

# *The Prayer Life of the Believer Priest*

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## Preface

For many sincere believers prayer is a drudgery. Why? Perhaps it is because they look upon prayer as a responsibility rather than a privilege. Grace believers have a privilege to approach God at any time based on the finished work of Christ.

One reason the privilege aspect of prayer is not emphasized is because of the devaluation of dispensational teaching in our day. Most believers have no understanding of the biblical doctrine of dispensationalism because it has been grossly misrepresented by friend and foe alike. But it is precisely the difference between the dispensation of law by Moses versus the dispensation of grace by Paul that makes prayer a privilege rather than a responsibility.

The primary dispensational element that will come into consideration today will be the priesthood of the believer. Under the law, Israel had a priesthood. That priesthood was charged with the responsibility of representing Israelites in their relationship with God as mediators. That mediation took several forms, one of which was prayer. Today under grace that priesthood has ended and a new priesthood of the believer has taken its place. As a believer-priest the Christian represents himself before God without the need for the intervention of a separate priesthood.

Another reason that believers find prayer a drudgery is that many are confused as to what prayer actually is. Again, we must ask the question, Why? Several answers come to mind.

Most of us learned “to pray” by listening to others. In other words, we have relied on what others believed prayer to be (or not to be). Very few believers have attempted to study prayer in Scripture.

In fact, the study of prayer from a Scriptural standpoint is rare, even among biblical scholars. Most books on the subject are highly devotional and deal little with applying the interpretive process to passages where prayer is mentioned. Rather than study the subject before applying the material, they assume that everyone knows the doctrine (including themselves, it seems) and jump merrily into misrepresenting Scripture.

In these lessons we will take a fresh biblical look at the subject of prayer in the New Testament, and in doing so we will challenge many preconceptions and assumptions that are currently being propagated by well-meaning believers and Bible teachers. These assumptions are being propagated not so much by false teaching but by lack of biblical understanding and *traditional practice*. We shall attempt, using normal interpretive procedures, to determine what prayer is and how it relates to the other New Testament words for communication with God.

There is a danger to taking such a technical and distinctive approach. The believer may feel obligated during his time with the Lord to try to distinguish between his various forms of communication. This is neither necessary nor desirable. The believer will eventually recognize these elements without effort, but if he becomes “bogged down” trying to “do it right” his time speaking with the Lord may indeed become drudgery.

The key to the grace Christian life, including prayer, supplication, etc. is to “relax and enjoy it.” The purpose for this study is to bring knowledge so that the Christian will know what he is doing when he communicates with God. It is not to try to fix his communication error. So! Relax and enjoy the grace that God has provided through the priesthood of the believer.

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## *Introduction*<sup>1</sup>

### The Importance of the Study

“I’ll pray for you” or “We’ll pray on behalf of that need,” or “I’ll pray that the Lord will meet that need” are common statements of commitment used by grace believers concerning their communication with God. It is easy to make a commitment to communicate for people and their needs. Too often such commitment itself is not kept. Why?

The answer is undoubtedly multifaceted. Certainly no lack of sincerity attaches itself to such promises. Perhaps one reason, then, is the lack of understanding of what the commitment really means. Modern day confusion over the meaning of “prayer” as the term is used biblically may go quite a way in weakening the believer’s fulfillment of such commitments.

“Prayer” has become a contemporary catchall for any and every communication with God that a believer makes. It does make *some* sense to use the term “prayer” in that way because the word itself is found more often than any other term for communication with God in the Bible. For this reason, and perhaps because English Bible versions regularly translate more than one Greek word by the term “prayer,” modern Christians are confused as to exactly what commitment they are making when they say “I will pray for you.”

Unfortunately, the whole concept of prayer (*proseuche*) is ruined by making *proseuche* (the noun) and *proseuchomai* (the verb) general terms for any and all communication with God.

*Proseuche* is the Greek word which describes *worship communication* in which the believer gives God His full weight repeating back to God that which He has said about Himself while not being prompted by a divinely provided benefit (as is true with “thanksgiving” and “praise,” both of which are responses to benefit). Until worship is correctly related to the concept of priesthood and divorced from the traditional view as being a period of time (as in “worship service”) will the believer begin to see the true value and ultimate requirement of unceasing prayer.

### The Oversimplification of the Biblical Doctrine of Communication with God

Twentieth century Christian teaching, writing, and preaching attempts to simplify itself as an appeal to the lowest common denominator. “Extraneous details” are eliminated to make it possible for the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade television mentality to grasp the rudiments of the Bible.<sup>2</sup> Too many biblical terms seem to complicate, while fewer simplify. Biblical terminology has been adapted and changed to the point that the distinctives that are inherent in Scripture itself have been eliminated. Confusion results. Oversimplification has deprived many Christians of the blessing of knowing how to communicate with God effectively and what to expect in return.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This “Introduction” is adapted from *Prayer, Confronting Problems with Proseuchomai and Proseuche being Worship Communication with God* by David K. Spurbeck, Sr. and amended by Dr. Garland H. Shinn.

<sup>2</sup> Let’s face it. We live in a pre-packaged, distilled, instantaneous gratification world. Modern Christians flock to the lively and exciting, while the serious study of the Word of God is left to the “experts.” The results of this “convenience Christianity” is a spiritual weakness that infuses the modern church. While it may be offensive to some, the fact is that many modern Christians are sliding through life unaware of their Christian responsibilities. And modern leadership seems either unable or unwilling to reverse the trend. The great sign of this weakness is the oversimplification of the Word of God, specifically, the making of things that are similar to be identical.

<sup>3</sup> As an example consider the doctrine of thanksgiving. Many Christians limit their thanksgiving to a prayer before meals, and that has become a mere litany given to meet what one considers his “spiritual obligations.” It is almost as if we believe God will withhold benefits from us if we do not pray our little pre-meal repetitious liturgy. Often the negative circumstances of life are not considered worthy of thanksgiving, though we are biblically bound to give thanks for them as well.

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### The Organization of the New Testament Doctrine of Communication with God

Some will admit that there are two, three, four and even five words which describe communication with God. In reality there are eight distinct root terms in the Greek New Testament which describe the grace believer's communication with God. *Proseuche* is 1/8 of these terms. That is to say, "prayer" is only 1/8 of the believer's communication potential with God. The eight types of communication are asking, intercession, supplication, thanksgiving, praise, worship (prayer), confession and vow.

### The Opposition to the New Testament Distinctions

There is always some resistance to being bound to Scripture and its details. A reluctance to accept the natural, logical distinctions of Scripture is normal because of the carnal or natural blindness upon so much of Christendom. If the believer accepts the distinctions he is castigated for being too specific.

It is, after all, more difficult to remember eight words and their meanings than one or two.<sup>4</sup> However, the question is whether the believer really knows and understands what God says about the subject rather than how easy is it to distill the material for mass consumption. Only an understanding of the distinctions presented in Scripture concerning this important doctrine make that knowledge and understanding possible. And without such knowledge and understanding correct application of Scripture cannot take place.

It is important to recognize that *proseuche* and *proseuchomai* are used in the same passages as other terms for communication with God. In these passages never are these terms confused or muddled. Never does the grammar of these passages allow for the idea that any of these terms are parts of a general term "prayer," but only that they are distinct activities.

Great blessings<sup>5</sup> coupled with confidence flow from a distinctive understanding of the doctrine of communication with God. Commitments to "I'll pray for you" expand include to "I'll intercede for you," or "I'll supplicate for you."

The author's desire for the students of this work is that their communication with God be enhanced and expanded. Boldness in one's approach to the Father will be the ultimate result of a carefully considered study of this doctrine.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 2 above. When someone consistently makes distinctions between things that are similar he is often accused of "nit-picking" or "hair splitting." Such short-sightedness, however, does not relieve the individual believer from applying the normal principles of interpretation to the doctrine of communication with God.

<sup>5</sup> Often the term "blessing" is a mystical term for modern Christians. It is associated with some kind of inner piety or "closeness to God." However, the biblical term actually means to be happy or contented, which is not a mystical idea at all. Happiness is a feeling of well-being associated with understanding. Perhaps one of the reasons individuals are reluctant to study the doctrine of communication with God is because of the unwarranted mysticism associated with prayer. It is deemed "too holy" to study in such an "academic way." The author has several books on prayer in his library. Not one author actually studies the meaning of the passages where the terms generally associated with the prayer life are used. Meanings of words are assumed from modern usage rather than studied using normal interpretive principles. If a writer were to use such an approach in "more important areas" such as justification or regeneration, he would be vilified as a crackpot. But in the area of prayer, such an approach is dignified by claims of great spirituality or spiritual insight. It is the position of the author that the doctrine of communication with God is too important to leave to such ramblings. When the New Testament authors used the terms found in Scripture they had definite and specific meanings in mind. It is the responsibility of the modern Bible student to determine these meanings so that a full understanding of this marvelous doctrine can be ascertained.

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## *Chapter One*

### What is a Priest?

#### What a Priest Does

- He Acts Minister in a Temple (Sanctuary)
  - **Hebrews 10:11** And every priest stands ministering daily and offering repeatedly the same sacrifices. . . .<sup>6</sup>
  - **Hebrews 9:1-6** Then indeed, even the first covenant had ordinances of divine service and the earthly sanctuary. For a tabernacle was prepared: the first part, in which was the lampstand, the table, and the showbread, which is called the sanctuary; and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant; and above it were the cherubim of glory overshadowing the mercy seat. Of these things we cannot now speak in detail. Now when these things had been thus prepared, the priests always went into the first part of the tabernacle, performing the services.
- He Sacrifices for Himself and for Others
  - **Hebrews 7:27** who (the Lord Jesus Christ) does not need daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins and then for the people's, for this He did once for all when He offered up Himself.

As will be seen, the communication of a Priest from man to God carries with it the concept of entering into the presence of God on behalf of the priest himself and the one who the priest represents. The idea of entering into God's presence is a very important idea in the Bible from Mosaic times until now. *Only priests can enter into the presence of God, and then, based solely on an adequate sacrifice to pave the way.* This sacrifice is not primarily *soteriological*, that is, having to do with salvation, but is *kathetological*, that is, having to do with cleansing the individual in order to allow him into the presence a perfectly holy God who is separated from all kinds of uncleanness.

#### What a Priest Does and Does not Do

- A Priest Does not Act as A Prophet
  - A prophet communicates newly revealed truth that God wants men to know. The direction of the communication is from God to Man. A priest communicates in the opposite direction, from man to God.
- A Priest Does not Act as A Pastor
  - A pastor/teacher communicates already revealed truth to believers. The direction of the communication is from God to prophet or apostle (man) to pastor/teacher (man), that is, from God to man to man.
- A Priest Does Act as a Mediator
  - A priest communicates from or on behalf of man to God. The direction of the communication is from man to God.

<sup>6</sup> All Bible quotations are from *The Holy Bible, New King James Version*, (Nashville, Tennessee: Thomas Nelson, Inc.) 1982.

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## *Chapter Two*

### Who are Priests Today?

#### Under the Old Testament Law, Priesthood was Limited to One Family

- The priesthood was limited by law of Moses to the Levites, that is, members of the family of Levi, the son of Jacob. According to Deuteronomy, all the Levitical families had a right to the priesthood since they did not receive an inheritance of land like the other tribes (Deuteronomy 10:8-9). Furthermore, Aaron and his sons *exclusively* received the anointing oil and were attired in special clothing of the priesthood (Exodus 28-29). The families of Eli at the temple of Shiloh (1 Samuel 14:3), Zadok in Jerusalem (Ezekiel 40:46), and Amaziah at Bethel (Amos 7:10-17) were not specified as Aaronides but were of Levitical descent.
- **Numbers 3:10** “So you shall appoint Aaron and his sons, and they shall attend to their priesthood; but the outsider who comes near (to the tabernacle/temple) shall be put to death.” An outsider was anyone not an Israelite.

#### Under the Household of Grace, ALL Believers are Priests

- ❑ Christians Have A Distinct Temple
  - **1 Corinthians 3:16,17** Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.
- ❑ Christians Are Called a Royal Priesthood
  - **1 Peter 2:9** But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. . . SA 1 Peter 2:5.
  - It is significant that Peter is addressing Christian Jews. They knew they were not a priesthood, and that only members of the family of Aaron could be. The priesthood in the Mosaic law was not royal, which distinction belonged to the tribe of Judah, the house of David. Therefore, this priesthood applied to Peter’s readers, not as Israelites, but as Christians, who, along with their ethnic Gentile brothers, constituted a new kind of priesthood, one made up not solely of males of one genetic line, but of all believers.

#### Because of the Cross of Christ, Communication with God has changed.

- ❑ Before the ascension of Christ there was no heavenly high priest.
  - **Hebrews 4:14-16** Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are*, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
  - **Hebrews 10:19-21** Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh,<sup>21</sup> and *having* a High Priest over the house of God. . . .
  - **Matthew 27:51** Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split . . . SA Mark 15:38 & Luke 23:45.

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- The distinctive word for “temple” here is not *heiron* (ἱερόν) which refers to the temple with all its buildings and porches, but *naos* (ναός), referring to the inner sanctuary, consisting of the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. The veil or curtain which separated these two rooms from one another, is referred to here. It was torn in two by the unseen hand of God, to show that the way into the earthly Holy of Holies was no more. The Sufferer who had just died on the Cross, had fulfilled all of the Levitical sacrifices and had abrogated them.<sup>7</sup>
- Before the ascension of Christ only Israel had a priesthood, but after the ascension all believers constitute a priesthood.
  - **1 Peter 2:9** But you *are* a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. . .
  - **Revelation 1:6** and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
  - **Revelation 5:10** And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”
- Before the ascension of Christ believers were not indwelt permanently by the Holy Spirit.
  - **John 7:37-39** 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. “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.” But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.
  - **John 14:16-17** “And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—“the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He *dwells with* you and *will be in* you.
  - **John 16:7** “Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you.
- Before the ascension of Christ, the Holy Spirit did not substitute His intercession for our prayers of ignorance.
  - **Romans 8:26-28** Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*. And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His purpose*.
- Because of the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a new and living way inaugurated for us to enter into the presence of God.

<sup>7</sup> Wuest, Kenneth S., *Wuest's Word Studies in the Greek New Testament*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company) 1997.

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- **Hebrews 10:19-22** Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is, His flesh, and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, 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.

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## *Chapter Three*

### What is Prayer?

Prayer is not precisely the same as other forms of communication with God.

□ Observations from 1 Timothy 2:1-2

- **1 Timothy 2:1-2** Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.
- All the terms in 1 Timothy 2:1 have the same grammatical weight. (Grammatically, these terms make up a compound subject of an infinitive clause.)
- Therefore, there are both similarities and differences that must be observed in dealing with each communication word.
- In what way are the word's similar? Each word can be "made for all men . . . etc." That is to say, these four words contribute to the priestly idea of mediation. The word translated "for" is *huper* and may be translated "on behalf of." Of the eight words for communication with God found in the New Testament, these four, plus the word "praise" are most closely linked to the idea of priestly mediation.
- In what way are the words different? (1) Since four different words are used, four different meanings are to be identified. (2) Since the words share the same grammatical weight, one action, such as prayer, is not to be taken as the identical to the functions expressed in other words. That is, supplication, intercessions, and thanksgivings are not the same act as prayer, either as to their meaning or function. (3) Since the word order is linear, no word or words can be subordinated to or be the cause of other words. That is, supplication, intercession, and thanksgiving cannot be "kinds of prayer."

As we shall see, eight different aspects of communication with God are revealed in the New Testament.

- Prayer is the form of communication with the Father that is primarily worship. It is the most basic and most general word for communication with God. (See below for a fuller discussion of the Greek word *proseuchomai*.)

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## *Chapter Four*

How is Christian Communication to God Different than Christ's Communication to God?

Christ's communications to the Father are not the same as ours, and He cannot be used as an example of communication for the Christian.

- Christ was always heard.
  - **John 11:41-42** Then they took away the stone *from the place* where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up *His* eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me.<sup>42</sup> "And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said *this*, that they may believe that You sent Me."
- Christ is God-man.
  - **John 1:1** In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
  - **John 1:14** And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.
- Christ always pleased the Father.
  - **John 8:29** "And He who sent Me is with Me. The Father has not left Me alone, for I always do those things that please Him."
- Christ was always "in the will of God."
  - **John 5:19** Then Jesus answered and said to them, "Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.
  - **John 4:32-34** But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?" Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.
- Christ asked in a way that is not possible for us to ask.
  - **John 16:23** "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you.
  - **John 16:26** "In that day you will ask in My name, and I do not say to you that I shall pray the Father for you. . .
  - **1 John 5:16** If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does not lead* to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death. There is sin *leading* to death. I do not say that he should pray about that.
  - **John 14:16** "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—
  - **John 17:9** "I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom You have given Me, for they are Yours.

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## *Chapter Five*

What do the Four Words found in 1 Timothy 2:1 Mean?<sup>8</sup>

### Prayer (proseuchomai)

Prayer is the form of communication with the Father that is primarily worship. It is the most basic and most general word for communication with God, and other forms of communication may interrupt or be included in the time of prayer without changing the character of either.

Since worship is the primary emphasis of prayer, praying should not be looked up as an attempt to change God's mind or to get God to do something for the believer. The spiritual Christian will recognize God's sovereignty and will ultimately desire to change his attitudes concerning daily circumstances to conform to God's attitude. Prayer leaves all circumstances to God, and does not attempt to interfere with His sovereign will.

#### □ The Fact of Prayer

- **Acts 9:11** So the Lord *said* to him, "Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. See also Acts 9:40; 10:9; and 16:25.
- **Acts 12:12** So, when he had considered *this*, he came to the house of Mary, the mother of John whose surname was Mark, where many were gathered together praying.

#### □ The Method of Prayer

- **Romans 8:26** Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.
- **Romans 12:12** . . . rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer;
- **Ephesians 6:18** praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—
- **Colossians 4:2** Continue earnestly in prayer, being vigilant in it with thanksgiving;
- **1 Thessalonians 5:17** . . . pray without ceasing . . . .
- **Jude 20** But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit,

#### □ The Content of Prayer

Prayer for others, unlike other forms of communication with God, is not necessarily specifically driven by need, either spiritual or physical. That is, the needs that produce prayer for others seem always to be general spiritual needs. Paul desired prayer for an opportunity to minister, and prayed for others for spiritual wisdom. This is distinguished from Old Testament prayer which seems to be more for physical benefit (James 5:17-18, where Elijah prayed for rain).

- **Colossians 4:3** . . . meanwhile praying also for us, that God would open to us a door for the word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which I am also in chains . . . .
- **Romans 15:30** Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me . . . .

<sup>8</sup> The following definitions were adapted from class notes by Dr. H. Laverne Schafer.

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- **Ephesians 1:16-20** do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what *is* the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*. . . .
- **Philippians 1:9** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment . . . .
- **Philippians 4:6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God . . . . (Note the three words of communication with God in this statement that are clearly distinguished.)
- **2 Thessalonians 1:11** Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of *this* calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of *His* goodness and the work of faith with power,

### □ The Objects of Prayer

#### Other Christians

- **1 Thessalonians 5:25** Brethren, pray for us.
- **Philemon 4** I thank my God, making mention of you always in my prayers,

#### All kinds of men, specifically those in authority

- **1 Timothy 2:1-2** Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence.

1 Timothy 2:1-2 clearly distinguishes between several acts of communication with God. All are ultimately to be entered into in this passage for the ultimate purpose that believers may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. Each of the words in this statement, the four words for communication with God, as well as the words for the lifestyle of the believer, must be studied carefully and diligently. These communication words have been so often confused with prayer that many believers simply choose to ignore what Paul is saying here, and remain comfortably in ignorance. But many have come to understand the richness of the communication life of the Christian as presented in Scripture. While this study will present the material from primarily an academic perspective, that is only the starting place. Once the believer understands the great variety of communication with God available to the individual, his communication life will become fuller, more satisfying, and reliant less on false doctrine and more on God's revelation.

### Supplication (Deomai, Deasis)

Supplication is the form of communication to the Father for oneself, or for others, in which the need, object or solution may not be known. This form of communication carries with it the idea of a cry or pleading for *help*. It emphasizes the need for the asking, rather than the fact or method. Contrast with *aiteo* and *erotao*.

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- Fear and solemnity is often associated with need for supplication.
  - **Luke 1:13** But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zacharias, for your prayer (actually δέησις, *supplication*) is heard; and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John.
  - **Luke 5:33** Then they said to Him, “Why do the disciples of John fast often and make prayers (δέησις, *supplication*), and likewise those of the Pharisees, but Yours eat and drink?”
  - **Acts 1:14** These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.
  - **Romans 10:1** Brethren, my heart’s desire and prayer (δέησις, *supplication*) to God for Israel is that they may be saved.
  - **Philippians 4:6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God
  - **Hebrews 5:7** who, in the days of His flesh, when He had offered up prayers and supplications, with vehement cries and tears to Him who was able to save Him from death, and was heard because of His godly fear,
- Righteousness is often associated with supplication
  - **James 5:16** Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray (*euuche*, actually meaning “take a vow”) for (*huper*, on behalf of) one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer (lit. δέησις, *supplication*) of a righteous man avails much.
  - **1 Peter 3:12** For the eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, And His ears *are open* to their prayers (lit. δέησις, *supplication*); But the face of the LORD *is* against those who do evil.”
- Other words for communication with God are often associated with supplication.
  - **2 Corinthians 1:11** you also helping together in prayer (lit. δέησις, *supplication*) for (*huper*) us, that thanks may be given by many persons on our behalf (*huper*) for the gift *granted* to us through many.
  - **Philippians 1:4** always in every prayer of mine making request (δέησις, *supplication*) for you all with joy,
  - **1 Timothy 2:1** Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, *and* giving of thanks be made for all men,
  - **1 Timothy 5:5** Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers (*proseuche*) night and day.
  - **2 Timothy 1:3** I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers (lit. δέησις, *supplication*) night and day,

### Intercession (enteuxis)

Intercession is the privilege of the New Testament priest to plead in the presence of the Father for known persons, or for known needs of known persons. In the papyri, *enteuxis* is the regular word for a petition to a superior.

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### □ Human Intercession

- **1 Timothy 2:1** Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men,
- **1 Timothy 4:4-5** For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer (lit. *intercession*).
- **Romans 11:2** God has not cast away His people whom He foreknew. Or do you not know what the Scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads (lit. *intercedes*) with God against Israel, saying,

### □ Divine Intercession

#### The Holy Spirit

- **Romans 8:26, 27** Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession (*huperentugxano*) for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit *is*, because He makes intercession for the saints according to *the will of God*.

#### God, the Son

- **Romans 8:34** Who *is* he who condemns? *It is* Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us.
- **Hebrews 7:25** Therefore He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them.

### Thanksgiving (eucharistia)

Thanksgiving is the communication with God in which gratitude for past, present, and future benefits is expressed.

- **Ephesians 5:4** . . . neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.
- **Philippians 4:6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God . . . .
- **Colossians 2:7** . . . rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving.
- **1 Timothy 4:3-4** . . . forbidding to marry, and *commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. <sup>4</sup> For every creature of God *is* good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving . . . .
- **Romans 1:8** First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.
- **Ephesians 5:20** . . . giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

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- **1 Thessalonians 5:18** in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

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## *Chapter Six*

### What do the Other Words for Communication with God Mean?

#### Asking (*aiteo*)

Since many believers make little or no distinction between praying and asking, and since they confuse the two so consistently, it becomes difficult for individuals to realize that they have been misusing the word “prayer,” perhaps for many years. Even when one does recognize that he has been doing so, it does not mean that the truth which he accepts intellectually becomes part of his emotional reactions to God. Any emotion which is not based on fact tends to be dangerous. So before discussing what asking is, one must simply say that asking is *not* praying.

One of the major confusions between asking and praying is found in the common ritualistic ending, “in Jesus name,” with which many believers end their “prayers.” In fact, no place in the New Testament teaches that a believer should end his “prayer” time with any formula. Rather, the idea of praying in Christ’s name as a formulaic approach is directly out of the false teachings of the so-called “church” going back before the middle ages.

Asking is the form of communication in which a known object of *spiritual benefit* (never physical) is requested from the Father in the same way that the Son would ask for it. “Asking” emphasizes the fact and method of asking, rather than the need for asking. Contrast with *deomai* (*deesis*) and *erotao*.

The word “ask” as it is used in communicating with the Father is different than normal asking between humans. The nature of asking was changed by the Lord Jesus Christ in the upper room discourse. No longer is the basis of asking the agreement of individuals, but it is now based on an understanding and application of the reputation of the Son.

The application of this asking is found in understanding the nature of the abiding life, specifically with reference to keeping Christ’s commandments (the upper room discourse commandments, not the 10 commandments of Moses).

- **John 14:13-14** “And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. “If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.”

The false idea of praying in Christ’s name is taken from the statements of Christ in John 14-16. I have included those statements here. There are other places where the word “ask” is used in the New Testament, and the diligent student would be wise to study each, especially those in 1 John given below. As with all doctrines of Scripture, correct contextual decisions must be made in studying the various places where an idea is presented. The conclusions presented here are the results of my personal study, and I encourage each Christian to undertake his or her own study of these passages. And please review the principles of interpretation which I have presented in other places to make sure that you are prepared for such a study.

The phrase “you ask” refers directly to the disciples asking at that time. He makes it clear later in this discourse that after His ascension they would no longer ask in His name. There is a difference of opinion among students of the word as to whether these two verses can rightly be applied to believers in general. It is probably best to limit its application to the original historical situation at the time of Christ’s teaching His disciples.

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As noted, asking “in My name” is not the same thing as praying in Christ’s name. Again as noted, there is no statement that one should pray in Christ’s name in the New Testament, and that idea is taken from a misunderstanding of this and related passages.

The phrase “in My name” refers to the *reputation of Christ*. We still use the word “name” that way today when we say such things as “our good name among our friends is important.” We do not mean our actual designation, either our first or last names, but the reputation that is associated with that name. So when one is asking “in My name” he is asking based on who Christ is, His reputation, His character. The disciples would have understood that at the time, but fallen man often desires ritual over understanding.

The phrase “if you ask anything” does not mean that they could ask for their heart’s desire, no matter what it is. The word “anything” actually is more precise than that, and in the original culture carried the idea of a certain identifiable thing. In many places the word is actually translated “a certain thing,” as it very likely should be translated here. Make no mistake. This is not a general idea that Christians can present any desire they wish to God and He will do it. In fact, in the subsequent statements, one can see that there are several limitations and restrictions placed on asking for us today.

- **John 15:7, 8** If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Historically, it is a very difficult passage. Is Christ speaking to the disciples as representative believers, including us today? Perhaps. He seems to be thinking ahead in the passage to His ascension, and, if so, the application of the passage is broadened beyond the previous statement that we studied.

However, these verses place a very strong limitation on *asking* even if the application is to post-ascension believers. There are actually two conditions that must be met before a person can expect that Christ will perform the thing asked.

First, the believer must “abide in Me.” In this presentation there is not room to do a thorough discussion of the concept of abiding. However, it is clear that one must learn what abiding is and be practicing abiding before one can expect a positive “answer” to his asking. A simple statement of abiding will have to suffice at this point.

Abiding<sup>9</sup> is the act of the believer whereby he expresses the character of the Trinitarian God in his daily life. The doctrine implies a certain level of spiritual maturity, including the application of daily living grace to overcome his enemies. Beyond that, it implies that the Christian will understand the biblical revelation concerning the character and nature of God, a doctrine that is often ignored in popular preaching. It is, after all, not particularly exciting, and is thought often to be impractical.

Nevertheless, if one is not abiding in Christ (and if one confuses abiding with other elements of Christian living, he will not be able to abide) one cannot expect what he asks for to be performed by Christ.

The second condition is that “My words abide in you,” a most unusual statement. “My words” cannot be limited to what Christ said during the gospel accounts. Indeed, those words are to be ex-

<sup>9</sup> The word “abide” means to be “at home” in a particular place. In these metaphorical passages, it is used to emphasize the normal spiritual condition in which a believer resides as he lives his daily life. Much more needs to be said concerning this amazing doctrine, but those things are well beyond the scope of this presentation.

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cluded from this statement. Rather, Christ is referring to His revealed words as presented in the New Testament documents for Christian living. While some of those words are included in John 13-16, one must not limit themselves to those truths.

“You will ask what you desire,” is of particular importance. If, indeed, Christ is speaking with a view to His ascension, it is reasonable to understand that the word “desire” is used in the New Testament epistolary sense. In that sense, the word “desire” is referring to the desirous will that the believer received *with the new nature*. That desirous will always desires the things of God, as opposed to the old desire, which is associated with the principle of indwelling sin. That old desire will never be done by God, but the new desirous will, with its source in the new nature, receives from God what it wills because its will is always consistent with the revelation of Scripture.

Finally, abiding ultimately produces glorifying God the Father and bearing fruit (which is not a reference to evangelism, as I have heard it presented). Again, space does not permit a detailed analysis of this part of Christ’s statement. For further discussion, see the author’s notes on the Gospel of John.

- **John 16:23-24** “And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. “Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

As previously noted, the upper room discourse, of which John 16 is a part, is looking forward to the ascension of Christ (13:1). That is the day to which Christ refers in vs. 23. After the ascension the disciples would ask Christ nothing because He was no longer with them in the physical sense. No longer will they ask Him, they will ask the Father “in My name.”

- **Ephesians 3:20** Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us . . . .
- **1 John 3:22** And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.
- **1 John 5:14-15** Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

### Confession (homologeo)

Confession is the acknowledgment of a believer’s personal act(s) of sin to the Father by naming and agreeing with God concerning the act.

- **1 John 1:9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

### Praise (aineo, ainesis)

Praise is the communication with God in which there is the response of appreciation for some aspect of *God’s character* which was responsible for the benefits received. Praise is contrasted with thanksgiving, in that thanksgiving shows appreciation for God’s acts, whereas praise shows appreciation for God’s character.

#### □ The Object of Praise

- **Luke 2:20** Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.
- **Luke 24:53** and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.

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- **Acts 3:8-9** So he, leaping up, stood and walked and entered the temple with them—walking, leaping, and praising God. And all the people saw him walking and praising God.
- The Content of Praise
  - **Luke 2:13-14a** And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: “Glory to God in the highest,
  - **Romans 15:11** And again: “Praise the LORD, all you Gentiles! Laud Him, all you peoples!”
  - **Hebrews 13:15** Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of *our* lips, giving thanks to His name.

### Vow (euche)

Vow is the communication of a promise to the Father committing oneself to accomplish a specific thing which the Holy Spirit has moved the individual to do through an express understanding of the Word of God. See Numbers 6:1-22 for the vow of the Nazirite which is likely the vow mentioned in Acts 18 and 21. James 5:15 may also refer to this vow, as James was writing to believing Jews steeped in the Old Testament.

- **Acts 18:18** So Paul still remained a good while. Then he took leave of the brethren and sailed for Syria, and Priscilla and Aquila *were* with him. He had *his* hair cut off at Cenchrea, for he had taken a vow.
- **Acts 21:23** Therefore do what we tell you: We have four men who have taken a vow.
- **James 5:15** And the prayer (vow) of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.
- The word vow in the New Testament appears to apply only to the transition, especially to Jews of that day. It cannot rightly be applied to believers after the transition period.

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## *Chapter Seven*

### How is Christian Prayer Different than Old Testament Prayer?<sup>10</sup>

There are prayer distinctions throughout the ages and household programs that must be observed. The purpose of this section is to show that communication with God is different than it was prior to the Household of today, and we must not go back to those previous households to learn what we must do to day to communicate with God. Supplication, prayer, intercession and giving of thanks, as well as asking (*aiteo*), became quite different than previously, and *new meanings* were attached to the various words for communication with God.

- Prayer promises to other households and people are not for us. Therefore, God cannot be approached in that way.

#### Millennial

- **Isaiah 65:24** It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear.

#### To Jeremiah Only

- **Jeremiah 33:3** Call to Me, and I will answer you, and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.

#### To Daniel Only

- **Daniel 9:20-21** Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.

#### To Kingdom Disciples Only

- **Matthew 6:5-13** And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward. But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who *is* in the secret *place*; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen *do*. For they think that they will be heard for their many words. Therefore do not be like them. For your Father knows the things you have need of before you ask Him. In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

<sup>10</sup> A great debt is owed to Dr. H. Laverne Schafer for the basic outline of this section.

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- **Luke 11:1-13** Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. So He said to them, When you pray, say: Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, For we also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. And He said to them, Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, Friend, lend me three loaves; for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing to set before him'; and he will answer from within and say, Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs. So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish? Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!
- ❑ Communication with God in Other Households is Different in Character.
- ❑ Up and through the Household of Abraham communication with God was through the head of the family.

### Adam

- **Genesis 3:8-11** And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, Where *are* you? So he said, I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself. And He said, Who told you that you *were* naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?

### Seth

- **Genesis 4:26** And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then *men* began to call on the name of the LORD.

### Abraham

- **Genesis 15:2-3** But Abram said, Lord GOD, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house *is* Eliezer of Damascus? Then Abram said, Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!
- **Genesis 17:18** And Abraham said to God, Oh, that Ishmael might live before You!
- **Genesis 18:23-32** And Abraham came near and said, Would You also destroy the righteous with the wicked? Suppose there were fifty righteous within the city; would You also destroy the place and not spare *it* for the fifty righteous that were in it? Far be it from You to do such a thing as this, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the

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righteous should be as the wicked; far be it from You! Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right? So the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes. Then Abraham answered and said, Indeed now, I who *am but* dust and ashes have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose there were five less than the fifty righteous; would You destroy all of the city for *lack of five*? So He said, If I find there forty-five, I will not destroy *it*. And he spoke to Him yet again and said, Suppose there should be forty found there? So He said, I will not do *it* for the sake of forty. Then he said, Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Suppose thirty should be found there? So He said, I will not do *it* if I find thirty there. And he said, Indeed now, I have taken it upon myself to speak to the Lord: Suppose twenty should be found there? So He said, I will not destroy *it* for the sake of twenty. Then he said, Let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but once more: Suppose ten should be found there? And He said, I will not destroy *it* for the sake of ten.

### Job

- **Job 1:5** So it was, when the days of feasting had run their course, that Job would send and sanctify them, and he would rise early in the morning and offer burnt offerings *according to* the number of them all. For Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts. Thus Job did regularly.
- ❑ Through the Household of Israel under the law given to Moses, communication with God mainly concerned the covenant nation.
- ❑ Under law, communication with God was wider in scope than previously.

### Moses

- **Numbers 11:2** Then the people cried out to Moses, and when Moses prayed to the LORD, the fire was quenched.
- **Numbers 12:13** So Moses cried out to the LORD, saying, Please heal her, O God, I pray!
- **Numbers 21:7** Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD and against you; pray to the LORD that He take away the serpents from us. So Moses prayed for the people.

### Samuel

- **1 Samuel 7:5** And Samuel said, Gather all Israel to Mizpah, and I will pray to the LORD for you.
- **1 Samuel 12:19-23** And all the people said to Samuel, Pray for your servants to the LORD your God, that we may not die; for we have added to all our sins the evil of asking a king for ourselves. Then Samuel said to the people, Do not fear. You have done all this wickedness; yet do not turn aside from following the LORD, but serve the LORD with all your heart. And do not turn aside; for *then you would go* after empty things which cannot profit or deliver, for they *are* nothing. For the LORD will not forsake His people, for His great name's sake, because it has pleased the LORD to make you His

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people. Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and the right way.

### David

- **2 Samuel 24:17-18** Then David spoke to the LORD when he saw the angel who was striking the people, and said, Surely I have sinned, and I have done wickedly; but these sheep, what have they done? Let Your hand, I pray, be against me and against my father's house. And Gad came that day to David and said to him, Go up, erect an altar to the LORD on the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite.

### Isaiah

- **2 Chronicles 32:20** Now because of this King Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah, the son of Amoz, prayed and cried out to heaven.

### Daniel

- **Daniel 9:20-21** Now while I *was* speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, yes, while I *was* speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering.
- Communication with God during the Household of Israel was rare.

### Hannah

- **1 Samuel 1:12** And it happened, as she continued praying before the LORD, that Eli watched her mouth.

### Hezekiah

- **2 Kings 20:2-3** Then he turned his face toward the wall, and prayed to the LORD, saying, Remember now, O LORD, I pray, how I have walked before You in truth and with a loyal heart, and have done *what was* good in Your sight. And Hezekiah wept bitterly.

### Samuel (for Saul)

- **1 Samuel 15:11** I greatly regret that I have set up Saul *as* king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments. And it grieved Samuel, and he cried out to the LORD all night.
- **1 Samuel 15:35** And Samuel went no more to see Saul until the day of his death. Nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul, and the LORD regretted that He had made Saul king over Israel.
- Throughout these centuries, the ground of communication with God consisted of pleading the covenants of God.
  - **1 Kings 8:22-26** Then Solomon stood before the altar of the LORD in the presence of all the assembly of Israel, and spread out his hands toward heaven; and he said: LORD God

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of Israel, *there is* no God in heaven above or on earth below like You, who keep *Your* covenant and mercy with Your servants who walk before You with all their hearts. You have kept what You promised Your servant David my father; You have both spoken with Your mouth and fulfilled *it* with Your hand, as *it is* this day. Therefore, LORD God of Israel, now keep what You promised Your servant David my father, saying, ‘You shall not fail to have a man sit before Me on the throne of Israel, only if your sons take heed to their way, that they walk before Me as you have walked before Me.’ And now I pray, O God of Israel, let Your word come true, which You have spoken to Your servant David my father.

- **Nehemiah 9:32** Now therefore, our God, The great, the mighty, and awesome God, Who keeps covenant and mercy: Do not let all the trouble seem small before You That has come upon us, Our kings and our princes, Our priests and our prophets, Our fathers and on all Your people, from the days of the kings of Assyria until this day.
- **Daniel 9:4** And I prayed to the LORD my God, and made confession, and said, O Lord, great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant and mercy with those who love Him, and with those who keep His commandments,
- Throughout Christ’s earthly ministry, in anticipation of the physical reality of the Kingdom of God, though still based on the Mosaic covenant, communication with God became more personal and common.
  - **Matthew 6:9-15** In this manner, therefore, pray: 1 Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done On earth as *it is* in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, As we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, But deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.
  - **Luke 11:9-11** So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if *he asks* for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish?