

## **A PRAYER OF DAVID (Psalm 86)**

### **1. Why should we pray?**

- a. The reason David was coming to God in prayer was that he had great needs that he knew only God could meet.
- b. The very first verse says “for I am poor and needy”.
  - i. He knew that he could not save himself and asks twice, verses 2 and 16, for God to save him.
  - ii. He knew that he was in a day of trouble so He called out to God.
- c. You might be thinking that it is obvious that we have great needs for which we ought to be praying.
  - i. But many times our pride gets in the way of us seeing how needy we really are.
  - ii. We tend to rely on ourselves or others to help us and turn to God as a last resort.
  - iii. John Bunyan is reported as saying, “You can do more than pray, after you have prayed, but you cannot do more than pray until you have prayed.”
  - iv. In other words, prayer is the first resort, not the last.
- d. Our world teaches that we are good people and don’t need to pray to God.
  - i. We, humans in general, tend to compare ourselves to others who are worse than we are in our minds and that makes us feel good about ourselves.
  - ii. This allows us to be blind to our need for God in our lives.
- e. This can happen even after we’ve come to God in obedience.
  - i. We can feel pretty self-assured sometimes.
  - ii. We forget we have a lion trying to kill us (1 Peter 5:8).
  - iii. We forget our own weakness.
- f. Someone wrote about this passage and said that perhaps our very first prayer should be, “God, show me my great needs that only you can meet”.

### **2. To whom should we pray?**

- a. David knew exactly to whom he needed to be praying and that is to the one, true God.
- b. When you read through this Psalm, you can tell that David knew the God to whom he was praying.
  - i. He knew many of the attributes of God.
  - ii. He knew the promises of God, which allowed him to have hope that God would affirmatively answer his prayer.
  - iii. Notice verse 5 (Psalm 86:5).
  - iv. Notice verse 15 (Psalm 86:15).
- c. David shows God as the only true God and great in power.
  - i. Psalm 86:8-10.
  - ii. Seven times in this Psalm, David uses the name Adonai, or Lord (Psalm 86:3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 15).
    - (1) This was a name given to God to show His sovereignty over man.
    - (2) God made the nations and one day they will all bow before Him

- (Romans 14:11).
- iii. It is God who does great things and has great power.
  - iv. David makes references to the idols that men had devised.
    - (1) In other passages, David and Isaiah wrote about how those things are impotent idols that can do nothing.
    - (2) Even the god of this world, Satan, will one day be completely destroyed (2 Corinthians 4:4).
    - (3) In this time, we need to know that God is greater (1 John 4:4).
  - v. Knowing this gives us the confidence to pray to God.
    - (1) We aren't praying to some impotent being or to a being that is weaker than another.
    - (2) We are praying to the Almighty God who is sovereign.
  - d. God is also great in love, mercy, and grace.
    - i. Two times David begs for God to be gracious to him (Psalm 86:3, 16).
    - ii. Twice David remembers Exodus 34:6-7 (Psalm 86: 5, 15).
      - (1) This statement by God is referenced at least six other times in the Old Testament.
      - (2) David used it here to request God to answer His prayer.
    - iii. God is the One who said this about Himself.
      - (1) This ought to give us great confidence to approach God in prayer.
      - (2) We ought to have confidence because of it (Hebrews 4:16).
    - iv. Notice that David calls himself a godly man.
      - (1) This does not mean God owes David his prayer answered because he is godly.
      - (2) This word comes from a Hebrew word that means lovingkindness and indicates that David is saying he was a loyal follower of God.
      - (3) David was committed to God.
      - (4) David knew that because of his commitment to God that God was committed to him.
      - (5) This is the confidence every child of God should have.
    - v. It may be we get worried that we bug God too much.
      - (1) Remember that the Lord Himself gave the parable of the widow coming to the judge repeatedly.
      - (2) He also told of the man who kept knocking on his neighbor's door when in need till he got what he needed.
      - (3) Not only that, David described God as plenteous in mercy, full of compassion.
      - (4) God's love is abundant and we cannot exhaust it (Romans 8:38-39).
  - e. If we've sinned, God is ready to forgive.
  - f. If we have a need, God is ready to meet it.
  - g. We have just to pray.

### **3. How should we pray?**

- a. David was one who was close to God and it comes out throughout this Psalm.
  - i. He knew God intimately and personally.
  - ii. God was not some distant being to David.

- iii. Because of that, he felt free to pour out his heart to God.
- b. David prayed earnestly.
  - i. There is an intensity to David's prayer because of his great need.
  - ii. If God didn't answer he knew he was doomed so he prayed hard.
  - iii. He was not going through the motions and saying some mindless prayer.
  - iv. It is like a starving beggar asking for food.
- c. David prayed continually.
  - i. David said he cried to God all day long (Psalm 86:3).
  - ii. Because he had a great need and he was aware of it.
  - iii. We must keep praying as Paul taught the Thessalonians (1 Thessalonians 5:17).
- d. David prayed thankfully.
  - i. Psalm 86:12.
  - ii. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 comes right after the command to continually pray.
- e. David prayed with humility.
  - i. Nowhere in this prayer does David complain about his situation.
  - ii. He refers to himself as God's servant (Psalm 86:2, 4, 16).
  - iii. He knows he is weak and asks for strength (Psalm 86:16).
  - iv. Remember that this is a king asking in this manner.
  - v. He knew he was weak and he knew that only God could give him what he needed.
- f. David prayed in faith.
  - i. He believed that God would answer him (Psalm 86:7).
  - ii. He believed it so much he prayed as if it had already happened (Psalm 86:13).
  - iii. We can't ask for something but not expect God to give it (James 1:6-8).
  - iv. Faith knows that if what we are asking is for good and God's will, God will grant our request.

#### **4. What should we pray for?**

- a. There are a lot of things in this Psalm for which David prayed that we should be seeking as well.
- b. David prayed for deliverance.
  - i. David was being hunted (Psalm 86:14) and prayed to be delivered from his enemies.
  - ii. You and I are being hunted and we should be praying for deliverance from our enemy.
  - iii. Jesus taught this as something for which we should be praying (Matthew 6:13).
  - iv. Notice what Peter wrote (2 Peter 2:9).
- c. David prayed for joy during his trials.
  - i. Psalm 86:4.
  - ii. Paul taught us to rejoice (Philippians 4:4).
  - iii. In the company of Roman guards Paul wrote that so we should pray for joy during our trials as well.
- d. David prayed for a teachable heart.
  - i. Psalm 86:11.

- ii. David wanted to be completely devoted to God not quickly delivered.
- iii. Our trials make us stronger (James 1:2-5).
- iv. When we learn more about God we will hold Him in greater reverence or awe just as David prayed.
- e. David prayed for God to be glorified.
  - i. Psalm 86:9, 12.
  - ii. One reason for the trials of life is that we will call upon God and we will then glorify God when He delivers us (Psalm 50:15).
  - iii. In all the trials we face, we need to be looking for ways to glorify God, not question Him.
  - iv. When someone was seeking David's life he still could say...(Psalm 86:5).
  - v. When we act that way in our trials, we can draw others to God.

Outline from an unknown source.