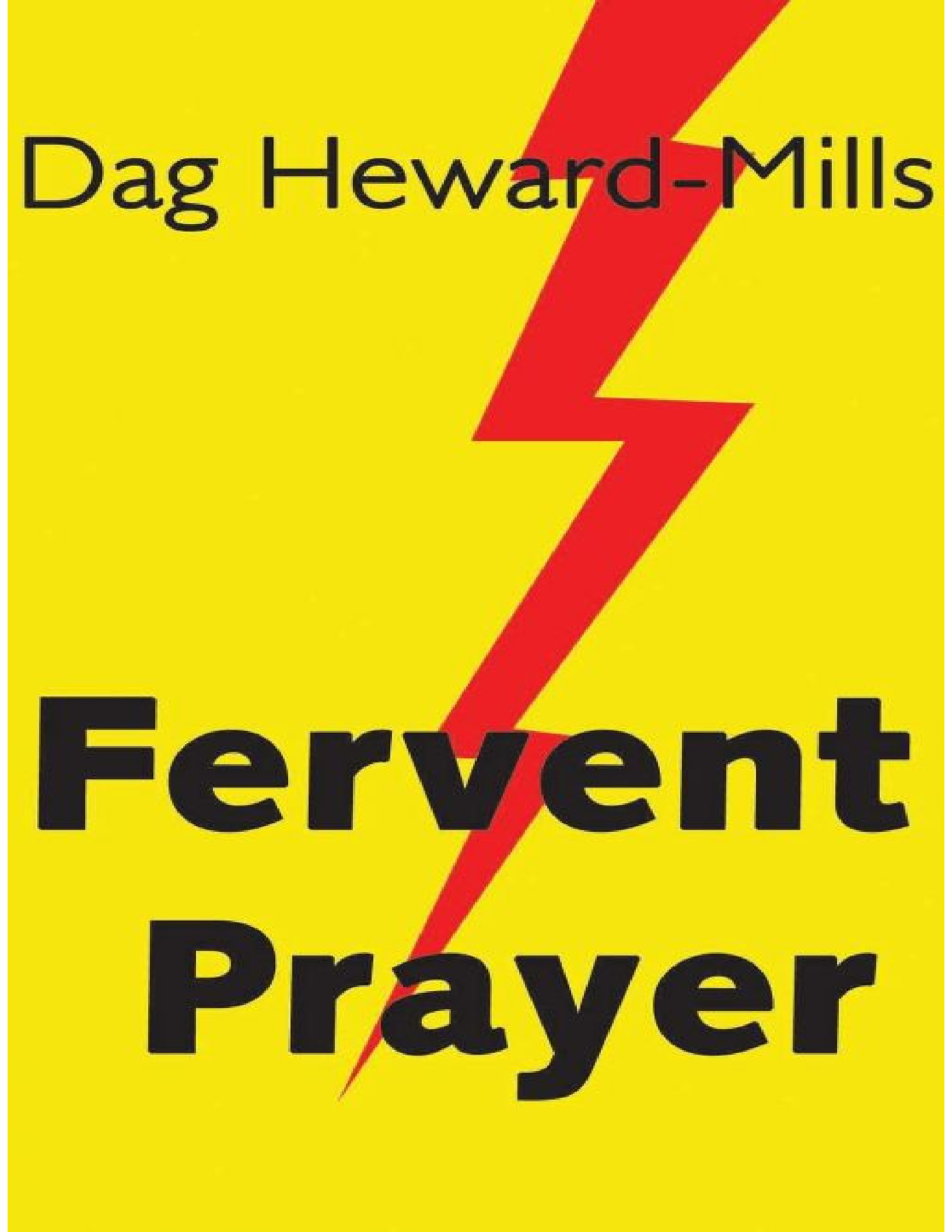
Dag Heward-Mills



Fervent Prayer

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by Dag Heward-Mills

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E mail Dag Heward-Mills
info@daghewardmillsbooks.org
evangelist@daghewardmills.org
Find out more about Dag Heward-Mills at:
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Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture quotations are taken from the King James Version of the Bible

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Chapter 1

Seven Examples of Praying Fervently

Praying fervently is one of the conditions for effective prayer. To pray fervently means to pray ardently, with passion and feeling. The word fervent means passionate, enthusiastic, zealous, fanatical, impassioned, keen, avid, burning, ardent and eager.

If someone is watching you pray, he should be able to describe your prayer with one of the words you just read. Here are Bible examples of people whose fervent prayers yielded great results.

1. Elijah's ardent prayer as he bent over asking for rain, remains the most well known example of fervent prayer.

And Elijah said unto Ahab, Get thee up, eat and drink; for there is a sound of abundance of rain. So Ahab went up to eat and to drink. And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and HE CAST HIMSELF DOWN UPON THE EARTH, AND PUT HIS FACE BETWEEN HIS KN And said to his servant, Go up now, look toward the sea. And he went up, and looked, and said, There is nothing. And he said, Go again seven times.

And it came to pass at the seventh time, that he said, Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand. And he said, Go up, say unto Ahab, Prepare thy chariot, and get thee down, that the rain stop thee not. And it came to pass in the mean while, that the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel. And the hand of the Lord was on Elijah; and he girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel.

1 Kings 18:41-46

This is the classic example of fervent prayer that was spoken of by James. I see you praying fervently to release the rain of God's blessing on your ministry! Look at the example of Elijah as he prayed to God for rain.

2. Hannah's tearful emotional prayer for a child also yielded fantastic results.

So Hannah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now Eli the priest sat upon a seat by a post of the temple of the LORD. And she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the LORD, and wept sore.

And she vowed a vow, and said, O LORD of hosts, IF THOU WILT INDEED LOOK O THE AFFLICTION OF THINE HANDMAID, AND REMEMBER ME, AND NOT FOR THINE HANDMAID, BUT WILT GIVE UNTO THINE HANDMAID A MAN CHILD, TH WILL GIVE HIM UNTO THE LORD ALL THE DAYS OF HIS LIFE, AND THERE SHAL RAZOR COME UPON HIS HEAD. And it came to pass, as she continued praying befo the LORD, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spake in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard: therefore Eli thought she had been drunken. And Eli said unto her, How long wilt thou be drunken? put away thy wine from thee. And Hannah

answered and said, No, my lord, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the LORD. Count not thine handmaid for a daughter of Belial: for out of the abundance of my complaint and grief have I spoken hitherto.

Then Eli answered and said, Go in peace: and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of him. And she said, Let thine handmaid find grace in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

1 Samuel 1:9-20

Hannah was in serious trouble. She desperately needed a breakthrough. She didn't just doodle and dawdle. To doodle and dawdle means to hang around, loiter, waste time and to make wavy impressions. She was dead serious about what she wanted from God. Dear pastor, fervent prayer will make you give birth to a new dimension in ministry.

3. Jacob's all-night wrestling prayer yielded tremendous results.

And Jacob was left alone; and there WRESTLED A MAN with him until the breaking of th day.

Genesis 32:24

Jacob was blessed and so was his seed. Several thousand years have gone by but the fruit of this fervent prayer is evident for all to see. Israel still stands as one of the most favoured nations on the earth.

4. Moses' burning prayer for victory over Amalek, is another example of fervent prayer.

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua Choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek: to morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek: and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when MOSES HELD UP HIS HAN THAT ISRAEL PREVAILED: and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Mose hands were heavy; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon; and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

Exodus 17:8-12

When your children's lives are at stake you cannot afford to laze about. Doodling prayers never helped anyone!

5. David's passionate request that the Holy

Spirit be not withdrawn from him was another example of a fervent prayer.

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou

mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in me.

CAST ME NOT AWAY FROM THY PRESENCE; AND TAKE NOT THY HOLY SPI FROM ME.

Psalm 51:1-11

David knew what it meant if the Holy Spirit were to leave him. He couldn't afford to have that happen.

God does listen to passionate fervent prayers. He looks disdainfully at Christians who while away time just waiting for the prayer meeting to end.

6. The New Testament Church prayed fervently for the power of the Holy Spirit to be upon their leaders.

And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Acts 4:23,24,30,31

God heard their prayer and look at the results. When a church begins to pray fervently there are always results. Sometimes, I look at people who claim to be having a prayer meeting. Some of them are sleeping and others are just whiling away the time. How would you feel if someone fell asleep whilst talking to you? You would think that he is either disrespectful or very uninterested in you.

7. Jesus prayed passionately for the will of God to be done in his life.

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared.

Hebrews 5:7

The evidence of this was when he began to sweat blood. Fervent prayer always works. The ministry of Jesus was a great success! You will have great success in your ministry when you learn how to pray fervently. Whenever you don't know what to do, do what Jesus did. Jesus shouted when he prayed! Jesus prayed until he was sweating! Read it for yourself!

And being in an agony he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

Luke 22:44

Chapter 2

Seven Signs of Fervent Prayer

The EFFECTUAL fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.

James 5:16

If your prayer is fervent, I assure you that you will have great results. Not all prayers are effective prayers. Some prayers are what I call doodling and dawdling prayers. Certainly, doodling and dawdling do not show fervency in prayer!

Since fervency in prayer is so important to achieve results, how can you know that you are praying fervently? I want to show you seven signs of fervent prayer. As usual, the best examples are in the Bible.

1. The Posture

The ministry of Elijah has the most famous example of fervent prayer. It is interesting to note his posture when he prayed.

And Elijah went up to the top of Carmel; and he

CAST HIMSELF DOWN upon the earth, and put his FACE BETWEEN HIS KNEES.

1 Kings 18:42

Begin to observe yourself and those around you at prayer meetings. What is their posture? Your posture speaks volumes about the kind of prayer you are engaged in.

2. A Lifted Voice

When Jesus was on earth He prayed with loud cries and tears. Are your prayers soft or loud? Jesus prayed with strong cries and tears.

I prefer to follow the example of Jesus!

Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with STRONG CRYING and TEARS unto him that was able tosave him from death, and was heard in that he feared;

Hebrews 5:7

There are no meaningless details in the Bible. These things were written for our example. Let us learn from the heroes of faith.

3. Weeping

Several Bible characters wept whilst they prayed. Our Lord Jesus was the best example Jesus offered up prayers with tears. There is nothing wrong with weeping whilst you pray. Jesus prayed fervent prayers and was heard by His Father.

Another famous prayer warrior was Hannah. Hannah was the mother of Samuel. The Bible describes her prayer time in graphic detail.

And she was in bitterness of soul, and PRAYED UNTO THE LORD, AND WEP SORE.

1 Samuel 1:10

4. Exhaustion

Physical energy may be exacted from you when you pray. Jacob prayed all night. That must have been tiring.

Jesus also prayed till everyone around Him fell asleep.

And he cometh (after praying) and findeth his disciples asleep…

Matthew 26:40

Moses prayed so hard that people had to help him lift up his hands.

But Moses hands were heavy: and they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat thereon and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands…

Exodus 17:12

5. Quiet Groaning

And it came to pass, that she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, SHE SPAKE IN HER HEART; ONLY HER LIPS MOVED.

1 Samuel 1:12

This was definitely an example of fervent prayer. This woman prayed passionately for a child. There was no shouting or screaming.

The Bible says that Eli could not hear what she was praying about. He even thought she was drunk. This is what I call quiet groaning.

Jesus was another example of someone who groaned in prayer.

When Jesus therefore saw her weeping, and the Jews also weeping which came with her, HE GROANED IN THE SPIRIT, and was troubled.

John 11:33

6. Inner Determination

Determination is not easily manifested. It is a quiet resolve to pray until something happens. Anyone who is determined to pray until something happens is a passionate or fervent prayer warrior.

And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I WILL NOT LET THE GO, EXCEPT THOU BLESS ME.

Genesis 32:26

People who come for prayer meetings without a determination to receive something from God often doodle and dawdle until the meeting is over. Be determined to get answers for all your prayer requests!

7. Desperate Language

If you study the prayers of David as recorded in the Psalms you will find the language of a desperate man. David was a man who was looking for God's help; a man reaching out frantically for the hand of God. Remember this: *God listens to every word you say.* The words you speak matter!

Look at one example of King David's prayers.

In thee O Lord, do I put my trust; LET MENEVER BE ASHAMED: deliver me in th righteousness. Bow down thine ear to me; DELIVER ME SPEEDILY: be thou m strong rock, for AN HOUSE OF DEFENCE TO SAVE ME. For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name sake lead me, and guide me.

Psalm 31:1-3

It is important to pray effectively in the ministry. You might as well say, "twinkle, twinkle little star", if your prayers are not going to work. You might as well be out there doing something less spiritual if your prayers are not going to work!

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