

THE DIPPER OF FAITH BY THE POOL OF PRAYER

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I want you to picture for a little while, brethren, a marvelous pool secluded in the mountains. This pool is fed by many little rivulets, many little falls that daintily fall into this pool to keep it filled. We hear the rivulets come down and the gurgling waters saying, "Be thou faithful unto death;" "Fear not, little flock;" "Be of good courage;" "He that endureth unto the end." These fall into the pool. We see on this side a little larger stream. This stream tells us: "The harvest is the end of the age;" times of restitution; times of the Gentiles—strong doctrinal truths falling into this pool. To the back side, we see another rivulet—features of chronology, features of the covenants, features of all these things fall into this pool. We call this the pool of prayer. For found within this pool are all the evidences that may make us intelligent new creatures in relationship with God in the period in which we live.

By the side of this pool is a dipper. How large is it? How small is it? Brethren, it's just as large as you wish to make it and just as small as you wish to make it. Nevertheless, not one of us can go to the pool of prayer without a dipper, and the size of our dipper depends upon the structure of our mind relationship and our heart attitude toward God, and our confidence in the great God that we serve.

Our lesson today, dear brethren, will endeavor to structure our minds in relationship to one of the great privileges each of us share day by day—prayer to the living God above. Prayer is the act of an intelligent mind meeting another intelligent mind through a relationship formed by God. Since it is God who invites us to commune with him, he invites us to meet him upon his terms and his relationship that he has formed, which is through Christ.

Prayer comes as a result of faith. Remember, our Lord gave an illustration in which he referred to the parable, or a lesson, of having a grain of faith So small or So large that it could move mountains. You may remember, or you may have heard, a story similar to the fact that one attended a lecture at one time in his particular church and the that day of the minister was on prayer, and on faith. And the minister used in his talk this very statement of the Master that we could have faith So strong that it could move mountains. This listener, this parishioner, thought about this statement of his minister and thought about his home on the ranch

on which there was a hill to the back of it that was obnoxious to him. He couldn't plow it; he couldn't till it; there was nothing to be done. So, he thought—I'm going to pray to God to move that mountain. I'm going to test this sermon today. So when he reached home that night, he knelt by the side of his bed. After first bringing down the blinds within his bedroom that viewed out this hill, he prayed to God to move this mountain. He was going to test God's ability. So, the morning came. As you may remember the story, when morning came, and the first glimmer of light appeared over the ranch, he carefully went to the curtain and lifted it just a little bit and peeked out. he said, just as I thought—the hill is still there.

Faith to move mountains! Do you realize that you and I have been instructed by God, however, in that very picture, though aside from our story. You and I have been praying for the removal of all the mountains in the earth. The kingdoms of the world are passing away, and our prayers are being fulfilled. We're watching the removal of earth's mountains by the consistent prayers of the saints from Pentecost to now, and we're living at a time when we're seeing earth's mountains begin to quake and soon to be cast into the midst of the sea.

It was the Apostle James who draws to our mind the statement, and it is so frequently used by so many of us in our expressions, of "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." May we turn to the account in James the 5th chapter, and, if you're acquainted with it, you'll note the lesson involved. It begins at the 15th verse. "And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man of like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit."

Before interrogating the mind of James on this statement as to why he involved Elias, a man of like passions, with the statement, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.", let's just trace back in our minds a bit to some of the evidences that we have of men of prayer. let's think for a moment of Daniel. It is found in Daniel the 6th chapter, about verse 10—the account at the time of Darius, King of Babylon, when the decree had gone forth, by his own hand, that for the space of one month anyone that was found bowing to the God of Israel would be cast into the den of

lions. Now, Daniel was a man of like passions. Daniel didn't have the blueprint of the Divine Plan of the Ages. Daniel didn't possess the hope of glory, honor, and immortality. Daniel was a man of like passions.

Brethren, in an effort for you and I to capture the pathos, the meaning, the value of these lessons, inject our position into the lives of these that the Scriptures tell about and then see the situation. Supposing that the government of this land would change and the decree would go forth under the new administration that any Bible Student caught upon his knees bowing to God will be condemned to death. What would you do? What would I do? Is it any different than with Daniel? We read these accounts and flip the pages without ever realizing what is God telling us. What's the lesson, the value behind it?

Daniel heard the decree, and the account tells us, he opened his window toward Jerusalem in the view of all beneath and bowed three times a day upon his knees to the God that he worshipped prior to the decree. Why? Daniel's confidence was in the God that he served, come what may. Motivated by faith integrity with God—mind relationship with God—that God was capable of directing the affairs of his life; motivated by principles of high integrity and stature. How weak do we often make our course of life? How tranquil, how compromising, how indirective do we become, instead of becoming men of strong, high stature before God. No wonder then, James drew the illustration of Elijah, the picture of the church at the end of the age and the introduction of the Messianic kingdom blessings and the work of Elijah.

Turn with me to the account to which James referred, as mentioned, in I Kings the 18th chapter, and see if our loving God has not tucked away for us a lesson of great value concerning Elijah. Again, brethren, our lesson is meaningless unless we put on the clothes of Elijah, set ourselves in the scene of Elijah, and ask ourselves the question as we go through the narrative: Would I do it? Would I do it? This is faith on trial.

We're reading from the 30th verse: "And Elijah said unto all the people, Come near unto me. And all the people came near unto him. And he repaired the altar of the Lord that was broken down." What had happened that the altar was broken down? Remember the account is—on this particular day was to be the test between the god of them that worshipped Baal and the God of Elijah and Israel. The camp was divided. Elijah gave first the; opportunity to the prophets of Baal to bring their god into harmony and to receive

their testimony that he was god. In like manner, God gave the great bulk of the Gospel Age to Babylon to prove their God, and at the end of the age, the altar was built, repaired, to prove who was and is the God of Israel, the God of the Kingdom.

In a marvelous picture, already we see drawn to our attention that when James drew the illustration of a faith of Elijah in reference to the effectual, fervent prayer, we can see that there is far more behind it than just reading the account that the prophets of Baal cried all day to their god, cut themselves with knives, and finally in utter rejection they gave up. So Elijah caused all the people to draw near and to stand before the Lord.

In passing, brethren, I've wondered if God has not involved another lesson picture here, found in Leviticus the 9th chapter- the account of the sin offering that relates from the Gospel Age picture and involves the Millennial Age in the full involvement of Lev. 9 and the sacrifices of this day, following the seven days of consecration of the priests- because, as you will note in # Leviticus 9:5, Moses told Aaron to have all the people come near and to stand before the Lord that day and the sacrifices were going to be consumed upon the altar that day and were going to be seen by all, and Israel was pictured as standing before the Lord. So, it shows a conception or a realization that from God's viewpoint he already sees the world of mankind standing as righteous people in the kingdom; as you and I may also, as we look forward to the eventual kingdom blessings in their full growth and development.

Are you with me— with Elijah? Elijah, remember, does not stand as defiant before the prophets of Baal and proudly before all Israel. We can see Elijah with his great mind faith towards God—the only one that stood out, willing to declare that the God of Israel was the God to worship, and not the god of those of Baal. So, verse 33, "And he put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, and said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood." Would you do this? Would I do this? Is our dipper large enough to take a barrel instead of a thimble to the pool of faith in prayer. Remember, a thimble holds moisture, holds water; and So does a barrel. We can't argue the fact that both are vessels of value, but Elijah says bring four barrels of water and pour over that wood and just soak it good. Don't do it once; do it twice, do it three times. The faith of Elijah was So positive that the God that he served would make manifest the fulfillment of his decree that there was no hesitation in the mind of Elijah.

"And he said, Do it the second time. And they did it...And he said, Do it the third time. And they did it." Why three times? How long has been the execution of God in his Divine Plan in respect to causing all mankind to stand before him and witness the sacrificed bullock, his Son? The Jewish Age, the Gospel Age, and the Millennial Age—three times- the marvelous realization that God wove into this picture the features of the Divine Plan to illustrate the faith of Elijah, and our faith, the faith that constitutes the Elijah class at the end of the age, because remember our Lord indicated Elias would come, and Elias has come, beginning in 1874 and the regathering of the church at that time.

Verse 36: "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word." Did you notice that he carefully included the statement, "at the time of the evening sacrifice."? If you're careful in your Bible study, you will notice almost all pictures start in the morning. When Moses went up to the mount, it was early in the morning. When Abraham offered Isaac, it was in the morning, on the 4th day (or, when Abraham was willing to offer Isaac). And when Joshua went the 7th time around the city, on the 7th day, it was early in the morning they blew their trumpets to herald the fall of the great walls of Babylon; as Brother Russell did with the early brethren in 1878 and thereabouts, at the early part of the harvest period—in the early morning of the Millennium, in the early morning of the new day. But this comes at a time of the evening sacrifice, to suggest to us it's the close of the day, it's the close of the harvest period, coming to the close of the church. "And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word."

Do you realize, dear brethren, that when Brother Alexander was bringing to our attention the firm indication that the times of the Gentiles would end in 1914, do you realize how many brethren living prior to that time stood on pulpits similar to this, or rostrums or in other areas, and declared to large audiences that the Bible declared that 1914 would be the end of the times of the Gentiles—when there was no evidence of wars between nations? Why did they do so? Complete confidence in the harmony and consistency of Bible chronology, and the reliance upon God's capacity to fulfill it. You and I are arriving at a time when much of the world will be

apprised of the fact that Bible Students have declared the restoration of Israel, the fact that they are back in the Holy Land to stay, and no force on earth will remove them. You and I may say it today, even in the midst of the great snarl of the Soviet power and the capacity to completely obliterate Palestine and make it a complete desolation from one end to the other if gunpower, not obstructed, would be released. You and I know it won't be. We know that they're there to stay, and no man shall pluck them out of God's hand. Hence our confidence is like that of Elijah, So for that reason we can be brethren of strong, positive convictions in our faith, as we rely upon the clearly taught evidences set forth in the Studies in the Scriptures and the harmony and prophetic fulfillments of this, our day.

"Be it known that thou art God in Israel, that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word. Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their heart back again." Remember the words of Malachi, the last verse. Remember, it says the work of Elijah was to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to the fathers, "lest I come and smite the earth with a curse." You and I in our public witness work, and the brethren that preceded us, have not converted the world and turned then to God; hence, the smiting of the earth has come, and we realize that this was prophetic, it was to take place.

Now marvel with me, brethren, verse 38, and see if this fits into your prayer life and mine. "Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.". Picture what they saw at that time. They really saw a hole in the earth when this whole thing was over. The altar was gone, the bullock was gone, . the wood was gone, and the water was licked up. All they saw was a was a complete hole. How manifest was God's acceptance of the prayer of Elijah; and James tells us, brethren, he was a man of like passions as you and I, meaning in your mind and framework of your constitution can be the same elements that were found in Elijah. And Elijah did not have a chart of the ages to direct his course of faith; but you and I do.

"And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; The Lord, he is the God." # Leviticus 9:24 - the end of the picture of the consecration of the priests and the manifestation of the two handed blessings by Aaron and Moses upon the children of mankind, upon the children of

Israel, are pictured, we believe, by this relationship of this like scene from a different concept, but the relationship in the same.

But brethren, this isn't what James referred to when he says: Elijah was a man of like passions, for he prayed earnestly that it rain not upon the earth for 31/2 years, and it did not, and he prayed later that it should, and it brought forth much fruit. It's the next scene that's before us, and this is the trying scene. The other was one of great demonstration; the other one in which there could be great plaudits, as it were, because it was something so physically visible to so many. So James takes an illustration tucked off into the corner, without any audience excepting Elijah and his servant, to draw an illustration of the positiveness of our prayer life.

Verse 41: "And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees." This is where James says we are men of like passions. Catch the scene, brethren. Elijah knew from his visitation with God by prayer that the time had come for waters to return back upon the earth by rain. Ahab was in the mount. Ahab was not a man of great faith, though he was a king. He says: 'Ahab, get your chariot down from the mountain, lest you're stuck in the mud before you reach the bottom.' 'Why look, Elijah, you foolish man, the sun is out here—and it's dry! What do you mean? There's not a cloud in the heavens.' 'Ahab, get your chariot down to the bottom of the mountain.'

Elijah had a servant. Elijah went over and said, 'I'm going to pray to my God concerning that it may rain.' And what did Elijah do? Did he build a high steeple, higher than the mountain be, and clear all the area and take his strong binoculars and begin to look around for evidences of rain? Elijah sat upon the ground, with his head buried between his knees, and prayed to God. Elijah had no need for physical signs that the rain—reign—would begin. Elijah was positive in his relationship to God, and therefore, he buried his head between his knees and prayed." He said to his servant" —and I believe this is where James takes the position of the view and concept of the mind of Elijah to illustrate the positiveness that we may share in the divine plan of the ages and the attributes of God as they work in harmony with the features of his Kingdom work.

"So Ahab went up to eat and drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he cast himself down upon the earth, and put his face between his knees, And said to his servant, Go up now, look

toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times. And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the meanwhile, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel." What was the motivating force that caused Elijah's faith to take a new surge? It wasn't with what he saw. It was not with what he saw. It was that which he received by direct report that he knew was honest. His servant went out and looked six times towards the sea. He saw nothing over the sea that gave any indication that there could be rain. And he came back finally the seventh time, at the insistence of Elijah, and said, I see a cloud the size of a man's hand.

I want you and I to think, for just a moment, Brethren, would you and I have confidence that a tremendous rainstorm was ensuing if we went out on a beautiful blue day and saw one little handful of cloud wisp by? Or would we wait until we saw the whole eastern heavens become black and lightning force through it? —aha, there might be rain. I wonder, brethren, have you ever thought of this statement of Brother Russell, as he closed the Third Volume, about the cloud the size of a man's hand that motivated Brother Russell to have the tremendous faith that he did in the divine plan of the ages and cast all his lot as a new creature in relationship to an appreciation of that which God had revealed to him?

"In view of all the evidences", we read on page 301 of Volume Three; "In view of all the evidences presented in this and the preceding volumes of this work, we have no hesitancy if proclaiming to the Lord's loyal and faithful people, his beloved Zion, this glorious intelligence: 'Thy God reigneth!' The oft-repeated prayer of the Church has been answered: the Kingdom of God has indeed come. In the days of the present kings of earth, before their lease of dominion expires, it is being set up. The dead in Christ are even now risen and exalted with our Lord and Head. And the 'feet' members of the body of Christ, who still tarry in the flesh, catching the inspiration of the glorified throng who have already ascended into the mount (kingdom) of God, reflect a measure of that transcendent glory, as did Moses when he came down from Mount Sinai. The faces of these messengers shine with that heavenly joy which fills their hearts and overflows their lips as they commune together and with the Lord, and go heralding to every nation (mountain) the good tidings of Immanuel's reign begun."

Brethren, think back to 1890. How big was the cloud that Brother Russell saw? How strong and clear were his positive evidences? Where was Israel? Ninety- nine per cent of Israel was in bondage to Gentile powers, and just one little tiny colony of a handful of Jews had been re- assembled in Palestine under the Herzl movement. What about the nations? But, Brother Russell was capable, in view of all the marvelous prophecies and chronology, to tie all these events together and to herald to the church this glad news, "Thy God reigneth," Therefore, I believe, when the Apostle James drew to our attention this marvelous picture that the strong faith of Elijah, with head bowed between his knees, merely heard the report, I see the cloud the size of a man's hand—go tell Ahab get down, because it's going to rain. Doesn't this shudder our realization into an activity that we can also be brethren of positive conviction in the light of all that's transpired?

By the way, brethren, as you think of the Third Volume and the quotation thought we've just read from it, and the summation of that volume, do you think of it as one volume, actually divided into three parts? It was So in Brother Russell's mind. Because of the size of the volume it would make and the time in which it was printed, they actually are component parts fit together. That's why this last chapter harmonizes all the preceding two volumes and including the third, So that it's actually an integral one volume in three parts; because Volume Four takes a new departure, separate from the others; and Volume Six is separate and can be read thus. But the first three are sequential in their inter- relationship of the plan, the time features, and the fulfillment, and the work and duty of the harvest and the church therein.

There are many other ways, brethren, in which we may illustrate prayer. David, as we know, was a man of great faith and great prayer. Will you turn with me to Psalm 61, and find in this psalm a lesson that may be helpful to us. Psalm 61: "Hear my cry, O God, attend unto my prayer. From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the rock that is higher than I. For thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in thy tabernacle forever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings, For thou, O God, hast heard my vows: thou hast given me the heritage of those that reverence thy name."

Think just for a moment: Can this be your prayer? Can this be my prayer? Can we say, "O God, thou hast heard my vows?" What have been your vows? How full is your vow? Have you really

vowed to serve the Lord, come what may? Have you really vowed to serve the Lord in his appointed way? We know that the answer rests in how we apply our life in obedience to the Lord's arrangements.

Psalm 65—Think of this: "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion: and unto thee shall the vow be performed. O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh come. Iniquities prevail against me: as for our transgressions, thou shalt purge them away." Then this delightful text, verse 4: "Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth, and causeth to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts: we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy house, even of thy holy temple." —realizing the blessedness of them that are chosen and caused to approach unto God, to dwell in his courts.

There are many recipes for prayer. We think of one in Acts the 10th chapter. This rather indicates a format that we think God instituted and recognized of his own choice, and the unusualness of the location of this account tells us each its value. Acts the 10th chapter, the first four verses: "There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band of the Italians. A devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway. He saw in a vision evidently about the ninth hour of the day an angel of God coming in to him, and saying unto him, Cornelius. And when he looked on him, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? And he said unto him, Thy prayers and thine alms are come up for a memorial before me."

We all marvel at this account. We think of the Centurion, the Roman, the Gentile, in this relationship with God. But have you ever thought of it, brethren, in its time setting? Israel's special favor, under Daniel's 70- week covenant, or God's 70- week covenant given to Daniel, did not expire until 36 A.D., 3 1/2 years after our Lord's death, because our Lord was cut off in the midst of the 70th week. From the account here, we realize that God dealt with a Gentile, a Roman, prior to the expiration of the 70 weeks. What right did God have to deal with a Gentile, when our Lord forbade his own disciples to go to the cities of the Gentiles and to be among the Samaritans. What right did God have?

God had every right! God took an element that he could constitute sufficient for righteousness that was found in the heart of Cornelius and others like him then and since, that could form a relationship of prayer between God and the one offering it—which was faith. The faith of Cornelius was of the character and capacity that God

for the time being could temporarily constitute this a relationship to form a meeting of minds through prayer until one was brought into Christ.

This has been the experience every one of us has shared as brethren prior to kneeling before God in full, complete consecration, to come into the appointed way. As children at the side of our bed, we've prayed to our God, and undoubtedly our God heard our prayers, as many of us have been raised with this influence in our lives, and the evidences are about us today that we matured into Christ from the childhood experiences of kneeling beside our bed before our God and having confidence that his hand was upon us when we were not yet in Christ. This is what Brother Russell calls tentative justification. This is what he calls a substitution arrangement, until one is brought into Christ. And here is the clear picture, that many, no doubt, in the world today, like Cornelius to the extent of having a heart relationship with God, are led later to find the avenues of the truth; the First Volume comes into their hands, and then they respond to the manner by which they may now have a close relationship with God and then Christ is introduced, whereby then under the full blood relationship of justification, they pass from death unto life. So we see this marvelous picture illustrated in this simple picture of prayer.

There are seven recipes given for prayer in one of the psalms. There are seven ways in which we may direct our prayers. Would you turn with me to the 143rd Psalm. Think of it more at your leisure at home, as we quickly view it now; but notice the attitudes and the aspects of prayer that David suggests in this account. Psalm 143, beginning at verse 7: "Hear me speedily, O Lord: my spirit faileth: hide not thy face from me, lest I be like them that go down into the pit." Here is a plea of a relationship with God for forgiveness, for encouragement.

Next, "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee " You know our Lord indicated that the path that he walked before his heavenly Father was one in which it was directed by God day by day. Remember our Lord Jesus said, "The words which I speak are the words of My Father, as I hear, I speak." Did you ever think of this in Isaiah's prophecy, the 50th chapter, the 4th verse? Did you ever think this as what was in our Lord's mind every morning as he rose from his night of sleep? "The Lord God (Jehovah) hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: he wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine

ear to hear as the learned." This suggests a prophetic picture that our Lord did not know tomorrow's activities. He let tomorrow take care of itself. He rose in the morning with confidence, as the Psalm suggested which we just read: "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning; for in thee do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I should walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee."

Now we can just see from this the pleadings that the prophets had in their day, in their strong faith structure before God, to know the way that they should take in obedience to God. We can see how this fits into our lives. It is not a life of just: on Sunday we go to church and the rest of the week we spend as we may. If we are in Christ; if for me to live is Christ; the whole essence of life is to be with our Master and to share the glorious, everlasting, eternal relationship with our Heavenly Father. If our real desire is to see the face of our loving God, we'll be motivated to the extent that life itself is dependent upon a close, daily relationship with our loving God, because this is the force and power over us. Then, of the pool that we have by our side with all of its elements of structure for our faith, we take our great barrel or dipper, and from that we nurture our mind in the satisfaction that the God that we serve is able to deliver us. Next, "Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee to hide me." This is one aspect of our life that not all of us have every day; but there are those times when we ask deliverance from our enemies. Sometimes, some of our enemies are very close attached; we're born with them.

Verse 10: "Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness." Sometimes it's been asked, If you were to characterize in a single text what epitomized our Lord's life that was most pleasing to his Heavenly Father, what text, or what illustration, or what words or language would you use? I would use: Because thou lovest righteousness and hated iniquity; therefore, I have anointed thee above thy fellows." — Psalm 45:7. Also, # He 1:9. In this picture, it characterizes the full life, heart, character relationship of our Lord. He loved principles of righteousness and truth, and he hated anything iniquitous, or untrue, or false. Therefore, this element is suggested in this portion of our prayer, and I believe we can use these thoughts in our own prayer life to see if we are actually expanding our minds to the capacity in all the avenues that we need to be in the full developed structure in Christ.

"Teach me to do thy will; for thou art my God: thy spirit is good; lead me into the land of uprightness." And for that reason, you and

I may have the utmost confidence that that which the Heavenly Father prepared for the nourishment of the church at the time of the Lord's return must have been good, righteous, and thoroughly in agreement with the mind of God. Because if later on, we feel that the volumes are filled with error, then we must go back to the source from which they originated, which the mind of God reveals was our Lord and brought to us through the harvest truth; and if this be true, then we may as well say that we lack confidence in any of the features of the divine plan because if one feature is wrong, then the rest must be wrong, or could be. Therefore, we must come back to the realization, our Heavenly Father has promised to guide and direct the affairs of the church. We can have this confidence, because he will lead us in the paths of righteousness.

Verse 11, or No. 6 on our recipe list: "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake." This is a hard prayer. What does it mean to be quickened? To be enlivened, to be put on fire, to have zeal, to have activity, to have zealotry, to have a full ambition, a life that expands and grows and magnifies. "Quicken me, O Lord", a prayer of fervency, to have a Jubilant, an active, a zealous life for the Master. Not one of sweet tranquility in the rocking chair, but one in which to the best of our mortal beings, and for what measure of strength and energies we may have, that they be directed into a quickened, zealous, active life. "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake: for thy righteousness' sake bring my soul out of trouble." Then, lastly, "And of thy mercy cut off mine enemies, and destroy all them that afflict my soul: for I am thy servant." Or, we would say, I am thy son, in this relationship through Christ.

Prayer is frequently likened to incense, and this brings us to our closing text. Prayer is likened unto incense. Remember that incense was offered morning by morning, evening by evening, every day, in the tabernacle by the arrangements of God, even on the day of Atonement. And the sweet incense in the holy as it emitted its perfume or its fragrance was that which was suggested as very pleasing to God and that even went over into the Most Holy to cover the Mercy Seat on the Day of Atonement lest the priest would die as he passed under the veil at the offering of the incense at that day.

But, brethren, there is something that accompanies that incense. Let's read the account: Psalm 141. You're right there in your Bibles at this time. Psalm 141: 1 and 2: "Lord, I cry unto thee: make haste unto me; give ear unto my voice, when I cry unto thee.

Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." What accompanied the incense? It was of no value unless there was fire. It took the fire of sacrifice; it took the death of a lamb, morning by morning, evening by evening, for God to illustrate the real fervency of the prayer of the sacrificing priesthood of the Gospel Age. A lamb was sacrificed, which in this instance represented their own sacrifice.

So, if you have a thought in the morning, and I have a thought, as we kneel at the side of our bed in beginning our new day: Our loving God, I bring unto thee my lamb sacrifice; it represents my all. Accept my lamb. Use it this day to thy honor. And then we see ourselves carrying our coals and setting them upon the golden altar in the holy, and then the perfume that rises. So that is why this text is drawn to our attention. It takes the sacrificial life, together with the prayer life, that emits the perfume that is pleasing to our Heavenly Father.

Thus, beloved brethren, may we use these lessons as helpful to our lives, and remember, it is the size of the dipper by the pool of prayer that determines the fervency of our life.