

Because You Prayed...

By Mary Kane

Today, we will continue our study on Isaiah. Please pray for the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of your heart and read Isaiah 37 again.

Please write the key phrase from verse 21 in the space provided.

A long time ago, I learned a technique based on repetition for studying Bible verses that can be very insightful. Let's try that technique with verse 21. We will say verse 21 several times in succession each time emphasizing a different word in order to gain additional insight into what God is teaching through this verse. Please record any new understanding in the space provided—my thoughts are in the parenthesis.



- "...**because** you have prayed to Me..."

(Praying over this situation will make a huge difference.)

- "...because **you** have prayed to Me..."

(I may be the only one who knows of this need.)

- "...because you have **prayed** to Me..."

(Prayer is powerful!)

- "...because you have prayed to **Me...**"

(Take your concerns to God and He will act on your behalf because He is the One and Only true God.)

What is the most pressing concern in your life at this time?

Have you spent time praying over this issue?

If I may, I'd like to kindly and respectfully ask a few questions about your prayer life.

Is prayer a top priority in your life?

How much time do you spend in prayer each day?

Please don't feel condemned if you answered "very little" or "not at all" to the above question. God never reveals an area of sin in our lives to condemn us; He reveals problems so He can free us from them. He also abundantly supplies the grace and power to needed to overcome difficulties or sins we struggle with.

Do you ever skip praying because you feel you don't have time to pray or because you know that others will be praying?

I have skipped praying for both of these reasons. In looking back on my life since I have become a Christian, I can recall long periods of time in which I prayed very little or not at all. In reviewing my own heart and seasons of prayer-lessness, I've come up with a few theories on why Christians may be prayer-less. Please remember the Enemy

would love for you to be prayer-less and therefore powerless. Please consider the following:

- **If your life is prayer-less perhaps it is because you believe it is powerless.** My make-up cabinet is full of many different beauty concoctions; some are tried and true favorites that have served me well for many years. Others are gathering dust on the shelf, scarcely used because they didn't deliver what they promised. The fact of the matter is I won't continue to use something that I have no faith in. The same is true of prayer. If I believe prayer is power-less I won't use it.
- **If your life is prayer-less perhaps it's because you didn't see the results you desired.** A few months ago I watched a program on religious beliefs in America. A reporter interviewed random people on the street, asking whether or not they believed in God. When asked if he believed in God, one young man replied that he didn't believe in God because he didn't receive what he prayed for. Think for a moment— what if God answered every single one of your past prayer requests in the manner in which you desired? How many of us would be married to our eighth-grade boyfriends? We'd be in a lot of trouble wouldn't we? Instead of childishly demanding our own way, let's ask Him to answer our prayers the way Jesus modeled—Thy will be done.
- **If your life is prayer-less perhaps it's due to lack of knowledge.** When I was younger in my walk with the Lord, I felt that didn't know all the right words to pray and my mind often wandered in prayer. I'd start out praying for my husband and end up planning what I'd make for dinner that night. During this season of life I used a wonderful resource by Stormie Omartian, *Power of a Praying Wife*. She also has several other books on prayer that are very insightful. My copies are very worn and dog-eared! I still pull them out from time to time pending on the need.
- **If your life is prayer-less perhaps it's because you feel you don't deserve God to answer your prayers.** Maybe you wrongly believe, like I used to, that you've messed up to many times and don't deserve God to bless you or answer your prayers. Jesus came to this earth to die for our sins, to heal the sick and save the lost. He came to give us beauty for our ashes! You don't have to have a perfect track record. I sure

don't. Neither does your pastor, Mother Theresa or that perfect women at your church.

Hezekiah did not have a perfect record either. Let's go back in time a few years, to the first time Sennacherib marched against Hezekiah.

Please read 2 Kings 18:13-16.

According to these verses how did Hezekiah originally deal with Sennacherib's threats?

What did Hezekiah give to his enemy?

Did compromising with the enemy work?

As we read in yesterday's study, Sennacherib came back for more. Our Enemy will always come back for more; he will never be satisfied. Compromising with the Enemy never works.

Thank goodness Hezekiah did not waste any time in Isaiah 37 bemoaning the past, and crying that he did not deserve to be delivered because of his earlier sins and mistakes. Hezekiah used the past how God meant it to be used— as a teaching tool to provide instruction for future decisions. He saw that compromise did not work and in Isaiah 37 he wisely tried a new tactic—prayer!

To wrap up this study, let's go back and read Hezekiah's prayer one final time and record any insights you receive from scripture.

My insights are as follows:

- Before discussing your problems with anyone, take them to God in prayer. (I struggle with this!)
- Others will be delivered when we choose ignore our fears and the voice of the enemy and follow God.
- When we choose to trust in God, our enemies will be destroyed by the very plans devised to destroy us.
- The threats of the Enemy are no match for a believer's prayers and the power of God.
- Replace compromise with prayer!

And please remember some things will only happen **because you prayed!**

*"The Lord has heard my supplication;
the Lord will receive my prayer.
Let all my enemies be ashamed and greatly troubled;
Let them turn back and be ashamed suddenly."
Psalm 6:9*

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