

Prayer Avails Much

"...The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months." (James 5:16-17)

P RAYER avails much! You are not wasting your time when you pray for God is an awesome God and a prayer-answering God! Much can be accomplished through prayer! Sometimes the only thing and the only recourse is to pray when everything fails! Think of Elijah of how God changed the course of nature and put aside the laws of nature for a temporal time because of his prayer!

Do you think Elijah is an exception? Consider George Mueller, the great man of faith. For him answered prayer was the rule rather than the exception. God did great things through George Mueller, even changing the course of nature and setting aside the laws of nature because he prayed. It was said in his autobiography that one time God changed the weather to his favor. Towards the end of November, 1857, it was discovered that there was a major leak in the heater boiler and repairs was crucial for the warmth and comfort of the orphan children. Mueller tried all recourses to no avail. But then he turned to the Lord in his time of distress. The repairs to be done would last for many days leaving the children in utter discomfort in the winter. A day or so before the repairs were to be done; a cold north wind blew unmercifully. The repairs had to begin but how can all the children keep warm for days?

George Mueller turned to the Lord for the answer. He prayed by faith and said: "Lord, these are Thy orphans: be pleased to change this north wind into a south wind, and give the workmen a mind to work that the job may be speedily done." The Lord took heed of George Mueller's cry and changed the north wind into a warm south wind so that no fire was needed to keep the children warm. Also He gave the workers "a mind to work" so that the repairs were done in no time.

So take the example of George Mueller to heart and always pray and do not lose heart (Luke 18:10) for prayer "avails much." Think George Mueller is also an exception? No, even George Mueller acknowledged that his faith was no different from your faith and my faith but it was a little more developed because of the severe trials God brought his way to cause him to trust in Him alone for the answer and the provision.

Here is an excerpt from George Mueller's autobiography of this incident:

Towards the end of November, 1857, it was found that a serious leak in the boiler of the heating apparatus of house No. 1 would make repairs at once necessary, and as the boilers were encased in bricks and a new boiler might be required, such repairs must consume time. Meanwhile how could three hundred children, some of them very young and tender, be kept warm? Even if gas-stoves could be temporarily set up, chimneys would be needful to carry off the impure air; and no way of heating was available during repairs, even if a hundred pounds were expended to prevent risk of cold. Again Mr. Mueller turned to the Living God, and, trusting in Him, decided to have the repairs begun. A day or so before the fires had to be put out, a bleak north wind set in. The work could no longer be delayed; yet weather, prematurely cold for the season, threatened these hundreds of children with hurtful exposure. The Lord was boldly appealed to.

"Lord, these are Thy orphans: be pleased to change this north wind into a south wind, and give the workmen a mind to work that the job may be speedily done."

The evening before the repairs actually began, the cold blast was still blowing; but *on that day a south wind blew, and the weather was so mild that no fire was needful!* Not only so, but, as Mr. Mueller went into the cellar with the overseer of the work, to see whether the repairs could in no way be expedited, he heard him say, in the hearing of the men,

"They will work late this evening, and come very early again to-morrow."

"We would rather, sir," was the reply, *"work all night."*

And so, within about thirty hours, the fire was again burning to heat the water in the boiler; and, until the apparatus was again in order, that merciful soft south wind had continued to blow. Goodness and mercy were following the Lord's humble servant, made the more conspicuous by the crises of special trial and trouble.

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