

Prayer

Thanksgiving

An expression of gratitude, especially to God.

We as believers should live thankful to God.

Paul tells the Philippians “In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God” (Philippians 4:6) and the Colossians “Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving” (Colossians 4:2).

Thanksgiving, like all other aspect of prayer, should not be a mechanical mouthing of a “thank you” to God; but the expression of words that reflect the thankfulness of our hearts.

We should be thankful in all circumstances and for every event in our life that He allows to come to us.

Some more scriptures: 1 Chronicles 16:8; Psalms 50:14; 92:1; Ephesians 5:20; Colossians 3:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 Titus 4:4

Confession

Being aware of God’s holiness, leads to us being conscious of our sinful state e.g. Isaiah “Woe is me, for I am undone...” (Isaiah 6:5). Sin is against God, we must confess our sins to God, to get right with Him. He promises to forgive us of all our unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9)

Some more scriptures: Ezra 10:11; Proverbs 28:13

Intercession

To intervene on someone’s behalf

Christ's intercession with the Father for Mankind.

For sinners	Isaiah 53:12
For weak believers	Lu 22:32
For enemies	Lu 23:34
For sending of the Comforter	John 14:16
Special for the Church	John 17:9
Our acceptance depends upon	Ro 8:34
Salvation through	Hebrews 7:25

Examples of Man's prayer of intercession for his fellow-men

Genesis 37:21,26; 44:33; 1 Samuel 19:4; 25:24; Jeremiah 38:9; Phm10

Examples of intercessory prayer.

Moses for Israel	Exodus 32:32
Moses for Miriam	Numbers 12:13
Moses for Israel	Numbers 14:17; De 9:26
Samuel for Israel	1 Sam 7:5
A man of God for Jeroboam	1 Kings 13:6
David for Israel	1 Chronicles 21:17
Hezekiah for the people	2 Chronicles 30:18

Other instances: Job 42:10; Psalms 106:23; Ephesians 1:16

Faith

Reliance, trust.

- Offering of money
- Prayer
- Serving others and sharing with those in need

Offering yourself to God is what worship is all about Romans 12:1.

It's personal surrender.

Adoration

Love deeply, act of worship, reverence, obedience, and a act of honouring God in prayer.

God is love and He has demonstrated His love in the gift of His Son. The greatest desire of God is that we love Him with our whole being (Mat 22:37). Our love should be expressed, as His has been expressed. When the love of God fills our hearts, we will express our love in prayer for the one who is ultimately responsible for whom we are.

Adoration is praising God for who He is.

Praise

Express approval or admiration of. To honour God

The natural outgrowth (grows faster than) of faith, worship, confession and adoration is praise. God whom we respect and love above all other, naturally receives our highest commendation. We praise Him for His "mighty acts...according to His excellent greatness!" (Psalms 150:2) and for "His righteous judgments" (Psalms 119:164). For God Himself, for His works and for His words, His people give sincere praise.

We are encouraged (throughout the Bible) to praise God. The praise of man toward God is the means of which we express our joy to the Lord.

In the Old Testament the word use for "praise" are halal; which means making a noise and yadah; which refers to movements of the body and gestures linked with praise.

Request

Prayer is not only response to God's grace as bought to us in the life and work of Jesus and the teaching of Scripture, it's also request for our needs and the needs of others.

God is not permitted to grant all our requests as they are asked. The reasons for this is: iniquity in the heart (Psalms 66:18), refusal to hear God's law (Proverbs 28:9), an estranged (cause to be no longer friendly or loving) heart (Isaiah 29:13), sinful separation from God (Isaiah 59:2), waywardness (Jeremiah 14:10-12), offering unworthy sacrifices (Malachi 1:7-9), praying to be seen of men (Matthew 6:5-6), pride in fasting and tithing (Luke 18:11-14), lack of faith (Hebrews 11:6) and doubting or double-mindedness (James 4:3).

God has promised to answer our request when we start helping the hungry and afflicted (Isaiah 58:9-10), when we believe that we will receive what we ask (Mark 11:22), when we forgive others (Mark 11:25-26), when we ask in Christ's name (John 14:13-14), when we abide in Christ and His words (John 15:7), pray in the Spirit (Ephesians 6:8), obey the Lord's Commandments (1 John 3:22) and ask according to His will (1 John 5:14-15). Until we have properly responded to God and His word, He cannot entrust us with His powerful resources.

Prayer is a request to a personal Lord who answers as He knows best. God hears and answers in the way that is best.

Effectiveness

Prayer has power over everything. The Bible declares that "The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much" (James 5:16).

Prayer meets inner needs:

Freedom from fear Psalms 118:5-6

Strength of soul Psalms 138:3

Guidance and satisfaction Isaiah 58:9-11

Wisdom and understanding Daniel 9:20-27

Deliverance from harm Joel 2:32

Reward	Matthew 6:6
Good gifts	Luke 11:13
Fullness of joy	John 16: 23-24
Peace	Philippians 4:6-8
Freedom from anxiety	1 Peter 5:7

Not only is prayer effective in the inner lives of those who pray; but also in the lives of others. Biblical writers believed prayer for others could result in greater wisdom and power (Ephesians 1:18-19); inward strength, knowledge of Christ's love, filling with God's fullness (Ephesians 3:16-19); discernment, approval of what is excellent, filling with the fruits of righteousness (Philippians 1:9-11); knowledge of God's will, spiritual understanding, a life pleasing to God, fullness, endurance, patience, joy (Colossians 1:9-12) a quiet peaceful life (1 Timothy 2: 1-2); love for one another, holiness before God (1 Thessalonians 3:10-13); comfort and establishment in every good work (2 Thessalonians 2:16-1 7); love for God, steadfastness in Christ (2 Thessalonians 3:5).

Some prayers in the Bible changed nature and physical bodies e.g. Jabez prayed for enlarged borders and protection for harm (1 Chronicles 4:10).

Supplication

Ask humbly for something.

When Solomon had finished building the temple	1 Kings 9:3
Daniel prayed for his people	Dan 9:3
Job acknowledges God's justice	Job 9:15
Hannah's prayer	1 Sam 1
Esther asked the king to let her and her people live	Esther 7:3

Other scriptures:

- Ps 6:9

- Ps 30:8; 142:1
- Ps 119:170
- Ephesians 6:18
- Ph 4:6
- 1 Tim 2:1

Prayer is conversation with God; the intercourse of the soul with God, not in contemplation or meditation, but in direct address to him. Prayer may be oral or mental, occasional or constant, ejaculatory or formal. It is a "beseeching the Lord" (Exodus. 32:11); "pouring out the soul before the Lord" (1 Samuel. 1:15); "praying and crying to heaven" (2 Chronicles. 32:20); "seeking unto God and making supplication" (Job 8:5); "drawing near to God" (Psalms. 73:28); "bowing the knees" (Ephesians. 3:14).

Prayer presupposes a belief in the personality of God, his ability and willingness to communicate with us, his personal control of all things and of all his creatures and all their actions.

Acceptable prayer must be sincere (Hebrews 10:22), offered with reverence and godly fear, with a humble sense of our own insignificance as creatures and of our own unworthiness as sinners, with earnest importunity, and with unhesitating submission to the divine will. Prayer must also be offered in the faith that God is, and is the hearer and answerer of prayer, and that he will fulfil his word, "Ask, and ye shall receive" (Matthew. 7:7,8; 21:22; Mark 11:24; John 14:13,14), and in the name of Jesus Christ (16:23,24; 15:16; Ephesians. 2:18; 5:20; Colossians. 3:17; 1 Peter. 2:5).

No rules are anywhere in Scripture laid down for the manner of prayer or the attitude to be assumed by the suppliant. There is mention made of kneeling in prayer (1 Kings 8:54; 2 Chronicles. 6:13; Ps. 95:6; Isaiah. 45:23; Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; 9:40; Ephesians. 3:14, etc.); of bowing and falling prostrate (Genesis 24:26, 52; Exodus 4:31; 12:27; Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:35, etc.); of spreading out the hands (1 Kings 8:22, 38, 54; Psalms 28:2; 63:4; 88:9; 1 Timothy. 2:8, etc.); and of standing (1 Samuel. 1:26; 1 Kings 8:14, 55; 2 Chronicles. 20:9; Mark 11:25; Luke 18:11, 13).

If we except the "Lord's Prayer" (Matthew. 6:9-13), which is, however, rather a model or pattern of prayer than a set prayer to be offered up, we have no special form of prayer for general use given us in Scripture.

Types of prayer

There are different kinds of prayer: secret (Matt. 6:6); social, as family prayers, and in social worship; and public, in the service of the sanctuary.

Intercessory prayer is commanded (Numbers. 6:23; Job 42:8; Isaiah. 62:6; Psalms. 122:6; 1 Timothy. 2:1; James 5:14).

Some examples of prayer in the Bible

- "Abraham's servant prayed to God, and God directed him to the person who should be wife to his master's son and heir (Genesis 24:10-20).
- "Jacob prayed to God, and God inclined the heart of his irritated brother, so that they met in peace and friendship (Genesis 32:24-30; 33:1-4).
- "Samson prayed to God, and God showed him a well where he quenched his burning thirst, and so lived to judge Israel (Judges. 15:18-20).
- "David prayed, and God defeated the counsel of Ahithophel (2 Sam. 15:31; 16:20-23; 17:14-23).
- "Daniel prayed, and God enabled him both to tell Nebuchadnezzar his dream and to give the interpretation of it (Dan. 2:16-23).
- "Nehemiah prayed, and God inclined the heart of the king of Persia to grant him leave of absence to visit and rebuild Jerusalem (Nehemiah. 1:11; 2:1-6).
- "Esther and Mordecai prayed, and God defeated the purpose of Haman, and saved the Jews from destruction (Esther 4:15-17; 6:7,8).

- "The believers in Jerusalem prayed, and God opened the prison doors and set Peter at liberty, when Herod had resolved upon his death (Acts 12:1-12).
- "Paul prayed that the thorn in the flesh might be removed, and his prayer brought a large increase of spiritual strength, while the thorn perhaps remained (2 Corinthians. 12:7-10).
- "Prayer is like the dove that Noah sent forth, which blessed him not only when it returned with an olive-leaf in its mouth, but when it never returned at all." (Robinson's Job)

Bowing

A way of showing respect

Abraham "bowed himself to the people of the land" (Gen. 23:7); so Jacob to Esau (Gen. 33:3); and the brethren of Joseph before him as the governor of the land (Gen. 43:28). Bowing is also frequently mentioned as an act of adoration to idols (Josh. 23:7; 2 Kings 5:18; Judges. 2:19; Isaiah. 44:15), and to God (Josh. 5:14; Ps. 22:29; 72:9; Micah 6:6; Ps. 95:6; Ephesians. 3:14).

Lord's Prayer

The name given to the only form of prayer Christ taught his disciples (Matthew 6:9-13)

The closing doxology of the prayer is omitted by Luke (11:2-4), also in the R.V. of Matthew 6:13. This prayer contains no allusion to the atonement of Christ, nor to the offices of the Holy Spirit. "All Christian prayer is based on the Lord's Prayer, but its spirit is also guided by that of His prayer in Gethsemane and of the prayer recorded John 17. The Lord's Prayer is the comprehensive type of the simplest and most universal prayer."

Spirit

Hebrew: ruah; Greek: pneuma, meaning wind or breath

In 2 Thessalonians. 2:8 it means "breath," and in Eccl. 8:8 the vital principle in man.

It also denotes the rational, immortal soul by which man is distinguished (Acts 7:59; 1 Corinthians. 5:5; 6:20; 7:34), and the soul in its separate state (Hebrews 12:23), and hence also an apparition (Job 4:15; Luke 24:37, 39), an angel (Hebrews 1:14), and a demon (Luke 4:36; 10:20).

This word is used also metaphorically as denoting a tendency (Zech. 12:10; Luke 13:11).

In Romans. 1:4, 1 Timothy. 3:16, 2 Corinthians. 3:17, 1 Peter. 3:18, it designates the divine nature.

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Also see:

- Angel
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Blasphemy against Holy Spirit
- Conversion
- Death
- Eternal death
- Familiar spirit
- Ghost
- Holy Ghost
- Holy Spirit
- Intercession of the Spirit
- Man
- Regeneration
- Resurrection of the dead
- Sanctification

- Spiritual gifts
- Trinity
- Witness of the Spirit
- How is the wind like the Holy Spirit?

General references to prayer

Prayer First Mentioned

Genesis 4:26

Universal Need of Prayer

Psalm 65:2; Isaiah 56:7; Luke 11:2

The Holy Spirit's Aids in our Prayers

Romans 8:26-27

Prayers of the Saints are Precious

Revelations 5:8

Prayer Ascends as Incense before God

Revelations 8:3

Prayer that is Commanded

1 Chronicles 16:11; Hosea 14:2; Matthew 7:7; 26:41; Luke 18:1; John 16:24; Ephesians 6:18; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 4:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; 1 Timothy 2:8; James 5:13

Prayer Answered

Examples:

Moses	Exodus 15:24-25
Gideon	Judges 6:39-40
Hannah	1 Samuel 1:27
Samuel	1 Samuel 7:9
Solomon	1 Kings 9:3
Elijah	1 Kings 18:37
Hezekiah	2 Kings 19: 19-20
Jehoshaphat	2 Chronicles 18:31
Ezra	Ezra 8:23
The Early Church	Acts 4:31

We have very many testimonies that it has been answered (Psalms 3:4; 4:1; 6:8; 18:6; 28:6; 30:2; 34:4; 118:5; James 5:16-18, etc.). Other examples:

- Abraham (Genesis. 17:18, 20; 18:23-32; 20:7, 17,18)
- Moses for...
- Pharaoh (Exodus. 8:12,13, 30,31; Exodus 9:33)
- the Israelites (Ex. 17:11,13; 32:11-14, 31-34; Num. 21:7,8; Deut. 9:18,19, 25)
- Miriam (Num. 12:13)
- Aaron (Deut. 9:20)
- Samuel (1 Sam. 7:5-12)
- Solomon (1 Kings 8; 2 Chronicles. 6)
- Elijah (1 Kings 17:20-23)
- Elisha (2 Kings 4:33-36)
- Isaiah (2 Kings 19)

- Jeremiah (42:2-10)
- Peter (Acts 9:40)
- The church (12:5-12)
- Paul (28:8)

Promise of Answer

Psalms 11:15; Isaiah 41:17; Isaiah 58:9; Isaiah 65:24; Zechariah 13:9; Luke 11:9; John 15:7

Prayers That Fail

Causes of failure in:

Disobedience	Deuteronomy 1:46; Isaiah 14:37; 28:6
Secret Sin	Psalms 66:18
Indifference	Proverbs 1:28
Neglect of mercy	Proverbs 21:13
Despising the law	Proverbs 28:9
Bloodguiltiness	Isaiah 1:15
Stubbornness	Zechariah 7:13
Instability	James 1:6-7
Self-indulgence	James 4:3

True Prayer Heard

Job 34:28; Psalm 4:3; 18:6; 34:17; Proverbs 15:29; Micah; Zechariah 10:6

