

## Lord, Help My Weakness of Faith!

(Mark 9:21-24)



Faith, the vital and most important armor of defense, is often overlooked in our times of trouble. We look for the tangible to provide the solution for our physical and emotional problems, because we seem to think that in the touching and seeing, our faith is developed, as it is often said, "Seeing is believing". Thomas, one of the disciples of YAHSHUA, seemed to have believed that way. When the disciples told and kept telling him of the resurrection of our Lord YAHSHUA, these were his words: "Unless I see in His hands the marks made by the nails and put my finger into the nail prints, and put my hand into His side, I will never believe [it]. Why was Thomas so contrary and so emphatic in his unbelief? What was there to gain? He expressively detailed the conditions he would believe: *"Unless I see the marks of the nails in His hands, put my finger into the nail prints, and on His side, I will **never** believe"*. The adverb *never* implies permanent condition of disbelief. The Lord rebuked him saying, Because you have seen Me, Thomas, do

you now believe? Blessed are those who have never seen Me and yet have believed on Me (John 20:27, 29).

But Thomas is not alone. We too turn faith into a dilemma in our challenging circumstances. When we fall ill, the first thought to come to mind is to see a doctor. Nothing wrong in that, humanely speaking ; but what does the Word say about that? Is anyone among you sick? He should call in the church elders. And they should pray over him, anointing him with oil in the Lord's name; and the prayer of faith will save him who is sick, and the Lord will restore him; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess to one another therefore your faults, and pray for one another, that you may be healed and restored. The earnest prayer of a righteous man makes tremendous power available (James 5:14-16). The Bible does not say, in sickness call in a doctor, but call in the church elders; it does not say, to give drugs, but it says, to pray over the sick, anointing him with oil in the Lord's name. The results will be that the prayer of faith will save the sick person and the Lord will restore him. The first thing to do to experience restoration is to confess our sin to one another. In offending my brother or sister, I have offended God also and I have suffered the consequences. By admitting my sins to the one I offended, I have taken the first step to my healing, because that has opened heavens and called the attention of God to bless me with restoration and deliverance from that which has caused my illness. God will always do what He has promised in our obedience to His word.

“But if You can do anything, do have pity on us and help us”; that was the cry of a desperate father. His son had suffered under the torment of an evil spirit since he was a little boy. This evil spirit would throw him into fire and water, trying to kill him. He had brought the boy to the disciples for deliverance, but they were not able to free him. That happened while YAHSHUA was on the mountain of His transfiguration with three of His disciples. When they had come down they noticed a crowd around the disciples. YAHSHUA asked them about what were they questioning and discussing, a man told Him what the situation was. He said, *Teacher, I brought my son to You, for he has a dumb spirit. I asked your disciples to drive it out and **they were not able [to do it].***

What was the ingredient missing for the success of the disciples? YAHSHUA answers this question this way: ***O unbelieving generation! How long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with you?*** (Mark 9: 21-24)

Miracles can only happen where there is faith. The father had faith enough to bring his son to YAHSHUA, but in the failure of the disciples to heal his son, he doubted if it could be done and said to YAHSHUA, the disciples could not heal my son, but if You can, please help us, have mercy on us! YAHSHUA told him that **all things were possible to those who believed**. When the father heard the words of YAHSHUA he cried out and began saying, "I do believe; [Lord], help my unbelief". Filled with compassion for that family, YAHSHUA confronted the deaf and dumb spirit and commanded it to leave the boy's body and ordered it never to enter him again. And the boy was set free! The belief springs forth from faith. We don't believe because we have seen, but because we have faith. YAHSHUA admonished Thomas not to be unbelieving, but believing.



On another occasion a Canaanite woman approached YAHSHUA begging Him to heal her daughter who was possessed by a demon. YAHSHUA did not answer her at first, and the disciples asked Him to send her away due to her crying to them; when He replied, *I was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. But she continued persisting and kneeling, she worshipped Him and kept praying, Lord, help me!* YAHSHUA answered her and said, *It is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the little dogs, but she answered, Yes, Lord, yet even the little pups eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table* (Matt. 15:22-27). YAHSHUA then praised her faith and said, *O woman, great is your faith! Be it done for you as you wish. And her daughter was cured from that demon* (Matt. 15:28).

The beauty of this story lies on the persistence and humble heart of this Canaanite woman. It would be normal for some of us to get offended at YAHSHUA'S words and leave empty of His blessings. But this woman knew Who YAHSHUA was; she knew that He was the Messiah, when she called Him, Son of David. This is a prophetically given title to the One Who was to be the Messiah. Being a Canaanite, how would she know Him to be the Messiah? She had come from the district of Tyre and Sidon, which has a rich history. That area was where the widow lived whom God sent Elijah to be fed. ( I Kings17: 9). Tyre and Sidon are located in Lebanon. Both cities have suffered much as the result of civil wars. Sidon was named after the firstborn son of Canaan. (Gen. 10:15). The Northern border of ancient Canaan extended to Sidon and was later the boundary of Zebulun (Gen. 49:13).

Faith was the force that pushed her to persist in the hope that YAHSHUA would heal her daughter, for she knew Who He was. The knowledge of Him gave her the impulse with the continuous plea for the healing of her daughter. The disciples tried to stop her and tried to send her away, but she was going nowhere until YAHSHUA healed her daughter. She only needed to hear the word yes from Him and she knew all was going to be alright for her daughter. YAHSHUA rewarded her not only with healing of her daughter, but with words of praise for her, written in His book, the Bible that has lasted thousands of years, helping others to persist in prayer.

There is a missing link in our Christian way of living today. We say we know our Savior, YAHSHUA, but it does not show in our life of prayer. We know that He is the healer, that there is nothing impossible for Him, that He is the Creator; He knows all about us, that He is our provider and much more. However there is no persistence in the way we pray. If we really knew Him, we would pray believing and expecting miracles in spite of the gravity of our problems, because it is about His power and about Who He is, as the Canaanite woman did, in spite of who she was: a destitute Gentile, voided of God's blessings, she still believed in Him and prayed for that which had been denied to her.

Our first step to victory is to recognize the weakness of our faith and make this our prayer: "Lord, help the weakness of my faith".