

GREAT LESSONS ON PRAYER

1. Text: II Samuel 15:30-31
2. Our last lesson dealt with the whole incident when David was forced to flee Jerusalem when Absalom revolted.
3. In that episode at one point (our text) David prays for help. That prayer and its answer form some powerful lessons concerning our modern prayers. Especially is answered the question often asked: does God have to perform a miracle to answer prayer. Clearly He does not.
4. The relevant passages for our study of prayer are these:
 - II Samuel 15:31-34, 37 The prayer and meeting Hushai
 - II Samuel 16:20-23 Absalom accepts advice of Ahithophel
 - II Samuel 17:1-13 Two give advice.
 - II Samuel 17:14 Hushai's is accepted. God's purpose seen.
 - II Samuel 17:23 Ahithophel kills himself.
5. Lessons on prayer:

I. **Prayer And The Prompt Appeal**

1. In same verse: problem presented and prayer offered (15:31)
2. When do we finally get around to prayer? Last resort?
3. Value of consistent habit.

II. **Prayer And Prudence (Wisdom) Of Men**

1. Again 15:31. Prayer was to turn man's wise counsel to foolishness.
2. God is greater than man's wisdom in every way.
3. Usually the issues involved in prayer have to do with trusting in God versus man trying to figure things out for himself.

III. **Prayer And The Providence Of God**

1. Verse 31 has the prayer; verse 32 says when David climbed to the top of the mountain there was Hushai.
2. How did he get there? God provided the means (providence). There's no need or mention of miracle here, or anywhere else in the passage.
3. God can do wonderful things in answer to prayer through His providence.

IV. **Prayer and Personal Involvement**

1. David "supplements his supplication" by his own actions.
2. See 15:33-34 He sends Hushai back to Absalom "to defeat the counsel" of the traitor. David put his faith into practice.
3. Famous quotation: "Pray as if all depends on God; act as if all depends on you."

V. **Prayer And The Purposes Of God**

1. See 17:14: God had purposed to defeat the good advice of Ahithophel to bring disaster on Absalom.
2. God's will or purpose must always be in our minds.
3. I John 5:14 "If we ask according to His will, He hears us."

VI. **Prayer And The Often Puzzling Patterns Of God's Answers**

1. God worked out what happened in this text in a very unusual way.
2. Ultimately Ahithophel really gave good advice but Absalom and his men rejected it for Hushai's bad advice. See 17:1-14.
3. Don't ever think you can always comprehend God's mysterious ways in answering prayer.
The Bookmark.

Conclusion: James 1:6 "Ask in faith."

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