

WAYS OF PRAYING - 2

SPECIFIC REQUESTS



Please read the following specific requests of God told in the Bible, each in very different circumstances:

- Hannah's request for a son - 1 Samuel 1
- Solomon's request for wisdom - 1 Kings 3:4-15
- Bartimaeus' request for healing - Mark 10:46-52

Here we have situations at family, national and individual levels - situations to which God in his love and mercy responds specifically; he hears the cry from the heart and moves to answer it.

Hannah was desperate for a child, especially a son who would bring honour to her as a woman, to her husband and to the family status; it would put an end to the rebuffs endured by being childless in the culture of the day. Her rival wife was unkind to her over many years; the tension in the kitchen must have been palpable! In granting her request, God shows he is interested in an unhappy family situation and intervenes to put it right.

Solomon was astonished that God should invite him to ask for whatever he wanted! Conscious of his shortcomings and inadequacies in the face of huge national responsibilities, he asks for wisdom to rule God's people aright. In granting his request, God shows his approval of an unselfish attitude and an overriding concern for His people. He adds everything else as a bonus.

Bartimaeus was blind; a condition then that meant a lifetime of begging, on the fringes of society. At first it seems strange that Jesus should ask what he wants (surely it was obvious?), but Bartimaeus could easily have hoped to receive a hefty donation, or Jesus' influence to find him a job or a house. In granting his request, God shows his interest in and concern for an individual in the crowd and his need for healing. He also rewards his persistence in the face of opposition from both the crowd and the disciples.

What do these three have in common?

Can we learn to apply anything to our own situations?

It is interesting to note that they each acknowledge God for who he is. How do we see God our Father, and Jesus his Son? (It also please God to answer "more than we can ask or imagine." Ephesians 3:20)

We also see that:

- Firstly** - each supplicant displayed
- a) *humility* in their approach to God
 - b) a sense of *God's power*
 - c) a personal *faith* in Him,
 - d) an *expectation* that He would act.

Secondly - each dared to be absolutely *specific*. They had faith to trust God's desire to answer specifically.

Thirdly - each *gave thanks* for answered prayer, and *lived out the blessing* in practical ways; each *witnessed* to their prayer being answered.

Let us not be discouraged if our requests seem rather small and unimportant compared with the above! God has shown that he is interested in everything we are and do, whether large or small. If specific prayer is something you have never yet tried - why not do so now, this week, today?

God grant that we, too, may be emboldened to be specific in prayer, knowing that our loving Heavenly Father delights to answer, specifically, and then let us not forget to return thanks to him, and to be bear witness to his goodness; for the glory of Jesus. Amen.