

WHEN ALL ELSE FAILS

Jeremiah 14:1-12 (Jeremiah 14-17)

Introduction: People tend to reach the same way when difficulties and troubles come. First they try to take care of the matter themselves with their own knowledge and skills. If that doesn't work, then they will call a friend or ask around to see who might have gone through the same thing and what did they do. Finally, in a last act of desperation people will turn to God asking Him "Why me?" "What did I do to deserve this?" "What am I supposed to do?" Then when all else fails, and there is no answer, some may then surrender themselves and their troubles to God for His intervention. Israel had gone far away from God and Jeremiah, a prophet of God, was interceding for Israel and is informed by God that it was of no use to pray for Israel for they had gone just too far and He was going to just leave them.

I. WHEN PRAYER DOES NOT WORK

1. Prayer has a proper place in the believer's life.
 - There is praise, adoration, thanksgiving and confession.
 - There is petition and intercession for one's self and others.
 - Then desperation drives one to God as the ultimate source of help.

2. Jeremiah's prayer for Israel is an example of how prayer should be. (*Jeremiah 14:7-10*)
 - He confessed that Israel's lives were not normal, they were sinful and had backslidden.
 - He asked God for help based on who God is and what God could do.

3. Jeremiah was told that it was useless to pray for Israel. (*Jeremiah 14:11-12*)
 - It was no use to pray for the welfare of Israel.
 - God refused to set aside His decree of coming judgment.
 - The people had tried to establish a relationship with God through shallow worship.
 - One cannot pray another into a right relationship with God, especially if he/she is not right with God him/herself.
 - Sin in one's life must bring forth it's fruit and will in due time.
 - God accepted no excuses for Israel's actions. (*Jeremiah 14:13-16*)
 - The false prophets misled the people, telling them that all was going to be alright.
 - There was no more use to pray. (*Jeremiah 14:16*)
 - It was judgment time. Religious leaders had failed, political leaders had failed and judgment was a coming reality, it was too late to pray.
 - When prayers go unanswered, it is usually the fault of the one praying, not what is being asked.

4. Prayer is misunderstood.
 - Prayer cannot delay or do away with judgment.
 - Only confession and repentance can change God's judgment.
 - If there is rejection of the Lord, prayer will go unanswered.
 - If there is continual backsliding, prayer will not be answered.
 - If one lives in a constant cycle of sin, forgiveness, restoration, then sins again, prayer will not be heard.

- Prayer will go unanswered when God's previous chastisement has brought no positive response.

II. WHEN PRAYER FAILS ONLY GOD IS LEFT

1. Israel was beyond hope.
 - Their depth into sin was the fundamental cause of their hopelessness.
 - Their misplaced confidence of trusting in people instead of God brought disaster to them.
 - Their deceitfulness of heart, corruptness and untrustworthiness brought separation from God.
 - Their life with out God brought their instability for they were interested only in riches, goods and worldly things, giving God little, if nothing.
2. The only hope anybody has is in the Lord God.
 - God alone can deal effectively with sin.
 - God alone is worthy of man's ultimate, total confidence.
 - God alone properly judges the heart correctly.
 - God alone can assure and bring stability.
 - God alone is the **ONLY** source of healing and help.

CONCLUSION:

1. Attending Church services fail, reading God's Word fails, and even prayer fails but when nothing seems to help, **GOD IS ALWAYS THERE** and God never fails.
2. Prayer as the center of one's life of faith is crucial, critical.
3. When situations get beyond one's ability to control or handle, it is God to whom one must turn but in order to be heard, one must be in God's will.
4. Every Christian, believer prays, but does God hear? Remember, for God to hear, the one praying **MUST** be in fellowship with God and that requires living as God wants.
5. Get yourself right with God before you start praying for anybody or anything else.
6. God is the answer to all situations and things in a person/nation's life.