

The Other Side of the Story

BY AN INTERNATIONAL WORKER SERVING IN
THE MIDDLE EAST

My dear friend Ifrah* is a sensitive soul, interested in meditation and a personal connection with her Creator. I thought the Beatitudes and their poetry would appeal to her. But shortly after that passage, we stumbled onto some harsh words:

Anyone who is angry with another will be judged as a murderer. Anyone who lusts after another will be judged as an adulterer. Anyone who divorces and remarries is an adulterer. When someone strikes you, you must turn the other cheek. Love your enemies. Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect (See Matthew 5).

Ifrah kept asking questions to make sure that the words actually meant what they said, that these statements were really so uncompromising. At the end of our time together, she made the following conclusion: “No one can live by these standards. If those are the standards that God judges people by, then no one can please Him!”

Thankfully, Ifrah’s story doesn’t end there. I explained to her that this is why we believe we need a Savior. Though many from the majority religion here think that Christians have no laws, the truth is that the laws we believe God holds us to are so harsh, so stringent, that we are hopeless to fulfill them. That’s why He sent His Son to die in our place.

The following week when Ifrah and I met, we went to John 4. Jesus, who set such strict requirements for His people, seeks out a five-times-divorced woman. The perfect One showed respect and great honor to a woman sidelined due to race, gender, and her own sins by trusting her to tell her people the good news—that their Messiah had come.

“This is the other side of the story,” I told Ifrah. “It’s true that God requires impossible perfection from us. But He loves us no matter how imperfect we are. He seeks us out and rescues us.”

Pray that Ifrah will continue to take steps of faith toward Jesus and will recognize Him as the answer she seeks. Pray also that she will join a community of believers.

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A Reminder from God

BY QUINN MCGARVEY, AN ALLIANCE
INTERNATIONAL WORKER SERVING IN JAPAN

The train was getting crowded. As I stood holding onto a handle so I wouldn't fall, I gazed out the window at a beautiful scene: the sun setting between the vast number of buildings. The thought ran through my mind, *Wow, I can't believe I get to live here.*

As quickly as the thought came, so did a reminder from the Lord: "Quinn, you prayed for me to bring you here, and I did. Don't underestimate the power of your prayers. Don't stop asking me for things." I whispered, "Whoa," as the train came to a stop. Tears of gratitude filled my eyes. I began wondering what He wanted me to ask Him to do. It didn't matter. I was where He desired me to be; He just wanted me to ask Him.

God is our Father, and He is delighted when we ask Him to move and act, not only on our behalf but also on behalf of those who don't yet know His love and power. Will you join me in asking God to soften the hearts of people in Japan—to open eyes to see and ears to hear the good news of Jesus?



Thank you for praying for Alliance workers and for the people with whom they share the gospel. To receive The Alliance Call to Prayer and weekly Alliance Prayer Requests via e-mail, subscribe at www.cmalliance.org/pray. Alliance Ministries are supported by gifts to the Great Commission Fund and the CAMA Advance Fund.



THEALLIANCE

8595 Explorer Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80920

The Power of Prayer

The following is an excerpt from Days of Heaven on Earth, by A. B. Simpson, published in 1983 by Christian Publications.

Prayer is the link that connects us to God. It is the bridge that spans every gulf and bears us over every abyss of danger or of need.

How significant the picture of the apostolic church: Peter in prison, the Jews triumphant, Herod supreme, the arenas of martyrdom awaiting the dawn of the morning to drink up the apostle's blood—everything against the church.

But prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for Peter. And what was the sequel? The prison open, the apostle free, the Jews baffled . . . and the Word of God rolling on in greater victory.

Do we know the power of our supernatural weapon? Do we dare to use it with the authority of faith that commands as well as asks? May God baptize us with the Holy Spirit and audacity and divine confidence. He does not want great men and women, but He is wanting men and women who will dare to prove the greatness of their God in prayer.

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