”

Leviticus 19:15: - “Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: *but* in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.”

Deuteronomy 16:18 & 19: - “Judges and officers shalt thou make thee in all thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee, throughout thy tribes: and they shall judge the people with just judgment. Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.”

Isaiah 1:17: - “Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.”

- We have already read in Luke 18:1, the reason Jesus gave this parable. It was to teach His followers to be persistent in their prayers and seeking the Lord. The Scriptures have much to say concerning seeking the Lord, and being persistent in our prayers. Let us read a sample of their Inspired counsel.
- The following passages refer to how we are to seek the Lord.

Deuteronomy 4:29: - “But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find *him*, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul.”

1st Chronicles 16:11: - “Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually.”

Isaiah 55:6 & 7: - “Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”

Jeremiah 29:11 – 13: - “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end. Then shall ye call upon me, and ye shall go and pray unto me, and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, and find *me*, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

Lamentations 3:25 & 26: - “The LORD *is* good unto them that wait for him, to the soul *that* seeketh him. *It is* good that *a man* should both hope and quietly wait for the salvation of the LORD.”

Hosea 12:6: - “Therefore turn thou to thy God: keep mercy and judgment, and wait on thy God continually.”

John 15:7: - “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.”

- Our Lord Jesus Christ Himself was persistent and very much in earnest in His earthly life.

Mark 1:35: - “And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, he went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.”

Luke 6:12: - “And it came to pass in those days, that he went out into a mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.”

Hebrews 5:6 – 9: - “As he saith also in another *place*, Thou *art* a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec. Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.”

- The following passages refer to our being persistent in our prayers with the Lord.

Psalms 109:4: - “For my love they are my adversaries: but I *give myself* unto prayer.”

Acts 12:5: - “Peter therefore was kept in prison: but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him.”

Romans 12:12: - “Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.”

Ephesians 6:18: - “Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.”

Colossians 4:2: - “Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving.”

Colossians 4:12: - “Epaphras, who is *one* of you, a servant of Christ, saluteth you, always labouring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God.”

1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:17: - “Pray without ceasing.”

James 5:16: - “Confess *your* faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

- **There are a number of conditions that we must fulfill if we expect the Lord to answer our prayers.**

We need faith in God, and to have a forgiving attitude to others for God to hear our prayers.

Mark 11:22 - 26: - “And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God. For verily I say unto you, That whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea; and shall not doubt in his heart, but shall believe that those things which he saith shall come to pass; he shall have whatsoever he saith. Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive *them*, and ye shall have *them*. And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. But if ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in heaven forgive your trespasses.”

- We are to pray in the name of Jesus.

John 14:13 & 14: - “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do *it*.”

- We are to pray in accordance with God’s will.

1st John 5:14 & 15: - “And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.”

- God will not hear the prayers of those who are disobedient to Him within their heart.

Psalms 66:18: - “If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear *me*.”

Proverbs 28:9: - “He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer *shall be* abomination.”

- We will not have our prayers answered if we are asking for things to please our carnal lusts.

James 4:1 - 3: - “From whence *come* wars and fightings among you? *come they* not hence, *even* of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume *it* upon your lusts.”

- At the end of this parable, Jesus refers to God avenging His elect or chosen people, which is set within the time context of the Second Coming of Jesus. The righteous at the end of time, are also to be persistent in their prayers, calling upon God for deliverance from their enemies, as the widow was in her persistence. The question is asked by Jesus, “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” This indicates that true, enduring faith will be rare to find on the earth just before Jesus comes again.

Luke 18:6 - 8: - “And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?”

- The Scriptures reveal the Lord as being the Avenger and Judge of His people.

Psalm 94:1: - “O LORD God, to whom vengeance belongeth; O God, to whom vengeance belongeth, show thyself.”

Nahum 1:2: - “God *is* jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and *is* furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.”

Romans 12:19: - “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.”

Hebrews 10:30: - “For we know him that hath said, Vengeance *belongeth* unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.”

- The saints will plead with the Lord to avenge them at the time of the Second Coming of Jesus.

Psalm 88:1 – 3: - “O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day *and* night before thee: Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine ear unto my cry; For my soul is full of troubles: and my life draweth nigh unto the grave.”

Isaiah 35:4: - “Say to them *that are* of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come *with* vengeance, *even* God *with* a recompense; he will come and save you.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1:7 & 8: - “And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- In Luke 18:7, it is God’s elect or chosen, whom He will avenge at the end of this world. So let us read a number of passages concerning God’s elect or chosen disciples. Some of the passages will refer to end time promises made to the elect. Others passages will refer to the qualifications or qualities of character associated with God’s elect.

Matthew 24:22 & 24: - “And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened. ... For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if *it were* possible, they shall deceive the very elect. ”

Mark 13:19 & 20: - “For *in* those days shall be affliction, such as was not from the beginning of the creation which God created unto this time, neither shall be. And except that the Lord had shortened those days, no flesh should be saved: but for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.”

Romans 8:33: - “Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? *It is* God that justifieth.”

Colossians 3:12 & 13: - “Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do ye*.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:2: - “Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.”

2<sup>nd</sup> Peter 1:5 – 10: - “And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; And to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; And to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you, and abound, they make *you that ye shall* neither *be* barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from

his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.”

- In Luke 18:8, Jesus promises that God will speedily avenge His elect who cry out to Him.

Psalm 31:1 & 2: - “In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness. Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be thou my strong rock, for an house of defence to save me.”

Psalm 40:17: - “But I *am* poor and needy; *yet* the Lord thinketh upon me: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God.”

Psalm 69:17: - “And hide not thy face from thy servant; for I am in trouble: hear me speedily.”

Psalm 70:5: - “But I *am* poor and needy: make haste unto me, O God: thou *art* my help and my deliverer; O LORD, make no tarrying.”

Psalm 102:2: - “Hide not thy face from me in the day *when* I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me: in the day *when* I call answer me speedily.”

Psalm 119:126: - “*It is* time for *thee*, LORD, to work: *for* they have made void thy law.”

- In Luke 18:8, Jesus asks a very simple but little acknowledged question – “***Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?***”

The New Testament Scriptures have given some excellent counsel and exhortations concerning true faith and the approaching Second Coming of Jesus.

Romans 1:17: - “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.”

Romans 13:11 & 12: - “And that, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep: for now *is* our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.”

Hebrews 6:11 & 12: - “And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.”

Hebrews 10:35 – 38: - “Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry. Now the just shall live by faith: but if *any man* draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.

Hebrews 11:1 & 6: - “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. ... But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.”

James 5:7 & 8: - “Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”

1<sup>st</sup> Peter 1:3 – 7: - “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.”

**📖 In the last days, God’s saints will need persistence in praying to God. Hence Jesus’ telling of the parable, is to encourage His followers at the end of time, and to be persevering in their prayer life.**