

Nuggets and Gems from the Bible

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Living Stream Ministry

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ALWAYS TO PRAY AND NOT LOSE HEART

As the Savior was going from Galilee to Jerusalem ([Luke 9:51—19:27](#)), He was training His followers to know the economy of God concerning the jubilee. The jubilee is actually Christ as the embodiment of God for our enjoyment. Such words cannot be found in the Gospel of Luke. Nevertheless, this underlying thought is there: the jubilee, which is the kingdom of God, is Christ as the embodiment of God for our enjoyment.

For the sake of the jubilee, it was necessary for Christ to die to accomplish an all-inclusive redemption and then enter into resurrection. Through His all-inclusive redemption Christ has fulfilled the requirements for us to be released from every kind of bondage. Now we can be released from the bondage of sin, Satan, the world, the self, and the old creation. We need to see that it was necessary for Christ to die to set us free from this bondage. Then it was necessary for Him to be resurrected to bring us positively into the enjoyment of the divine inheritance.

This inheritance is the Triune God processed to become the all-inclusive Spirit for our enjoyment.

This understanding of the underlying thought concerning the jubilee in the Gospel of Luke is not according to the concept of the natural mind. On the contrary, this understanding is in accord with the revelation given in the New Testament, especially that in Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation. In other words, the New Testament books from Acts to Revelation are an explanation, definition, and development of the vision in Luke concerning Christ's death accomplishing full redemption to set us free from all negative things and His resurrection bringing us positively into the enjoyment of the Triune God, who, having been processed, is the all-inclusive Spirit for our enjoyment. This is the jubilee.

THE UNRIGHTEOUS STEWARD AND THE UNRIGHTEOUS JUDGE

While the Lord was on the way to Jerusalem with His disciples, they had no idea what was happening or what was being taught to them by the Man-Savior. As we read the account of

that journey, we see many different instances, and hidden in certain of these instances are a number of puzzling points.

In [chapter sixteen](#) of Luke, the Lord told the disciples the parable of the unrighteous steward. Now in [18:1-8](#) He gives them another parable, the parable of an unrighteous judge. The unrighteous steward in [chapter sixteen](#) signifies us as the Lord's stewards. As we shall see, the unrighteous judge in [chapter eighteen](#) refers to the righteous God. Therefore, the Lord used two parables, one denoting us and the other denoting God. The unrighteous steward signifies us serving the Lord, and the unrighteous judge signifies God avenging us.

TEACHING ABOUT PERSISTENT PRAYER

[Luke 18:1-3](#) says, "And He told them a parable with the purpose that they ought always to pray and not lose heart, saying, There was a certain judge in a certain city who did not fear God and did not respect man. And there was a widow in that city, and she kept coming to him, saying, Avenge me of my opponent." The widow in [verse 3](#) signifies the believers. In a sense, the believers in Christ are a widow in the present

age because their Husband Christ ([2 Cor. 11:2](#)) is absent from them.

In [Luke 18:3](#) the widow asked the judge to avenge her of her opponent. The Greek word rendered “avenge” may also be translated “procure justice for.”

In this parable the Lord indicates that the believers in Christ have an opponent. This opponent is Satan, the Devil, concerning whom we need God’s avenging. We ought to pray persistently for this avenging (see [Rev. 6:9-10](#)) and not lose heart.

According to [Luke 18:4](#), the judge for a time would not avenge the widow of her opponent. Then he said within himself, “Even though I do not fear God nor respect man, yet because this widow causes me trouble, I will avenge her, lest by continually coming she wears me out” ([vv. 4-5](#)). Following this, the Lord went on to say, “Hear what the unrighteous judge says; and God, shall He not by all means carry out the avenging of His chosen ones, who cry to Him day and night; and yet He is longsuffering over them? I tell you that He will carry out their avenging quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?” ([vv. 6-8](#)). The Lord’s word in [verse 8](#) indicates

that God's avenging of our enemy will be at the Savior's coming back.

Literally, the Greek words rendered "faith" mean "the faith." This denotes the persistent faith for our persistent prayer, like that of the widow. Hence, the faith here is the subjective faith, not the objective faith.

TODAY'S EVIL GENERATION

We need to consider the parable in [Luke 18:1-8](#) in the context of the lengthy record of the Lord's journey from Galilee to Jerusalem ([Luke 9:51—19:27](#)). During the course of His teaching given on this journey, the Lord covers many aspects of matters related to the jubilee, to the kingdom of God, and to Himself as our enjoyment. He speaks regarding His death, His resurrection, God's salvation, the coming reward, the kingdom age, the evil generation, and the condition of the Pharisees. All these matters are related either directly or indirectly to the kingdom of God and to the enjoyment of Christ.

Today's evil generation can distract us from the enjoyment of Christ. This generation seeks to stupefy us, to drug us, so that we have no sense about what is happening. The entire world has become stupefied, and, having been drugged,

the worldly people have no sense, no consciousness, of the fact that they have been carried away from the enjoyable Triune God.

The Triune God is for man's enjoyment. Nevertheless, the fallen human race has no concept of this whatsoever; it has no sense concerning it at all. The people of the world are busy with marrying and giving in marriage, with buying and selling, with planting and building ([Luke 17:27-28](#)). They have no thought concerning God being their enjoyment, for they all have been drugged, stupefied. Therefore, in His long journey from Galilee to Jerusalem, the Lord touched this matter a few times. For example, in [chapter fourteen](#) He told His disciples that they must hate the things of this generation. They even need to hate their own soul life, for they should hate anything that distracts them from the enjoyment of Christ. In [chapter seventeen](#) the Lord comes to this point again when He speaks about the stupefied generation, which keeps God's people away from their enjoyment of the divine inheritance. Before He touches this matter again in [chapter eighteen](#), He unveils to us something else that concerns our enjoyment of the jubilee, and this is the persecution that comes from our opponent.

PERSECUTED BY OUR OPPONENT

We need to realize that as God's people in this stupefied and stupefying generation we are like a widow. In a sense, our Husband, the Lord, is absent. Furthermore, we have an opponent who is constantly persecuting us.

Before the Lord Jesus went to the cross to accomplish His all-inclusive redemption, He opened the veils from many directions to show His followers things that are related directly and indirectly to their enjoyment of Him as their jubilee. They needed to realize that the most distracting thing is this present generation with all its components. The components of the evil generation stupefy the worldly people.

The Lord also reveals to His disciples that while we are seeking Him, we need to hate any thing and any matter that frustrate us from our enjoyment of Him. Furthermore, as we are enjoying Him, we shall suffer persecution. This persecution comes from our opponent, the one who is the enemy of God and who has become our enemy because we take sides with God.

The parable in [Luke 18:1-8](#) indicates the suffering we have from our opponent during the Lord's apparent absence. Actually, the Lord is not

absent; He is present. But during His apparent absence, we are a widow whose opposer is troubling her all the time.

WHAT TO DO WHEN GOD SEEMS UNRIGHTEOUS

While our opposer is persecuting us, it seems that our God is not righteous, for He allows His children to be unrighteously persecuted. For example, John the Baptist was beheaded, Peter was martyred, Paul was imprisoned, and John was exiled. Throughout the centuries, thousands upon thousands of honest and faithful followers of the Man-Savior have suffered unrighteous persecution. Even today we are still undergoing unrighteous mistreatment. Our God seems to be unjust, since He does not come in to judge and vindicate.

Often we have prayed for God to vindicate us. Yet, many faithful ones have been imprisoned and even put to death. Where is the living, righteous God? Why does He tolerate this situation? Why would He not judge those who persecute us? Because of this situation, the Man-Savior in [Luke 18:1-8](#) uses an unjust judge to signify God who does not seem to do anything on behalf of His persecuted people.

What shall we do in a situation when we are persecuted and it seems that our God is not living, present, or just? From this parable we learn to be a bothering widow, one who prays to God persistently.

Apparently, the Lord is not present or does not care. It seems that He is not righteous. Nevertheless, I have learned that we need to bother God in prayer, that we should pray to Him persistently without losing heart.

THE PERSISTENT PRAYER OF THE MARTYRED SAINTS

In [Revelation 6:9 and 10](#) we see that this kind of persistent prayer is carried out by the souls of the martyred saints: “I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and because of the testimony which they held; and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O sovereign Lord, holy and true, will You not judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” In figure, the altar is in the outer court of the tabernacle and the temple, and the outer court signifies the earth. Hence, “underneath the altar” is underneath the earth, where the souls of the martyred saints are. This is the paradise where

the Lord Jesus went after His death ([Luke 23:43](#)). It is the comfortable section of Hades ([Acts 2:27](#)), where Abraham is ([Luke 16:22-26](#)). Here we see that the souls of the martyred saints are crying out, “How long, O sovereign Lord?” They seem to be saying, “Lord, how long will You be silent? How long will You apparently be unjust? You are the righteous Judge. How can You tolerate the unrighteous persecution that is still taking place on earth? How long, O Lord, how long?” This is the prayer from the unseen realm, the prayer from the martyred saints in Paradise.

PRAYING PERSISTENTLY TO THE SOVEREIGN LORD

In [Luke 18:1-8](#) we see the prayer from the visible realm. This kind of prayer is related to our enjoyment of the jubilee.

Often the children of those who are faithful followers of the Lord ask their parents why they are suffering persecution. They may ask, “Since we love the Lord Jesus so much, why must we suffer?” Usually the parents do not know how to answer. It seems to the children that the Lord whom their parents follow is not righteous. We also may wonder why we suffer, since we love

the Lord and follow Him. The parable in [Luke 18:1-8](#) answers our question.

When our Husband is apparently absent and we are left on earth as a widow, temporarily our God seems to be an unrighteous judge. Although He appears to be unrighteous, we still must appeal to Him, pray persistently, and bother Him again and again.

We need to be careful in understanding a parable such as the one recorded in [Luke 18:1-8](#). We should not try to understand it in a natural way. On the one hand, this parable indicates that the Judge is sovereign. This means that whether or not He judges is up to Him. Seemingly without reason, He may either listen to the widow or not listen to her. This parable reveals that He is the sovereign Lord and that He judges whenever He chooses.

On the other hand, this parable indicates that we need to bother the Lord by praying persistently. We need to say to Him, “Lord, praying is up to me, not up to You. You never told me that I should not pray. On the contrary, You charged me to pray. Therefore, Lord, I am praying now for Your vindication.”

The significance of this parable is profound, and we all need to know God as He is revealed

here. We also need to see that the kind of prayer described here helps us to enjoy the jubilee.

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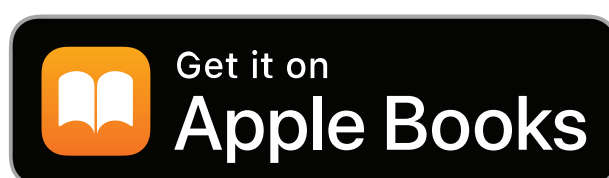
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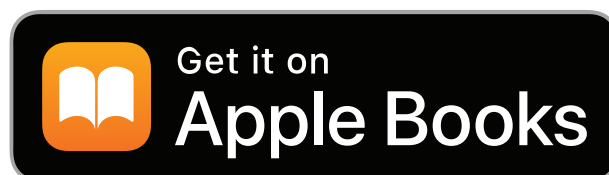
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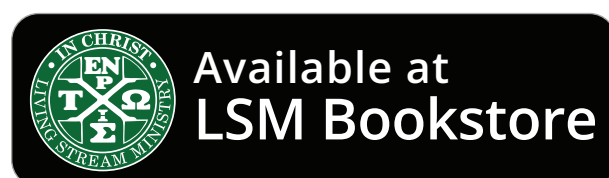
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