

Moses' Prayer

by Bill Barratt

The sermon explores Moses' prayer as a model for intercession, emphasizing humility and reliance on God's power in spiritual battles.

Duration: 42:01

Scripture: Deuteronomy 9:1

Topics: "Prayer", "Spiritual Warfare"

Description

Bill Barratt emphasizes the significance of Moses' prayer as the Israelites prepare to enter the Promised Land, highlighting the formidable nature of their enemies and the necessity of recognizing God's power over them. He urges the congregation to understand their own weaknesses and the importance of humility before God, reminding them that victories are not due to their righteousness but God's grace. Barratt encourages persistent prayer, drawing parallels between Moses' intercession for Israel and the need for the church to pray for their community, emphasizing four key aspects of prayer: for redemption's sake, for the faithful, for the unbelievers, and for God's glory. He concludes with a call to action for the church to unite in prayer and preparation for spiritual battles ahead.

Transcript

I'm going to read a portion of scripture from Deuteronomy chapter 9. The first three verses, Moses is speaking to the children of Israel just before they're going in to possess the promised land. Here, O Israel, thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself, cities great and fenced up to heaven, a people great and tall, the children of the Anakims, whom thou knowest, and of whom thou hast heard say, Who can stand before the children of Anak? Understand therefore this day, that the Lord thy God is he which goeth before thee as a consuming fire. He shall destroy them, and he shall bring them down before thy face.

So shalt thou drive them out, and destroy them quickly, as the Lord hath said unto thee. Speak not in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me to possess this land, but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord doth drive them out from before thee. Not for thy righteousness, or for thy uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess their land, but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee, that he may perform the word which the Lord sware unto thy fathers Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Understand therefore that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness, for thou art a stiff-necked people. Remember and forget not how thou provokest the Lord thy God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt until you came into this place, ye have been rebellious against the Lord.

I would like to take you now to Luke chapter 11 verse 5, and Jesus said unto them, Which of you shall have a friend, and shall go unto him at midnight, and say unto him, Friend, lend me three loaves. For a friend of mine in his journey is come to me, and I have nothing to set before him. And he from within shall answer and say, Trouble me not, the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed, I cannot rise and give thee.

I say unto you, Though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his infortunity he will rise and give him as many as he needeth. And I say unto you, Ask, and it shall be given you. Seek, and ye shall find.

Knock, and it shall be opened unto you. For every one that asketh receiveth, and he that seeketh findeth, and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. If a son shall ask bread of any of you that is a father, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he for a fish give him a serpent? Or if he shall ask an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him? Last Sunday morning we were speaking about Abraham's prayer, and how he kept knocking six times, how he understood the character, the integrity of God, and how he applied that knowledge to reason with the Lord, not demanding but humbly, and how he was persistent in how God answered his prayer.

This morning I want to take another great man of God, Moses, and we can learn from his prayer. The background, if you turn to Deuteronomy chapter 9 again, we can see the background of Israel and Moses' prayer. In this first few verses of Deuteronomy 9, Israel are ready after 40 years in the wilderness, they're ready now to go in that day to possess the land.

We can learn something from those first three verses, and it's a lesson that applies to every situation when you're going into battle for the Lord. Whether it is a private battle, or whether it is a battle that the whole church is involved in. The first thing we must learn is the power and the might, the strength of our enemy.

That's the first thing. Listen, hear O Israel, Moses speaking to the children of Israel, telling them the might of their enemy. Hear O Israel, thou art to pass over Jordan this day, to go in to possess nations greater and mightier than thyself.

Cities great and fenced up to heaven. Hear O Israel, your task is formidable. Hear O Israel, your task is impossible.

A nation and nations greater than you, mightier than you, their cities, the walls are fenced up to heaven. There's no possible way. The task is far, far above you.

That's the first lesson we've got to learn in a spiritual warfare. Our enemy, his strongholds and the cities that he possesses, they're far greater than we are in our natural selves. They're mightier than we are in our natural abilities.

They're greater than we are. It is an impossible task. Sharon, Manchester is greater than little Sharon.

Manchester is mightier than little Sharon. The one little building of Sharon with a youth centre and a plot of ground might seem fairly big to us as a church, but in the centre of Manchester of nearly 3 million people, very small indeed. The task is beyond you.

Not only have we got to realise the enemy's fortifications are greater, but we've got to realise that his army is greater. Second verse. You're going in, you're going in, you're going in.

You're passing over Jordan and you'll find a people great and tall. The children of the Anakims whom thou knowest and of whom thou hast heard say, who can stand before the children of Anakim? Not only are the cities walled up to heaven, greater and mightier than you could ever be Sharon, but you're fighting against forces far greater than you are in the natural. They're much taller than you are.

Have you not heard of the spiritual powers that rule the world and brought the world into confusion from Adam? You've heard about them. The children of Anak, the children of the devil, the evil powers under the great prince of this world. You've heard about them.

First thing that we have got to learn as Christians in battle is the fortifications and the places the enemy possess is far greater than us. The second thing we've got to realise is that the army that defends them, the spiritual forces that hold them in their grip and keep them in slavery and chains is far greater than we could ever be. We'll never have a chance unless we first realise that, but there's a positive side too.

The second thing that we have to realise is that there's a greater power and there's a greater one than our enemy. Verse 3. Understand therefore this day that the Lord thy God is he which goeth over before thee. So you're not going to meet them head on and he will be as a consuming fire and he shall destroy them.

He'll go before you as a consuming fire and he will destroy them. And he shall bring them down before thy face. He'll do all the work first.

So shalt thou drive them out and destroy them quickly as the Lord has said unto thee. Sharon our God will go before us and with his mighty force of angels like a consuming passionate fire he will go before and he will destroy the power of the enemy and he will root them out of their fence cities and he'll shake them out of their tense positions and he'll send them reeling in confusion and broken in fear and we'll be able to walk in and drive them out. Two things you must realize in a battle the power of the enemy and the power that you have behind you.

But in between there's a third thing we've got to realize we are nothing. Now why is it important that we realize those things? The lessons of history, the lessons of our own nature, the lessons of our church and the lessons of the church in general. In Israel there were some very good men Moses the leader, Joshua, Caleb and quite a number of others men of caliber.

But sad to say the possibly here the majority or should I say the silent majority may be dormant, placid, content to get up in the morning, eat at the table, go to work, come back and go to bed and one day die. Or perhaps as the prophecy gave us this morning take the armor out of the tent, polish it up in the sun, put it back at night and go to bed, hang it up and look at it. But also in Israel there were anarchists, rebellious people, stubborn, stiff-necked.

That was Israel's state. Moses says to them he said now look I've told you the might of the enemy. I've told you about the power of God who'll go before you.

But when God delivers the land into your hands and you possess it, a land flowing with milk and honey, a land where everything will be supplied for you, a land where you'll build houses and be prosperous he said, don't forget it was not for your righteousness or by how good you were or by your talents or your gifts or your organization. Remember that when God blesses and when God gives you that land remember it wasn't for you. It wasn't because of your goodness or your righteousness or your integrity.

You were generally a rebellious people. Now that's always a good lesson to learn. Before God blesses he humbles.

We've got to realize that. And Moses then goes on to remind them and I think we can learn from this before we hear his prayer. He said I want to remind you before we go in and before God gives us the victory, I want to remind you that you've been rebellious as a nation.

I'm not talking about individuals as a nation. You were called of God. God delivered you out of Egypt with mighty signs and wonders and slavery.

He did great things. He drowned the Egyptians in the sea, brought you out and you rejoiced and sang. Marvelous.

He said and then from that moment Moses goes on to say if you read this account, you've been a rebellious nation ever since I knew you. Talking in general. What did they do? Well, they grumbled about the manna from heaven.

God's food. They grumbled because it wasn't like the garlic and the fancy food they got in Egypt. They weren't satisfied with God's bread.

And they cried for the food of Egypt and they wanted to go back and have the food of Egypt. So God had to deal with them. They went on the journey a little further and then they rebelled against Moses.

Even his own brother and sister rebelled against him. She became leprous. Remember he said you've always been like this.

He says remember when I went into the mount and God called me and remember how I prayed 40 days and 40 nights and I didn't eat bread or drink water. Miraculous thing. And God wrote with his finger the 10 commandments and communicated with me his righteousness.

And while I was there in the mount with him he says look Moses, go down to the people that you've brought out of Egypt and see that they've already turned away as soon as you left them for a moment. They've committed an abomination. He says and remember when I came down after all the miracles and all the signs and all the wonders God did when I left you to go in the mount to pray to get God's righteousness, to get God's communion, to get God's will for our nation.

And I came down with him in my hands in two tables. He says you'd made a golden cup. He says and what did I do? He said I took it and I struck the calf and I grounded under my feet till it was as small as the dust of the earth and I picked it up and I threw it in the brook and I broke the two tablets of stone.

He says and then I went back into the mount. He says and I prayed for another 40 days and another 40 nights and I had no bread and no drink again. Says God said to me let me go down and destroy them Moses.

I can give you a nation mightier and greater than these. Don't worry about them. They keep rebelling.

Let me go down and destroy them. Moses said I prayed to God. Lord save your people or destroy me altogether.

He said I stood in the gap. Now I suppose we could apply that to the church of Jesus Christ throughout history. It happened with Paul.

It happened with John Wesley. It happened with Luther. It's happened in every denomination.

It's happened after every revival and before every revival. And it still happens today nationally and locally. In some measure we're all guilty of being far far short of the glory of God.

It's a wonder God can bless his church. Now when we realize this and don't forget until we get to heaven it'll probably be the same. We've no chance of winning the battle.

We've got to see the wonder and the mighty of God. We've got to see the awful power of the enemy and we've got to see ourselves in between as the weakest of the weak and repentant in dust and ashes. Then God can use us.

But if he does and if God should give share in Manchester, never let it be said that it was by our righteousness. And don't let us compare ourselves with other churches and say we're better than them. Our comparison is with the holiness of God.

The utter perfection of Christ. And we fall far short. I don't know whether there's a place for humor.

I don't know. Of course, how careful we've got to be. Is it right? Perhaps it's better to be more sober.

Is there no backbiting in Sharon? Has there never been malicious gossip in Sharon? Has there never been little divisions or sins in Sharon? Has there never been any wrong in me? Let us hang our heads. God has been good to us. But also, let us be thankful.

He has given us a good church. And we have had very loyal people. And praise be to God, it's growing.

But let us keep the perspective. It's far better to err on the side of seeing ourselves as God sees us. Now that's the background.

Moses' prayer. We find this in verse 18 and 19 of the ninth chapter. This is how Moses prayed.

He says, And I fell down before the Lord as at the first 40 days and 40 nights. I did neither eat bread nor drink water because of all your sins which you sinned in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord to provoke him to anger. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you.

But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time. Isn't it a marvelous thing that God's willing to hear one man? He heard Abraham. He hears Moses.

And isn't it a wonderful thing to realize that within a church like ours, there's no need to be just one or two. There could be dozens and dozens of people who'd be willing to fall down before God. I am trying to build up in this church, by God's grace, a spirit of prayer.

And we've no need to have one or two. We can have the whole church. Why not? What's to stop every one of us falling down on our face before God and praying? What's to stop us? If we see the power of the enemy, the slavery that exists around us, lost souls dying without a savior, and if we see the might and power of God and the Holy Ghost, and if we realize that despite our weakness, God can use us, why shouldn't we fall down and ask God not to destroy but save? As Moses prayed for Israel, cannot we pray for Manchester? His prayer, I would like to think that in his prayer, there's four knocks on the door of God's heart.

And we can learn from Moses' prayer. We find the prayer at the end of the chapter, verse 25. Thus, I fell down before the Lord forty days and forty nights, as I fell down at the first, because the Lord said he would destroy you.

Is that a good reason that we can fall down before God? Because one day, England, Manchester, all around us, men will be destroyed by the judgment of God. Isn't that enough to make us fall on our faces and pray? But how did he pray? First of all, Moses' prayer was for redemption's sake. I prayed, therefore, unto the Lord, his first knock, when he fell down.

O Lord God, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance, which thou hast redeemed through thy greatness, which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt with a mighty hand. The first prayer was for redemption's sake. Could we not fall down on our faces, each one, and pray, Lord God, do not destroy Manchester for the Savior's sake, for the cross' sake, for the blood that was shed? Could we not pray to God for your redeeming grace, for you loved all men and wish all men to be saved? That would be a good prayer, wouldn't it? For redemption's sake, for the Savior's sake, for the cross' sake.

His second prayer was for the sake of those who had been faithful before. Remember thy servants, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Loop not unto the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin.

Could we not fall down on our faces and pray to God the second prayer and knock again and say, Lord, don't destroy this city for the sake of the faithful who've lived before us? All those who worked before on the open air, in the open air, the Salvation Army, the Methodist mission that used to be here, all the good work that's been done, the work that's been done by our own church. Lord, don't destroy Manchester for the sake of all your servants that's gone before, for the sake of faithful ministers and faithful deacons and faithful prayer warriors, for the sake of all those women who may have passed into the presence of the Lord now. All those men who've passed into the presence of the Lord now, all those who have spent their life praying and giving for the Lord and they never saw revival, Lord, for their sake, send a mighty revival to this city.

Is their work wasted? Is all the prayers that have gone before in Sharon going to be wasted? Is all the handbills that have been given out going to be wasted, Lord? Is all the open air meetings we had at Alec Park going to be wasted, Lord? You know, we can reason with God, for God has integrity. Say, Lord, you've seen what we've done. It's not for our righteousness sake, but for these faithful ones sake, not for my sake.

I'm the least of the saints, but for the faithful sake, for those who've looked and prayed and not seen it and passed into glory, for their sake, Lord. That's a worthy prayer, isn't it? Then he knocks again the third time. This time, for the sake of the heathen, the unbeliever.

Lest the land whence thou brought us out say, because the Lord was not able to bring them into the land which he promised them and because he hated them, he hath brought them out into the wilderness to slay them. Can we not pray a prayer like that? Lord, for the sake of the unbelievers all around this church. They saw you bring us out.

They saw you bring us out from a little front room, then into a church in the garden, then into this church. They've seen this church grow. They've seen the cars outside.

They've seen the campaigns we've had. They've heard our witness and claim in the open air, Lord, don't let us perish before them. Don't let us be like some weak, poor little pygmy.

And they say God couldn't do the job. They said he was going to do this. They said he was mighty.

They said he healed the sick. They said he delivered the captives. He's not doing it.

Mrs. Jones went. She was blind and never saw. I know a lady who went and she went several times.

She wasn't healed for the heathens sake, for the unbelievers sake. Lord, do mighty wonders. Do mighty signs for their sake.

Is that not a worthy prayer for God's sake? And lastly, the fourth knock for the glory of God's sake. That God's name will not be blasphemed. That God has not lost his power to deliver.

Verse 29. Yet are they thy people and thine inheritance, which thou broughtest out by thy mighty power and by thy stretched out arm. Lord, for the sake of all thy people who you've redeemed, for the sake of all thy people who you've filled with the Holy Ghost, for the sake of your name, for the sake of your word, we preach that Christ heals, Christ saves, Christ loves, Christ cares, Christ gives eternal life.

Lord, for your glory's sake, don't destroy the city. Four knocks. What can we learn? Well, we can pray like Moses.

First thing, we've got to realize the enemy that holds Manchester is far greater than we are. The cities and the positions he has are impregnable. Have a walk round and have a look.

But then turn your eyes from that and look at yourself in comparison. Have you ever walked along the streets of Manchester as I have done? And I've walked along and I've seen the masses of people and the great percentage are blind on their way to a lost eternity. Not the faintest idea of God's love or grace.

They may know a little bit about God, but no idea really, blinded. Have you walked along and thought how small and insignificant I feel? It's good in Sharon to say let's have the victory, but when you stand here in the masses of buildings and people and sin and vice, we are nothing. But then we turn our eyes from our enemy, turn our eyes from ourselves and we look at God.

For with God, nothing is impossible. The nations are but as a drop from the bucket. Is anything too hard for the Lord? Did he not bring three million out of Egypt with one man Moses against a mighty empire? Can he not stop the sun that we may win the battle like he did for Joshua? Can he not open the Red Sea for us again and drown all the enemy in the sea as he tries to oppress us and stop us? Is anything too hard for the Lord? Ask anything in my name and we'll do it.

We can learn those things and then we can learn the four prayers of Moses. For the sake of redemption. I like that one best I think.

For the sake of the dear blessed savior who came to seek and to save that which was lost. For the sake, oh God, of all the faithful that have worked so hard to build Sharon like this. For the sake of the heathen that they will not be able to blaspheme your name.

They will not be able to point and say, look at them Christians. Look the way they live. Look at the powerlessness of them.

Look at the weakness of them. For the sake of the heathen that they may be saved. For when people see the power of God and righteous people, they desire it if they have a true heart.

For the sake of your glory that men won't be able to say, well you're supposed to be the God of miracles but where are they? What prayers we could give to God? And the answer is sure. Verse 10 of the next chapter, chapter 10. And I stayed in the mount according to the first time 40 days and 40 nights.

And the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also and the Lord would not destroy thee. But the positive side, verse 12. And now Israel, what does the Lord thy God require of thee but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his ways and to love him and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul.

And to keep the commandments of the Lord and his statutes which I commanded this day for thy good. Behold the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God. The earth also with all that therein is.

And he goes on right to the end of the chapter. Can we pray and go in and possess the land? For a few weeks I ministered on giving with a deliberate purpose that we as the children of God may give to our uttermost with sacrifice that we may have resources to build up for our attack. And I want to tell you God is answering the prayers of the diligence of the people.

God is honoring his word. A number of people have given money for handbills. Our last Jericho march offering was 285 pounds.

That's more than double normal. And I prayed to God about a crusade this year. And I said I'd like some confirmation.

I asked God to give a good sizable sum of money that I should know how I could move. Because you have to plan now if we're going to have a crusade in May. And I had a call from our treasurer this week to say that an anonymous gift had been given for 2,000 pounds.

And with the gift was the words for souls. Now whatever the gift is, small or great, God sees it. And God answers prayer.

So I am encouraged that God is going to bless us. It's put a drop in the bucket totally. But at least we've got some resources.

And you know when an army goes into attack, the first thing they do is build up a massive background of resources. Implements, weapons, materials, food. You can't win a battle unless you're well backed up.

We need that finance. Secondly, you then need to soften up the enemy before you go in. In the spiritual warfare, we need prayer day and night.

People pray in the homes. People getting together to pray. People praying in groups.

Praying night and day. Praying without ceasing. Praying as you're going to work.

Praying in the church. Praying everywhere and at all times. The more we pray in this next 10 weeks or so, we are softening up the enemy.

The shells and the bombs of God's power is going over. Our weapons are not carnal, but mighty to the pulling down of strongholds. And so we pray to God.

We pray to God to send his artillery, his mortar shells. His powerful nuclear bombs to shatter the enemy in the city before we go in. We've got about 10 weeks to do it.

So let us pray.

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