

LISTEN TO GOD

“Submit to God and be at peace with Him; in this way prosperity will come to you. Accept instruction from His mouth and lay up His words in your heart.” (Job 22: 21-22)

We learn, we practice and we live asking God for all our needs because the Bible says, *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks will find; and to Him who knocks, the door will be opened.” (Matthew 7: 7-8)* This is the optimum that we can rely on after we restore our relation and fellowship with God and receive the new life through Jesus Christ’s suffering and death on the cross and His resurrection on the 3rd day. Jesus, the Lord in our hearts, mind, thoughts and behaviors gives us the assurance. *“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, He hears us.” (John 5: 14-15)* And if we know He hears us every time we ask him, we are sure that we receive what we ask from Him.

Prayer is conversation with God. Prayer is not merely talking to God. It is not a one-way direction. We speak and God listens; we listen while God speaks. But for many of us we make prayer as one direction. We only speak but never give time to listen to God and to perceive what He is telling us. And, we want God to answer our prayers in a way that suit us. We insist on what we ask, never giving the space for God to grant what He desires for us. God supplies all our needs according to His good and perfect will for us, from His great riches and for His own glory He is giving to us.

The Lord God clearly declares to us, *“For I know the plans I have for you, plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” (Jeremiah 29: 11)* It is clearly written that God has His own plan for us to prosper. But when we pray we are forgetting this fact. We neglect that God whom we are praying knows not only the next step but the full plan for our lives.

This is the story in the Old Testament about the people of God after they were brought to the Promise Land: God was raising up leaders in turns to lead the people and to deliver them from their enemy. That was going on until the time of the prophet Samuel whom God appointed to lead His people. Samuel, the man of God was leading the people with justice and prevailing righteousness among them. *When Samuel grew old, he appointed his sons as judges for them. (1 Samuel 8:1) But the people said to him, “You are old, and your sons do not walk in your ways; now appoint a king to lead us, such as all the other nations have.” But when they said, “Give us a king to lead us,” this displeased*

Samuel; so he prayed to the Lord. And the Lord told him, “Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their King. (1 Samuel 8: 5-7) God is the King who rules His people. God is Spirit and in the unseen form, but He is living among us. The people presented their request to God to have a king to rule over them like the other nations around them. But the Lord God warned them and gave them in details what a king will do to them; a king will abuse them and he will take the people as slaves and servants for his own property. He will take the best of their fields, vineyards and everything they possess. *“When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, and the Lord will not answer you in that day.” “But the people would not listen to Samuel. “No!” they said. “We want a king over us. Then we will be the same as all the other nations, with a king to lead us and to go out before us and fight our battles.” (1 Samuel 8:18-20)*

Ultimately God provided the people with a king that they are pleased with. God granted them their prayer request. Saul was the man who became king. And king Saul led the people according to his wishes and desires. He led the nation for 40 years. But they passed through terrible situations. They loss many battles and the king conveyed to them many problems.

The people insisted to God to grant them their request despite the Lord was not accepting. In spite of the warning they received from the prophet of God, still they persisted requesting the Lord to help them do their own desire, not to obey the will of God. God granted them their wish and not His will, but they received all the consequences of their request.

My dear and beloved: Many times we behave likewise because we have the privilege to pray. We ask God but we fail to listen to Him. We forget that God knows what is the best for us as He is the one who plans to prosper our living and ministry. At this point, as we read the message, let us ponder on this and review ourselves. If we ask with wrong attitude in our prayers to God, it is now the time to correct ourselves and to listen to God. Let us relent from doing our own plans and desires, but allow God’s will to rule over our lives.

“Father God in heaven, I kneel down before You. Please forgive my sins, cleanse me from disobedience, and help me to correct myself, to listen to You and to do your will for You are faithful and just. Father, I know You have a perfect plan for me so let it be done. Thank You Lord for accepting my prayer in Jesus’ name.” Amen!