

# Gleaning In The Fields Of Light

*“Are any among you suffering? They should pray ... The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up ... The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective...”*

—The Epistle of James

By Ken Woodley

Life can sometimes make us feel as if we’ve suddenly been caught in an avalanche or a collapsed mineshaft.

We’re buried miles away from our former happiness.

Nearly suffocating in the darkness.

Unable to reach the light of day.

But we are not helpless.

Nor are we abandoned and alone.

Prayer is the tool we can use to dig our way out.

Every prayer.

Each day.

All of our spoken and silent words of prayer can tunnel through the layers of darkness that cover us just as if we’d literally been trapped in an avalanche or a mineshaft that had given way.

“The Lord is my shepherd...”

And we penetrate a little further toward the light.

“Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...”

And we dig ourselves a bit closer to the fresh air that we were breathing only yesterday.

“I will fear no evil...”

And now the Holy Spirit can feel us praying.

“Because you are with me...”

God knows where we are and what has happened, and why would we ever think that God doesn’t pray? And Jesus too.

Digging down toward our words of faith.

So we must keep praying so they can reach us.

Praying and believing that they will.

It is too easy for some people to dismiss prayer as merely a ritual. True prayer can be far more than that.

The words in the Epistle are powerful reminders of the true power of real prayer—the prayer, as James tells us, “of faith.”

James is speaking to us as a compelling firsthand witness of what the early church experienced through faith-filled prayer after the death and resurrection of Jesus.

There is no avalanche too heavy.

James knew this.

And no mineshaft too deep.

Do we understand everything about prayer and how it works? No, not at all. We never shall.

But that is what makes the prayer of faith so powerful. It is all about the faith. Faith that taps into the deepest recesses of our soul and connects us to the power of God’s love and grace.

When that happens, God is surely digging with us, too.

God has joined us in the tunneling.

And the heart of Christ is beating for us all.