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THE ROLE OF PRAYER IN THE LIFE OF SUFFERING  
PEOPLE OF GOD. A REFLECTION ON THE  
LIFE OF DANIEL.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is on the role of Prayer in Suffering, with a reflection on the life of Daniel.

Suffering is a universal phenomenal in every person's life. There is a way out of every problem and suffering and that is the way of Prayer. No matter how terrible or how painful a situation may be, prayers makes us to overcome.

Chapter one deals with the interest and motivation, the purpose of the thesis, the plan and the methodology used for this work.

Chapter two deals with definition of suffering and Prayers. Special references are made to examples from the Old Testament and New Testament.

Chapter three deals with suffering and God's will. How does God see suffering?, and what should be the understanding of the Christian about suffering.

Chapter four deals with the Role of Prayer in suffering with reflection to the life of Daniel. A detail work is done on the Prayer Life of Daniel in Suffering.

Chapter five is the conclusion of this work.

Appendix I contains the testimonies from text to show role of prayer in suffering and Appendix II contains the Testimonies of Few individuals to show the efficacy of prayer in suffering.

## CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

In conclusion prayer should be known and taken as an ordinance of God. For one to be able to pray effectively to get results he must have been touched by God. Prayer can be a private or public affair depending on the situation. It can be private when praying as an individual and it can be public if a group prayer or a congregational type of prayer.

Prayer is needful at all times for us not to fall into temptation and that we should be delivered from evil. This was really the teaching of Christ to the disciples. When Jesus was also going to face the period of passion he encouraged them to pray so as not to fall into temptation.

There is a part that prayer plays in every situation. Prayer can be the way out. We can supplicate, intercede, at such periods of pains and make our concern known to him. This makes us to be closer to him. "Prayer is a sincere, sensible, affectionate pouring out of the heart or soul to God, through Christ, in the strength and assistance of the Holy Spirit"<sup>1</sup>.

We should not forget that it is a sincere pouring of the soul to God. It should each time be coupled up with faith. Any prayer said without faith is as if one has not prayed because without faith it is impossible to please Him. Jesus said "Truly, I say to you if

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<sup>1</sup>John Bunyan, Prayer (Choteau, Montana 59422: Gospel Mission International, Inc., n.d), p. 1.

you have faith and never doubt, you will not only do what has been done to the fig tree, but even if you say to this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea', it will be done. And whatever you ask in prayer, you will receive if you have faith" (Mt.21:21-22)

We also should not forget that our prayers even in suffering should be to the Lord and in His secret presence. "When you pray don't be like the hypocrites". It should not be how loud we say our prayers that will make God to answer us. God is in heaven, but "the great secret of prayer is to realize and understand that He is also in the Very room where you are"<sup>2</sup>.

No matter the situation that is bringing us all to prayer, we should learn to pray in the will of God. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt.6:10). When we ask anything according to his will he will hear us. If we just ask according to our own will he can not hear us at all.

We should not be weary or slack in praying, We should ask God until our joy is full. We should contact him each day for the daily bread that will take us through. A daily contact in prayer with God makes us to overcome in all of our sufferings. We should be steadfast. We should be watchful because of the adversary. There is the place for watchfulness in prayer. Prayer that is prayed in anticipation of any evil that may come will make such evils to bypass us. "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matt.6:13).

Prayer can be done with fasting as suffering people of God. This kind cannot go except by prayer and fasting (Mt.17:21). We discover

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<sup>2</sup>Gordon Lindsay, Prayer that moves Mountains. (Dallas, Texas: Christ for all Nations, n.d), p. 5.

act of prayer and fasting in Daniel's life, This is worthy of emulation.

When we pray we should understand for the fact that we are in the flesh we have our limitations. No life is without problem. There is the need to totally surrender to God in praying. We should not forget that "Every mountain has a peak. Every valley has its low point. Life has its ups and downs"<sup>3</sup>. Surrender all to the Lord. The Lord can use the problem to shapen us. "Problems never leave us the way they found us"<sup>4</sup>.

In every life situation we choose what the problem will do to us. There are times we overmagnify the problem and fail to see God as our ready help. At such times we fail to allow him to intervene. "Don't exaggerate your problems"<sup>5</sup>. We should also not underestimate our problems. "Problems are like a pregnancy. They will grow until their presence is obvious. No one is just a little pregnant". This tells us that we should pray always. "Men ought always to pray and not lose heart"<sup>6</sup>(Lk. 18:1). Your adversary is roaring like a lion". If we understand this we will know that the devils plan is to devour us, so we should not under play any problem.

"Thus, God with all His mighty forces, could come down on the hopeless"<sup>7</sup>. God can make our wilderness become a blooming and fruitful garden. Our scar can be transformed to stars and our mountains

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<sup>3</sup>Robert H. Schuller, Tough Times Never Last (Nashville, USA: Thomas Nelson, Inc., Publishers, 1983), p. 64.

<sup>4</sup>Schuller, p. 66.

<sup>5</sup>Schuller, p. 74.

<sup>6</sup>Schuller, p. 73.

<sup>7</sup>E.M. BOUNDS, Power Through Prayer (U.S.A: Whitaker House, 1982), p. 61.

be turned into Gold mine. "To pray is the greatest thing we can do"<sup>8</sup>. From righteous Abel to John the Revelator, it is this act we see in the scriptures.

Remember that to pray effectively "we must want what God wants"<sup>9</sup>. We should pray in his will. We should be thankful for every situation we found ourselves, and ask that only his will be done.

The praying man should be careful of self glorification. "No form of selfishness is so deeply and dangerously sinful as that which glorifies in being a man of prayer"<sup>10</sup>. We need to learn the humility of Daniel in prayer. His fervency, his faith and his secrecy in praying. Each time he refers to the Sovereign Lord as the one who helped him.

We need not also forget that they that will live godly life in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. Persecution is not enjoyment. It could be painful. Its a way of suffering. If we have a right understanding of God we will be satisfied. We can still pray ourself out of such problems. "WE must keep reminding ourselves that God is in control. He is over with us i.e. 'Immanuel'"<sup>11</sup>. Many don't understand God can accomplish the ultimate in discipline, chastening, or in teaching us. Why should he leave us in the darkness? We need keep our heart open "He will communicate what He is trying

<sup>8</sup> BOUNDS, Power Through Prayer, p. 100.

<sup>9</sup> A.W. Tozer, Keys to the Deeper Life, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1957), p. 61.

<sup>10</sup> Tozer, p. 65.

<sup>11</sup> Marjorie Ball, Growing Through Pain (Guernsey, C L. Guernsey Press Ltd, 1987), p. 94.

to work in us through the circumstances of the moment"<sup>12</sup>.

God can take desperate measures to allow the dark and battering storms that may leave us breathless and shaken. "After we've flailed around in the blackness, exhausted from trying to get our bearings, we'll stop sputtering and listen".<sup>13</sup> If we will listen and be obedient to God we will find light breaking forth the darkness".

The Lord at times want us to be broken down. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and contrite heart"(Ps.51:17). If the treasure in our human vessel will be revealed we need be broken for light to come in to reveal the treasure. We are grateful for the little we can understand about his works.

When we look to the crisis experience around us at times it is as if the heavens will fall on us or as if we are in hell. We should not forget such experiences make us better than what we were. Situations like that can be for growth.

"A person's faith is never vital and alive unless it is challenged either by crises or by mountains to be climbed"<sup>14</sup>. Whatever the situation we are passing through, God is faithful to see us through by his own Sovereignty.

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<sup>12</sup>Florence Bulle, Lord of the Valleys (New Jersey: LOGOS INTERNATIONAL, 1972), p. 28.

<sup>13</sup>Bulle, Lord of the Valleys, p. 28.

<sup>14</sup>Vernom J. Bittner, Make your Illness Count (Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House Minneapolis, 1976), p. 95.