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What is the Prayer of Faith? Part 1

A Scripture Study in Luke 18:1-8

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Yeshua (Jesus) uses a parable to encourage His disciples to be faithful in prayer and to prepare them for the response that would come when they poured out their longings and questions to God.

In this parable, the widow prevails upon the negligent judge to bring about justice for her. The judge is nonempathetic and procrastinating, but because of the widow's willingness to prevail, the judge finally secures justice for her. The Lord, on the other hand, is boundlessly compassionate and swift to help us. The lesson – If the widow prevailed with an uncaring judge, how much more should we prevail with our caring Shepherd?!

In Verse 8, Yeshua concludes with these words, “However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?” Why do we need faith if the Lord is swift to answer?

Hebrews 11:1 tell us that faith is the assurance (or evidence) of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Faith is a continual, prevailing state of belief in the imminent answer to our prayer.

From our perspective, the Lord's answer may not be swift. The answer may not even be what we hoped for. But from The Lord's perspective, the answer *is* swift, because it comes in His perfect timing, and the outcome is as it should be. Faith is believing that His answers are swift, perfectly timed, and as they should be for His purposes and our joy, regardless of our perception.

This past January, I was sick the last two days we were in Israel. I walked through the last day completely fueled by the prayers of friends. The Lord enabled me to trust Him. I wanted to say, “But Lord, I paid a lot to be here. Are you kidding me? Really? I am here to learn about You, the Healer!” But instead, as I lay on my bed that night, I said, “I trust You.”

In the ensuing days, the Lord showed me everything that would not have happened if I had not been sick. I am not saying that God is the author of sickness. I am saying that all things happen in His time for His purposes. Even though this is a mystery and I don't understand it completely, and even though my prayer went against what I felt, I forced the words out, “I trust You.”

The prayer of faith pours out from the heart, often against feeling, and says, “I trust You.” We echo the father's prayer for his son in Mark 9:24, “Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!” because, “Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord!” (Psalm 40:4; Jeremiah 17:7) Blessing follows trust, and blessing is greater intimacy with Him.

Recently, I was sitting in an operating room, waiting for the eye surgeon. Having memorized Psalm 139 years ago, I sat in that chair and soaked more deeply in the words than I ever had – He knows. He cares. He sees. We trust.