

The Role of a Prayer Burden

by Wesley Duewel

A prayer burden is a deep sense of concern or burden that comes from the heart of God, calling us to intercession and prayer.

Duration: 1:21:06

Scripture: Nehemiah 1:3-4, Nehemiah 1:6, Nehemiah 1:11, Matthew 6:33, John 3:16, Ephesians 5:27

Topics: "Prayer"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a story of a coup in Indonesia where top generals were assassinated. The speaker then transitions to the story of Nehemiah in the Bible, who was deeply concerned about the state of Jerusalem. Nehemiah mourned, fasted, and prayed to God, asking for his help in rebuilding the broken walls of Jerusalem. The speaker emphasizes the importance of having a holy concern for the church and the world, reminding listeners of God's love and sacrifice for both.

Transcript

I've been kneeling here. I don't feel worthy to give the message this afternoon. I feel that many times, but especially in this message.

I don't want it to be a trivial thing. I hope that all of us have, are carrying on our hearts holy concerns. And I hope that God uses you to help your people share holy concerns from the heart of God.

And there's a term which, among us that have been here this week, we use rather freely, and I'm going to speak on that term today, prayer burdens. But do you know that there are many people that know practically nothing about prayer burdens? And oh, that God's people would share with Jesus. Must Jesus bear the cross alone or all the world go free? Must Jesus bear the burdens of our lost world comparatively alone? Oh, that God would help us get to the place where we can thus share the heartbeat of God.

He's depending on us. We're so, such failures. We're so weak.

Oh, that somehow we could sense more constantly the heartbeat of God. Sometimes that heartbeat is sheer joy, and sometimes it is heavy burden. God so loves the church, and he wants the church to be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.

And God so loves our world, he was willing to die for it. Yet we forget so quickly. As a basis of this, I'm going to read several verses from the first chapter of Nehemiah in the Old Testament.

I was in the citadel of Susa. Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Jerusalem with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile and also about Jerusalem. You see, Nehemiah had a holy concern.

He was concerned about Jerusalem. This was a disgrace. Israel was in captivity.

Jerusalem had fallen. The flame had been extinguished in the temple. The holy sacrifices had stopped.

For practical purposes, Israeli ritual religion was at a standstill. And so here come some people, and I can just imagine, oh, you have just come from Jerusalem. Oh, brother, tell me, how is it? What's happening in Jerusalem? He has this concern.

He is carrying a continual concern on his heart. They said to me, those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire.

When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. He couldn't take it. He couldn't keep standing.

He felt it so heavily. He just had to sit down. And there he sat and wept.

For some days, I mourned and fasted, and I prayed before the God of heaven. Then I said, oh, Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants. You see, he could say to God, God, you know, I've been praying day and night about this.

I've been carrying this burden. You know my heart cried to you. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you.

And he goes on. And then he comes down, verse 11, oh, Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this, your servant, and do the prayers of your servants who delight in revering your name. Lord, I know I'm not the only one.

You've got other faithful ones. They're praying. Oh, God, listen to us.

Listen to us. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man. I was cupbearer to the king.

The cupbearer was the closest associate of the king, closer than the prime minister, the most trusted person in the kingdom. And Nehemiah had reached this position even though he was a Jew, a captive Jew. His life must have been so sterling, his walk with God so humble but transparent that a heathen emperor trusted him more than others.

He put his life in the cupbearer's hand. There were intrigues in those days. It wasn't safe to be an emperor.

Many ways to try to kill him, to try to poison him. But the cupbearer was the responsible one, and he was the one with whom the king confided when he wanted to talk things over. He was a confidant, and Nehemiah has been living with a heavy concern in his heart.

And it had grown heavier and heavier until day and night he'd been praying. So when someone came from Jerusalem, oh, tell me what's the condition in Jerusalem now? And when he hears terms like disgrace, he just sits down or collapses down on the chair. It just about knocks him over.

He is so burdened, and so he prays and fasts. That was our topic this morning. He was adding fasting not as a discipline here.

He was fasting because of his concern. He was intensifying his prayer to the level of fasting. I have called prayer burden the fifth level of prevailing prayer.

Prayer burden can be so holy it goes beyond fasting. Prayer burden begins deep in the heart. So I began with the word prayer concern.

I believe there are many who share a prayerful concern up to a point. How many share it to the point of burden? You know how Paul was burdened for the church? You know how Jesus was burdened in Gethsemane? And no doubt he was carrying prayer burden right along. Who could he share it with? Who could he share his burden with? Have you ever thought of that? Why didn't Jesus invite someone to go with him when he got up early in the morning when he prayed through the night? I don't suppose there was anybody spiritually sensitive enough to really share it with him.

Do you remember when he took them up on the Mount of Transfiguration? They went to sleep. The closest disciples he had. Do you remember in the garden? He didn't take them there to stand guard.

He had those by the gate. But he took them with him farther in the garden. Surely they could carry some of his burden.

No. They were spiritually unprepared to go to sleep. We prevail in prayer only by the enablement of the Holy Spirit.

And we carry a prayer burden only by the grace of God and the assistance of the Holy Spirit. And I suppose we carry prayer burdens so seldom because we so shallowly appreciate the heartbeat of God. Our eyes fail to see what God sees.

We go past a broken heart. We go past a dismayed person. We see what we don't see.

Even we go beside the sickbed or stand with the family beside the casket and we say, I understand. We don't understand. Why did Jesus weep at the tomb? He knew he was going to raise Lazarus.

But he entered so into the sorrow of Mary and Martha. So even though he was within minutes of miracle, he wept. That's the heartbeat of the Savior.

All that I would know more about the heartbeat of the Savior. Prayer burden begins with an inner impression that can gradually go deeper. Sometimes it begins very suddenly as a special gift and entrustment of the Holy Spirit to you.

It is God's way to call you to prayer. It is God's way to try to draw you near enough to the heart of God that you pray with God, the Son, and with God the Holy Spirit in that trinity of intercession that you share the burden in the heart of God. For no prayer burden ever begins with you.

It always is but a reflection of a burden in the heart of God. You can have selfish prayer that come from greed or ambition or something unworthy like that. But the prayer burden comes from the heart of God.

And if you begin to sense it and to see it, you know you're just on the fringe. But it's God who feels it infinitely more. So I hope all of us are carrying prayer concerns.

Even I hope that you have one or two or more prayer burdens. I don't think that anyone carries a host of prayer burdens. You may carry a multitude of concerns.

Do you have a prayer concern for people? I have quite a list of people on my prayer list. And of those people on my prayer list, some days I have a deeper concern for one and some for another. And there are several of those that I am more apt to have a deeper concern, maybe to the point of burden at times.

I'm touched for some reason or other. Now not everyone will be touched for the same ones. So when you feel this, you are being specially trusted by God the Holy Spirit.

You see, you may have been prepared by relationship, by past experience, by similarity of some kind, that you are more open to the Spirit's sharing with you a deeper portion of God's prayer burden. So don't be proud, but be deeply grateful and seek to respond and seek to share the prayer burden of God. The first variety of prayer burden is comparatively rare.

It is maybe a little more spectacular, but it is very real. And I believe if we were more constant in carrying regular prayer burdens, we would more often be entrusted by what I call instant emergency prayer burden. But, you know, a new Christian is sometimes entrusted with instant emergency prayer burden.

This is a sudden call of the Holy Spirit, an unexpected inward compulsion to pray and pray now. It is a compulsion that there is an urgency or a danger or something that's calling for prayer now. There is something that makes you, gives you an inward fear or tremble or apprehension, whatever.

I don't know how to express it, but it's time to pray now. You may have a clear concept of who it is for or what it is for. You may suddenly feel called to an instant prayer burden for a situation that flashes to your mind or for a person that flashes to your mind.

Or it may be that there is just an instant apprehension that something's needing prayer. And as you immediately try to open your heart and close your eyes to the outside things about that you may discern, what is it, Lord? What is it that you're wanting me to share? Then it may become clarified. Sometimes you don't know till later what it was all about.

So it may be very specific. It will always be very strong. And it may be very specific, and it may be that it emerges into greater more specificity.

Okay. The burden gets heavier, and as you respond, it may get still heavier and so heavier. You may become false to tears.

You may be so gripped that there's a deep apprehension, and you just call on God for mercy. It's an SOS from God. It's nothing that you put apart till your next personal prayer retreat.

It's nothing that you put apart till Sunday when you'll have more time for prayer. If you as a pastor have more time for prayer on Sunday, or whatever day you use for your free day, it's important to go instantly to prayer. Dr. J. Oswald Sanders, who was the overseas director for the China Inland Mission, now called

Overseas Missionary Fellowship, a New Zealander, he was traveling in central China when Mrs. Sanders was in bed at midnight and suddenly got an impression that she must pray immediately for her husband.

In this case, she knew it was for her husband. She didn't know where he was. She knew he was on a trip.

She did not know that he was in a very dangerous, bandit-infested area. But at midnight, she was awakened and called to prayer. And she went to prayer.

And later, when they compared notes, they found this was the exact time when he was in great physical danger. She was prayer partner with her husband and with Jesus and with the Holy Spirit. During World War II, a British captain, a British chaplain on a British warship in the English Channel had gone to bed and was awakened in the night with a strong urgency to pray.

He got right out of his bunk, got on his knees beside his bunk, and began to call on God. And as he interceded and called on God for mercy and for God to undertake, he prayed until the burden lifted. Sometimes these sharp prayer burdens last only a brief time.

You pray then or you don't pray at all. You pray then or you fail God's purpose. And he prayed immediately.

And when peace came to his heart, he was getting back in his bunk when just then the ship's officer stepped in the door and said, Chapman, we just missed a floating mine by a few yards. And within the next couple of days, two other ships were sunk with a loss of over 1,500 lives in that very area. There was a praying chaplain that was available to God that God used to prove the power of prayer and to prove how God uses us to affect events in the world and in his kingdom.

And just after my wife and I were married, we were going to go to a pastorate, but we stopped by my parents' home for a few days. We were very poor, beginning with almost nothing. And in those few days, God did several wonderful things.

I had less than \$100 to my name and knew I had to get some kind of a car. And a cousin gave me \$125. Praise the Lord, I was able to get a car, which served us in the pastorate until we left for India.

We were in my parents' home in the spare bedroom, and my father and mother went out to a prayer meeting out in the country one weeknight. They went out there on a regular basis, and my wife and I did not go along. And we were just going to get ready for bed, so we had prayer time together.

We were kneeling beside the bed, and I believe Betty prayed first. And I was praying when suddenly in the midst of my prayer, I was gripped with a prayer burden. I didn't know what it was, but I just sensed danger.

And I opened my eyes and I looked, and there was a window beside where I was kneeling. I wondered if there was someone with a gun outside the window. If we were in danger, what it was, I didn't know.

And I just began to pray for God to have mercy. Oh Lord, undertake, I plead your precious blood. I plead your precious name.

I plead the name of Jesus. And I began to pray, and pray more strongly, and just call on God. I don't know how long I prayed like this.

You don't at such a time. You're not watching your watch. You are totally absorbed in prayer.

And then the burden lifted, and I tapered off my prayer and said amen. And Betty said, what was that Leslie? What was wrong with you? What were you praying about? What was that? I said, I don't know. I said, there was danger.

Who was in danger? I said, I don't know. There was danger. She said, well, your face was as white as a sheet.

So we talked a little bit and got in bed. We hadn't gone to sleep yet, maybe 10, 15 minutes. There was a gentle knock on the door.

And then my mother's voice, Leslie. I said, yes mother, come in. She opened the door.

She said, oh Leslie, God was so merciful to us. Papa and I were coming down the highway. It's a county highway, gravel road, coming down the highway.

And there was a car with such bright lights, came straight at us at such a speed. And both of our eyes were blinded. We couldn't see where we were on the road.

It looked like we were going to be hit head on by that speeding car, when suddenly it passed us on the wrong side. And when it was passed, we discovered we were on the wrong side of the road. Oh Leslie, she said, God was so merciful to us.

So for more than 30 years, my father carried on in gospel ministry, preaching on two radio stations to the very last week of his life when he was 87. In fact, I was called home. And I got there the day before the funeral.

And on the radio in the home where I was staying, I suddenly heard my father's voice. It was his last message recorded several days before on the radio. And at the close, they said, Reverend Doole's memorial service will be held today.

And they gave me a kiss. What if I had said, Betty, you suppose we could take off an hour for a special prayer tomorrow? I'd been too late. Supposing I had said, you know, I believe there are so many urgent needs, and I feel God wants me to pray.

I don't know what all for. I think I'll set off tomorrow for a day of prayer. I wouldn't have done it.

I'd have been too late. When an SOS comes, you pray then. Or you don't pray.

There was a businessman in Sydney, Australia. And one evening, he began to feel a deepening prayer concern for Indonesia. And he felt that he should call several men together to pray.

So he got on the phone. And he got several men who agreed. And they came together.

And they prayed for Indonesia. And they prevailed in prayer that night. Little did they know, little did the Christians of Indonesia know, that that was the night for Indonesia.

The communists had been planning for months for a coup which would take over the government. They had prepared lists. Every missionary's name was on the list.

Every police official's name was on the list. The lists were later found, so we know exactly. And behind each list was the name of the person assigned to assassinate them.

And within the first hours of the coup, all these people were to be eliminated. I stayed in the home of a Christian Missionary Alliance couple. They said, people came and dug a pit in their front yard.

They said, what are you doing here? They said, we have orders from the municipal government to dig a pit. And hereafter, you're to put your garbage in this pit. They thought it was strange, but you know, they're visitors, guests in a foreign country.

Little did they know that that's where their bodies were to have been thrown, and then the pit covered. They found the stocks of uniforms to be worn when the coup took effect. It was D-Night, and the assassination squads started out.

And there were six top generals to be assassinated immediately. And five of the six were captured and assassinated. And the jeep with communist guerrillas drove up to the front door, front of a house of Air Force General Suharto, who is now the Prime Minister of Indonesia.

And they got up silently from the jeep with their guns. And just as they got up, ready to storm the house, suddenly, one soldier's finger just began trembling. And he looked, and he couldn't stop.

He couldn't control his finger. And his finger just began to, and before he knew it, it had hit the trigger, and the gun shot off straight up in the air. And General Suharto was in bed.

And he heard the shot, and instinctively, he leaped out the bedroom window and ran zigzagging across and got to the Air Force headquarters. And he was a surviving man to take charge. And for two weeks, it swayed like this, and nobody knew.

I don't have time to tell you one Christian that I knew who was the head of the Indian Christian, of Indonesian Christian labor union. Did you ever know there were such things? There was. And by sheer accident, no providence, that was the year that by turns they rotated the leaders of the labor unions to make the top leader of all the labor unions of Indonesia.

And there was a Christian at the head of this labor union. And another friend of mine, Ice Hormans, who was leading Campus Crusade at that time, felt led to go and see the other friend. I can't for the moment think of his name.

I've met him. We've talked briefly about the situation. And Ice went to him and said, brother, it was just, who's going to succeed? Are the Communists going to succeed, or are the government forces going to succeed? And I said, brother, God's put you in a strategic place.

Are you going to risk your life for God's sake and for Indonesia? And he prayed with him. And the labor union leader went out on the street to take a procession. The Christian labor union was small, but because he was chairman for the year of the whole of the labor unions, when his labor union came out, the whole labor unions came out and started praying the streets for the government and not for the Communists.

They might have been mowed down by the Communists. No one knew how advanced they were in their preparations. But the tide turned because what? A businessman in Australia got a sudden prayer burden and got together a group of men, and not knowing why, they just prevailed for Indonesia.

And so what happened? Some people call it great revival that spread across Indonesia. And thousands of people, in fact, hundreds of thousands of people became at least nominal Christians, and many, we hope,

became real Christians. And to this day, the Communists have not taken over Indonesia.

And it probably hung in the balance in the hand of one businessman in Sydney, Australia. I am told, but I have not been able to verify. I have been told that in the Philadelphia area there was a businessman who felt the same impression and got some people together to pray.

If anyone knows anything, I would like to investigate. I don't know how to investigate. But I know in Sydney, Australia, a sudden, instant prayer burden.

That puts you on instant responsibility. You're a watchman on God's wall. You are instantly responsible for whatever it is that is at need in the kingdom of God.

You never know. You may be the only one. You may be one of several.

But God is summoning you to play a role in the kingdom of God. The second variety of prayer burden is a gradually deepening prayer burden. Not an instant prayer burden, but a gradually deepening prayer burden.

I hope you have experienced this. When something you begin, just as you take a concern upon your heart. I believe maybe I ought to pray more for prison ministry.

Or I believe I ought to pray more about the Muslim world. Or I believe I ought to pray more for Gideon's distribution of scripture. Or I believe, and you just sort of, to a sense, voluntarily you take a need upon your heart.

I believe I ought to pray for the young people in our area. And you take that upon your heart. And as you carry it on your heart, it becomes deeper and deeper and deeper.

And the more faithful you are, the heavier the prayer burden becomes. Until you are a very entrusted individual in the kingdom of God. And you are one, or one of many, whatever God knows, you don't need to know, responsible for the situation.

It may be that at first you wonder, now is this just my own idea, or is this God giving me an assignment? But as you pray on, it almost always becomes more clear. And you begin to feel, yes, this is what God wants me to pray for. You may put it on your daily prayer list.

You may take other steps. You may decide to spend a day of fasting and prayer. Perhaps I could give one illustration from some years ago.

I was ministering in Perth, Australia, and coming to the end of my several weeks of ministry there, and about to go back to India. This was before I came to the OMS headquarters. And I was in the last church.

I was in the last city of Perth. I was in the Bible Institute of Perth. I was in another church earlier in the week.

And on Wednesday, I came to the Perth, to the Scarborough Baptist Church. And the first night I spoke on communion with God and prayer, and the work in India. And as I went home that night, I began to feel a prayer concern coming over me.

I prayed, went to bed. The next day, all day long, I began feeling the need of prayer. I just need to pray.

I didn't know what for, but I just felt the need to pray. So I thought to myself, I believe on Saturday, I should take the day off and just spend the whole day alone with God. This was Thursday.

On Friday, it became even more clear. I just felt a real conviction as I kept praying, yes, I must spend Saturday alone with God. So Friday evening, I said to my hosts, I said, tomorrow I have a special appointment.

Don't expect me for meals. I'll be away early in the morning, but don't worry, I'll be back in time to change my clothes, in time for the evening service. So I slipped out before daybreak on Saturday morning.

Took my Bible, my notebook, and I don't remember, several items. And I went out on, I had seen in general where the beach was. So I went out to the Scarborough Beach, and I found a place where there was a cluster of shrubs, bushes, and so forth.

And I found a place where I was able to have a kind of a hideout. I didn't see anybody all day long, and I don't think anybody saw me. And there on the beach, I was praying.

I began the day with a wonderful time of communion with the Lord, reading maybe 50, 75 of the Psalms, I don't know. I was just feasting on the Word of God. And as the time went on, I began to feel more and more, oh, we must pray, we must pray.

I just felt the prayer burden increasing steadily. And then I began, of course, I was concerned for India. I was still a missionary in India.

And then as by noon, I just felt a tremendous sense of spiritual warfare. And my prayer began to change. I was no longer communing and feasting, but now I was praying for God to intervene, for Satan to be stopped, for God to slow down the onslaught of Satan, for God to break through the darkness.

And as I prayed on and on, I wrote two poems on militant prayer. I wasn't praying one word out loud. Utterly silent.

I did not have a cold, hoarseness, or anything, just praying silently, holding on to God. And as I prayed on, I felt, I've got to change my message for tonight. And I prepared a new message fairly quickly that afternoon on the power of Satan and the power of God.

And I knew I had the Word of the Lord for the evening service. I walked back to the house, washed, changed my clothes. We started for the church.

They'd asked no questions and I made no comments. They asked me something, and I started to answer, and my voice was gone. I couldn't say a word.

I moved my mouth. I couldn't make a sound. We got to the church.

One of the deacons came and opened the door. Well, brother, what's the matter? Can't you speak? You can't speak. What are you going to do? I moved my lips.

I'm going to preach. I knew I had the message of God. I didn't know what was happening.

They took me on into the pastor's room. Each night we had a half an hour of prayer, the deacon's pastor and I, before the evening service. We went there and they prayed up a storm.

And we began the service, and the pastor started the service and all, introduced me. I went up to the pulpit, opened up my Bible to Ephesians chapter 6. I struggled. I couldn't make a sound.

By this time, the people were sitting up all over the church. What's going on? I gripped the pulpit on both hands. Now, it probably didn't take as long as it seemed, but, you know, when you're on the spot, it seems a long time.

And I struggled and struggled, and finally I got four, one word at a time. We struggled. Not.

And it seemed to me like every word I was saying, I was forcing out across the pulpit, like it was just flopping down on the floor. There was no liberty. There was no sense of anointing.

No sense of God's presence. I just forced the words out, word by word. I think I got a little more fluent as time went on, but it was a forcing all the way through.

When I finished the message, I began first with the power of Satan, then on the power of God. I sat down. I don't think the pastor knew what to say or do.

He got up. He dismissed the service. He went to the door and shook hands with the people, and I just stood at the pulpit.

Normally, I go to the door with the pastor, but I just stood at the pulpit, and I put my head down in my hands. I said, Oh, Lord, I don't understand. I've tried to obey you.

I've done everything I know to do. Lord, I don't understand it. I don't understand.

I'm praying aloud in my heart, and I heard the voice, Brother Dewey. I looked up. There was a short little woman standing in front of the pulpit.

I said, Yes, sister, and I came around. She said, Six months ago, I was born again, and I know I was born again, but before my salvation, I was partaking in black magic. She says, Now the demons won't let me go, and every night when I go to bed, they gather around my bed visibly, and they hoot at me.

That was her words. They hoot at me, and for the first time in my life, I knew what righteous indignation was. I was angry with Satan.

I forgot about the pastor at the door, a godly brother. I said, Sister, Satan has no right to torment you like that, and we're going to agree in prayer right now that he leave you alone, and I don't think I prayed more than five or six sentences, but I just felt like I had the authority of heaven, and I prayed and said, Amen, and I knew I was finished. That was it, and she left, and people, my host were waiting for me.

He was secretary of the board of deacons, and so we went home, but I was shaken. I still didn't fully realize what was involved, what was happening, and I thought, What am I going to do tomorrow? Sunday morning, the last service, I was to fly at two o'clock for Singapore, then to Calcutta, back to Allahabad in India, and I went to bed praying. I prayed a good deal before I went to bed that night, and I got up in the morning, and I was praying, and I said, Lord, help me.

I've got to finish this series here. Help me, and I thought, What if the young people come? Someone wants me to meet with a Sunday school class. I don't believe I ought to speak.

You know, I didn't want to endanger my voice. I couldn't explain what happened the night before, so we went to the church, and I went straight to the pastor's room so no one would stop me and want to talk, and I got down on my knees, and just a little bit, there was a tap on the door, and here was a young man. He said, Brother Dool, the young people would like to have you come, and tell them about India and answer questions, and I thought, Lord, what do I do? Dare I use my voice? I had no problem that moment, but I just, I was shaken still, didn't know what was happening.

All right, I said, I'll come, and it was a little reluctance that I went, and we had a helpful time, I hope. We came in the morning service, and the pastor, Brother Walton, I believe it was, he began the service, then just before I spoke, and you could sense God's presence that morning in the service. God was there.

He said, now we're going to learn a new song this morning. He said, everybody turn over your bulletin on the last, the back side of the last sheet. I hadn't even turned the bulletin over, so I turned over, and there was a poem I had read the first night at Jesus' feet.

I didn't know the man was a musician, much less that he was a composer. He walked over to the organ, he began to play the organ, beautiful strings, and then he taught us to sing my poem at Jesus' feet. I was just about in tears.

I'd never heard words of mine sung by a congregation before, and it was so, it seemed so heavenly. It just was just precious to me. Then it was time to speak.

When I got up, there was no problem with my voice. The Lord was present. There was such a strong anointing upon me.

When I finished speaking, there must have been 50 people came forward, some to be born again for the first time, some to be consecrating, to be filled with the Spirit, some responding to the missionary call. The pastor led in prayer. Oh, it was just, you were just ripped by God's presence.

Then I went to the door to say goodbye to the people, and he said, if you want to, ask brother, tell brother Dool, you'll be praying for him as he goes back to India. So I was at the door, pray for me, God bless you, pray for me, pray for me, shaking hands with me, and I reached for the next person. It was a big hulk of a man, and I don't know why, but I had not noticed him during the service, and I don't notice everybody in the service, but I certainly had not noticed him.

In the moment I saw him again for a first time, God gave me the gift of discernment. In an instant, I said, brother, God can meet your need. I hadn't intended to say that.

It was not in my mind, but I said, brother, God can meet your need. Instantly, his whole body began to shake and tremble, his head and his body, just like this. I grabbed his arm.

I said, come to the pastor's room, and as soon as I finished shaking hands, I'll pray. By that time, one of the deacons came and got him on one side, and another one came and got him, and they took him. So I shook hands with the people, and then I went back to the pastor's room.

He was sitting on a chair and was quiet then. So I kneeled down beside his chair, and I said, brother, like you would, open your mouth, your heart, tell God your need. Jesus is here to meet your need.

Jesus died for you, and so on. I said a few words. He opened his mouth, and the moment he opened his mouth to pray, his whole body began to shake and tremble like this again.

We were praying. We were praying, and he calmed down. He tried again.

Again, his whole body began vibrating like this. Finally, he got the words out. God, be merciful to me, a sinner, and just like that, that spell was broken.

He was normal. He prayed to God. He prayed the sinner's prayer.

He began to praise the Lord for the forgiveness of sins and salvation. He got up. We grabbed hands, and he hugged each other and all like that.

Well, I don't know how long it took, but anyway, it was behind schedule. So they bundled me in the car. I had no time to eat lunch because the plane left at two, but the wife had prepared a sandwich for me to eat in the car on the way to the airport.

We got to the airport, and I've never had a send off in my life like that. There were folks there from the Perth Bible Institute, from the other church. I can't remember the name of it.

Then from the Perth, from the Scarborough Baptist Church, about 150 people in a big circle got around me there. They all began to sing choruses, and then we all kneeled down. I felt like Paul on the way to Rome.

I was surrounded by such love and such prayer. I flew back to India. Two weeks later, I was sitting in my office when they brought in the mail, and there was an air letter from Australia.

In my opening, it was from my host, the secretary of the Board of Deacons. He said, Brother Dool, the Board of Deacons feel that I should write you this letter of explanation. We feel you should know that that man that you brought into the pastor's room was the husband of that woman who was delivered from demon oppression the night before.

You see, he had been involved in black magic too. Then the letter said, we as a Board of Deacons had had a covenant of prayer for that man's salvation for six months. His wife had said to me, six months ago, I was born again, and I knew I was born.

That was some of what was involved in that gradually deepening prayer burden. Then that sudden struggle that I didn't know that Satan could keep us from using a vocal cord. I had not compromised, but there I was.

You know what? Within six months time, my host and his wife were in Papua New Guinea as missionaries with Wycliffe translators in the children's school. So God did a lot of things that last Sunday and got glory to his name. How's my time coming? There's the third type of prayer burden is this gradually deepening prayer burden that suddenly becomes an instant prayer burden.

A holy concern which settles upon you heavier and heavier, and then suddenly there is that instant prayer burden. I have several illustrations that I could give. Mrs. Hulda Andrus was a godly mother.

Her husband was dead, and she was remarried. She had a wayward son who was away from God. She had prayed and prayed for her son, and he had never come back to God.

Now he was in the Air Force. It was during World War II. She didn't know where he was.

She just knew he was in the Air Force. You were not told exactly where people were during the war. One night she was awakened in the middle of the night with a tremendous prayer burden.

She said it just felt like she was dropping down, down, down through space, and she called out to God for mercy, just called out with the top of her voice as she lay there in bed, pled with God for mercy, whatever. She didn't know what it was or why, just pled with God for mercy, and then the burden was gone. And she didn't know what had happened.

She couldn't explain it. She went back to sleep after some time. A couple of days later she had a letter from the War Department.

Your son was on General Doolittle's plane that was shot down over Tokyo. The word we have is that your son is alive and is a prisoner in a Tokyo prison. Then she knew that must have been when her son was shot down, and later she heard from her son after he got back to America that as he was falling through the sky, the Japanese machine gunners were shooting at the falling crew members trying to kill him before they struck the ground, but he landed safely and was made a prisoner.

It was some weeks later. She was having lunch at noon when suddenly that prayer burden started she'd been praying for her backslidden son for months, for several years. She had prayed and prayed and prayed.

Again a second prayer burden struck her. She just got up from the table and she walked back and forth in her dining room calling on God to undertake for her son. She was just so burdened, oh for her son, oh undertake.

She knew it was for him this time. She didn't know why. Later on she found the reason for that.

Her son had been on trial with the other crew members. There were five. The other four were executed, and for some reason her son was imprisoned.

A mother's prayer. A mother's prayer. But she was still carrying that general prayer burden for her son.

And a third time she got a sudden emergency prayer burden. She knew it was for Jake. And later she found that at the very time she was praying that third time her son was on his knees in the jail cell in Tokyo giving his heart to God.

He was saved. Later on before he got out of the Tokyo jail he was called into the ministry in the jail cell. And then he was called to be a missionary.

When he was set free after the war he came to America and went to an evangelical seminary. He went back to Japan as a missionary. And I had hardly gotten back when he met a Japanese air force.

I forget whether he was a general or colonel. I think he was a colonel. The one who had led the attack on Pearl Harbor.

And he had been converted. So the two men linked up as a team in Japan. And they went from city to city holding evangelistic campaigns in the cities of Japan.

Jake DeShazer and I don't remember the Japanese brother's name. Former enemies leading the two sides. Not exactly leading.

Jake was not the leader but still on the opposite side. Now brothers in Christ preaching the reconciling gospel of Jesus Christ. What if it hadn't been for a praying mother faithful to the prayer burden.

When I wrote my first book *Touch the World Through Prayer* there was one illustration that I struggled with. I was afraid it might call attention to myself. And yet it was so clear cuts and I felt it just fit should I tell it or should I not tell it.

And I put it in. I took it out put it back in again kind of making up my mind. And I found the reason four years ago.

I wrote this book longer ago. It was off the press about six years ago. I found the reason four years ago.

It was a story before I went to India. America was not yet in the war but Europe was in the war. And as a Christian I was obviously praying every day about the war about the conflict.

And as Hitler was making his advances and as country after country fell I was trying to hold on in prayer. It seemed like prayer was not prevailing. Holding on, holding on in prayer.

War is hell people have said. War is tragic. But there was one thing that seemed to me desperately wrong.

There was a German pocket battleship disguised with a facade as a British merchant ship. And they would sail in passenger lanes undetected among the ships of the various countries. And suddenly remove the facade and attack a passenger ship deliberately sinking it with all lives lost.

Put up the facade and disappear again. And they appeared here and they appeared there. It was the Graf Spee, the German pocket battleship.

And I thought that is so wrong. For a battleship to attack a battleship that's war. But for battleships to deliberately seek out and attack passenger ships to just destroy life that's so wrong.

And I was disturbed in my heart. And so I prayed many a time, many a day, many a night I prayed about the Graf Spee. Not a sudden prayer burden, just a continuing, oh God stop that loss of life.

Stop that wickedness. Stop that awfulness. And I prayed and I prayed.

And one night I had just gotten in bed and I don't remember now whether I was at the moment praying about the Graf Spee or not. But suddenly just like that a prayer burden struck my heart for the Graf Spee. I knew exactly what it was for.

Oh I didn't say one word out loud. My wife sleeping and she hadn't gone to sleep yet quite but at my side didn't know it. I didn't wave my arms but in my heart I was just wrestling with God crying out, oh God stop the Graf Spee.

Stop that attack on human life. Stop that sinfulness. And as I was just praying in my heart calling out to God the burden was just so heavily upon me.

And I don't know how long it was dark. I didn't look at the clock until the burden lifted. And when the burden lifted I'm personally quick to go to sleep so pretty soon I was asleep.

The next morning on the news the Graf Spee dashed into the harbor of Montevideo, Uruguay last night. Oh Lord I said don't let that ship get away. Well I'm sure by that time probably several million Christians around the world were praying.

I don't know I hope they were but anyway. They got minor repairs. There were rumors that some British naval vessels were steaming toward Montevideo Harbor.

I don't know how near they were. The ship made the dash, got just to the mouth of the harbor. The German captain ordered every man off board with a life jacket into the lifeboats.

He chose to go down with the ship. It was suicide. It was to him a disgrace that he had been ensnared.

He died. Every other life was saved. I thought should I put that in there? You know people think that I'm trying to boast.

I knew that probably many people had been praying about the Graf Spee at that time. But I did put it in at last. Four years ago in Orlando, Florida, I had just come back from Brazil holding pastors conferences in Brazil.

I got to Orlando and the joint meetings of the EFMA and the IFMA, the two evangelical accrediting organizations for missionary organizations. I came into the first service and as I usually do I just paused and asked, Lord if there's someone you want me to sit with? If someone has information that I need or if I'm to share something with anybody else, do you guide me to who I sit with? So I was just standing in the aisle a little bit before the service and just praying, Lord, if there's someone you want me to contact, you guide me. And I saw a shirt man, this wife that I didn't recognize over here but I didn't particularly look.

I kind of was aware that she kind of leaned out her head trying to read my lapel on my knee. The next thing I knew, arms were thrown around me and this little man had grabbed me and hugged me to his heart, face against my face. Brother, he said, I believe I'm here today because of you.

I said, who are you brother? You know, I couldn't see who it was. It was Dr. Louis Bush. A month later, he emceed, he was the coordinator for the first all South America Congress on World Evangelization held in Brazil.

He said, I was reading Touch the World through prayer and I saw in there where you were praying and God stopped the grasping. I said, brother, maybe there were a thousand people praying at the same. He said, I don't know about the thousand, but I know about you.

He said, my father-in-law was a British surgeon in Argentina. When war came, he decided to take his family home to a safe place and took them to Britain. Well, you know, the bombings and all that was all but a safe place.

But he said, he had a daughter and she was in love with an Argentinian young man. And after several months, she said, I've got to go back to Argentina and marry my fiance. And he said, the night that the grasping dashed into Montevideo Harbor, my wife was on a British merchant ship just outside Montevideo Harbor.

And that evening, the captain said to her and several people standing there, we have heard a rumor that we are being targeted by the grasping. Of course, we can't verify that. He said, God stopped the grasping.

My mother's ship was not sunk. It was right there at the time. She got to South America.

She married my dad. I was born. I'm in God's work today because of you.

Listen, friends, I felt almost physically cold and I felt trembling. I said, brother, there may have been many people praying. He said, I know you were praying because your book says so.

The next morning, he was to give the keynote address. And before he spoke, he said, I'm here today because of Wesley Newell. I've been told he's told that in Singapore.

I've been told he's told that in Atlanta. I guess where he goes many places. And a year later, I heard him in another place and he started off the message the same way.

I'm here today because of the prayers of Wesley Newell. What if I'd failed the Lord? Is that what heaven's going to be like? Is that what's going to happen in heaven? People are going to come up and say, the angel has assured me that you were the one praying that time. Oh, friends, what would it mean on that day to have been faithful? The fourth one I'll hear, long term prayer burden.

That's a prayer burden that God puts on your heart and you just carry it on and on and on. There may be nothing very dramatic, but you just feel like that's your assignment from God. Do you have any such prayer assignments from God? I have a friend, his prayer burden is for the street children of the world.

He's constantly praying for the street children of the world. Hundreds of thousands living on the streets of Bogota, hundreds of thousands living on the streets of Bombay, on the streets of Calcutta, on the streets of various cities around the world, waste, getting into drugs, into sin. No one knows who their parents are.

Tragic, pathetic. And that's his prayer assignment from God, the street children. Wherever he goes, he carries that burden on his heart.

He's praying, oh God, help people to get a concern, help people nearby to see, give them eyes to see the need, help them to get doing something, help them to win those children. Oh Lord, undertake, supply the needs of those children. That's his continuing prayer burden.

You may have a prayer burden for prison ministry. You may have a continuing prayer burden for your church. You may have a continuing prayer burden for your city.

And every day, several times a day, when you have free moments, you think once more of Roanoke, or Greensburg, or Atlanta, or Boston, or Indianapolis, or wherever. Would to God that every city had some people with a continuing prayer burden. Have you ever heard the story about George Verwer? You know who George Verwer is? The founder of Operation Mobilization that takes out every year several thousand young people overseas for shorter or longer periods of witness.

Many of them go for two years. They've got two ships, a Dulas and a Logos. There was a woman in Pennsylvania that got a prayer burden for a high school down the street.

She had no children in that school, but she had a tender heart, and God gave her a burden for that high school. And for 12 years, she prayed for that high school, that God would save young people in that high school, and he would send some around the world with the gospel. Twelve years with no proof of an answer.

And then a young people's Bible study was formed, and a number found the Lord, and one of those was George Verwer. And that dear lady, just a couple of months ago, went to heaven. You ask any O.M.er of the senior people, and they'll tell you the story.

What if she hadn't carried that burden for 12 years for that high school? There are high schools in all of our cities. There are colleges. There are universities.

Is anyone carrying a prayer burden? Is anyone praying for God's witness to come on those campuses? Can God find anybody? There are places all around us calling for prayer burden. You may get a different one. I may get a different one.

But do we have ears to hear the voice of God? Do we have a heart sensitive enough to feel the burden of God? My precious mother went to heaven while I was in India. But for the last at least 30 years of her life, I can testify whenever I was home, whether from college or from the mission field, every day that I was at home, in the family prayer, mother always prayed for China and for India. Her prayers for China began I don't know when.

But when I was called to India as a little boy of about six, mother added India to China. And so she prayed every day. And she didn't just say, Lord bless India and China, or Lord bless the missionary work in India and China.

Mother prayed in some detail every day for those two nations. And for the last roughly I would say at least 30 years of mother's life, whenever I was home, every day in family prayer, she not only prayed, but before she stopped praying for those two nations, she would be sobbing and weeping. Not just with tears, she would be actually sobbing.

Mother loved those two nations. She never left the United States. But mother was an intercessor.

When Chairman Mao died, and within a couple of months, things began to break in China. And when the secret Christians began to come out in the open, and when witnessing began to be more freely made, and for the best that human estimates can be given, the most conservative estimates say that within about 12 years time, at least 50 to 60 million people received Christ. And some of the more generous estimates, some people, some books talk about 100 to them, more million Chinese found Christ in 12 years time.

The greatest harvest in the history of the human race. When the moment I began to hear this, I said, mother's prayers are being answered. Mother's tears.

Mother invested tears in that day after day after day. She never got to China. She never got to India.

But mother was weeping and praying every day. She loved them so much. On mother's tomb, mother's grave site, I should say, on the gravestone, there's her name, the year of her birth, the year of her death, in one word, intercessor.

That's what she was known for. God doesn't forget your investment of prayer and love. You may say, well, I've prayed and prayed.

I don't see any results yet. Look, your prayers are being caught up in the treasury of God and in the purposes of God. And someday, somehow, those prayers are going to be joined with other prayers.

And in mighty force, the kingdom of God is going to advance. I believe that with all my heart. I have prayed for people who never gave their heart to Christ, but at least my conscience was clear.

But my prayer that I believe, I was at a function in India, about 65 of us, and Prime Minister Nehru addressed us. Had a tea party, and we expect him to nod and walk out. And suddenly, it was announced to the surprise of the people that arranged the function that he wanted to shake hands with all those present.

So we quickly all lined up in a row, and Mr. Nehru came up. Just shaking hands quickly. How do you do? How do you do? I get down the line.

And I thought, well, here he's coming. Lord, what do I say to Mr. Nehru? This may be the only time in my life. His house is just a mile down the street from us, but how do I get close to Nehru? And when he came, I took his hand.

I said, Panditji, I'm praying for you every day for some years now. He stopped. He looked in my eyes.

He was silent for a minute. Then he said with some emotion, thank you. I didn't have time to preach him a sermon.

I didn't have time to tell him the way of salvation. He was down the line. But at least he knew that somebody, a Christian missionary, was praying for him.

I didn't see any results. As far as I know, he died without Christ. But I suppose he was a representative, symbolically, of India.

I was especially concerned with him because of my love for India, for him as a person, because he had many admirable qualities. And we Christians owe a great debt to Mr. Nehru. He was the one that kept India from becoming a Hindu nation.

He insisted it has to be a secular country where every religion has equal rights. Thank God for that. But my prayers for his salvation, as far as I know, were never answered.

But I don't believe those prayers were in vain. They were invested in India. I've been away from India for 27 years.

I prayed for India before I ever went to India. I prayed during my time in India. There were plenty of tears.

There was sweat. There was fasting days. I couldn't understand.

It was so hard. It was so unresponding. So little being done.

We poured out ourselves. I called for a meeting of the leaders of our work across India to come together to Allahabad, where our center was. I prepared a sheet and a half of legal-size paper, elite-type, small-type questions.

We took those questions and spent a couple of days just searching our hearts before God. Is there anything in our message that we're not clear-cut? Is there any reason why souls are not being saved in greater number? Is there anything in our fellowship, in our relationship with one another? Is there anything in our personal lives? We got on our knees before God and searched our heart for two days. Lord, what is

it? Why don't we see more of a breakthrough for God? I don't know.

We fasted. We prayed. We wept.

You couldn't see the results. One of my former students came to my office one day with his head down. I said, come in, John.

He stood there. He says, Mr. Dool, I don't know whether I should accept any more money from OMS or not. If God can't use me more than this, why should God's people support me? Tears were running down his face.

He said, I've been trying. God knows I've been trying. He says, my wife and I fast two days every week.

He said, I've never seen a praying woman like my wife. Well, of course, he hasn't seen that many women. I mean, in that sense.

But he said, my wife gets out of bed twice every night. She gets down on her knees beside her bed and she asks God to give us souls twice every night. But he said, where are the souls? By this time, he wasn't the only one weeping.

I was weeping. I put my arm around his shoulder. I said, John, I don't know how to explain this to you.

But keep preaching. Keep trying. Keep going.

I'll try and do a better job of getting people to pray for you. And when I was coming across the Pacific for the furlough, which has lasted until now, I didn't know I was going to be tied down as a vice president and then later as a president of OMS. I thought it was just a normal furlough.

And I was flying across the Pacific and I was praying in the airplane. Lord, Lord, what more can we do? How can we win the souls? How can we have the breakthrough? After 25 years, I was one of the first pioneers. After 25 years, about 25 churches, about one a year, about 1,500 believers.

Lord, what more can we do? As I sat in the airplane, just praying away, and I felt the Lord gave me a plan. I was to get a thousand people during furlough to pledge one 15-minute time per day for one year to pray for our work in England. And God gave me nearly 1,500.

That was a lot to ask for some people, 15 minutes a day for one subject. I'm amazed now that I asked for that much. That's what I asked for.

I felt, really, I felt led to. Within a couple of years, souls began to come through to God. Before furlough, we were having on average 25 new churches added per year.

As many each year as we had in the first 25 years put together. And now we have over 700 churches and over 80,000 believers. And I was back in India with the pastors making a report service prayer day, sitting in a big circle, younger pastors and older ones.

And one of the senior men looked across the circle to me. He said, Dual Sahib, he paused a minute. He said, all of us, repeated, all of us are seeing results beyond anything we've ever seen before.

I said, praise the Lord. He said, Dual Sahib, are you surprised? Oh, George, I said, I am surprised. Praise the Lord.

He said, you oughtn't to be. I said, no. He said, didn't you go home and get a thousand people to pray 15 minutes a day for us? I said, George, more than a thousand.

I said, George, I asked them for one year. And I don't know how many are still praying for you. I said, I know someone.

He said, then why are you surprised? And I said, thank you, George. Why should we be surprised when God answers prayer? And I must stop, but I just want to tell you that continuing prayer burden will bear fruit in eternity. We may not see it instantly, but we are depositing in the treasuries of eternity.

Prayers in the will of God, prayers prayed for the glory of God will never die until God ties them in with other prayers and brings some glorious answer to extend his kingdom and bring glory to his name. And the number five, the last one, there are some situations so serious, so urgent, so difficult that they demand whole movements of prayer, movements of prayer. And I believe the situation in our country demands a movement of prayer.

And I pray to God that he will raise up Christians in local church after local church. I pray that God will raise up people until there is a movement of prayer across our nation. And I believe the Muslim world is another place.

There are those who say the Muslim world is a greater threat than communism ever was. And I believe we need a movement of prayer for the Muslim world, for a breakthrough, for Satan to be frustrated. And I just pray that God will raise up a movement of prayer.

And there may be other movements of prayer that call for more than ordinary praying and call for thousands of Christians to join, maybe not in a formal organization, but in their own heart of to hold the fort, to storm the gates of hell, and to claim victory for the Lord Jesus Christ. I always look forward toward giving this message because I feel that so much could happen if God's people became more of a burden-bearing people. And I would to God that every one of you pastors had five or 10 or 20 or more of your people who would carry a prayer burden for you and for your church.

I tell you, if they will carry a continuing prayer burden, we'll see things change for God. And maybe in your hands is the raising up of those prayer warriors. Maybe in your hands.

And I'm hoping that if God keeps sending me across the country, that I will be able to help people catch the vision and that God will raise up people. I know there are many other people teaching prayer and preaching prayer, and I don't have things very new, but I just want to see a movement of prayer across our land for God. Before I die, or after I die, just let God's will prevail.

Just let God's people rise up. Oh, the song says, rise up, O men of God. Here you are, men.

May God help us to rise up as men of God, as prevailers before God. I believe the tide can be turned, not by our might, not by our power, not just because we're praying, but because the Holy Spirit is praying through us, and the Holy Spirit is burdening us, and the Holy Spirit is helping us, and the Holy Spirit is leading us, and the Holy Spirit is groaning with groans which cannot be expressed with us for the will of God to be done. I'm not claiming that everybody's going to get saved before Jesus comes again, but I believe God has work to be done that hasn't happened yet.

And I believe that Satan is a usurper, and he'll occupy all the ground we let him take. And I believe it's time for us to stand up in the holy might of mighty prevailing intercession and believe for God. So help us, God.

Oh, God, help us.

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