

# The Prayer of a Righteous Man

James 5:13-18

## Introduction:

- A. James discusses the effects of prayer upon the sick.
  - 1. Two words for “sick” in the text – “Asthenei” and “Kamno”
  - 2. “Kamno” is weariness mind<sup>1</sup> (cf. Heb. 12:3)
  - 3. Hence, one is raised or lifted from despondency that accompanies physical sickness.
  - 4. I believe the healing in verse 16 is healing from “Kamno” – weariness of mind.
- B. James then gives a non-miraculous example of effectiveness of prayer (vv. 17-18)
- C. James uses powerful words in the last sentence of verse 16 to answer four questions:

## Discussion:

### I. What? “Prayer”

- A. Several forms of prayer (1 Tim. 2:1).
  - 1. “Prayer” is prayer in general.
  - 2. “Supplication” is prayer for a specific need.
  - 3. “Intercession” is prayer for another.
  - 4. “Thanksgiving” is prayer of thanks.
- B. A constant practice of Christians.
  - 1. Always or regularly (1 Thess. 5:17; cf. Rom. 1:9)
  - 2. All places (1 Tim. 5:8).
    - a. Public (Acts 12:5; 1 Cor. 12).
    - b. Privately (Matt. 6:6)
  - 3. For all things (Phil. 4:6)
  - 4. For all men (1 Tim 2:1).
- C. A variety of postures.
  - 1. Standing (Luke 18:13; Mark 11:25)
  - 2. Sitting (1 Chron. 17:16)
  - 3. Kneeling (Acts 7:60).

### II. How? “Effectual, Fervent” (energeo)

- A. Prayer is not merely “saying a prayer”, a formality. (Matt. 6:5-8).
- B. But, it is the expressing of ones “heart’s desire” to the Lord. (cf. Rom. 10:1).

### III. Who? “Righteous Man”

- A. Not self-righteous (Luke 18:9-14)
- B. Not an active sinner (John 9:31; cf. Acts 10:31)
- C. A man of faith (v. 15; Jas. 1:5-8)

### IV. Why? “Availeth Much”

- A. Does not avail everything, but much.
- B. Does not avail to unconditional forgiveness. (cf. Saul of Tarsus).
- C. Does avail to invoke God’s providence (vv. 17-18). (Note difference in providence and miracle)
- D. Does avail to forgive a penitent Christian (Acts 8:24).
- E. Does avail to relieve distress. (v. 15; Phil. 4:6-8).
- F. Does avail to sanctify our food (1 Tim. 4:4,5).

## Conclusion:

- A. Indeed: “The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
- B. There is “power in prayer” because there is power in the one who hears our prayer.

1. kamno ^2577^, primarily, "to work," hence, from the effect of constant work, "to be weary," <Heb. 12:3>, is rendered "(him) that is sick," in <Jas. 5:15>, RV, KJV "(the) sick." The choice of this verb instead of the repetition of No. 1 <v. 14>, see above, is suggestive of the common accompaniment of "sickness," weariness of mind (which is the meaning of this verb), which not infrequently hinders physical recovery; hence this special cause is here intimated in the general idea of "sickness." – Vines