

# 4 Stir Me to Pray

by Helen Roseveare

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*God's strategy of prayer is to stir us to give, go, and pray, and to trust in His power and sovereignty.*

**Duration:** 44:02

**Scripture:** Matthew 6:33, Romans 8:31, 1 Corinthians 15:57, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Ephesians 6:12

**Topics:** "Prayer Power", "Faith Healing"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of prayer and faith in God's ability to intervene in difficult situations. He shares stories of miraculous answers to prayer, such as a hot water bottle being sent in response to a young girl's desperate prayer and a doctor being rescued from rebel soldiers through the power of prayer. The speaker encourages the audience to believe in God's ability to act and to actively participate in prayer. He also addresses the question of why God chooses to work through prayer, highlighting the mystery and importance of our role in partnering with God through prayer.

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## Transcript

We've been thinking on this subject of stir me. On the first night we had stir me, oh stir me Lord, I care not how, but stir my heart in passion for the world. Stir me to give, to go, but most to pray.

On the first night we thought along the line of giving, not just our money and our things, although that is involved, but our time, our love, our caring, our very selves, giving him everything right the way through. And then the second night we took the second verse of the hymn, stir me, oh stir me Lord, till all my heart is filled with strong compassion for these souls. Stir me to go, where, anywhere for Jesus, as his ambassador, sent one, sent out by Jesus to meet up with needy souls, to meet up with those who are hungry to hear.

Maybe in your Jerusalem, your Judea, Samaria, or out to the uttermost parts of the world, but the thing is to know that wherever you are, you were sent there. Getting nowhere just because you'd nowhere else to go. Not just turning up at a spot because you don't yet know where God wants you, but that in every detail, every one of us knowing that I'm where I am because God put me there.

And tonight, the third thought, stir me to pray. Stir me, oh stir me Lord, till prayer is pain. Till prayer is power.

Till prayer turns into praise. Stir me till heart and will and mind, yea all, is holy thine to use through all the days. Stir till I learn to pray exceedingly.

Stir till I learn to wait expectantly. Certainly for me, I find this far the hardest to speak on. I've known a little bit about the giving and the going, but I'm very conscious how little I know of the praying.

For many years, I've kind of hid myself behind a very nice and convenient passage of scripture. You know, we're always taught to be sure we have scripture for anything we did. Be careful because even the devil had scripture when he quoted it at Christ in his temptations.

And I used to quote scripture quite glibly on this one that I think it comes in Exodus 17 probably. Well, it says, then came Amalek. And the next thing was that Moses went up the mountain to pray and Joshua went out into the battle to fight.

And I say, fine Lord, thanks. I'm out in the battle fighting. Please make sure my prayer partners are praying.

And it's easy to get hidden behind that one and accept it. And thank God for the tremendous faithfulness of prayer partners. Many of us just will never know how much we owe to them.

We'll never know just all that's been achieved over there, that somehow I thought I had something to do with it. And we just don't realize how much others were involved. And this prayer battle business, I think the hymn writer was right when he said, stir me to give.

Not too difficult. I remember when I first came home three years ago, I was nursing my mother who's been a wheelchair invalid. And we saw a program on the television of Ethiopia and the agonized suffering in Ethiopia from the starvation and famine.

And at the end, I don't know if they do the same over here. They put up on the screen on the television the address to which you could send gifts. And mommy just turned to me, get my bag dear.

I went and got her bag and got out her checkbook. And she wrote out a check and addressed an envelope. Then she passed it to me with tears in her eyes.

She says, that's not really it, is it? She says, I'm just escaping my conscience. I thought, how true. How easy it is for us to think we can pay our way out of it.

It is necessary we give. And it's not too hard to give because we do feel we've done something. And then stir me to go.

For me, it was just thrilling. I just can't think how on earth you stay. I mean, to me, the obvious thing is to go unless you're, well, perhaps you're lame, the halt, the blind, the deaf, the dumb.

Okay, you may have to stay. For the rest of us, it's gorgeous to get going. But then he came to the third one.

But stir me most to pray. I want to read a passage of scripture. You may wonder as I read it, what on earth has this got to do with praying? But you know, I believe this is God's great strategy of prayer.

However strange it seems to you, I would have loved to have had the courage to have stood here and read it in the living Bible version. I wasn't quite sure in a Bible school, I quite dared to do it. But those of you who've got the living Bible, just follow it there because, you know, he does make this bit live.

Joshua six. Now Jericho was shut up from within and from without because of the people of Israel. None went out, none came in.

And the Lord said to Joshua, see, I have given into your hand Jericho. Well, I can never get very far. I always interrupt the scriptures as I go.

I like to put in my little thoughts on route. But if you just think of whatever you like as your Jericho, 600 million Muslims in the world practically unreached for Christ. Unsaved relatives at home.

I've got a lot. Whatever your Jericho happens to be. Here he says, the Lord said to Joshua, I have given, past tense, past aorist, absolutely completed.

I have given into your hand Jericho. With its king and mighty men of valor. Wonderful, tremendous statement of promise.

And then he goes to tell him the most ludicrous story you've ever read. And you just wonder, well, just how foolish can God be? You shall march around the city, all the men of war going around the city once. Thus shall you do for six days.

Seven priests shall bear seven trumpets of ram's horns before the ark. On the seventh day, you shall march around the city seven times. The priest blowing the trumpets.

And when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, as soon as you hear the sound of the trumpet, then all the people shall shout with a great shout, the wall of the city will fall down flat. The people shall go up, every man straight before him. What a story.

I don't know if I, as a Sunday school teacher, I'd have to teach this every year. I think it's just so exciting. If you've ever thought of the craziness of it, 600,000 men of war.

Say they marched six abreast, which I'm sure they didn't, not in those marshy, swampy lands at the time of floodwaters, going across from the Jordan to the foothills of the mountains. But if they did go six abreast, say they marched half a yard apart. And any of you men folk who've been in the army, you know that you really can't do it.

You'd be kicking each other's heels. You'd need a yard. But if they were half a yard apart, do you know there'd be 25 miles of them? It's fantastic.

The first lot would be back in the camp before the last lot had left. Just one great long winding snake across the valley, up the foothills, around that great big city, all the way down again, all the way back again. What a spectacle.

What a foolish sight. All in silence. Not a murmur.

And the first day, the people in the city were scared stiff. And the second day, the people wondered, what new voodoo was this? And the third day, they thought, are they really mugs? And by the fourth day, the rotten tomatoes had arrived. And I wonder about the men of war.

I wonder how many were still marching by the fourth day. I wonder how many of them had begun to say, who on earth does he think he is anyway? Who put Joshua over us? What does he know about this? He's never been a man of war. This is crazy.

He must have gone nuts. Call it what you like. And they drop out.

And they drop out. Six days. And then six more times on the seventh day, 12 times, dead silence.

And by this time, the whole city laughing at them, scorning them, jeering them, throwing epithets at them, nevermind everything else they threw. And still they marched. And still they kept silence.

And they go on and they do it all. And we come round to verse 16. At the seventh time on the seventh day.

This is the 13th time going round. And at the seventh time, when the priest had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, shout! The Lord has given you the city. Comes up in verse 20, so the people are not quite sure what the living Bible says, but it probably says, people let rip.

But anyway, they really gave it. You bet they did. They're a tad stiff of it all.

But wasn't that marvelous? Marvelous. The people shouted. Trumpets were blown.

As soon as the people heard the sound of the trumpet, they raised a great shout. And the wall fell flat. People went up into the city.

Every man straight before them, they took the city. This is a picture of the mystery prayer meeting. Week after week, week after week, week after week, seeing nothing happen.

Going round and round and round that Jericho, the Muslim world. That impossible situation. Getting to the pitch when you just can't see any point in going anymore.

Is your leader really a fool? Why on earth did God decide to do this job by prayer? Why on earth did God make such a foolish decision as to depend on you and me? He's almighty. He's sovereign. He's without limits.

Why did he go and limit himself to us? Weak, foolish, faithless, unbelieving, with precious little stickability. But we meant to go on. We pledged we'd do it.

We meant to keep at it. But it's so hard. Well, it's not too bad when you get exciting prayer letters home from folk like me.

You know, you really think that I live 365 exciting days a year. It just isn't true, you know. I have 364 humdrum everyday days like you do.

In fact, probably a little more humdrum. Once every now and again, something exciting happens. Oh, good, now I can write a prayer letter.

And that's what you get. And it stirs you all up, you see, and you all start praying. Think, how marvelous.

What about the person who doesn't write prayer letters? What about the person in the Muslim land? 12 years, 12 times going round, never yet seen the convert. If they wrote a prayer letter, they could easily write and say, read the last one, no change. Hard for you, hard for them, tough.

And sticking at it, and sticking at it, and sticking at it, praying for them. Oh, friend, how many of us are going to be in on the 13th round? How many of us are going to fall out before the 13th round? I want to be in on that 13th round when God says, shout. I'm all for it.

And at that moment, when the walls go down, when the walls of that Muslim citadel go down, we move in and we take over Islam for Jesus Christ. Are you going to be there that day? This is the challenge God gives us. This is his strategy of prayer.

We don't understand it. We don't understand how those walls of Jericho fell down. Don't tell me all that stuff about rhythms and beats and all this sort of stuff.

They were on a mountainside. There weren't any rhythms. They were scrambling up the edge on the one side and scrambling down the edge on the other side.

God did it. It was just fantastic. He just knocked them down.

And he's going to do it for the Muslim world and all the other Jerichos that stand up against us and all that God would find us faithful. He's chosen to limit his missionary outreach to the world to your and my praying, to how faithful we are at walking around. And you know, it's not only in the dramatics.

All right, in the Ethiopian disaster, we prayed. In the Chad disaster, we prayed. In the Bangladesh disaster, we prayed.

In Vietnam last year, we prayed. In Guatemala this year, we prayed. Are you still praying? Are you still praying today, faithfully and regularly for the national pastors in Vietnam who've been separated from their flocks, who've been taken off to camp for brainwashing and indoctrination, who need your prayers? Oh, you meant to.

But the snag is we see it on the newsreel. We watch it there for a brief second. And then the most recent baseball match comes up and it gets blotted out of our thoughts.

And so quickly we forget, which isn't only in the dramatics. Oh, there are plenty of dramatics. And God has given us some wonderful prayer.

I would just say in passing, I was surprised to find how few people seem to know the dramatic answer to prayer last year down at Bogota in Colombia, when 3,000 Satan worshipers got together for a great international conference, the first ever large-sized international conference of Satan worshipers, all the people involved in occult, black witchcraft, white witchcraft, and all the other types. It was a fantastic gathering. They were going to have it Sunday through Sunday.

And on the first Sunday when they opened their conference and all the press were there and the press releases were enormous, it was all written up, it was on the radio, and they blasted out that the following Sunday there was going to be an enormous earthquake and various other predictions they made. By Tuesday evening, the whole thing had fizzled out. On Wednesday, one of their own leaders made the announcement.

They were unable to run their conference because of the power of the evangelical prayer meeting. And the evangelicals had surrounded the city. And they just kept up a 24-hour vigil.

They gave out literature, literature, literature to every single member of that 3,000-strong meeting. They said several of those, I heard of three actual ones. I've heard there are others.

But those Satan worshipers were brought to Christ during that week. God did it through prayer. And then we've heard another announcement made.

No, friends, let's wake up to this. Those witchcraft people, that conference said, all right, we'll stage another conference, but this time we'll choose more carefully. We'll go to America, there'll be less opposition.

Now may God stir us to get going in the battle of prayer. Right now, this month of April, many of you don't even seem to know what's happening in my little country of Britain. But in April this year, 2,000 Islam missionaries trained in Cairo have gone into our country to take over Britain for Islam.

They have a three-month project, April, May, and June. They've managed to hire every museum in every one of our great cities of Britain to put on a cultural show of what Islam has achieved. Oh, may we be praying.

May we be praying this out of our country. It has already done one good thing. It has brought the church together in a tremendous fight against this thing.

But we need your prayers. We need you to pray against this thing that God will overrule. But friends, again, not only in the dramatics.

And what I really want to get down to is more this business where I wasn't at all sure which scripture to pick up to read. There were so many I wanted to read. It's the everyday praying.

It's the praying all the time. It's in Thessalonians where it says praying always. Pray without ceasing.

What do we know about it? What does it really mean? How can we in our busy, everyday humdrum lives, how do we really do this? This is the sort of way. In January, I went a journey way up north of Toronto, up to Timmins, about 400 miles north. We had the most fantastic missionary meeting.

The actual temperature on the thermometer said it was minus 40. And then there was a fantastic gale of howlingly cold wind roaring across the place. I'm sure it was minus 60.

And the place was packed out with people. And on our way home, we met car after car after car, stalled off the edge of the road, left their indicator lights on, hopefully waiting for tomorrow, it might thaw out. And I thought to myself, yes, what happens? Your car stalls on the way home, and you can't make it go.

You do everything you can. It just won't go. And you had to leave it and walk home.

And it's raining, and it's late, and you're tired, and you're cold. You're gonna walk home, and you're just feeling like that with that car. Half a minute.

You know that tomorrow, you'll just send for the wrecker, and he'll probably be in within 24 hours. He'll have it back all mended. Instead of feeling like that, just pray for that missionary who is 250 miles from anywhere in jungle forest land, and the car breaks down.

And if he waits for the wrecker to come, well, he'll wait five days possibly for the next truck to come along that bit of road, never mind a wrecker. And he's got no way out of the situation. So he starts to strip it down and try and repair it in the dark, in the rain, in the mud.

I did this once. I was driving the school Dodge truck, and I'm more used to a Chevrolet. I was quite sure the trouble was in the carburetor.

So I was cleaning out the carburetor, and I didn't happen to know that the Dodge carburetor has a small bore bearing in the middle to regulate the jets. So I turned it upside down to clean it. I lost the bore bearing in the mud.

I spent the rest of the night with a flash lamp in my teeth, groveling in the mud, looking for one beastly bore bearing. Okay, you've got it, you see. Now you prayed for me.

You find your home. You didn't notice it was raining and cold and muddy and wet. Your home, you're feeling better yourself, and I'm feeling better where I am.

You just translate your everyday occurrence. Johnny's just run in with muddy boots on your beautifully newly cleaned carpet. And you're just about, well, don't.

I had 84 orphan kids. Most of them were boys. They didn't run in with muddy boots.

They didn't have boots. They ran in with muddy bare feet off the football field. I didn't have a carpet, but I did have a nicely cleanly scrubbed cement floor.

And I'm just about to let rip 84 times worse than you were. Well, don't. You stop and you pray for a minute.

Lord, keep that missionary out there, wherever she is. Keep her temper. Don't let her get irritated.

Don't let her blast off. And you suddenly find that you see it in perspective. You're not quite so mad with Johnny after all.

It doesn't really matter. The carpet can be cleaned. And I'm getting better.

This is how it works, that just in everyday detail, change the situation into a prayer, whatever you're up against. You're lining up in the shopping to pay for your bill. And the woman in front of you has got such a pile, little bits and pieces, she's never ever going to get through.

And you're getting so irritated, you had a bus to catch, and you're not going to catch it? Okay, well, just pray for that missionary somewhere way off and beyond. There isn't any sugar to be bought. Flour's so expensive.

They have to think in terms of whether they can afford to make one loaf of bread a week or not. And as you pray for them, you suddenly find you didn't mind waiting. It was altogether different.

Your dress comes back from the cleaners, absolutely ruined. And you're just feeling so, well, don't. You have got another one.

Pray for that person way off beyond who perhaps hasn't, or she's just busy making down father's pants to fit little Johnny. And you suddenly find it didn't matter quite so much. This is the level.

This is the everyday praying. This is the praying without ceasing. This is when everything that occurs turn into prayer.

Students, you're just coming up to final exams. I'm too late. I should have told you this a week ago.

And you're just getting that nervous twitch. You're getting agony. I can't sleep.

I can't eat. And there are other things that come along too, aren't there? But anyway, instead of getting all tied up, think of those Africans. They're getting just the same.

They're taking final exams too, with ever so much less to back them up than you've got. So much less equipment. Do you know that my students, there are no textbooks at all.

Every single lecture, at the end of the lecture, they have 20 minutes to copy down off the blackboard a summary of notes that I put up there. And that's their textbook for the rest of their lives. And just pray for them and think, well, Lord, just bless those students out there.

They're doing finals too. It's just as important to them as it is to us. And suddenly find you're calm, you're cool.

And they've been blessed too. This is the level God wants us on. I've already told some of the stories I told you on Monday night, of the hot water bottle.

Yeah, fantastic. Some of you, of course, weren't here, but that was your fault, not mine. You know, that little 10-year-old girl prayed, God, please, God, send a hot water bottle and please send it this afternoon.

If you don't send it today, that tiny baby is gonna be dead. And she believed and God answered. And a parcel came, first parcel ever that I'd ever received out there in three years of missionary service, on the equator, plus a hot water bottle.

For the 10-year-old prayed, believing. This is the sort of thing that counts along that sort of level. I want to tell you one story that you may perhaps think I really shouldn't tell it from the platform.

It regards toilet paper. But the fact that it's impressed itself on my mind shows how important it was to me. And God spoke to me through this rather stupid little story, but it was fact.

I'd been converted about seven months, very new, very green. I'd been converted out of the sort of church where we didn't know much about praying other than what the textbook told us. And I went to this summer camp and because I was a pre-med student, I was made the medical officer of camp.

Another of our wonderful foolish ways, not that I knew the first thing about medicine. But one of my jobs as medical officer of camp was to look after the restrooms, see they were clean, see there's enough toilet paper, et cetera, et cetera. Well, I don't know what happened to the cooks, but by the fourth day of camp, we had an epidemic of summer diarrhea.

And so we ran out of toilet paper. And so the moment came the next morning when the staff meeting were having their meeting at eight o'clock before going into breakfast, we had to give to our commandant anything that needed buying during the day. And everybody else had given their list of what they needed for shopping.

And I added to her shopping list, please, we need a large quantity of toilet rolls. She'd just written it down when the telephone rang. Some of you will be able to date the story fairly well in a minute.

She went down to the room and we were chatting amongst ourselves, the staff, and she came back in with a radiant face. And she said, the minister downtown has just rung up. He said he knew that while we were here in camp, we wouldn't be listening to the radio or the news.

So he rang up to tell us that this morning, V-J day was announced. Victory in Japan, World War II was finished. We all had brothers, cousins, fathers, uncles in the war.

It was a tremendous day. It was a kind of overwhelming sensation to sit there and suddenly realize it was over. Those dreadful long years.

I was a Londoner throughout the blitz of World War II. I knew something of what it meant. The awfulness was finished.

And the sudden sweeping joy, it was over. And then she was telling us how there was going to be a general Thanksgiving service down in the village at 10.30. We were to go down with the girls. Oh, of course, I, bright me, was thinking horrors.

All the shops will be shut. It's a public holiday. There'll be no toilet paper.

And of course, I never think anything. I always speak. So I said it aloud.

And one of the girls said, oh, Helen, shut up. And then we closed the meeting in prayer. And the commandant was praying and praising God for his goodness and praising God for this wonderful and precious day and this tremendous news and what it was going to mean to everybody.

Praying for today's activities, praying for everything. And then she said in her prayer, please God, would you remember that we need toilet paper? Well, you know, I couldn't take it. Oh, fair enough, you take everything to God, but there are sort of limits.

And that sort of seemed to me a bit below the belt. I thought, you know, can't have this one. And I thought she was laughing at me, really.

So I looked up quickly, but she wasn't. She was completely serious. And I was just so amazed.

I shut my eyes quickly. I thought, what on earth these people are on. Well, you know, we went down to the service in the village and each of us, each staff member had so many girls to look after.

And I sat with my little group of girls in one place. Somebody else sat with their group of girls. At the end of the wonderful Thanksgiving service, we went out through the different doors by this great big church.

And I went out with my 10 girls to one door and one of these very lovely, gracious church elders was shaking hands at the door and telling me what lovely girls I got. I thought, I wish he could see them at other times. And then he said to me, if there's anything at all we can do for you, please don't hesitate.

Let us know. I'm the local grocer. Oh, I said, we badly need toilet paper.

Well, perhaps you think I was helping God out, but nevermind. By midday, the great big carton of toilet paper came. You know, for me, it was a terrific message.

To me, God got right through. There is nothing too small to take to God. It is the everyday ordinary.

Don't go on praying for missionaries as though they stood on pedestals or had halos. It isn't fair on us. You know, it's you folk who give us the pedestals and then we fall off them.

Now, just keep us on ground level. We're ordinary, everyday folks like yourself. And this is where we need praying for.

We need praying for as we are, for what we are. The wonderful, precious thing is that God accepts me as I am, even though it's taken me years to learn to accept myself as I am. And that's where we need prayer, on the everyday level.

Just to give you a few illustrations now of just how this works, how God gets through on this. You know, after 1960, when we had independence in our country of Congo, Zaire, we had four very difficult years, 60 through 64, when our country was desperately striving for a national identity. And during those four years, nobody quite knew who trusted whom.

It was dreadful, the barriers that were built up. And the white-black tension was really appalling, not only up in administrative levels and government levels, local levels, village levels, but right into the church it came. And there was this distrust.

Largely, it used to harp back almost every time onto cash, it's the usual spot. Nevertheless, there was this distrust. And to me, it was a terrible heartbreak.

And through those four years, there was a real heart agony going on in me. God, somehow, bring us back into the unity we had before, or bring us into a new unity, where we no longer see color, where I'm not conscious that he's black, and he's not conscious that I'm white, but we're just brother and sister in the Lord. Lord, do something for us.

And he didn't seem to be answering. And the tension seemed to be getting worse. And then suddenly, we were plunged into the rebellion.

And we had a very terrible time. About 10 weeks after the beginning of the rebellion, on October the 29th, the rebel soldiers turned against the whites. Till then, it had all been a black versus black war.

It was just a civil war, it was a political war. Then for various reasons, they turned against the white people. And so happened, I was the first white person to be taken by the rebels in our region.

So one hadn't any mental preparation for what lay ahead. It was a very cruel night. I was cruelly taken by these soldiers.

I was flung on the ground, I was kicked. I was beaten by the end of a gun, I was dragged to my feet, I was beaten with a rubber truncheon. I lost my back teeth that night, I don't even now know whether it was through a boot of a rebel soldier or through a rubber truncheon.

But the whole thing was cruel, cruel, cruel. Driven back to the veranda of my home, pressed up against a veranda, one of the pillars. I wasn't praying, I was far beyond praying.

I was numb, horrified, the whole thing, I was paralyzed with fear. Panic takes over. A tremendous sense of self-preservation seems to fight all the way through you.

You're not thinking straight. Somewhere in the back of your mind, you're holding on to the name of Jesus, but almost unconsciously, subconsciously. And then suddenly, that rebel lieutenant with a pistol pressed against my forehead shouted at me, say that Lumumba is the savior of the world.

Well, it did something to me. That got through my clouded brain. One thing I did know was that wasn't true.

And I shouted back, Jesus is the savior of the world. One thing I knew for sure. And at that moment, I really prayed for a moment, God let him shoot me.

It would have been easier to die than to face what lay ahead. And I really prayed, God let him shoot me. Let him pull the pistol.

But out on the driveway, a young 17 year old, first year student in the college. He'd only been converted four months. Hugh, held by rebel soldiers.

He couldn't stand anymore. He broke loose from those soldiers. He flung himself between me and the lieutenant, shouted at him, you don't touch her.

Over my dead body. They turned on Hugh. They beat him up so cruelly.

It's unbelievable. They flung his, as we thought, dead body out on the drive. They kicked him about like a football.

And I was sick. The sheer awfulness to think that a 17 year old had given his life for me. In that moment, I never doubted God.

I never doubted his word. But I did doubt for a moment his relationship with me. I just felt somehow I must have failed him.

Somehow he'd failed me. Somehow there was no connection left. If I had prayed any prayer in that moment, I would have prayed, my God, my God, why has thou forsaken me? Weeks later, I was rescued.

Months later, I was taking a meeting in the north of England. A lady came up to me. Do you remember the night of the 29th of October? I certainly do.

Were you in special need that night? I sure was. Well, she said, I went to bed early that night with a headache. I woke at 11.30. That would be 1.30 a.m. where I was.

Your name was on my heart. She didn't know me. She never met me.

It's just a name on a prayer list. I got out of bed, she said. I got down on my knees.

I prayed for you. I went to get back into bed and I didn't have peace. I woke my husband.

He got out and he joined me and together we prayed for you. Again, we went to get into bed. Again, with no peace.

We stayed on our knees. We prayed through for you until half past one in the morning. Half past three in Africa.

We felt the burden lift. And God met me. And right there in the midst of the awfulness, the wickedness, the cruelty, the fear, the pain, the humiliation, whatever you like, suddenly there was God.

I didn't see a vision. I didn't hear a voice. I just knew with every fiber of my being, there was God.

It wasn't God the son or the father or the spirit. It was the whole Godhead. It was the whole majesty of God.

It was the whole bigness of God. And the sudden overwhelming realization that God was in charge. God was on the throne.

God did know what he was doing. What right had I to ask him what he was doing? Why should he tell me? I was his servant. He could do what he liked.

I suddenly felt very small that I even dared to doubt him for a moment. And so he said to me, 20 years ago, you asked me for the privilege of being a missionary. This is it.

Don't you want it? Oh friends, it was tremendous. Driven down the short corridor of my home and just hearing the Lord say to me, these aren't your sufferings. They're not beating you.

These are my sufferings. All I ask of you is the loan of your body. And the overwhelming sense of privilege that he was inviting me to share with him in some little way, on the edge of the fellowship of his sufferings.

I'm not saying that if those two hadn't prayed for me, God wouldn't have intervened. Of course he would. He'd have found someone else.

But I am saying that's the way he does it. When God puts a name on your heart, don't stop to think, I wonder why. Don't stop to say, I don't know what they want.

Doesn't matter. He knows. You pray, he answers.

And he lets loose his power on our behalf as you pray. Oh friends, it works. It works.

In actual fact, I was taken off that night, flung up in a truck and driven away. An hour later, Hugh regained consciousness. Very, very badly wounded.

Many broken bones, his jaw kicked in, many ribs kicked in, in a very bad condition. He managed to crawl on all fours across the hospital and wake the night nurse and just say, they've taken the doctor captive before he lost consciousness. The night nurse took the message down to the village.

The doctor has been taken captive. The evangelist had the drum beaten. He gathered the whole church together at about four o'clock in the morning, men, women and children, gathered in the church, and they got down to prayer.

They prayed. They prayed and they prayed that God would release me. God would bring me back to those wicked men.

God would deliver me from all their wickedness and cruelty and unbelievable hatred of those men against us. They prayed and they prayed. During the course of the morning, they heard a truck going through the village.

One of the men went down to the road to see. About 30 white people tied up on the truck. I was amongst them.

The rebel soldiers called out they've been taken to Issyro to be shot. The message went back into church. They went on praying.

They held on for us. Two o'clock in the afternoon, up at Issyro, 50 miles north, we were stood before the firing squad. Roman Catholic priests, Roman Catholic nuns, Protestant missionaries in three groups.

Soldiers had their guns cocked, waiting for the command to shoot. And we were singing the praises of Jesus. We didn't work it up.

We didn't do it to demonstrate to anybody. We just couldn't resist it. Jesus was there and he was so real and so precious.

We were going out to be with him. Oh, it was so wonderful. And suddenly somehow the order was reversed.

Eventually we were put back in the trucks. We were driven back to our village. I arrived at my village at five in the evening.

They were still in church. They'd been there 13 hours. They hadn't noticed time.

They hadn't noticed hunger. They held on in prayer till prayer became power. They prayed me home.

They prayed me out of that situation. And then, you know, two days later, we had a very bad weekend. Actually, it was a cruel weekend.

On the Tuesday following, they came and they took young Bill McChesney from us, our young American missionary. Bill was very cruelly murdered. And during the course of that day and all that went on, one of the soldiers saw me.

I was stood behind the other missionaries, leant against the wall. I was really unable to stand up. I was very, very badly bruised from head to toe.

And I couldn't see. My glasses had been broken from me and my eyes were all bloated up with the beating. And my face had a great gash down the middle.

My jaw had been kicked in. I was in a bad mess up. One of the soldiers saw me and he dragged me out.

He said, what's the matter with you? I was mad. I said, one of you lot beat me up. He said, you're a liar.

You're a liar. He said, we're not allowed to touch white women. No one of us could have done it.

I got mad. I said, don't be ridiculous. I named the man who'd done it.

All right, we'll have a people's court. We were bundled back into the house. I don't remember now whether it was that day or the next day.

I don't remember the time sequence of this. But eventually they rounded up a people's court. They got about 800 of the local villagers out in the courtyard.

And the men were all nearest to us. Then the women, folk and their children. And then out behind again were the rebel soldiers.

I sat at the table on the veranda, rebel leader, myself standing behind him. I was going to be tried by the people's court. They'd been told, they'd been primed.

They were ready to shout out, she's a liar. She's a liar. Kill her.

They'd be given the authority of the people's court to kill me. And that was the theme song. I knew something of the cruelty of people's courts by then.

I was made to tell the story of Friday night. I didn't want to. I didn't want to open up my shame.

I didn't want to open up my humiliation in front of a great crowd like that. I dropped my head. I whispered the answers.

He struck me across the mouth with a rubber truncheon, said, speak up. I spoke up under sheer terror of pain. And so the evening went on.

And there should have come the moment when they started to shout, she's a liar. She's a liar. They were being prompted by the soldiers on the outside.

And then suddenly something happened. And that soldier and I at the same moment noticed something had gone wrong. Things weren't happening as they ought to have done.

And I looked up for as little as I could see, at least the front rows. And that whole great congregation of 800 was standing there crying. Strong men with tears pouring down their faces.

Their heads hung in shame that their doctor had been taken and molested by a soldier. And they cried and they cried. And in that moment, God did what I'd prayed for for four years.

In that moment, God brought us a unity, black, white, we'd never known before. We've never lost it since. In that moment, they suddenly knew they loved me.

And I suddenly knew I loved them and I needed them and I cared. And we were made one in a way that was so startling. God did it.

He answered our prayers, not exactly the way we expected, but this is where prayer turned into power and God did it. Oh, he's a mighty God. He really is.

He's tremendous. I just, I'd tell you two quick stories of how prayer turns into praise. Yes, this is a painful stage.

Yes, this is the power stage, but this is the stage where prayer takes into praise and it's where God wants us to get to. Two quick stories, one perhaps the sublime and one perhaps the ridiculous. When I went back after the rebellion, I asked our head midwife, how many mothers do you think died in our maternity during the rebellion because I was not here to operate? Women that if I'd been there to do a caesarean section or a forceps delivery, they would have lived.

She paused, said, doctor, I can't answer that, but I'll tell you a story. So I was down in the forest. I'd taken down the premature babies to look after them, away from the rebel soldiers so they wouldn't get killed.

One day I heard somebody calling my name, called back, a teenage girl came to where I was and said, you're needed in the forest. It's a woman having a baby and things aren't going right. I said, okay, you stay and look after my babies, I'll go.

She went off down the jungle pathways, nothing in our hands at all. A jungle forest woman, a woman, very little training, very little education, but a very good midwife. She came to this clearing in the forest and there on the ground was lying this woman kneeling around her other women.

She said, oh doctor, when I got there, my heart failed me. I knew that woman. You know her.

Two years ago you'd operated on her for a caesarean and you told her she could never ever have a baby normally. She was very deeply crippled. She'd had rickets as a child.

She had polio as a teenager. Her whole left thigh was withered. Her whole bony pelvis was all misshapen.

She just could not have a baby normally. She said, I knew I could do nothing for her. I knew I'd have to sit there and watch mother and baby die.

Sat beside her, I held her hand. I couldn't even talk to her. She had the tears run down my face.

And a voice came into my heart. Damaris, do you believe? I felt rebuked of God. I started to tell her at once of the love of God and his gracious goodness in sending Jesus.

Again the voice came, Damaris, will you believe? So I began to tell her more urgently the way of salvation, they should accept Christ as savior while she yet had time to accept him. And again, the voice came through, Damaris, can you believe? She said, you know, I knew that almighty God was asking me, a jungle forest woman, to believe that he could give her a living baby. I knew he couldn't, but you can't tell God he can't.

So I said, yes, I believe God, but I didn't. And they said, immediately the voice came again and said to me, all right, tell them. One thing to say to yourself, nothing to tell them.

So she told them, God has told me he's going to give you a living baby. She said, the moment I said it, my heart whirled up with faith. I knew it was true.

I sent this one off for water, that one off to make a fire and getting things ready. And a few hours later, she was delivered, a lovely baby boy, seven pounder. Two years after that story, one of our surgeons flew up from our central hospital to our little jungle hospital at Nebobongo to do a week's surgery.

While he was there, that lady came in expecting a baby, number three, I'd given her one from Caesarean, God had given her one in the jungle. She came in expecting number three. They took her to Dick.

Dick examined her. He said, she needs a Caesarean. Damaris said, one minute.

Damaris told him the story I've just told you. Dick examined her again. Dick said, I'm sorry, but humanly speaking, she must have a Caesarean.

And Dick operated, gave her a third baby. When he flew back to our village at the end of the week, he came to me and we discussed it together. He told me what he'd found during the operation.

Exactly what I had found five years before. God hadn't changed her bones. God had given her a miracle baby.

While there was no surgeon, he stepped in by the faith of a jungle forest woman who believed that God could do what he said he could do. Oh, the miracle working God in answer to the prayer. But you know, it isn't only in the urgent and the dramatic, as I said at the beginning, it's in the everyday and ordinary.

When we went back in 66, we got nothing left. Everything was burned to the ground. The village was gone.

The hospital was gone. Everything was gone. We had to start again.

I was given five acres of land, amongst a lot of other people, and asked to build a training college for African medical auxiliaries. It was a big mouthful, but anyway, we started. And four years later, in 70, we got the building, a great big, vast building with all the classrooms, the laboratory, the nurses' arts classroom, the library, the offices, and an auditorium.

We got it up to roof level. It was the biggest building I'd ever put up. When I got to roof level, I got cold feet.

I thought, I just cannot put the roof on. It's just one stage too big for me. I said to my head workman, look, we can't really do that roof alone.

Let's pray for a roofer. Okay, he said. So we started praying God would send us a roofer, whoever he was gonna be.

And he didn't come very quickly. So we got on, we did all the electrical wiring. Still no roofer.

We did all the plumbing. No roofer. We plastered the walls.

You usually wait till the roof's on for that. Still no roofer. We put in the windows, put in the doors.

Still no roofer. We cleared up the brick rubble. Still no roofer.

We planted flowers. Still no roofer. I thought, God, what's the matter? Aren't you hearing me? I thought, surely to goodness, he's done such big things for me.

Can't he do a little thing like this, just a roofer? Surely there must be a roofer available. No roofer. My head man came to me one Thursday night.

He said, doctor, I can't invent another job. Shall I send the workman home and tell him we'll send for them when the roofer comes? There's no point paying them for doing nothing. I looked at him.

We've worked together for 20 years, Baswana and I. He knows me pretty well. We grinned. Okay, we'll put the roof on.

Okay, he said, you're fair. And I went to bed that night. I thought, God, what's the matter? Why didn't you send me the roofer? Surely you could manage that.

In the middle of the night, I was woken about half past one. Heard a car coming up the hill. I'm next to the last house on the hill.

I looked out of the windows, through the curtains, just to see, was he coming to me? Did I have to get up? No, fortunately not. Went to the next door house. I was very relieved.

I saw the lights go up, heard the talk. After a bit, I saw Dr. Ruth come out, get in the car, go down the hill. I thought, oh, it's for maternity.

I put a quick prayer up for Ruth. I rolled over and went to sleep again. 6.20 next morning, I was going down the hill to have prayers with the workmen.

And I tell you I was puzzled. I tell you I was talking with God. God, why didn't you send the roofer? What have I done? Have I failed you? Did I not believe enough? What's gone wrong? You've always answered prayer.

Why have you stopped? And as I was talking like this, a young American was going up the hill. I didn't know him. And he looked pretty scruffy and very tired.

I guess I said good morning to him and he probably said hi to me. And I went on down the hill. Suddenly my head workman came out.

Doctor, did you see that man going up the hill? Sure, I saw him. Don't you know him? I don't know him, no. He's a roofer.

We rushed up the hill behind him. We called out to him. He turned around.

And then I felt a fool. I already said good morning once. Couldn't quite say it again, you see.

So I said, I'm sorry, sir. I don't even know your name. But I'm told you're a roofer.

He looked at me. Well, he said, I'm Roscoe Lee, but I don't know what you mean about a roofer. I said, you see that great big building down there? All it needs is a roof.

The material's ready. The trusses are ready. Everything's ready.

The workmen are ready. The whole thing's done. All it needs is a roof.

I guess he wasn't accustomed to being shouted at by a white woman in the jungle. He said, would you give me five minutes? I said, sure, I will. He went up the hill.

I went down the hill. I praised the workmen. He came down in his dungarees.

Put the roof on. And what had happened? In the middle of that night at half past one, he'd driven in over 200 miles over some of our very, very worst roads to bring his wife to the hospital dangerously ill. Ruth had gone down to care for his wife.

She made a very good recovery. It took her 10 days to get up enough strength to be allowed to go back to her own village. In nine and a half days, he'd finished my school.

Can God? Of course God can. But he is asking you and me to believe. He's asking us to get in alongside and do the praying part.

And as we pray, he'll act. But oh friends, he has limited himself to us coming in on the job with him. Are you willing to let him stir me? Oh, stir me, Lord.

Till prayer is pain. Till prayer is power. Till prayer turns into praise.

Stir me till heart and will and mind, yea, all is holy thine to use through all the days. Stir till I learn to pray exceedingly. Stir till I learn to wait expectantly.

Amen. You've been listening to one of a four-part series of Helen Rosevere sermons entitled, Stir Me. Stir me, stir me to give.

Stir me to go. Stir me to pray. And you can find the rest of these sermons at [pathtoprayer.com](http://pathtoprayer.com). Again, that's P-A-T-H, the normal two, P-R-A-Y-E-R, [pathtoprayer.com](http://pathtoprayer.com).

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