

Prayer Through the Eyes of Yeshua

For Yeshua and his Jewish followers, prayer served very different purposes from those of Christians today. The following will help you understand some of those differences – *and probably change the way you pray!* Be sure and keep the following in mind when you pray “*The Lord’s Prayer*” too.

Now let’s go over some of the basics of prayer in Yeshua’s Jewish culture:

- *You and God are partners in prayer.*¹
- *Prayer is your side of an unending dialogue with God. God speaks to you through nature and Scriptures.*²
- *The function of petitionary prayer is to make you more conscious of your dependence on God, so you may become more receptive to divine influences.*³

When you pray remember there are a number of different ways God answers prayers.

- *Prayer does not always work in the way you want it to or think that it will. God is concerned with the lives of all of His creatures, not just yours.*⁴
- *God will not answer a prayer that is not sincere.*
- *God will not answer a prayer that asks Him to break His own laws.*
- *God will not answer a prayer that asks Him to do what you should be doing.*
- *God will not answer a prayer that asks Him to help you by hurting others.*⁵
- *God will not answer a prayer that asks Him to forgive a sin you committed against another person until you do teshuvah (acts required for repentance) and that person forgives you first.*⁶
- *God’s answer to your prayer may sometimes be “No!” Yes, that is truly an answer.*⁷

The function of prayer for Yeshua, in all its manifestations, is to *bring people closer to God so that they may more faithfully perform His will.*

- *Prayer is not trying to induce God to perform your will.*
- *Prayer is not speaking magic words that force God to make something happen.*
- *Prayer is not bribing or forcing God to obey you.*⁸

God does not always answer petitionary prayer according to your specifications.

- *You cannot expect God to overrule the physical laws of His universe.*
- *God cannot replace your own role in effecting the goals you seek.*
- *You must be a co-worker with God, even as you struggles against the deficiencies which challenge you.*
- *You cannot expect God to heed your requests when they run counter to the needs of the world as a whole.*
- *You cannot expect God to lift you out of the limitations which are inherent in the human condition.*⁹

Congregational prayers play an educational role in the community as a whole.

- *Community Prayers help members more clearly see what their true needs really are.*
- *Community Prayers teach members to not pray for the trivial things, but for the things which are of enduring value -- for wisdom, for nearness to God, for cleansing from sin, for redemption from oppressions, for health, for sustenance, for peace, for the vindication of the righteous, for Jewish renewal in the Holy Land.*¹⁰
- *Times of Community Prayers remind members of their connection to past generations by corresponding to the times set for public worship and the sacrificial rites in the Second Temple in Jerusalem in ancient times.*¹¹

Print this lesson about “*Prayer Through the Eyes of Yeshua*” out and put it in your **Real Yeshua Handbook** (or link to it so you can call it up on your phone). Also share it with your friends. Reading it before and after you pray, especially when you pray with others, will be a life changing experience. One change is that instead of sending God a list of your needs and wants, your prayers become your “*To Do List*.” This alone will dramatically increase the impact of prayer on your life and on the lives of people in your community. *Shalom!*

¹ *When a Jew Prays* By Seymour Rossel with Eugene B. Borowitz and Hyman Chanover; © 1973 Begrman House, Inc. Publishers, New York, NY; p. 52.

² *The Prayer Book: Weekday, Sabbath and Festival* Translated and arranged by Ben Zion Bokser © 1983; Behrman House Publishers, Inc., New York, NY; p. viii.

³ *The Prayer Book: Weekday, Sabbath and Festival*; p. viii.

⁴ *When a Jew Prays*; p. 57.

⁵ *When a Jew Prays*; p. 58.

⁶ *The Encyclopedia Judaica*; Keter Publishing House, Jerusalem, Israel; Vol. 14, col. 73.

⁷ *When a Jew Prays*; p. 58.

⁸ *When a Jew Prays*; p. 57.

⁹ *The Prayer Book: Weekday, Sabbath and Festival*; p. ix.

¹⁰ *The Prayer Book: Weekday, Sabbath and Festival*; p. ix.

¹¹ *TESHUVAH: A Guide for the Newly Observant Jew* by Adin Steinsaltz © 1982 by The Domino Press, Jerusalem Israel. Translation © 1987 by The Free Press, a division of Macmillan, Inc., New York, NY; p. 98.