

PRAYER 091-093

Prayer 091

For a Christian, prayer is spiritual communication with God. Praying is the privilege, right and responsibility of every man, woman and child that calls Jesus their Lord and Savior. How did we receive such a wonderful gift?

Mark chapter 15. Jesus has been arrested and brought before Pilate. The crowd cried...

(Mark 15:14 NKJV) "Crucify Him."

(Mark 15:25 NKJV) "Now it was the third hour, and they crucified Him."

*(Mark 15:37-38 NKJV) "And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. {38} Then the **veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.**"*

The Veil of the Temple

Let us go back about 1500 years before the crucifixion. God had delivered the children of Israel from Egypt, and they were in the desert - headed for the Promised Land.

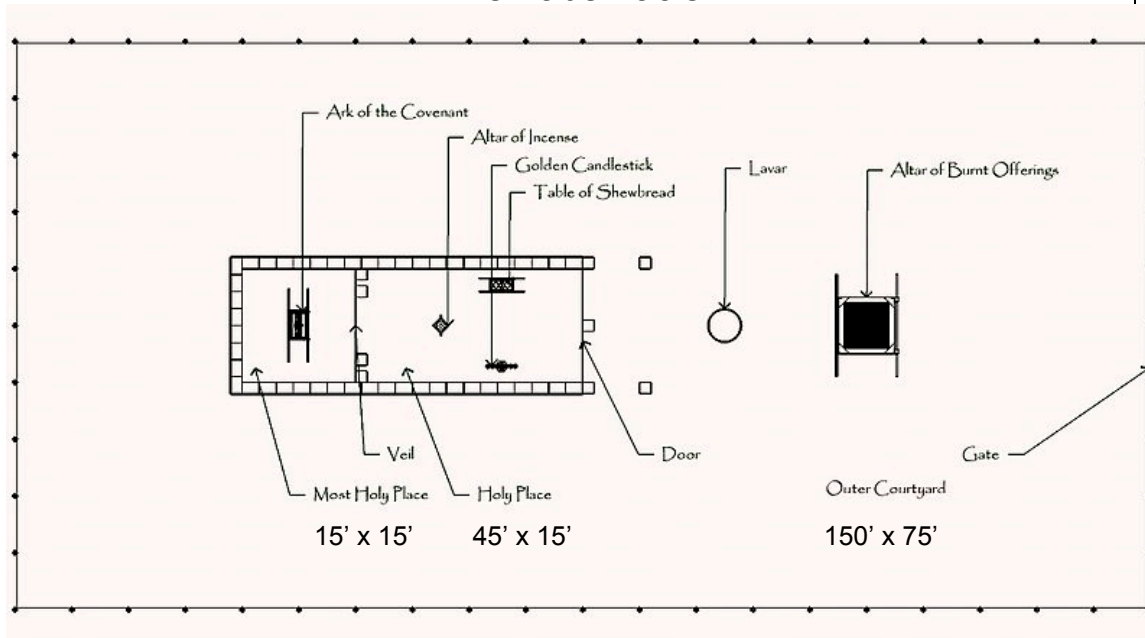
(Exodus 25:1-2; 8-10) God said to build Him a place to live. It would be a place where "a sinful people might come to meet their holy God." (Hayford - pg 17) He told Moses to build an ark with a mercy seat - where the presence of God would reside and from which God could speak to His people.

Where was the ark located?

*(Exodus 26:31-34 NIV) "Make a curtain of blue, purple and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen, with cherubim worked into it by a skilled craftsman. {32} Hang it with gold hooks on four posts of acacia wood overlaid with gold and standing on four silver bases. {33} Hang the curtain from the clasps and place the ark of the Testimony behind the curtain. **The curtain will separate the Holy Place from the Most Holy Place.** {34} Put the atonement cover on the ark of the Testimony in the Most Holy Place."*

The ark and the presence of God, were behind a curtain, an "inner veil." The veil was a divider between the "Holy Place" and the "Most Holy Place."

The Tabernacle



Kohen Gadol (Jewish High Priest)



(Illustrations from Wikipedia)

The high priest had special elaborate clothing he was to wear as he ministered to the Lord. (Exodus 28).

Please note: These were not worn inside the veil on the Day of Atonement. (Leviticus 16:2-4; 15-16, 29-31,34)

For the next 1500 years, there was a veil, a barrier between God and His people. For 1500 years, innumerable blood sacrifices were made to cover sins so that a Holy God would not have to kill His sinful people. In the year 33 A.D., there was still a veil separating the Most Holy Place in the temple. Caiaphas was now the high priest. And then one fateful day, a day that was set apart from the beginning of time, all of this was about to come to an end.

*(Mark 15:37-38 NKJV) "And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. {38} Then the **veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.**"*

The way to God was opened through the cross. Jesus shed His blood so we could be reconciled to God. Now all who believed in Jesus would have their sins imputed to Christ. By the shed blood of Jesus, God could take their sins and charge them to Christ. Humanity could now have a way to direct access to God. As a sign to all, the veil that separated the Most Holy Place in the temple, where the High Priest would meet with God once a year, was torn from top to bottom. There was no longer a barrier between God and His people.

The privilege of directly communicating with God was given to us because of the sacrificial death of Jesus. Prayer is one of the greatest privileges we have as Christians.

*(Hebrews 10:19-22 NKJV) "Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, {20} by a **new and living way** which He consecrated for us, through **the veil, that is, His flesh**, {21} and having a High Priest over the house of God, {22} let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water."*

Just as the veil was the way the high priest entered into the presence of God, the sacrificial death of Jesus now became the way to the presence of God - a bold new way that had never been available before.

(Hebrews 4:15-16 NIV) "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are--yet was without sin. {16} Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

(John 14:6 NKJV) "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."

Personal access to God now became available to all who believe. There are no barriers between you and God. Jesus calls to us to "come."

(Matthew 11:28 NKJV) ""Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

(John 7:37 NKJV) "On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink."

(James 4:8 NIV) "Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded."

You do not need someone else to approach God on your behalf. You can go before God yourself, in the name of our High Priest Jesus.

(John 14:13-14 NKJV) ""And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. {14} "If you ask anything in My name, I will do it."

Jesus paid the ultimate price so that we can pray and directly communicate with our Heavenly Father. Prayer is the way we communicate with God. It is the way we become intimate with Him and share our hearts, hopes and dreams. Your prayer life is a reflection of your relationship with God. How close are you to the Lord? How much closer can you get?

Please go to the following page for Prayer 092.

Prayer 092

In our times of prayer, our communication with God takes many forms. We express our love to Him. We worship and praise Him. We thank Him. We listen to Him. We receive revelation, wisdom and understanding. We confess our sins, and repent before God. We also make requests of Him. At times, we simply sit in his presence and commune with Him.

Three Branches of Prayer

Prayer can be divided into three “branches.”¹

1. Prayers of humility (confession of sin and repentance)
2. Prayers of adoration (worship, praise, and declarations of who God is)
3. Prayers of supplication (requests presented to God)

Prayers of Supplication

The subject of this lesson is prayers of supplication. These are prayers in which we make a request of God. Let us consider four kinds of prayer requests.

1. Prayer requests concerning what is happening to me. We could call these “daily bread” needs.

(Matthew 6:11 NKJV) “Give us this day our daily bread.”

These are the things that sustain our natural and physical needs. Healing, finances, relationships, safety, favor on the job, etc.

Let us look at an example from the Apostle Paul. It is interesting that this is the only example we can find in which Paul actually stated that he had prayed for himself for a personal need.

(2 Corinthians 12:8 NLT) “Three different times I begged the Lord to take it away.”

King Hezekiah prayed for healing for himself.

(2 Kings 20:2 NKJV) “Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, ...’Thus says the LORD, the God of David your father: “I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears; surely I will heal you.”

¹ Gleanings from Paul, The Prayers of the Apostle, Arthur W. Pink, Moody Press 1967, page 11

2. Prayer for what is happening in me.

These are prayers for spiritual growth, heart issues (unforgiveness, bitterness, anger), demonic issues, confession of sin, and repentance.

(Luke 11:4 NKJV) "...And forgive us our sins"

King David understood the need to pray and ask God to do a work in him.

(Psalms 51:1-2 NKJV) "Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. {2} Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin."

(Psalms 51:10-11 NKJV) "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. {11} Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."

Solomon asked God for an understanding heart.

(1 Kings 3:9 NKJV) "Therefore give to Your servant an understanding heart to judge Your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of Yours?"

3. Prayer for what is happening to others.

This is intercession for the things that sustain other people's natural and physical needs. Again, healing, finances, relationships, safety, favor on the job, to have children, etc.

Paul prays this prayer of comfort for the people of the Corinthian church.

(2 Corinthians 1:2-4 NLT) "May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you his grace and peace. {3} All praise to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the source of every mercy and the God who comforts us. {4} He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When others are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us."

We look to King Hezekiah again as he prayed for God save his people from being attacked.

(2 Kings 19:15, 16, 19 NLT) "And Hezekiah prayed this prayer before the LORD: "O LORD, God of Israel, you are enthroned between the mighty cherubim! You alone are God of all the kingdoms of the earth. You alone created the heavens and the earth. {16} Listen to me, O LORD, and hear! Open your eyes, O LORD, and see! Listen to Sennacherib's words of defiance against the living God... {19} Now, O

LORD our God, rescue us from his power; then all the kingdoms of the earth will know that you alone, O LORD, are God.”

Consider the prayers of Elisha when he prayed that God would resurrect the Shunammite woman’s son.

(2 Kings 4:33-34 NKJV) “He went in therefore, shut the door behind the two of them, and prayed to the LORD. {34} And he went up and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands; and he stretched himself out on the child, and the flesh of the child became warm.”

Think about all the prayers Moses lifted up to God on behalf of the children of Israel.

(Psalms 106:21-23 NLT) “They forgot God, their savior, who had done such great things in Egypt-- {22} such wonderful things in that land, such awesome deeds at the Red Sea. {23} So he declared he would destroy them. But Moses, his chosen one, stepped between the LORD and the people. He begged him to turn from his anger and not destroy them.”

4. Prayer for what is happening in others; Intercession for the spiritual needs of others

It is very interesting that almost all of Paul’s prayers are concerned with what was happening in other people. The prayers are about their spiritual growth, their hearts, and their minds.

(Romans 15:13 NIV) “May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

(Philippians 1:9-11 NIV) “And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, {10} so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, {11} filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ--to the glory and praise of God.”

(Colossians 1:9 NIV) “For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you and asking God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding.”

(1 Thessalonians 3:12-13 NIV) “May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you. {13} May he strengthen your hearts so that you will be

blameless and holy in the presence of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus comes with all his holy ones.”

(2 Thessalonians 1:11 NIV) “With this in mind, we constantly pray for you, that our God may count you worthy of his calling, and that by his power he may fulfill every good purpose of yours and every act prompted by your faith.”

(2 Thessalonians 3:5 NIV) “May the Lord direct your hearts into God's love and Christ's perseverance.”

(Philemon 1:4-6 NIV) “I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, {5} because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. {6} I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ.”

Prayers of the Apostle Paul.

These Scriptures were the subject of Arthur Pink's book -
“Gleanings from Paul”. Footnoted on page 1.

(Romans 1:8-12) (Romans 15:5-7) (Romans 15:13) (Romans 15:33)
(Romans 16:25-27) (1 Corinthians 1:4-7) (2 Corinthians 1:3-5) (2
Corinthians 12:7-10) (2 Corinthians 13:14) (Ephesians 1:3) (Ephesians
1:15-23) (Ephesians 3:14-21) (Philippians 1:8-11) (Colossians 1:9-12)
(1 Thessalonians 3:11-13) (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24) (2 Thessalonians
1:11-12)
(2 Thessalonians 2:16-17) (2 Thessalonians 3:5) (1 Timothy 1:17)
(1 Timothy 6:15-16) (Philemon 1:4-6)

Please go to the following page for Prayer 093

Prayer 093

Prayer and Faith

We have looked at four kinds of prayer: what is happening in us, to us, in others and to others.

All these types of prayer require one thing. That one thing is faith. Faith not only that the answer will come, but more importantly, faith in the One we are praying to.

(Hebrews 11:6 NKJV) "But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."

We must have faith that:

1. God "is"
2. That He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him, a rewarder not just temporally, but eternally

Faith requires patience. Luke 18:1-8.

(Luke 18:1 NKJV) "Then He spoke a parable to them, that men always ought to pray and not lose heart... {8}...Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He really find faith on the earth?"

This parable reminds us that God is faithful. The question posed at the end of this parable asks, but when He comes with the ultimate answer, will we still be standing strong in faith? Regardless of how long it takes, will we stand?

*(Ephesians 6:1, 13-18 NKJV) "Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil... {13} Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. {14} **Stand** therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, {15} and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; {16} above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. {17} And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; {18} praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints;"*

Prayer is based on faith - faith in "who" God is, faith in His willingness to answer and faith in His ability to answer. Otherwise why pray? Ultimately, the outcome or answer to your prayers is not the final issue. Your unwavering faith in God is the final issue.

Let us look at Job.

(Job 13:15 NKJV) "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him."

(Job 37:23 NKJV) "As for the Almighty, we cannot find Him; He is excellent in power, In judgment and abundant justice; He does not oppress."

Here is Job's "aha" moment. The moment when he finally understands who he is and who God is.

(Job 42:1-2 NKJV) "Then Job answered the LORD and said: {2} "I know that You can do everything, And that no purpose of Yours can be withheld from You."

Jesus begins His instructions on prayer with faith statement.

(Mark 11:22-24 NKJV) "So Jesus answered and said to them, "Have faith in God. {23} "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. {24} "Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them."

"Have faith in God."

Prayer is the way we express and exercise our faith. Prayer goes far beyond receiving the answers, it goes deep to the heart of what we believe and Who we believe in.

"Without faith it is impossible to please God."

Paul's prayer for the Thessalonians is our prayer for you.

(1 Thessalonians 5:23-24 NIV) "May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. {24} The one who calls you is faithful and he will do it."