

# FROM THE DEPTH OF MY HEART...



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BERACHAH PROPHETIC VOICE

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Inside India - Rs.150 Other Countries - \$30 Dearly Beloved,

Greetings in the mighty name of the resurrected Jesus Christ!

Our Jesus is alive! Amen! What a privilege to serve a living God. He not only lives, He made us alive together with Christ and raised us up together and made us sit together in the heavenly places with Him (Eph.2:5-6). His resurrection power is working within us. May the Lord enlighten our eyes to see the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead (Eph.1:17-20). We are heavenly beings living on this earth to establish His Kingdom. Let this revelation penetrate to your hearts.

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We have started to work for our 'Supernatural Lifestyle' seminars which we will conduct in Vijayawada and Bhopal in this year. The Lord's promise to us for these seminars was "Holy Ghost explosion, Holy Ghost revelation, Holy Ghost manifestation, Holy Ghost transformation". Start praying and mobilize people from your

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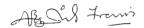
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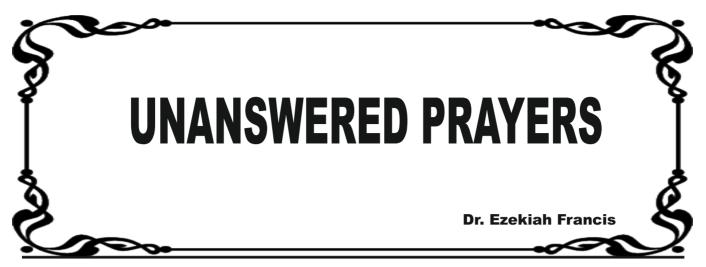
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Many are perturbed when they receive no response even after many days of prayer. They just blink, not knowing what to do when there is no answer. It is natural to become weary when we don't receive any immediate reply. Then our interest in prayer slowly diminishes. How about His promise that He hears our prayers? There is no reason why our prayers should go unanswered. Whoever asks receives. This is His unfailing Word. Right prayers by a righteous person never go unanswered. You are the reason for your unanswered prayers. Here are a few counsels on what you should do when there is no answer to your prayers. They will be of great help in getting replies to your prayers.

## A. CONSIDER YOUR PETITIONS AND MOTIVES

Examine whether your prayers are according to His will. Undesirable petitions will never be answered. The prayer warrior James speaks of this. "You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures" (Jas.4:3). The Lord does not answer prayers that are contrary to His will. Supplications aimed at fulfilling carnal desires will never be answered. Our prayers will go unheeded also when we pray against others. James and John were Jesus' close prayer companions. When Jesus was passing through Samaria to go to Jerusalem, the Samaritans would not receive Him. James and John were upset and prayed, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to

come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?" The Lord did not grant their request; instead He rebuked them saying, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of" (Lk.9:54-55). Do your prayers belong to this category? Prayers for strife and controversy will provoke the anger of God. The Israelites had to experience this (Isa.58:4).

Selfish prayers also find no answer. The Lord scorns the prayers of those who think about nothing other than their own promotion and prosperity. It is dangerous even to ask spiritual blessings and gifts for our own glory. Seeking great things for ourselves is also dangerous. James and John had yet another humiliating experience. One day they asked the Lord, "Teacher, we want You to do for us whatever we ask". Very wisely, He enquired of them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Grant us that we may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on Your left, in Your glory". Instead of a reply, they got a rebuke. Jesus said to them, "You do not know what you ask". He regretted that even His own close prayer partners did not know what to ask for. Please never ask anything for your own glory. Some have erred in this and ended up in despair. Ask things for the furtherance of God's glory. Pray unselfishly. "And do you seek great things for yourself? Do not seek them" (Jer. 45:5).

We should also examine our motives. Praying to show off is dangerous. One who makes a display of his prayer life receives nothing from God. This is like the Pharisees' prayer. Jesus reproved them saying, "For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have *their reward*" (Mt.6:5). The reward for such prayers ends with the praises of men. It is not registered in the heavenly books. What a pity! Our prayer life is the root of our spiritual life. The root should be underneath. People need to see only the fruits and the gifts. Someone said, "The secret of praying is praying in secret". This is undeniable. When you use your prayer life for your own glory, you will soon lose the spirit of prayer. You will receive no answers to your prayers. Beware of advertising your prayer life! Of course, it is not possible for you to hide it from people very close to you. It also may be necessary at times to share your experiences with your prayer partners. You may have to assure the brokenhearted of your prayers. These things are unavoidable. The Scriptures also testify to this, but advertising your prayer life for others to see and glorify you is detrimental to your prayer life. Resist such temptations to pray just for winning the praises of men. What a joy it is to know that your prayers in secret bring answers in public!

#### B. CHECK YOUR OWN LIFE

Let us assume that your prayer needs are legitimate and your motives are pure, but still you get no answer! Now consider your life. God looks more at our life than at our prayers. Before He listens to us, He peeps into our lives. God does not just overlook the shortcomings of a praying man. Even evil man knew that God does not hear sinners. Strangely, we often forget this truth. Our sins block answers to our prayers. Isaiah warned, "Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear" (Isa.59:1-2). His ears are not heavy, but our sins prevent Him from answering us.

They stand as a wall between us and God. It is pointless to pray without setting things right. What is the use of talking for hours into a disconnected phone? He will not listen to you, even if you offer many prayers. Please do not attempt to pray without having a right relationship with God. "One who turns away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer is an abomination" (Pr.28:9). An abominable person's prayer will be emitting a foul smell. God will not be able to tolerate such prayers. The Israelites hardened their hearts against hearing God's Word. Look at God's furious Words to them. ".... that just as He proclaimed and they would not hear, so they called out and I would not listen" (Zech.7:13). While you reject His Word, can you expect Him to regard your words? Is not even such an expectation sinful? How dangerous it is to live in deliberate sin and presume to pray! Ask your conscience. It will tell you the reasons for God not hearing you.

"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God. And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (1.Jn.3:21-22). If your heart condemns you, set right your life and then pray. Do not deceive yourself. After you have prayed for a while, you may feel a temporary relief. Do not rely on this. God cannot behold wicked things. He cannot look at anyone who comes to Him while hiding iniquity in his heart. He will soon turn His face away. Examine yourself every time you kneel down. This is a good principle. Let God's searching rays penetrate you. Let your sins come up before you. Let the Blood of Christ cleanse you. When you find that your petitions are not heard, examine yourself without delay, and you will find immediate response. When you ask for God's forgiveness, examine whether you have forgiven others. Be reconciled with others without any excuses. There is no shortcut method for your prayers to be heard. It is a sin to pray while harboring enmity in your heart. The prayer that moves mountains will be hindered by such an unforgiving spirit.

Jesus received extraordinary answers to His

prayers. We cannot achieve even in 300 years what He accomplished in just  $3\frac{1}{2}$  years. See His courage before a stinking corpse that had been dead for four long days! What a confidence in His prayer! "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me" (Jn.11:41-42). Oh, what a daring faith! Is there any reason for this? Yes. Jesus said, "I always do those things that please Him" (Jn.8:29). Here lies the secret. His heart never condemned Him. Confession of sins is common in Bible prayers. It is a must for a successful prayer life. Guard your heart against guilt with all diligence. Let the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanse you daily. Then you can ask Him confidently and get answers for your prayers. "Come now, and let us reason together, says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa.1:18). Go to Him with your robe washed in His Blood. The heavenly door will be opened to you.

#### C. INCREASE YOUR FAITH

Now your heart does not condemn you. You are washed by His Blood. Still there is no answer to your prayers? Now is the time to increase your faith. Our doubts nullify the prayer results. Jesus said, "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them" (Mk.11:24). Faith is essential for effective prayer. It is better not to pray without faith. A prayer of faith claims our rights. Faith is seeing before receiving. A Christian's life begins and ends with faith. By faith we are saved. By faith we are justified. By faith we live and walk. By faith we receive the Spirit. No faith - No hope! No faith -No freedom! No faith - No miracles! No faith - No success! No faith - No prayer answers! Faith of the size of a mustard seed can accomplish what many years of tears could not.

Thousands came to the Lord for miracles. They got answers according to their faith. Two blind men approached the Lord for His mercy. Jesus asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" (Mt.9:28). Even today, He asks you the same

question. Your faith counts a lot. The blind men replied "Yes, Lord". Then He touched their eyes saying, "According to your faith be it unto you" (Mt.9:29). Their eyes were opened immediately. What will you get if the Lord says the same to you right after your prayers? Keep this in mind every time you pray. Do you believe that whatsoever you ask you will receive? Do you rejoice as though you have already received it? Do you have the confidence to say before you receive, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me. And I know that You always hear Me"?

George Muller was once sailing in a ship to preach at a convention. On the way, his ship was surrounded by dense fog. He asked the captain the reason why the ship was not moving forward. The captain told him that it would take a few months for the fog to disappear, and until then the ship would not move. Muller immediately started praying along with the captain. Muller prayed, "Lord, remove this fog and enable us to travel. I need to take part in the meetings in just a few days". Then the captain started praying, but Muller stopped him, saying that he had already prayed. Instead, he asked him to peep through the window. The bewildered captain peeped out. What a miracle! The fog had completely disappeared. Have you noticed the power of a prayer of faith? If we know that He listens to whatsoever things we ask, the confidence that we have received all that we have asked of Him will not fail us. Faith can do what God can do.

In the Scriptures, we see a father kneeling down before the Lord Jesus and pleading for His mercy upon his only son. Many days of affliction had weakened his faith. The failure of the disciples erased whatever faith was left in him. Hear his doubting words. "If You can do anything, have compassion on us and help us". Is it not a fact that many of us pray like this? Knowing well that such prayers will not receive answers, Jesus corrected him and conveyed the secret of a successful prayer life. He said, "If you can believe, all things are possible to him who believes" (Mk.9:22-23). He who says, "If I can believe" will never go empty-handed. For God, nothing is too hard. When He speaks, it is done.

When He commands, it comes to pass. Believe that all things are possible with Him. The centurion believed that miracles were possible with Him. The centurion believed that miracles were possible by a single Word from Jesus, and he got his miracle (Mt.9:23-25). The woman who believed that there is power even in the hem of His garment was healed instantaneously from her twelve years' disease (Mt. 9:20-22).

We may not always doubt His power, but we might doubt His will to help us. This doubt is enough to limit the power of our prayers. A leper had this doubt. He knew God's power to heal but he doubted His willingness to heal. He worshiped Him and said, "If You are willing, You can make me clean". This unbelief emanates from a lack of knowledge of God's compassion. The Lord had compassion on him. He put forth His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed" (Mk.1:40-41). Immediately, he was cleansed of his leprosy. Thereby Jesus proved that He is both able and willing to heal us.

Make sure your need is covered in His will before you ask. The confidence that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us, should be the anchor of our prayer life. To know His will, you need to search the Scriptures. If His Word is favorable to you, start praying boldly. Don't entertain any doubt thereafter. Ask with faith and without doubting. A doubtful mind will be as unsettled as the waves of the sea. Such people should not think they can get anything from the Lord.

May I tell you a few things which are according to His will? You can boldly ask the Lord for these things. He wills that all people be saved. He wills that we lead a happy life. He wills that we be healed. He wills that we be efficient. He wills that we be prosperous. He wills that our ministry be full of power. He wills that we be at peace with all. He wills that we be wise. He wills that we lead a Christ-like life. He wills that we be a blessing to others. He wills that we receive His guidance and live accordingly. He wills that we have a blessed family life. He wills

that we prosper in all things and be in health, just as our soul prospers. These are only a few of the many blessings He wills that we enjoy. To be brief, it is His will that you enjoy all good things. "If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him" (Mt.7:11). Ask Him for good things in faith. Fix your attention on God's attributes. Fill your heart with His promises. Thank Him, believing that you have already received them. Jesus used to thank the Father while praying. Even at the time of raising Lazarus from the dead, He thanked the Father. While blessing the five loaves, He thanked the Father.

Praise releases your faith.

Keep your conscience guilt-free.

Do not confess the same sins again and again.

Have regular days of fasting and prayer.

Know who you are in Christ.

Exercise your faith in action!

Fill your mind with God's promises.

That is the way to grow in faith.

#### D. PERSISTENT PRAYER

God desires that at times we ask Him persistently. Jesus taught, "Men always ought to pray and not lose heart" (Lk.18:1). Many of us pray for a while and get weary when the answers delay. This fainting blocks the answers for prayer. It is better not to pray than to pray for some time and then to forget. People who hold on till the end are true prayer warriors. Intense desire will not give up. Mighty men of God succeeded in this art of perseverance. It is the key to their extraordinary power in ministry. They are not only victorious but also a blessing to many, even today. Prayer is a battle. One should pursue it till attaining victory. God honors such prayers.

Jesus spoke many parables on perseverance in

prayer. Look at our importunate friend. At midnight, he knocks at his friend's door and requests bread. His friend replies. "Do not trouble me: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I cannot rise and give to you" (Lk.11:7). What a disappointing reply! And yet, he was determined to stay and knock. His need was so important. He kept requesting even after being told not to trouble his friend. It is a fact that the door was closed, but at this midnight hour, he kept standing and knocking. His need was so great. He didn't mind the negative reply of his friend; he went on knocking and won at last. See how beautifully Jesus portrays the scene of persistent prayer. If a selfish friend could not say no. can our Friend who seeks our welfare remain quiet? This is the success of persistent prayer. Jesus affirms that though he will not rise and give him because he is his friend, yet because of his importunity he will rise and give him as many as he needs (Lk.11:8).

Just imagine! If this man had been discouraged by the negative response, he would not have attained his goal. Does it appear that there is no answer to your prayers? Do you feel that heaven's door appears too strong and you cannot push through? Are you vexed by the lack of response to your prayers? Do you think that God has some favorite children, and that He listens to them only? Do you feel that your prayers can never be answered? Do you conclude that God does not answer prayers as He did in the past? Don't think the days of miracles are over. Be of good cheer! Keep knocking! Keep asking! Keep on seeking His face. Whosoever asks receives. Whosoever seeks finds. He opens to him that knocks. There is no change in this. "Faint not, rise up. Strengthen the hands which hang down and make straight paths for your feet" (Heb.12:12). Today is like that midnight hour. Needy people surround us for the bread of life and for blessings. We are not able to meet all their needs. We seek the Face of our heavenly Friend. It might appear as though there is no response. Don't be dejected. Continue to ask. He will answer your petitions early.

A woman of Canaan once cried to Jesus for her daughter who was severely demon-possessed. She

went after Him, but Jesus kept walking without a word. Still, she kept on following him. The disciples urged the Lord to send her away. Jesus replied her harshly, saying that He had come for the Israelites and not for the Gentiles. Did she give up, grieved at this reply? No, she fell at His feet. It looks like the Lord wanted to test her. He said, "It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs". He actually called the Israelites children and the Gentiles dogs. Was this mother dismayed? No. she bowed and worshiped Him saying, "Yes, Lord, vet even the little dogs eat the crumbs which fall from their masters' table". Jesus could not contain Himself any more. He said, "O woman, great is your faith! Let it be to you as you desire." And her daughter was healed from that very hour (Mt.15:22-28). Can you see the victory of that persistent prayer? If those who are considered dogs could find answers to their prayers, how much more those who sit at the table with Him? Can we afford to faint?

Pursue the Lord like Elisha. Run after Jesus until you receive the double portion of blessing. It might appear as though the Lord intentionally does not respond. It might even look like He is not willing to give what you asked for. Do not stop. Think of Elisha who followed Elijah. He followed him from Gilgal to Bethel, from Bethel to Jericho and then from Jericho to the Jordan. He did not heed the words of Elijah who kept asking him to stop. The frightening words of the other prophets did not shake his determination, either. Finally, God honored him (2.Ki.2:1-15). This is the secret of persistent prayer.

At times, satan might block the answers to our prayers. Daniel prayed for his country, and God answered that very day. Yet satan fought against the angel who brought the answer and delayed him twenty-one days. See how persistent Daniel was in praying all these twenty-one days. Finally the angel came with an answer (Da.10:12-14). Does satan delay the answers to your prayers? Don't give in to the devil. Your cause is just. Pray like the widow who wanted to be avenged of her adversary. You will succeed. Many days of mourning will bring joy. Notice the challenge of Jesus. "And shall God not avenge His own elect who cry out day and night to

Him, though He bears long with them?" Now look at His reply. "I tell you that He will avenge them speedily" (Lk.18:1-8). Faith never concedes defeat. It pursues. Will you rise up in faith?

#### E. SEEK PRAYER PARTNERS

Sometimes corporate prayers are indispensable. He who wants to accomplish things singlehandedly never becomes a prayer warrior. At times, praying together is the only way to get results. This is God's order as He wants us to honor one another and be interdependent. He assures, "If two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (Mt.18:19). Look at this passage. It means that it will be done the moment two agree to pray, even before they start praying! Marvelous is the power of corporate prayers. Every prayer warrior has to seek the support of others. Woe unto them who, praying alone, have failed! As I said, prayer is a battle. Maybe you fought all alone without any success. You need to take the help of another believer immediately. It is good to remember His Word which says, "How could one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight" (Dt.32:30). The prayer of two is ten times more powerful.

You must have your prayer partners. Even our Lord Jesus had three prayer partners. He trusted them and sought their company more than that of others. When Jesus needed prayer partners, how much more you and I? He shared divine secrets with them. He was transfigured before them. He took them with Him when He raised Jairus' daughter. At Gethsemane, He began to be grieved and distressed before them. Please try to picture this for a while. The Son of God, the King of the universe, began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed before ordinary mortal men. It is difficult to grasp the very idea of the Son of God unburdening His heart to men! It is no wonder that He showed them His transfiguration. Also there is nothing great in showing them the demonstration of His power by miracles. But it is really difficult to show them His agony and despair

in order to seek their help in prayer. The Master pleads with His disciples! The King of kings cries for the prayers of His subjects! What an incredible display!

It is easy to seek the prayers of senior believers, but it is hard to share our weaknesses with our juniors. This demands humility and trust in others. It stipulates honoring others. The adamic nature will resent this. The One who singlehandedly silenced the sea and the wind, did He feel bad about His disciples observing His moments of distress? He knew all the weaknesses of His disciples. Still He sought after their prayers. Is it because He was doubtful that the Father might not hear His prayers? No. He knew that the Father always heard Him. Yet He requested them repeatedly to watch with Him in praver. This is just to prove that no one can fight against the devil and the flesh all alone. Identify persons with whom you can be utterly frank; share your fleshly weaknesses, and pray with them. They should be trustworthy, God-fearing and God-loving. Tell them your failures and your successes. Believe that God can lead you even through them. Be a blessing to each other. It is God's order that we bear one another's burden (Ga.6:2). I readily seek my prayer partners whenever I am distressed and find it difficult to pray alone. Beware! No holy man has ever lived on earth who could accomplish everything all by himself.

You might be a Daniel. Your wisdom and revelation might be great, but still you need prayer partners. Look at Daniel. "Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise men of Babylon" (Dan.2:17-18). You know the background. The king had a dream. He wanted the wise men to reveal the dream and its interpretation. No one could. So he issued a decree to execute all the wise men of the land. At this critical juncture, Daniel did not risk praying alone. He sought the help of his prayer partners. God immediately revealed both the dream and the interpretation. The humble will find prayer partners. Ask the Lord for prayer partners. Set apart time for praying with them. Your prayer life will witness many miracles. You and your friends will work valiantly for the Lord.

Make decisions along with your prayer partners in His Presence. Daniel took the decision with his friends not to defile himself with the king's choice food. Corporate decisions brought them success. God honored their joint determination and preserved them alone (Dan.1:8-20). God blessed these four young men exceedingly with wisdom and understanding and exalted them more than all the others (Dan.3:12-27). Challenge satan like Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, as a team! You will conquer even blazing fire. Where two or three are gathered, the Fourth Man will be with you (Mt.18:20). Corporate prayer brings nationwide revival. Many revivals were born from collective prayers. Study the revival of the apostolic days. The Spirit descended mightily upon all who were gathered in the upper room (Ac.2:1). At the hour of prayer. Peter and John who spearheaded the revival. went to the temple (Ac.3:1). Even the leaders

## Tune in to hear the prophetic voice!



assembled for prayer. When the church was confronted with problems, the apostles gathered together and said, "We will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the Word" (Ac.6:4). Again a corporate prayer!

The missionary work was also born in collective prayer. The church at Antioch had five ministers. They all came from different backgrounds. "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (Ac.13:2). The ministers gathered together in fasting and prayer. They heard the voice of the Holy Spirit, and the missionary ministry was born. The Lord looks for interdependent people. Do you pray for His guidance? Join your partners and seek His face! You will have miraculous answers.

Many mighty miracles were wrought by corporate prayer and praise during times of calamities. Paul and Silas were beaten up and thrown into prison. The rage of satan on one side and much hindrance to the ministry on the other! Wounds all over the body! Unbearable pain and public shame! And yet, at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God. Here again collective prayer! Collective Worship! Result? There was a great earthquake! Doors were opened! Chains were loosened! The authorities bowed! This is the power of corporate prayer (Ac.16:25-39)!

In my college days, we were confronted with much opposition in the hostel. At such times of distress, collective prayer worked miracles. Do not despise prayer meetings. Personal prayer cannot be a substitute for corporate prayer, and vice versa. Keep up your prayers with your prayer partners along with congregational prayers. Your prayers will be exceedingly rewarding. The work of the Spirit will double. Satan's plans will be shattered. A holy life will be yours! Your ministry will flourish! There will be prosperity! Diseases will vanish! Hindrances will be crushed!

"Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (Jas.5:16).

# Vital keys to success in life and ministry

Rev. Benita Francis

Dear family of God, today I want to ask you some very serious questions. Are you satisfied with your life? Are you sure you are where God wants you to be? Do you see others growing and excelling in their ministries although they are less gifted and less talented than you? Do you have greater anointing than all of them, but still you are not recognized as you should be? Can you honestly say you are using your full potential for God's Kingdom? Or is there some secret dissatisfaction that is eating away at your life?

In this article, I want to show you some answers to your secret questions.

Let me assure you right from the beginning: Your God does want to take you into ever increasing levels of trust and service. Sadly, many believers have a very wrong understanding of God's ministry and God's ways. His ways, however, are unchanging, just like His Word and character. He still works with the same principles He has laid down for us to read in the Old Testament. Never forget that "ALL Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2.Ti.3:16-17). There is SO much wisdom hidden for example in the First and Second Book of Chronicles, it is just marvelous. Let me just highlight a few points the Holy Spirit showed me recently.

What do you need to grow into a real

trustworthy servant of God?

A praising attitude. Beginning in 1<sup>st</sup> Chronicles 9, we see how the first dwellers in Jerusalem from Babylonian captivity honored the House of God and organized their lives around it. Interestingly, first named are the children of Judah, although they had been carried away to Babylon because of their unfaithfulness (1.Chr.9:1-3). Still, God's pattern is, "Judah first" (Jdg.1:2; 2.Chr.20:21). Praise and worship, which is Judah, must always be first in our lives (Ge.29:35). Is this your decision and attitude? If so you will always be frontline.

Ability. Then we see the priests, "one thousand seven hundred and sixty very able men for the work of the service of the House of God" (1.Chr.9:13). The priests were the most privileged group of people among the Israelites, but praise God, that did not make them proud or lazy. They were very able people, and fortunately, they understood the purpose for which their ability was given them. Have you understood that your gifts and talents were given to you for the purpose of furthering God's Kingdom, not your own? Are you investing your abilities into His work? What more could you do to build His House with your abilities?

Willingness. The priests were willing to serve in the House of God, and as this verse shows, they understood that ministry can be described in a four-letter-word: WORK. I have seen far too many people who tell me they want to serve God

and who dream of a big ministry, but when you ask them to do some small help, they feel that this is not their ministry. Sadly, they have not understood God's way of testing and then only promoting His servants. Such people will dream about their big ministry till they die, but they will never really accomplish anything for the Lord. What about you? Are you willing to spend your time and energy for God and His cause? Are you willing to invest muscle power and WORK?

After them, the Levites are named with their different tasks and responsibilities (1.Ch.9:14-34). These Levite works are actually very interesting. Notice how clearly God's Word commends and commands great ability and a willingness to WORK for God and His dwelling place.

Trustworthiness. The gatekeepers were specially chosen and recorded by their genealogy. They were appointed to their trusted office by none less than David, the King, and Samuel, the prophet, the two highest ranking authorities of the entire nation (1.Chr.9:22). The fact that their work was a specially "trusted office" is mentioned even twice in this chapter (v.22, 26). What a privilege! Do you understand the importance of the trust God and His leaders invest into you? Do you know you have been anointed for your task by the highest authority of heaven, God's very own Holy Spirit, and by His appointed spiritual leaders?

**Availability**. God's Word says, "And they lodged all around the House of God because they had the responsibility, and they were in charge of opening it every morning" (v.27). Their work for

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APPLY NOW AND PARTICIPATE! GET TRANSFORMED IN CHRIST & TAKE PART IN THE ENDTIME MINISTRY FOR CHRIST!! God's House was of such high responsibility that they had to wrap their entire life around it! Think about it! Would you be willing to relocate your family for the sake of God's ministry? I hope your answer is a resounding YES!

Accuracy. Other Levite responsibilities are also eye-opening. "Now some of them were in charge of the serving vessels, for they brought them in and took them out by count" (v.28). Imagine! Even the vessels used in God's service are so precious that they are subject to strict inventory! How do you treat things God entrusts to your care? Do you keep an inventory? Do you always know where things are? You may laugh, but let me tell you: All these small things are very important in the eyes of your God who so much desires to put you over much (Lk.19:17)!

Carefulness. "Some of them were appointed over the furnishings and over all the implements of the sanctuary, and over the fine flour and the wine and the oil and the incense and the spices" (v.29). Not only the furnishings, even the groceries used were subject to scrutiny! Are you diligent with what God entrusted to your care? Or do you waste God's provisions without an atom of remorse?

**Anointing**. "And some of the sons of the priests made the ointment of the spices" (v.30). The anointing oil was not made by the Levites who could be compared to the helping ministries found in Romans 12:8. It was made by sons of priests who could be compared to our so-called five-fold ministry callings. Of course, every believer has been sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise (Eph.1:13). Even the very title "Christian" means "anointed one". Since our Lord Jesus has made all of us kings and priests to His God and Father, every believer is called and equipped to exercise heavenly authority on this earth (Rev.1:6). And yet, the five-fold ministers have the special task to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Eph.4:11-14). So in a sense, they are still in charge of making the ointment of the spices! Are you making room for the Anointing Oil of the Holy Spirit in your life? Are you studying God's Word and thus preparing the precious Ointment for yourself and for the multitudes?

Responsibility. See also this interesting Levite responsibility. "Mattithiah of the Levites, the firstborn of Shallum the Korahite, had the trusted office over the things that were baked in the pans" (v.31). Can you believe it? There was even an in-charge of the pancakes and chapattis! And even this job was a special, trusted office with high responsibility which required great trustworthiness! Let me ask you. Does your life show such order and perfection, even down to your kitchen use? Do you make sure that everything you do is done in perfection, as it should be for the King of all kings (1.Co.14:40)? Are you this diligent about everything that has to do with you?

Yes, every work for God's House had to be done in order and in perfection as it is worthy of God who is perfect and requires us to be perfect like Him (Mt.5:48). In the Old Testament, God's people had to strive in their own strength to fulfill

God's commandments. Praise God, today in New Testament times, this perfect, holy God is living inside of you! You yourself have become God's House, His holy Temple (1.Co.6:19). The wonderful news is that you don't need to strive any more to be perfect. You can just declare your willingness to Him and allow Him to live out His life and character through you! Hallelujah! No more striving! Just trusting! What a wonderful God!

So today, I want to challenge you to check your life and attitudes with this check list, confess any shortcomings to the Lord and assure Him of your desire to let Him work out all these virtues in your life. Very often, just one such attitude problem blocks a person from being promoted by God. Just as often, small adjustment catapults a person into his or her destiny in God's Kingdom. So change and conquer TODAY!

# BOOK OF THE MONTH



PRAYER
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BREATH
OF LIFE



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