

PRESENT DAY PAPERS—III.

The Prayer Battle.

BY

D. M. PANTON

SIXTH THOUSAND.

Price, 2d. (post free 3d.). 12 copies, 2/4.
50 copies, 8/-. 100 copies, 15/-. All Post or Carriage Free.

LONDON:

CHAS. J. THYNNE & JARVIS, LTD.,
Whitefriars' Street, E.C.

And may be ordered of any Bookseller.

1923.

PRESENT-DAY PAMPHLETS

BY

D. M. PANTON.

-
- I. **Spiritualism: Its Origin and Character.** Fourth Edition. Price 1/- net. Contemporary spiritism studied in the light of the occult in Scripture.
 - II. **The Medium and the Witch.** Second Edition. Price 4d. net. The roots of Spiritualism laid bare in world-old and world-wide phenomena.
 - III. **Irvingism and the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.** Price 6d. net. The most plausible of all modern "tongues" movements examined in the light of a legitimate desire for the supernatural.
 - IV. **The Advance of Rome.** Second Edition, 1/- net. A black thundercloud revealed on the horizon of the Church of Christ.
 - V. **Democracy, Socialism, and the Sermon on the Mount.** Second Edition. Price 1s. net. Paper boards, 1/6 net. Christian ethics in relation to Socialism and Democracy.
 - VI. **Gnosticism: The Coming Apostasy.** Price 3d. net. A study of the occult signs and doctrinal foundations of the Great Apostasy.
 - VII. **The Judgment Seat of Christ.** Second Edition. Price 1s. net. The responsibility of believers as a supplementary truth to their eternal security in Christ.
 - VIII. **Christ Risen a Fact.** Price 4d. net. The fact of the Resurrection the rock-foundation of the Faith.
 - IX. **Expiation by Blood.** Price 6d. net. Atonement traced and studied as the blood-red heart of the whole Bible.
 - X. **Rapture.** Price 1s. net. Second Edition. A problem as urgent and as practical as any that confronts the child of God.
-

The above ten Pamphlets, bound in one volume, cloth boards, with gold lettering, price 8/6 net. Post free, 9/-.

London: CHAS. J. THYNNE & JARVIS, Ltd.

THE PRAYER BATTLE.

I. THE KNEELING FIGURE.

I N a Conference of Ministers in New York, the Chairman asked all who spent half-an-hour in the twenty-four in prayer to hold up their hands. *Only one* hand was held up. He then asked for a response from those who spent fifteen minutes in prayer. Not half present responded. Asked for *five minutes*, all were able to respond, though one was afterwards doubtful. *If this represents the closet prayer in the modern church, the marvel is that we get what we do.*

One of the greatest victories won in all the ages is extraordinarily significant for our own. Apart from the Persian armies (Xerxes is said to have mustered two million men), the largest host on record swarmed down upon the people of God in the time of Asa; dark-skinned masses vomited out of the heart of Africa—an apt type of the Hosts of Darkness now bearing down upon us in hordes unquestionably greater than have ever before massed against the people of God: when lo, on the battle-field, as monster a prayer-meeting as was ever held—six hundred thousand praying souls, watched by another million. The almost incredible defection of our leaders; an undermining of belief in the Word of God so universal as to imperil all faith; the seething restlessness of growing anarchy; the descent of deadly Satanisms, such as Spiritualism, Theosophy, Christian Science, and Millennial Dawnism; famine; earthquake, pestilence, war, on an unprecedented scale, in which God thunders (in vain) at the conscience of mankind; the return of martyrdom; a personal battle for holiness more desperate than any we have yet known:—behold, the dark-skinned hosts!

Now we find it is in the prayer-gathering, and by the prayer-gathering alone, that the complete deliverance of Israel came; so we watch Asa before he enters the prayer-room. For one thing—only less conspicuous than the final victory itself—the narrative stands out radiant:—*preparation for crisis, and a life wholly devoted before it prays.* “He built fenced cities: for the land was quiet, and he had no war in those [ten] years; because the Lord had given him rest” (2 Chron, xiv. 6). Before he prayed, he built: his destructive godliness—for there is such a thing—had smashed the sun-images, and the idolatrous altars: he brought a clean life into the prayer-room: “he did that which was good and right in the eyes of the Lord” before ever the supreme crisis was upon him. Consecration precedes prayer-power. Moses ground the Golden Calf to powder before he shattered Amalek: Hezekiah smashed the Brazen Serpent before he smashed the Assyrian; the early Christians burnt 50,000 shekels worth of Spiritualistic literature before they overran the world with the Gospel. But the consecration was also positive. Asa marshalled all his hosts, he massed his resources, ere ever a single black foot had set itself on Judah’s soil. He was armed, alert, ready. He armed every man he could seize: he put every man into the field: he never flinched from facts, in fear of being called a pessimist—he knew a million men when he saw them: he “faced the music.” God was going to do everything for Asa, *but only after Asa had done everything for God.* So in our Lord’s life the preparation and the crisis, fitting into each other, achieved His Waterloo: “I knew that Thou hearest me always” (John xi. 42) was the palace into which He entered; but the portico which led into it was—“I do always those things which please Him” (John viii. 29).

Now we watch the kneeling figure in the prayer-room. Some one has said:—“We have lost the secret of agonizing; all we can do is to organize.” Asa betook himself to God; and “Asa cried”—for the history of a crisis is often merely the record of a cry—“unto the Lord his God, and said, LORD, IT IS NOTHING WITH THEE TO HELP, WHETHER WITH MANY, OR WITH THEM THAT HAVE NO POWER.” What

extraordinary blessings our enemies can bring us! Asa was never so radiant, never so secure, never so mighty as when beset by a million foes driving him on to God. A man who is shut up to God is shut up to omnipotence—to “a God who doeth wonders” as an habitual thing. Keen aliveness to overwhelming odds may have one of two effects: either discouragement—fear—fainting—defeat; or else, first every nerve braced, and then every promise of Omnipotence seized. Probably why so many Christians to-day refuse to face the facts lies in their fear of the effect on themselves, or on others. But grave and known danger, in its God-designed effect, can be one of the most magnificent incentives to prayer, and the actual creator of our most splendid victories. Having done his little all, Asa now casts himself upon Omnipotence: he realises, with vivid faith, that to an Infinite Power no one difficulty can be greater than any other difficulty; and that one man alone with God is in a huge majority. “When you have reached the limits of human ability, you have not yet reached the limits of human possibility”: with God’s impetus behind, what is impossible? All the dark-skinned hosts are powerless against God. Evan Roberts has said:—“Beloved, when you move heaven, you move Hell. Prayer is two-fold. Prayer cuts both ways, it cleaves upwards, and it cleaves downwards. I don’t care how humble the child of God may be in intellectual attainments, he has power in prayer to move heavenly forces in opposition to the spirit-forces of hell.” *That kneeling man’s appeal to God was the death-sentence of untold multitudes.*

But even more vital and inspiring than the plea, is the substance of the prayer. Asa cries:—“Help us, O Lord, our God; for we rely on Thee, and IN THY NAME are we come against this multitude.” To be identified with the truth is to be identified with God. Carlyle says:—“Fight on, thou brave, true heart, falter not, through dark fortune and through bright. The cause thou fightest for, so far as it is true, no farther, yet precisely so far, is very sure of victory. The falsehood alone of it will be conquered, will be abolished, as it ought to be; but the truth of it is part of Nature’s own laws, co-operates with the world’s eternal tendencies, and cannot be conquered.” This is extra-

ordinarily comforting to all who are fighting for God and His Word against tremendous odds. Nothing is sure in this world but the purposes of God: no interests are safe but God's interests: no final victory rests anywhere but with God: how wise then to fuse our fortune with that of truth! Luther's constant prayer was this:—"Lord, this is Thy cause, not mine; therefore, do Thine own work; for if this Gospel do not prosper, it will not be Luther alone who will be loser, but Thine own name will be dishonoured." So the end is sure. *All that God is going to do in coming days is going to be done through a tiny band of faithful souls.* If they kill us, they only crown us: exactly so far as we identify ourselves with God, exactly so far the million will be put to flight in the prayer-room. "Let not *man* prevail against THEE": so Jehovah, on a like occasion, responds,—"Fear not ye, neither be dismayed, by reason of this great multitude; FOR THE BATTLE IS NOT YOURS, BUT GOD'S" (2 Chron. xx. 15). God lift our eyes from the million to the One! Our enemy is a mortal man: prove, O Lord, that he is no match for an immortal God: or, if they be the hosts of Hell, Thou couldst consume *them* with a breath. At last came the shock of battle. "So"—because of that mighty prayer-meeting in the open; because Asa had gone into the prayer-room with clean hands; because bankrupt Israel had cast themselves on Omnipotence; because the cause of God and the cause of Asa, Asa had been wise enough to fuse into one—"THE LORD SMOTE THE ETHIOPIANS." The Ethiopian host is the largest on record that God has ever directly overthrown; and He overthrew it solely in answer to the cry of a consecrated saint. Are we beset with a million foes? a million doubts; a million fears; a million difficulties; a million sins; a million devils? *Then we are exactly where Asa won one of the greatest victories of the world.* For *there* are the unseen hosts. Bishop Westcott and his chaplain were once standing in a little village church. "The church is empty," said the chaplain. "No," said the Bishop; "it is full. When the tiny church in a village meets to pray, the hosts of the Lord are there: there may be only a few score in the pews, but the congregation is immeasurable."

II. THE UNSEEN HOSTS.

So, in the gloom of midnight, the hosts of Syria had silently drawn a belt of steel round Elisha; and Gehazi bursts into the presence of his master with the cry—"Alas, my master! how shall we do?" (2 Kings vi. 15). For an utterly impossible situation met his startled gaze—two helpless, unarmed men, caught in a cordon of steel, confronted by ten thousand heavily armed men. So, as to-day the tiny band of the faithful, ever fewer, wake up to see the iron hosts closing in around them, forces infinitely vaster than we can ever hope to grapple with, for just such a situation God has once for all drawn aside the curtain of the Invisible. "Behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha:" the chariots that had escorted Elijah to the gates of heaven were on earth again, around Elisha at the gates of hell. At any moment God can call in the other world to redress the balance of this: another order of beings, older than the human race; with whom is neither childhood nor age, for they were never born, but sprang into life, in glittering hosts, full-grown; invisible, innumerable, invincible. It was no fancy of our Lord when, ringed like Elisha with the hosts of hell, He said:—"Thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father and He shall even now send Me more than *twelve legions* of angels?" (Matt. xxvi. 53). They stood upon the mountain's side, rank over rank, chariots that were billows of fire, and horses that were tempests of flame; built of spirit-forms we cannot see, but infinitely more enduring than these bodies of flesh and blood; for they live in the land where there are no graves. God can at any moment fill our streets, or surround our homes, with squadrons and battalions of light, armies of the sky mustered and marshalled as on the eve of battle. *At this moment it is possible that these same armies are mustering on earth's mountains for Armageddon.*

The modern thinker, steeped in science, would do well to mark what science itself tells of invisible worlds no whit less real than this. "Lord I pray thee *open his eyes*, that he may SEE." All around us is a world real, physical, and

yet, to us, wholly unrecognisable. The vibrations that create light on the optic nerve, intensified, pass into light—as real as the light we see—that is wholly invisible: vibrations that create sound on the auditory nerve, multiplied, pass into sound no human ear can hear. “The noonday silence of a tropical forest,” says Prof. Huxley, “is, after all, only due to the dulness of our hearing; and could the ears catch the murmurs of these tiny maelstroms, as they whirl in their countless myriads, we should be stunned as with the roar of a great city.” Faith is no imagination of something non-existent: it is a mental certainty of things unseen, *but there*. Suddenly the young man saw: suddenly the Syrians “groped at noonday as in the night.” Every day there are men that are receiving their sight, and every day there are men that are being smitten with blindness. The poet Blake said he was accustomed to see things incorporeally. “But surely,” someone objected, “at sunrise you see just a yellow disc rising above the horizon?” “No,” Blake replied; “I see a Throne high and lifted up; and I hear the chant of Seraphim, crying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of Hosts.” Our eyes are open to our perils: O Lord, open them to our power!

But God’s withdrawn curtain reveals a still more precious truth. “Fear not: for they that be *with us* are MORE than they that be with them.” The dragon drew a third of the stars of heaven (Rev. xii. 3): apart altogether from His own omnipotence, God’s hosts of light outnumber the Powers of Darkness as two to one: how much more they outnumber our human enemies! Every Syrian chariot was outmatched by a more powerful heavenly chariot. Every human warrior had, pitted against him, a spirit-warrior to whom dynamite or poison-gas is as nothing. The angels are no idlers: “are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister?” (Heb. i. 14). No demon escapes their keen scrutiny: wherever a foe lurks, an angel watches: they attend us in our loneliness; they are beside us in our danger; they join us in our worship. Infinitely greater power is for us—for our salvation, our holiness, our victory, our glory—than ever can be against us:—“Ye are come,” says the Apostle to all Christians, “to INNUMERABLE HOSTS of angels” (Heb. xii. 22).

We now arrive at the supreme lesson: the other world is potent only to the man who sees it. “The mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire *round about Elisha*”; that is, between the hosts of Syria and the Prophet, nearer far, were the hosts of God. Where Gehazi found a blank, Elisha found a world; for the blank in Gehazi’s sight corresponded to a blank in his own soul. Luther sang his noblest battle-songs in the darkest moments of his life; for he had the clairvoyance of faith. Whether Elisha had *seen* the heavenly armies, or not, we are not told; *but he knew that they were there*. Faith pierces into the realities of things. “When thou seest thy brother,” Tertullian said long ago, “thou seest thy Lord.” The man of God sees an infinite soul in every man he meets: he sees a field-marshal’s *bâton* in the knapsack of every believer: as it was said of Whitfield, he has eternity stamped upon his eye-balls: he walks in two worlds. A grain of faith (it has been well said) outbalances the resources of a kingdom. When a mediæval sculptor saw a rude block of marble, he exclaimed,—“What a godlike beauty thou hidest!” so when we look into unsaved eyes, we see a potential saint, an infinite soul, “an angel who has not yet found his wings.”

III. THE LIMITLESS RESOURCES.

For Paul, after a prayer as comprehensive as was ever uttered, breaks into a doxology (Eph. iii. 20) as full of vision of the Infinite as ever fell from human lips, a doxology almost incredible in its revelation of wealth inconceivable. God, he says, is able to *do*—here is activity, execution, accomplishment; *all* that we ask, *all* that we think; *above* all that we ask or think; *abundantly* above all that we ask or think; *exceeding* abundantly above all that we ask or think; according to the power that worketh in us—the resident and omnipotent Spirit of God. That is, God is not only able to accomplish our utmost prayer or remotest thought, but, *when He has done so*, an infinity of prayer-answering power subsists beyond. George Muller was asked in his old age, “Have you always found the Lord faithful to His promises?” “Nearly nine thousand five hundred orphans,” he replied, “have never wanted a meal.

Hundreds of times we have commenced the day without a penny in hand, but our heavenly Father has sent supplies by the moment they were actually required. One million four hundred thousand pounds have been sent to me in answer to prayer. For nearly seventy years every need has been supplied."

The implications Godward are profound. Such ability means resources infinite on which to draw: it means agencies that cannot be baffled in translating His wishes into fact: it means draft-plans that are boundless from which such answers can be executed: it means a love that is unplumbed that can surround all human cries with shoreless an ocean of response. No less are the implications manward. Paul has just uttered one of the deepest prayers, of the widest sweep, ever uttered; yet he has at once to say that God's ability to answer far outstrips all that men ever, as a matter of fact, do ask. No prayer in our mouths, or that has ever been in human mouths, has ever yet plumbed the depths of God, or even approached the nearest limit of His resources. For the statement goes to a staggering length. "God is able to do *exceeding abundantly* ABOVE all that we THINK." Our uttered prayers are timid, shrunken, puny, beside the wide sweep of our thought-life: nevertheless, nothing has ever been conceived, but infinite conceptions lie, unwrought, beyond.

Nor is this all. God's infinitude of resource is as boundless in time as it is inexhaustible in power. "Unto Him be the glory unto all generations *for ever and ever*." Language almost breaks under the effort to express the inexpressible: dazzled, overwhelmed by the infinite capacity of God to transcend all mortal prayer, and all finite imagination, Paul heaps together the vastest terms to utter the unutterable:—"TO ALL GENERATIONS OF AN ETERNITY OF AGES." God's infinitude of resource, outstripping all prayer and even all conception, will never become an obsolete truth, an exhausted fact: generations without end down an unceasing eternity will never see a horizon to God, or to the power of God: as the ages pass, ages that are single beats of the pendulum of Eternity, God's wealth beyond will always escape our experience, and exceed even the utmost reach of our mental grasp.

So we are face to face, awed, with the vast comfort of God. We are confronted by a Heavenly Father whose habit is to give more than is asked or thought. Moses asks to see the glory of God, and he sees it—on the Mount of Transfiguration, a thousand years later: Solomon asks for wisdom, and he gets riches and honour as well: Martha asks for a cure, and she gets a resurrection: Paul asks for service, and he is made the writer of letters that have moulded millions. But it is more miraculous than that. Is any vice unmastered?—God is able, not only to cure it, but to give us the counter-virtue: is any doubt paralyzing us?—God is able to make us shining exponents of that very truth: is any offence against us unforgiven?—God is able, in that very wound, to plant the flower of an active love. For the centre of our prayer is a God who is love, who wishes the highest His creature can hold. Bishop Philipps Brooks, when found once in his cabin prostrate upon his face, was overheard saying, "O Lord Jesus, Thou hast filled my life with peace and gladness. *To look into Thy face is earth's most exquisite joy.*"

The years are laying snowy hands upon many of our heads; all of us are rapidly hastening to that bourne from which no traveller returns. Little children, it is the last hour: *let us give ourselves to prayer.* Dr. Bachus, a former president of Hamilton College, in America, was told, on his death-bed, that he had but half-an-hour to live. "Is that so?" he replied; "then take me out of my bed, and put me on my knees, and let me spend it calling on God for the salvation of the world." And so they did. He died upon his knees.

Note on the Prayer Hour.

"Prayer," says William Law, "is the nearest approach to God, and the highest enjoyment of Him, that we are capable of in this life"; and in our collective prayer-hour we have the crowning method, the supreme instrument, by which to accomplish God's purposes amongst us. A foremost London preacher said recently:—"Prayer is a lost art. *We want nothing more to-day than men who are good at praying.*" For immense is the emphasis which God casts on collective prayer. Our Lord says: "If two of you"—Christ had just spoken of the whole Church: He now bases his enormous prayer-promise on *only two*—"shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of My Father Which is in heaven" (Matt. xviii. 19): "*on earth*"—there is the fulcrum; "*agree*"—there is the lever; "*done in heaven*"—there is the accomplishment. God in His grace allows the smallest possible fulcrum—two believers—on which to rest a lever that can move the world. That is, believe that when you pray forces are liberated, souls are besieged with grace, things become fluid and changing which, a moment earlier, were motionless. Aaron and Hur, with Moses, were only three all told; yet the vast battle rose and fell exactly by the motion of their heaven-lifted hands. And it is the harder work: for while we read that Moses' hands "grew weary" in prayer, we never read that Joshua's hands grew weary in fight: the more spiritual the duty, the sooner the spirit faints. Oh that ours may be the epitaph of Moses!—"and Moses' hands were steady *until the going down of the sun.*"

Paul has shown us how God beholds a prayer-meeting, and has expressed His desires. "I will therefore that the men pray everywhere" (1 Timothy ii. 8): the desire of the Apostle is the desire of God. Two things are requisite for a prayer-meeting with which it is impossible for the

meeting to be a failure: (1) a high level of closet-prayer at home; and (2) almost equally vital—an *intention* to pray aloud before we come. Many find it easy to pray in a mission, or in a revival, and complain bitterly of the cold atmosphere of the ordinary gathering: to which we reply,—"My brother, you are a splendid oarsman down-stream; but what the Church supremely requires are powerful rowers up-current. "Prepare your prayers," says Mr. Spurgeon, "*by preparing yourselves*"; and then come *resolved* to pray, with ideas and trains of thought so marshalled that but a spark will fire the mass. Let us be careful how we say that we have not the 'gift' of prayer. If we have the 'grace' of prayer, the 'gift' matters little: the gift may make us acceptable to men, but it is the grace that makes us acceptable to God: the gift may puff us up, but the grace always edifies. As old Archbishop Leighton says: "It is not the gilded paper and the good writing of a petition that prevails with a King, but the *sense* of it." Nor is it necessary to be long and elaborate. It is remarkable how effective short prayers have been. "Lord, remember me"—"Lord, help me"—"Lord, save me": if Peter had had as long a preamble as men sometimes put into prayers nowadays, he would have been forty feet under water before he had got as far as the cry for rescue. "I'd rather have a man pray three times, and only five minutes at a time, than to have him take fifteen minutes all at once" (D. L. Moody).

Now we see the petitioners themselves. "Lifting up *holy* hands, without wrath and disputing." "A man who cherishes anger," says Luther, "can never hope to prevail with God in prayer." A brother of perhaps lesser ability, of awkward enunciation or stammering speech, can so pray, *because of the life behind the prayer*, that a power from on high suddenly moves the assembly, "as though an angel shook his wings." God looks at the *hands* of Aaron and Hur. The hands in the workshop, in the factory, in the office, in the home—can God see a soil on our palms or a dye on our fingers? A Congregational minister in Yorkshire was once speaking on the power of prayer. He suddenly passed his hands slowly over his head and said, in dazed tones,—“I do not know, my friends, whether you

ever tried praying ; for my part I gave it up long ago as a bad job." *He never preached again.* Father John, of the Greek Church, has a helpful word on our actual praying : "When you are at your prayers, do not hurry on from one word to another. Stay with every word till you feel in yourself its full truth and power. Lay every single word to heart, and strive hard to feel every word that you speak. Always, when you kneel down, keep this of Paul well before your mind, that it is better to say five words from the depth of your heart, than ten thousand words with the tongue only. And when at any time you feel that your heart is not a heart at all, but a hard and a cold stone, then stop attempting to pray for a few minutes, and warm and melt your heart by thinking of your sinfulness and your misery. and what you deserve at the hands of God and man. Set the four last things before your eyes :—death ; judgment ; heaven ; hell ; and then return as fast as you can to the throne of grace."

God says that the throbbing dynamoes in the powerhouse of the Church must never cease. "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians vi. 18). "Satan," says George Muller, "doesn't mind how much a Christian prays, if he can only get him to *stop* praying." A certain church was mightily blessed for fourteen years in succession. The confession of a member in the prayer-meeting both explained the blessing, and reveals how church blessing is in daily jeopardy. "Brethren," he said, "I have been long in the habit of praying every Saturday night, till after midnight, for the descent of the Holy Ghost among us. And now, brethren," and he began to weep, "I confess that I have neglected it for two or three weeks." The figure of Peter's cock on many a Church spire drew these lines from Keble :—

Lo, on the top of each aerial spire
What seems a star by day, so high and bright,
It quivers from afar in golden light ;
But 'tis a form of earth, though touch'd with fire
Celestial, raised in other days to tell
How, when they tired of prayer, apostles fell.

It is the ceaseless prayer which brings the complete victory. "Continue *stedfastly* in prayer." Some years ago a little group of missionaries started work on the Congo. Fever killed several, and invalidated others home, and in twelve months there was not a single convert. They were on the point of returning home, when lo, the awakening came ; and now, after twelve years, there is a Church there of over two thousand members. What a reward of stedfastness and labour ! Nor must we allow ourselves to be discouraged by 'dryness' in prayer. Hear what two effectual prayers have to say. When Hudson Taylor was once asked if he ever prayed without conscious joy, he replied : "Often. Sometimes I pray on with my heart feeling like wood." And then he added,— "Often, too, the most wonderful answers have come when prayer has been a real effort of faith, without any joy whatever." Evan Roberts says : "Some ask about dryness in prayer. It matters not whether it is 'dry' or 'dewy.' The 'dry' prayer may be more effective than the 'flow.' *The thoroughness with which you ask is the thoroughness with which God will work.*" Nor let us be discouraged by exhaustion. Charles G. Finney so gave himself to prayer that sometimes he would pray all night. In his latter days a friend said,— "Mr. Finney, do you pray the way you used to ?" He said,— "I pray a great deal, but I cannot pray the way I used to, I am not strong enough. My nerves have been shattered, I am an old man now. I would like to pray the way I used to but I cannot. Sometimes I would pray in an agony all night, but I cannot do it now." But he said,— "When people send a request for prayer I just quietly look up to God and I say, 'Oh God, I am not strong enough to pray the way I used to pray. Let the Holy Spirit be my prayer and give me the words of prayer,' and as I just look up to God and pray what I believe God's Spirit gives me, my friend, I want to tell you, *God answers these prayers just as much as he did those old prayers of agony I had in the olden time.*"