**THE THUNDER OF SILENCE**
Chapter XIV
**WHEN YE PRAY**

***NO ONE EXPERIENCES ANSWERED PRAYER*** –
 ***WHEN HE PRAYS* – *MERELY WITH HIS MIND,*
 *RELYING WHOLLY ON WORDS AND THOUGHTS*,**
 **BECAUSE THERE IS THEN – NO OPPORTUNITY --**
***FOR THE SPIRIT* – *TO BREAK THROUGH* – *INTO EXPRESSION***.

**REGARDLESS OF WHAT FORM PRAYER MAY TAKE,
 *THERE IS NO CONNECTING LINK WITH GOD* – *UNTIL*** –
***THERE IS A CONSCIOUS AWARENESS*** – ***OF HIS PRESENCE*.**

**Many of us have been guilty of using** – **vain repetitions,
 thinking that we are praying – when in reality –
 all we have been doing – is repeating over and over again –
 somebody else’s man-made prayer.**

Even the repetition of as great a prayer as the Lord’s Prayer,
if recited with the idea that the mere rehearsal of its words has power,
 IS NOT EFFECTIVE PRAYER.

***Anything that is thought spoken, or written* – *is but an effect –
 and how can the power of God* – *be in an effect*?
Does not all Scripture state that there is no power but the One,
 there is no God but one?**

***PRAYER THAT IS MADE UP OF WORDS AND THOUGHTS*** –
 ***CANNOT AND DOES NOT REACH GOD*,**
 ***AND THEREFORE REMAINS* – *UNANSWERED***.

***THE PRAYERS THAT ARE ANSWERED* –
 ARE THOSE DEEP WITHIN A PERSON –
 WHEN NO WORDS AND NO THOUGHTS ARE PRESENT;**

 **BUT WHEN THERE IS A HUNGER, A DESIRE, OR A NEED –
 THAT IS BEYOND WORDS.
 IN THAT INTENSE LONGING, GOD IS REACHED.**

***THE ABSENCE OF FRUITAGE IN PRAYER*** –
 **MERELY BEARS WITNESS** –
 **TO OUR FAILURE – TO GO DEEP ENOUGH –
 INTO OUR CONSCIOUSNESS –
 TO MAKE CONTACT WITH – THE PRESENCE –
 WHICH IS ALWAYS THERE –
 AND WHICH IS EVER AVAILABLE.**

**God is not to be found – on the surface – of men’s minds;**
**God is not to be found – through the intellect;
God is not to be found – *EXCEPT THROUGH* –
 *DEEP PRAYER, A HEART-HUNGER FOR GOD*, –
 *A DEEP DESIRE TO KNOW HIM ARIGHT*.**

***PRAYER*** *–* ***MUST BE*** *–* ***A DESIRE FOR* – *SPIRITUAL FULFILLMENT.***

***THROUGH SEEKING FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD –*** ***GIVING UP HOPE OF GAINING ANYTHING,******AND BEING SATISFIED*** *–* ***TO LET THE THINGS BE ADDED UNTO US,
 WE OPEN OURSELVES TO FULFILLMENT***.

**Who of us can know
 where spiritual fulfillment will lead or leave us?**
*IT MAY LEAVE US* –
 *IN OUR PRESENT WORK OR PRESENT MODE OF LIVING*,
OR IT MAY LEAD US –
 INTO NEW ACTIVITIES AND AN ENTIRELY NEW LIFE.

***IN PRAYING*** – however –
 ***IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE* – *LEAVE BEHIND*** –
 ***all our preconceived notions or ideas of what we* –
 want** – ***our hopes, aims, ambitions, and desires*** –
 ***BECAUSE***–
 **there is no assurance that God will fulfill them on our terms.**

***If we hope to see the fruitage of answered prayer***–
 ***WE MUST REMEMBER* –
 *NOT TO PRAY FOR ANYTHING AT ALL* –
 THAT THE WORLD NEEDS,**

***BUT LET OUR PRAYER BE* – *AN INNER STILLNESS* –
 *IN WHICH GOD’S WORD* – *FLOWS INTO US* –  *REMINDING US, “SON… ALL THAT I HAVE – IS THINE*.”**

**When God speaks His word, there will be no doubt of Its truth,
 and there will be no interval of barrenness –
 between God’s word – and its fulfillment.**

*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.
 I Corinthians 2:9*

***MAN – CANNOT KNOW*** –
 ***WHAT THE DIVINE PLAN HOLDS FOR HIM* –
 because man can only measure good –
 by an increase of what he already possesses.**
Whether it is dollars or horses – he has,
 accumulating more of ***–*** what to him represents good –
 is his only way of evaluating good.

**These things, however, bear no relationship at all to** – ***real good***, ***because no man can define*** – ***WHAT GOOD*** – ***ACTUALLY IS*.**

***NO ONE CAN KNOW – THE TREASURES THAT ARE –
STORED UP WITHIN HIMSELF – UNTIL HE TURNS TO GOD –
IN THE REALIZATION THAT, WHATEVER FORM IT MAY TAKE,
 GOD’S GRACE IS HIS SUFFICIENCY IN ALL THINGS,***

***AND UNTIL HE IS WILLING TO FOLLOW – IN WHATEVER WAY*** –
 his good is unfolded and revealed – even though that way –
 may temporarily be a complete reversal or turning upside down –
 of his human life, his hopes and activities.

Probably there is no one reading this book –
 who has not already found ***–*** that he is glad he did not receive ***–*** many of the things for which he prayed so insistently.

***THEREFORE, IT SHOULD NOT BE TOO DIFFICULT TO PRAY,
 “NOT MY WILL BUT THINE BE DONE IN ME.***
Thou art the all-knowing, infinite wisdom and intelligence ***–*** of the universe, and I surrender myself –
 I surrender my hopes and desires, my fears,
 my aims and ambitions – into Thy hand.”

***THUS* – *WE MAKE OF OUR PRAYER* – AN EMPTINESS OF SELF.**

***TO BRING OURSELVES – AS AN EMPTY VESSEL TO GOD –
 AND LET GOD – FILL THAT VESSEL –
 IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF PRAYER.***

**LET US NOT TAKE OUR – FINITE VIEWS –
 of what is good and what is bad to God,
 nor take our human hopes and ambitions to Him,
 but let us go to God – as if we really trusted Him –
 more than we would trust our own mother,
 trust Him as the divine Love and the divine Wisdom *–* of this world, which in truth He is.**

The reason for so much unhappiness – is that many people are not fulfilling their own idea of themselves, much less God’s idea.

As human beings, a great many people are misfits.
Scarcely a person on earth, regardless of how exalted his position,
 is fulfilling his true destiny on earth.

Usually, he is either fulfilling a destiny that he has chosen for himself –
 or one that circumstances have thrust upon him. And so it is –
 that if we are among those who are fulfilling some niche in life –
 into which we have been thrown **–** through circumstances beyond our control –
 or in which we have placed ourselves through ignorance,

***CERTAINLY WE NEED –* THE PRAYER OF FULFILLMENT –
 *WHICH IS THE PRAYER OF EMPTINESS*.**

**WE NEED TO LEARN *–*HOW TO RELEASE THE WHOLE SITUATION *–* INTO GOD,
WILLINGLY ADMITTING, *–*“LOOK, I CERTAINLY HAVE MESSED UP THIS LIFE OF MINE *–* SO FAR. LET ME GIVE UP *–* AND YOU TAKE OVER.”**

Then we may be amazed at how the miracle begins to work in us – and how quickly what we had thought of as our destiny – changes.

***THERE IS NO OTHER WAY TO PRAY*.**
***When we pray in* – *THAT WAY***,
 **we are praying to the infinite Wisdom of the universe,
 *TRUSTING DIVINE LOVE* – *TO FULFILL ITSELF* IN US.**

***AS LONG AS WE ARE* –
 *ADVISING, SUGGESTING, OR OUTLINING TO GOD,
 OR EVEN HOPING THAT GOD WILL ACT –
 ACCORDING TO OUR PERSONAL WISHES,
 WE ARE NOT PRAYING OR GOING TO GOD,
 BUT TO OUR OWN MIND.***

***THAT IS NO WAY TO PRAY.
RATHER – SHOULD WE SURRENDER OURSELVES TO GOD –***
 so that God’s will for us may fulfill Itself,
 that whatever it was for which we were born –
 and we were all born for a purpose –
 or we would not be here – may be fulfilled.

**REGARDLESS OF HOW PAINFUL OR DIFFICULT IT MAY –
BE AT FIRST – TO GO TO GOD –
 WITHOUT – A WORD *–* OR A THOUGHT,
 A DIRECTION, A HOPE, A FEAR, OR AN AMBITION,**

***THIS EMPTINESS OF SELF –
 IS WORTH ACHIEVING* – *EVEN IF IT TAKES TIME.***

***WHEN WE REACH THAT POINT,
WE SHALL FIND WHAT A GLORIOUS THING IT IS –
NOT TO HAVE TO PLAN OUR DAY OR OUR NEXT YEAR;***

***AND YET AT THE SAME TIME BE ASSURED* –
*THAT EVERY DAY OF THE YEAR –
WILL BE A DAY OF FULFILLMENT – BECAUSE IT IS GOD’S DAY,
 AND WE HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH IT –
 EXCEPT TO BE BEHOLDERS OF GOD AT WORK.***

***THAT WHICH DIVINELY DECREED US* – *TO DO IT –
 WILL FULFILL IT.***

**He fulfills the days and He fulfills the nights *–* as long as we are empty enough *–* of words *–* and are not injecting some human thought –
 conceived in our mind.**

***WHEN WE BEGIN TO MEDITATE*,
*IT IS NATURAL TO THINK SOME THOUGHTS,
BUT LET US BE CERTAIN IN OUR MINDS –
 THAT WE* – *ARE NOT ASKING GOD FOR ANYTHING*:**

**IN THIS WAY – *WE EMPTY OURSELVES* –
 WE EMPTY THE OLD BOTTLES – OF THE OLD WINE –
 MAKING OF OURSELVES – A NOTHINGNESS,**
 **without desire, hope, ambition, or fear *–* AND IN SUCH A STATE OF RECEPTIVITY,**

***WE OPEN THE WAY* *– FOR THE SPIRIT OF GOD* –
 TO WORK IN AND THROUGH US –
 *IN ACCORDANCE WITH HIS PLAN AND DESIGN.***

***How much praying has been done to a God –
 somewhere other than within us*!**

***YET THE MASTER SET THE EXAMPLE*** *–*
***BY PRAYING* – *ONLY TO THE FATHER WITHIN***,
***CREDITING EVERYTHING TO THE FATHER*** –
***and turning in every situation* – *to that withinness*** –
***whether it was the feeding of the multitudes– or their healing***.

***SOONER OR LATER,
 WE MUST ALL MAKE CONTACT WITH* – *THAT FATHER,
THE CHRIST OF OUR OWN BEING,
 WITH THE SON OF GOD WITHIN US.***

**THE SON OF GOD *– CONSTITUTES OUR REAL BEING*;**
**THE SON OF GOD – IS THE VERY LIFE, MIND, AND SOUL OF US**. ***THE SON OF MAN*** – **has to learn *–* to commune with** **–**
***THE SON OF GOD WITHIN – UNTIL THE TWO BECOME ONE*** –
 **and then *– THE SON OF MAN REALIZES***,

 **“*I AM NEVER ALONE*. *– I AM NEVER ALONE*.
 *WHERE I AM*, *GOD IS*; *WHERE GOD IS*, *I AM*.”**

***THE WORD OF GOD – RECEIVED IN OUR CONSCIOUSNESS*** –
 ***IS THE HEALING AGENCY***–
 ***QUICK AND SHARP AND POWERFUL.***

***BUT THE WORD OF GOD* – *MUST BE* – *RECEIVED;***

***IT MUST NOT BE A MERE REPETITION OF WORDS***–
***because it is not our– rehearsal of these truths***–
***that reveals Gods presence and power,***

***EVEN THOUGH THESE TRUTHS*** –
***DO FORM THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH WE REST*** –

***UNTIL THE WORD OF GOD –
 BURSTS INTO OUR CONSCIOUSNESS*** –
 ***WITH SOME MESSAGE SUCH AS,***

***“THOU ART FREE,” OR “SON… ALL THAT I HAVE IS THINE,”
 OR “THOU ART MY BELOVED.”***

***SOMETIMES IT SAYS NOTHING AT ALL,
but we feel the inflow of peace and warmth –
throughout our whole system, or a smile coming to our face*** –
***as much as to say, “How could I ever have believed –
that there is really an inflow – coming to our outer sense*** –
 ***FROM THE FATHER WITHIN,***

***HARMONY IS ESTABLISHED, AND HEALING TAKES PLACE,
 WHETHER FOR OURSELVES OR FOR OTHERS.***

***TO ATTAIN THIS, however,
IT IS NECESSARY FIRST OF ALL***–
***TO STOP TURNING* – *TO GOD*** –
**AS IF THERE WERE A GOD** – **SOMEWHERE WAITING –
FOR OUR PICAYUNE LITTLE TROUBLES –
TO BE BROUGHT TO HIS THRONE TO BE TAKEN CARE OF.**

We must stop believing ***–***that God is withholding some good from us ***–***and that by some form of treatment, prayer, sacrifice, or coercion,
we are going to get God to do ***–*** what God is not already doing.

**ALL THAT NONSENSE MUST BE GIVEN UP,
AND WE MUST TURN TO GOD IN THE SENSE OF *–* IS:**

**As we learn to listen and develop a state of receptivity,
 eventually we arrive at that place *–* where the flow begins to come from within.

*NEITHER WRITTEN NOR SPOKEN TRUTH* –
 *CAN BRING GOD INTO OUR LIVES.***

***THE WRITTEN OR THE SPOKEN WORD* *–* *GIVES US A FOUNDATION* *–* UPON WHICH TO REST *–* *WHILE WE ARE AWAITING* *–
 THE REALIZATION* *–* OF GOD’S GRACE,
*BUT ONLY WHEN THE SPIRIT* *– MOVES UPON US* *–* *DO THE MIGHTY WORKS TAKE PLACE*.**

**THE WORDS WE SPEAK – *ARE NOT POWER*,
 NOR ARE – *THE THOUGHTS WE THINK*,**

***BUT IF WE SIT IN A COMPLETE QUIET –
 IN THE THUNDERING SILENCE,***
 ***AND KEEP OUR “MIND STAYED ON THEE*,”
*EVENTUALLY WE ARRIVE AT A PLACE –
 WHERE THOUGHTS DO NOT COME ANY MORE –***

 ***AND, IN A FEW MOMENTS*,
 *WE BEGIN TO FEEL* – *THIS INNER PEACE –
THAT IS KNOWN AS – REALIZATION*.**

***PRAYER IS* – *OUR CONTACT WITH GOD.***

***IT IS THE MEANS – THROUGH WHICH – GOD’S GRACE –
PERFORMS ITS MIRACLES – IN OUR EXPERIENCE.***

***BUT PRAYER – MUST BE* – *A LISTENING ATTITUDE.
 IT MUST BE* – *A WILLINGNESS –
 THAT THE SPIRIT OF GOD FILL US –
 AND PERFORM ITS FUNCTIONS –
 IN US AND THROUGH US.***