

Welcome to **Discipleship training On The Air**. In this teaching series you may learn to become a disciple of Jesus Christ. A teacher will teach from the Bible that a disciple of Jesus prays. As you listen to this programme, make notes in a notebook or record the programme. Jesus says, "Ask and it will be given to you" (Matthew 7:7). Paul says, "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17). And James says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16). The Bible teaches much about prayer.

The third series of 6 teachings is about "The prayers of people in the Bible". We will learn from the prayers of different kind of followers of the Living God and the topics are: "Prayers in the Psalms", "Prayers of the prophets in the Bible" and "Prayers of the statesmen in the Bible". Every topic will be in two parts. Today we will learn about "A DISCIPLE USES THE PRAYERS OF THE STATESMEN IN THE BIBLE - PART 1". Throughout the history of the world there have been political leaders in countries that have been Christians! In their responsibility as leaders of people, they often prayed to God for wisdom, strength and courage to do their task. They pleaded with God for the lives of people. They struggled in their prayers for these people that they may trust and obey God. They prayed that justice might prevail in their countries. In part 1 we will learn from the prayers of Abraham, Moses, David and Solomon.

POINT 1. PRAYER OF ABRAHAM, THE FOUNDER OF NATIONS

Abraham lived 4000 years ago. Abraham was chosen by God to become the father of many nations.

Pray to God on behalf of the nations in the world.

Unlike many mighty rulers in the world, Abraham did not desire the destruction of another nation so that he himself might become stronger. Sodom belonged to another nation. This city was decadent and God decided to destroy it. In Genesis 18:16-33 we read how Abraham persistently interceded for the wicked city of Sodom. He pleaded with God that if there were 50 righteous people in the city, that God would spare the city. God granted him his request. Abraham continued by asking if there were 45 righteous people, that God would spare the city. Again God granted him his request. Abraham again and again renewed his request, up to six times, until he was convinced that God graciously answered his prayer. He stopped only when he knew God's will. And then he rested in God's will. It was God's will to destroy that wicked city, and yet, because of Abraham's persistent prayer, God answered his prayer and saved Lot and his family from that disaster.

Application. We Christians have a salvation and promises for the nations, which Abraham never knew. Let us begin to plead more with God on behalf of the nations in the world!

POINT 2. PRAYERS OF THE STATESMAN MOSES

Moses lived 3500 years ago. Moses was a Jew, but he was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action (Acts 7:22). After 80 years of training and gaining experience, God called him to lead the Israelites out of their slavery in Egypt.

First. Pray for other nations that mistreat you.

In Exodus 8 we read that the Egyptian king, called Pharaoh, had enslaved all the Israelites. The Israelites suffered much under his heavy workload and cruel treatment. Then God sent Moses to deliver the Israelites from the hand of Pharaoh. According to God's word, Moses demanded that Pharaoh let the Israelites depart from Egypt, but Pharaoh refused. So God sent plagues upon the Egyptians. The second plague was frogs. We read, "The frogs came up and covered the land. ... Then Pharaoh summoned Moses and said, 'Pray to the Lord to take the frogs away from me and my people, and I will let your people go. ... And Moses cried out to the Lord about the frogs he had brought on Pharaoh. And the Lord did what Moses asked. The frogs died in the houses, in the courtyards and in the fields. They were piled into heaps, and the land reeked of them.'" As the statesman of Israel, Moses did not seek the destruction of even his enemy, the Egyptians. Instead he prayed for his enemies and asked God to stop the punishment of his enemies.

Application. Leaders should follow the example of Moses and the teaching of Jesus in Luke 6:28, "Pray for those who mistreat you."

Second. Pray when you face trouble in your country.

In Exodus 15 we read that the Israelites had been travelling through the desert for three days without water. When they finally found water, it was bitter and undrinkable. Like usual, the people blamed the leader for all the hardships they suffered and they grumbled against Moses. But Moses prayed to God about this problem and God

showed him what to do. Moses found a piece of wood and threw it into the bitter water and the water became sweet!

Application. When people are dissatisfied and grumble it is easy for a leader to get angry and scold. But James 5:13 says, "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray." God has the best solutions for problems.

Third. Pray for the troublemakers in your country.

In Numbers 11 we read about the Israelites complaining about their hardships. They were wandering around in the desert, extremely hot during the day and extremely cold during the night. God heard their complaints and had a righteous anger against their bad attitude. So God sent fire down from heaven that consumed some of the Israelites. Then the people cried in fear and Moses prayed to the Lord. In answer to Moses' prayer, the fire died down and God's righteous judgement against their complaining came to an end.

Some time later, in Numbers 21, the Israelites grew impatient on their journey through the desert and again spoke against God and against their leader, Moses. They complained and said, "There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" God heard their complaints and sent poisonous snakes among them. The snakes bit the people of Israel and many people died. Then the people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the Lord and against you. Pray that the Lord will take the snakes away from us." Moses prayed to the Lord, but this time the Lord did not take the snakes away. Instead, Moses had to make a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. God said, "Anyone who is bitten must look at it and live." God's answer to Moses' prayer was that the Israelites would still suffer the consequences of their complaining, but each Israelite who had been bitten must personally look up at the cross and believe what God said. Only those who believed God, did not die.

Application. The people of every nation are sinners. And God will judge their sins. However just like Moses, the leaders of a nation can pray to God and plead with God to stop his judgements. God sent Jesus to be lifted onto a cross and die for the sins of people. Every person who believes in Jesus will not die the eternal death, but have eternal life.

Fourth. Pray with boldness and persistence for the people of your country.

Moses was a very humble man (Numbers 12:3) and yet he prayed with shameless boldness and persistence. In Exodus 32:30-34 we read when Israel had made the golden calf, Moses fasted for forty days and forty nights (Deuteronomy 9:18-19) and prayed, "What a great sin these people have committed. Please forgive their sin - but if not, then blot me out of the book you have written." To pray so long was "shameless persistence"! To make such a bold request was "shameless boldness"! Moses would rather die than not have his people forgiven and given back to him.

Fifth. Pray for the presence of God among the people of your country.

In Exodus 33 we read that, because Israel had made that golden idol, God did not want to go along with Israel on their journey through the desert. God said to Moses that he would send an angel with the Israelites as they journeyed through the desert, but that he would not go with them himself. However, Moses would not settle for anything less than that God himself would go with them. So Moses prayed to the Lord and said, "If your 'presence' does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" (verse 15-16). Moses knew that there was nothing special in himself or in the Israelites. He could only be the statesman of God when 'the presence of God' went with him! Without the presence of God he would be like any non-believer. Moses knew that only with the presence of God would Israel be God's people. Without the presence of God in Israel, Israel would be just like any other nation in the world. The presence of God is the distinguishing mark of the worker of God and the distinguishing mark of the people of God! Then God answered Moses and said, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name. My presence will go with you!" (verse 17,14).

Application. Like the statesman Moses, leaders should persistently pray for their subjects and especially pray that God may be present among his people!

POINT 3. PRAYERS OF KING DAVID

David lived 3000 years ago. King David was the most famous king of Israel. God testified about him, "I have found David a man after my own heart; he will do everything I want him to do" (Acts 13:22).

First. Pray for the revelation of God's plan and strategy for your country.

In 2 Samuel 5 we read that the Philistines attacked Israel. Instead of rushing out against his enemies, king David first prayed and asked God what he should do. God told him to go straight up against the Philistines. He obeyed God and gained a victory. Once more the Philistines attacked Israel and once more king David inquired from

God what he should do. This time, God told him to circle around the Philistines and attack from the back. Again king David obeyed God and again he gained a victory.

Application. A leader should not rush out and do things in haste. Instead he should first inquire from God what God wants him to do. After all, God knows the future and is the best strategist in the universe!

Second. Pray and ask God to deal with your enemies.

In 2 Samuel 15, we read that king David's counsellor, called Ahithophel, had turned against him and joined forces with his enemy. This Ahithophel plotted to get king David killed. King David had to flee for his life. During his flight David prayed to God that God would turn the advice, which Ahithophel would give to his enemy, into foolishness. And God answered David's prayer. His enemy did not follow Ahithophel's advice and consequently king David's life was saved.

Application. A leader should pray and ask God to deal with his enemies, instead of seeking revenge himself.

Third. Pray for the welfare of your country.

In 2 Samuel 21:1 we read that there was a famine for three successive years. Without rain and harvests, every country is doomed to be destroyed. God said that the famine was due to the unrighteousness that was done to the Gibeonites. After David had restored righteousness to the Gibeonites, God again answered prayers in behalf of the land and sent rain.

Application. A leader should pray for the welfare of his country or the welfare of his department, or factory or business. But his prayers must be accompanied by righteous actions!

POINT 4. PRAYERS OF KING SOLOMON

Solomon lived 2950 years ago. He was the son of king David.

First. Pray for wisdom and discernment between right and wrong.

In 1 Kings 3 we read that God appeared to king Solomon and said, "Ask for whatever you want me to give you." And Solomon prayed and asked for wisdom. He said, "Give your servant a discerning heart to govern your people and to distinguish between right and wrong." God was very pleased with his request, because it was unselfish and would benefit the people he ruled. In 1 Kings 4:29-34 we read, "God gave Solomon wisdom and very great insight, and a breadth of understanding as measureless as the sand of the seashore. Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all men of the East, and greater than all the wisdom of Egypt. He was wiser than any other man ... His fame spread to all the surrounding nations. He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. He described plant life, ... he taught about animals and birds, reptiles and fish. Men of all nations came to listen to Solomon's wisdom..." And all this happened almost 3000 years ago!

Application. *Wisdom* is the ability to use the best means to accomplish the highest goals. And every country leader needs this kind of wisdom. Only God can give this kind of wisdom. Therefore, pray and ask God for this wisdom.

Second. Pray for God's healing of your broken land.

In 1 Kings 8, king Solomon stood before all his people, spread out his hands toward heaven and prayed for his people. For example he prayed, "When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray towards this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people as an inheritance" (verse 35-36). And God answered him, saying, "When I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or command locusts to devour the land and send a plague among my people, if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land" (2 Chronicles 7:13-14). King Solomon had the courage to show to all his subjects that his country and even the king himself are utterly dependent on the living God!

Application. Through prayer, God can heal the broken land. Through prayer, God can send rain when there is drought, restore the crops that have suffered from pests and heal people who have been struck with severe sicknesses. Listener, if your land is broken, then start praying for God's healing.

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

First. If you are a leader in your country, in a factory, in a business or in the church, then what do you pray for your people?

Second. See the workbooks "Go and make disciples" and Internet on www. Etc

Third. Listen on short wave radio every SATURDAY to WEDNESDAY to "Discipleship training on the air".