



Title: Effective Prayer

Category: Serving Self

Tags: 2 Corinthians 10:3-4, 2 Kings 19:15-20, 2 Kings 19:35-36, Effective Prayer, James 5:16, Serving Self

How do you pray? What's an effective prayer? One that might get the attention of God? One of the most effective prayers recorded in the Bible was uttered by Hezekiah, king of Judah, when the Assyrian army laid siege to Jerusalem and their commander, Sennacherib, was trying to goad them into surrender. Hezekiah prayed: "O Lord, God of Israel, enthroned between the cherubim, you alone are God over all the kingdoms of the earth. You have made heaven and earth. Give ear, O Lord, and hear; open your eyes, O Lord, and see; listen to the words Sennacherib has sent to insult the living God. It is true, O Lord, that the Assyrian kings have laid waste these nations and their lands. They have thrown their gods into the fire and destroyed them, for they were not gods but only wood and stone, fashioned by men's hands. Now, O Lord our God, deliver us from his hand, so that all the kingdoms on earth may know that you alone, O Lord, are God" (2 Kings 19:15-20).

The Bible says, "The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective" (James 5:16).

So, how effective was this prayer? "That night the angel of the Lord went out and put to death one hundred and eighty-five thousand men in the Assyrian camp. When the people got up the next morning there were all the dead bodies! So Sennacherib king of Assyria broke camp and withdrew. He returned to Nineveh and stayed there" (2 Kings 19:35-36). I would have left, too, if I were Sennacherib!

Hezekiah was praying for his country, as should we, but most often our imminent need is more personal. Habitual sin may have laid siege to our heart; or, immoral or ungodly influences may have laid siege to our family.

Men, as war was being waged against Judah, so war is being waged against us. If the gods we turn to are fashioned by the hands of men, they will be thrown into the fire and destroyed. But, if we turn to the God who is enthroned between the cherubim, who alone is God over all the earth, the devil and his plans will not succeed. We don't wage war as the world does with gods of wood and stone. "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:3-4).