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Mighty Prevailing Prayer: Experiencing the Power of Answered Prayer

11. You Must Prevail Before God

This chapter argues that persistent, prevailing prayer is often required even when you're praying inside God's will. It explains why God may delay an answer, walks through Jacob's night of wrestling as the model of prevailing, and closes with the eight Spirit-empowered dynamics that make prayer a battle Satan cannot win.

Key takeaways

- God may delay an answer for good reasons: to test the depth of your desire, deepen your humility, and purify your motives.
- Delay isn't a sign you're outside God's will. Difficulties, obstacles, and Satan's attacks often prove the opposite.
- Prayer can be blocked by cherished sin, wrong motives, or broken relationships. Prevailing time lets God surface these.
- Jacob is the pattern: he pleaded God's promise, humbled himself, refused to let go, stopped fighting and started clinging, and got a new name and nature (Israel).
- 'His power with God preceded his power with men' — once Jacob prevailed with God, prevailing with Esau was no problem.

- Elijah prevailed by persevering: he prayed for rain seven times before a cloud the size of a hand appeared.
- All prevailing depends on one source — the Holy Spirit — working through eight dynamics: desire, fervency, importunity, faith, the Spirit, uniting in prayer, perseverance, praise.
- Christ won the victory alone at the cross; the church now enforces that finished victory through Spirit-empowered prayer. It is the church militant, meant to be aggressive, not passive.

Passages worth keeping

“That eternal victory must now be applied and enforced by the Holy Spirit working through the prayers and obedience of God's children.”

States the chapter's core claim about how the cross-won victory reaches the world.

How it connects

The chapter ties Old Testament prayer warriors (Jacob, Elijah) to New Testament warfare: what Christ won once at Calvary, believers now enforce by the Spirit's power.

Scripture referenced

- **Gen. 32:9-31** -- Jacob's night of wrestling — the chapter's model of prevailing before God.
- **1 Kings 18:39-45** -- Elijah on Carmel praying seven times until rain came — perseverance.
- **Jer. 29:13** -- We find God when we seek Him with all our heart — testing depth of desire.
- **James 4:3** -- Wrong motives block prayer, even for things in God's will.
- **Ps. 66:18** -- Cherished sin keeps the Lord from listening.
- **Matt. 26:39** -- Jesus prevailing in Gethsemane over Himself and over Satan.