



A Systematic Expository Study of the Word of God

Special Study:

KNOCKING HEAVEN'S DOOR UNTIL IT IS OPENED

Matthew 7:7-11

This brief passage contains a lot for the education and edification of every child of God in every age. The privilege and power of prayer is not left on the unreachable branches of a tree of philosophy but the branches are low enough for all members in the family to pluck the fruits. In these verses, the Lord has not given us some deep well of theological mystery with nothing to draw with, He has brought the supply of every need to the table and we do well to come and dine.

The opening verse supplies the key to the interpretation and application. We are to ask, seek and knock. These three verbs are in the present imperative in the original text. That simply means that they demand continual, repeated action. Ask and keep on asking until you receive; seek and go on seeking until you find; knock and continue until the door is opened. Pray and keep on praying until the Father answers according to His promise. The whole process is put in the family setting. We are not asking as a beggar from an unknown stranger, we are asking as a trusting child from a loving Father. We are not seeking as a traveller seeks water in a desert, we are seeking fruit as a member of the family in the family garden. We are not knocking at the door of a house guarded by wild dogs, we are knocking at the door of our Father's house Who is waiting to open the door and receive us.

IMPORTUNITY IN PRAYER SYMBOLIZED BY KNOCKING

Matthew 7:7,8; Acts 12:13-16; Luke 11:5-10; 18:1-8; Genesis 18:23-33; 32:24-28; Deuteronomy 9:18-20; Daniel 9:2,3,10-14; Acts 12:5-12; Hebrews 4:14-16.

"Knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Comparing Matthew 7:7,8 and Luke 11:5-10, it is obvious that the Lord is teaching us and calling us to importunity in prayer. We often give up too soon, just before the door to heaven's storehouse is opened. Our lack of supply is often the result of our lack of importunate supplication. A few of us are ignorant of what is in the storehouse for us. Others knock at the door of the storehouse so feebly that they are barely heard. So very few ever knock continually with a firm hand of the prayer of faith.

There was a great famine in Egypt. The famine had spread beyond Egypt to other nations. To meet the needs of all people, Joseph had beforehand filled the vast storehouses in the land. As the people came from all the land, **"Joseph opened all the storehouses"** (Genesis 41:56). Everyone who came received enough sustenance from the opened storehouses. Jesus is waiting for us to come and knock at the door. Whatever our needs are, the door will be opened and we shall be satisfied with justification, salvation, regeneration, transformation, provision, restoration, imputation, sanctification, impartation, protection, preservation and finally, glorification. We are not knocking only to stop after receiving an initial supply of grace; we keep on knocking until we receive abundant grace, sufficient grace, grace for every need.

INTENSITY IN PRAYER SIGNIFIED BY KNOCKING

Matthew 7:7,8; Luke 13:25; 11:5-10; Hosea 12:3,4; 1 Samuel 1:9-20; 1 Kings 18:41-46; James 5:16-18; 2 Kings 20:1-6; Acts 4:23-31; Romans 10:1-4.

The fervency of our prayer and force of our faith often show how important our request is to us. Coming back to the illustration of knocking, the desperate man who is knocking at the door to meet a pressing need will knock differently from a casual visitor with no definite purpose. Those who knock casually in prayer often have wandering thoughts in prayer; they are formal and repeat the same phrase each prayer time; they do not have any specific need in prayer; they habitually sleep off when praying; they lack freshness of thought and have no grip on any promise of God; they do not remember what they have prayed for and they are not conscious of their spiritual state; like the Laodiceans, they are lukewarm in the closet, too lazy to seek urgent remedy for their spiritual malady.

Intensity in prayer is demonstrated by the righteous whose fervent prayer avails much. Watch Jacob at Peniel; observe Elijah on mount Carmel; visit the plains of Mamre with Abraham as he intercedes for Sodom; follow Moses to the mount where he pleads for backslidden Israel on the verge of destruction; kneel beside Daniel as he prays for Israel's seventy-year captivity to end; feel the great heaviness and continual sorrow in Paul's heart as he cries in prayer for the salvation of his kinsmen according to the flesh, and you will catch a glimpse of what it means to knock with importunity and intensity.

INIQUITY IN PEOPLE SPECIFIED AS STUMBLING-BLOCK WHILE KNOCKING

Luke 13:25-27; Psalm 66:18; Isaiah 59:1,2; Jeremiah 5:25; Ezekiel 14:1-11; Isaiah 1:4,12-20; Psalm 32:5-10; Ezekiel 18:30-32; 2 Timothy 2:19; Job 22:23-28.

God is so eager to bless us and if we are as eager to be blessed, our spiritual stature will change so quickly that it would be difficult to recognize us. Our lack of thoughtfulness is often our greatest hindrance. We hinder ourselves more than any enemy, demon or Satan can ever hinder us. Holding on to iniquity or sin is the major reason why we knock and knock in vain. Sin is dangerous and deadly in itself and it also hinders the opening of heaven's door of blessing. We commit two evils against our soul in one stroke: we poison ourselves with iniquity and at the same time prevent remedy and infinite goodness from coming to us. Repentance and cleansing in the fountain of Christ's blood will remove all hindrances. Then we shall pray and God will answer; we shall knock and the door will be opened; we shall also decree a thing and it shall be established unto us.

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