

OLD TESTAMENT PRAYERS

By Isaac Aluochier



Prayer



Prayer

CONTENTS

AVRAHAM AND AVIMELEKH	11
Yahweh Requires His Prophets To Pray For Repentant Sinners	11
The Sin Of Adultery Is Committed Against Both Yahweh And The Woman's Husband	12
Sin, Even Unwitting Sin, Must Be Atoned For	12
Repentance And Prayer Contribute To The Atoning For Sin	12
Why Did Yahweh Require His Prophet To Pray For A Repentant Sinner?	12
YITZCHAK'S MARRIAGE TO RIVKA	13
Avraham Was Confident That Yahweh Would Prosper His Servant's Way	15
A Woman Should Not Be Forced To Marry A Particular Man, Even One Yahweh Has	
Appointed Her For	15
Avraham Had Faith That Yahweh Would Bring Success To His Servant's Mission....	16
Success Lies In Yahweh's Hands.....	16
Avraham Taught His Household To Worship Yahweh.....	16
Avraham's Servant Was Also A Servant Of Yahweh.....	16
Appropriate Respect Should Be Accorded To Yahweh In Praying To Him	16
Consent For The Marriage Of A Woman Should Be Obtained From Both Her And Her Family	
.....	17
Yahweh Hears Both Audible And Silent Prayers.....	17
Authority For Giving A Woman Away In Marriage Rests With The Male Head Of Household	
.....	17
It Is Appropriate For One To Publicly Thank And Praise Yahweh	17
Rivka's Family Understood That Rivka Had Authority To Accept Or Decline The Marriage	
Proposal.....	17
MOSHE'S DEALINGS WITH PAROH	18
Yahweh's Prophets Should Pray For Repentant Sinners.....	18
Both Moshe And Paroh Were Confident That Yahweh Would Hear Moshe's Prayer..	19
Why Moshe Was Confident That Yahweh Would Hear His Prayer	19
Yahweh's Servants Are To Pray For Repentant Sinners.....	19
Yahweh Acts To Glorify His Name	20
The Time Of Year When Yahweh's Plagues Afflicted The Mitzrim	21
Why Yahweh Performed His Signs In The Land Of Mitzrayim.....	21
MOSHE'S DEALINGS WITH THE PEOPLE OF YISRAEL	23
Yahweh Responds To The Prayers Of His Servants	23
Aharon And Miryam Speak Out Against Moshe	23
Moshe Prayed For Miryam's Healing	24
Miryam Shamed In Retribution For Her Sin.....	24
Sometimes Yahweh Does Not Answer Our Prayers In The Manner That We Expect .	24
The Fiery Serpent On A Standard	24
The People Of Yisrael Repeatedly Sinned Against Yahweh	25
How Yahweh's Servants Are To Entreat Yahweh When A Grievous Sin Has Been Committed	
.....	27
Moshe's Prayer For Aharon Facilitated Aharon's Preservation.....	27
Moshe's Prayer To Yahweh For The People's Preservation.....	28

Prayer

YISRAEL DURING THE DAYS OF JUDGES	29
Yahweh Generally Does Not Deliver Those Who Are Unfaithful To Him.....	29
How To Turn Yahweh's Heart In Our Favour.....	29
Prophecy And Instructions Concerning Shimshon's Birth.....	30
Pray In A Manner Consistent With Yahweh's Will.....	31
SHEMUEL THE SEER.....	32
Shemuel's Birth.....	32
How Channah Prayed For The Cessation Of Her Affliction	34
Channah Prayed In Her Heart - Silently	34
Eli Publicly Worshipped Yahweh	34
Shemuel's Judging Of Yisrael	34
Yahweh's Servants Should Teach The People How To Serve Yahweh	35
How Yisrael Repented Before Yahweh.....	35
Yahweh Hears His Servants' Prayers On Behalf Of Those Who Are Repentant.....	36
The People Of Yisrael Demand To Have A King	36
Shemuel Sought Yahweh's Guidance When Faced With A Difficult Matter	37
The Nature Of Man's Rule Over Man.....	37
Shemuel Judged Yisrael In Righteousness.....	37
The Manner We Should Conduct Our Lives.....	38
A Duty Of Yahweh's Prophets	38
YAHWEH'S PROMISE TO KING DAVID.....	39
Acknowledge Yahweh's Work And Praise Him	40
The Dedication Of Yahweh's House.....	40
Kneel And Spread Forth Your Hands Towards Heaven.....	43
Yahweh Heard Shelomo's Prayer	44
Praise Yahweh.....	44
Pray Facing The Direction Of The Location Of Yahweh's House.....	44
Non-Yisraelites Should Also Pray Facing The Location Of Yahweh's House.....	44
Humble Yourself, Repent Of Sin And Wholeheartedly Seek Yahweh In Prayer	44
The Man Of The Mighty One From Yahudah	45
ELISHA THE PROPHET	46
The Shunammite Woman During Elisha's Time	46
Pray To Yahweh In Private	47
The Shunammite Woman Is A Parallel Of Sarah.....	47
The King Of Aram Seeks To Capture Elisha.....	47
Pray To Yahweh Only, Not To Anyone Else.....	48
Have Great Faith In Yahweh.....	48
Yahweh Protects His Servants.....	48
CHIZKIYAHU KING OF YAHUDAH	49
The King Of Ashshur Attacks Yahudah In Chizkiyahu's Time	49
Yahweh Prospers The Ways Of His Faithful Servants.....	52
Why Yisrael Was Sent Into Captivity.....	52
The King Of Ashshur Did Not Understand Yahweh And Yahweh's Ways.....	52
The King Of Ashshur Was An Enemy Of Yahweh.....	53
The King Of Ashshur Ridiculed Yahweh.....	53
The King Of Ashshur Arrogantly Elevated Himself To The Position Of A Mighty One.....	53



Prayer

The King Of Ashshur Defied The Living Mighty One.....	53
It Was Yeshayahu's Duty, As Prophet, To Pray For The People	54
Ridiculing Yahweh Is Blasphemy Against Yahweh.....	54
Penalty For Blasphemy Against Yahweh	54
The King Of Ashshur Accused Yahweh Of Deception	54
The King Of Ashshur Repeated His Blasphemy And Defiance Against Yahweh	54
Seek Yahweh's Guidance When Faced With Difficulty	54
Yahweh Responds To Our Prayers In The Manner He Chooses	54
Be Alert To Yahweh's Communication In Whatever Manner He Chooses	55
Chizkiyahu's Prayer To Yahweh	55
Chizkiyahu's Sought Yahweh's Deliverance To Glorify Yahweh's Name	55
Yahweh's Encapsulation Of Sancheriv's Sins	55
Why Sancheriv Gained Victory Over Many Nations	55
Why Major Geopolitical Events Occur In The Manner That They Do	56
Servants Of Yahweh Should Not Be Overawed By Any Human Power.....	56
Pray According To Yahweh's Will	56
Seek Yahweh's Will And Act Within It	57
Do Not Trust In Your Past Righteousness	57
Chizkiyahu's Sickness To Death.....	58
Acknowledge Yahweh's Power Over Life	59
The Basis Of Chizkiyahu's Request To Yahweh.....	59
Chizkiyahu's Prayer Moved Yahweh To Show Him Compassion	59
Yahweh's Eyes And Ears Are Open To The Prayers Of His Faithful Servants	59
Yahweh Is Merciful And Compassionate	59
Yahweh Sometimes Extends The Lives Of His Faithful Servants	60
Why Yahweh Sometimes Does Not Heal His Servants.....	60
A Time When Yahweh DID NOT HEAR Yah'shuah's Prayer	60
Live And Die According To Yahweh's Will	61
Yahweh Is Gracious And Merciful.....	61
Yahweh's Commands Have Priorities Of Importance	63
Yahweh Is Merciful To The Humble.....	63
YESHAYAHU THE PROPHET	65
Yahweh Does Not Hear The Prayers Of Unrepentant Sinners	66
Yahweh Does Not Hear The Prayers Of The Proud.....	66
Chizkiyahu's Prayer After His Recovery	67
The Futility And Folly Of Praying To Idols	68
Yahweh - Alone - Is The Mighty One	69
Yahweh's House Of Prayer For All Peoples	70
YIRMEYAHU THE PROPHET	71
When Yahweh Does Not Hear The Prayers Of His Prophets For His People	71
When Yahweh's Servants Are To Pray For The People	72
When Yahweh's Servants Are Not To Pray For The People	72
Once Yahweh's Judgement Is Pronounced	73
When To Repent	74
Yirmeyahu's Letter To The Captives Of Yahudah At Bavel	74
Long-Term Captives Should Pray For The Welfare Of The Land Of Their Captivity ..	75

Prayer

Yahweh's Command To Yisrael Applicable In The Present Time.....	75
What Yisraelites Should Now Do.....	75
What Yahweh Is About To Do For Yisrael.....	75
Prophecy Shortly To Be Fulfilled.....	75
The People Sought Yahweh's Guidance Through Yirmeyahu The Prophet.....	77
Why Yirmeyahu Agreed To The People's Request.....	79
Yahweh Answers Our Prayers In His Own Time.....	79
The People Were Not Sincere In Their Request For Guidance From Yahweh	79
Yahweh Punishes Those Who Insincerely Seek His Guidance	79
Those Whose Minds Are Set Should Not Seek Yahweh's Guidance	80
Sincerely Seek Yahweh's Guidance.....	80
YONAH THE PROPHET	81
Yonah's Mission	81
Pray To Yahweh When In Affliction.....	83
Yahweh's Pronounced Judgements Are Initially Provisional	83
Yonah's Heart Was Different From Yahweh's	83
Lesson For Yahweh's Servants.....	83
Yahweh Takes No Pleasure In The Death Of Anyone	84
Yahweh Refused To Listen To Yonah's Prayer	85
Why Yahweh Did Not Take Away Yonah's Life	85
Are Our Hearts Righteous?	86
We Should Consider Our Ways, Whether They Are Righteous Or Not	86
Yonah Did Not Desire To Face The Shame Of Seeing His Words Not Fulfilled.....	86
We Need To Surrender Our Wills To Yahweh's Will	86
Yahweh Dealt With Yonah Patiently.....	87
Yahweh Personally Taught Yonah What The Latter Needed To Learn.....	87
Yahweh Is Patient With Us - His Errant Servants.....	87
Be Patient With Other Human Beings	87
Be Concerned About Yahweh's Creation.....	87
The Prayers Yahweh Hears	88
Seek, Act And Pray According To Yahweh's Will	88
Learn About Yahweh's Nature And Acquire It	88
Yahweh's Human Servants Are Not Yet Perfect	88
Knowing Yahweh's Nature Is Not Equivalent To Having Put On Yahweh's Nature....	88
Clothe Yourself With Yahweh's Nature And Ways	89
THE PSALMS	90
Yahweh Hears The Prayers Of The Righteous.....	90
David Laid His Requests Before Yahweh In The Morning	90
Yahweh Hears Righteous Pleas.....	90
Obey Yahweh	91
When Men Shall See Yahweh's Face	92
Confess Your Sins To Yahweh	92
Pray To Yahweh While He Can Be Found	92
Yahweh Delivers The Poor And Needy From Oppression.....	93
Fast And Pray For Your Enemies.....	94
Thank And Praise Yahweh.....	94

Prayer

Offer Your Supplications To Yahweh	94
Enemies Arise Among Those We Fellowship With.....	96
Yahweh Both Saves And Redeems	96
David Prayed To Yahweh Three Times A Day.....	96
Fear Yahweh's Name	97
Do Not Cherish Sin In Your Heart	97
Ask Yahweh To Answer Speedily When In Distress	97
Praise And Thanksgiving Pleases Yahweh More Than Animal Sacrifices	99
Seek Yahweh Wholeheartedly	100
Trust In Yahweh And Walk Blamelessly.....	100
Some Reasons Why Yahweh Answers Prayers.....	100
Be Humble.....	101
Be Righteous And Trust Wholly In Yahweh	101
Call To Yahweh All Day Long	101
Lift Up Your Soul To Yahweh.....	101
Ask Yahweh To Teach You His Way.....	102
Praying When In Distress.....	102
Yahweh Has Appointed Times For Particular Actions.....	103
Prepare Yourself To Pray For Tzion.....	103
Yahweh Shortens And Prolongs The Days Of Human Beings	104
Worship Yahweh In Fasting	104
Pray For The Peace Of Yerushalayim	105
Prayers Are Similar To Incense And Sacrifices	106
Seek Relief From Yahweh For His Own Name's Sake.....	106
When In Danger Ask Yahweh For A Quick Answer	108
Seek Yahweh's Guidance	108
PROVERBS.....	109
Put Away Wickedness	109
Be Attentive To Yahweh's Law.....	109
IYOV'S SUFFERINGS	110
Avoid Wickedness And Pray Pure Prayers	110
Avoid The Traits Of Wickedness	111
Yahweh Hears The Prayers Of Repentant Sinners	113
Confess Your Sins To Both Yahweh And Men	114
Yahweh's Servants Must Pray For Sinners	115
DANIYEL THE PROPHET.....	116
Daniyel Cast Into The Lions' Den	116
Pray Your Prayers Facing In The Direction Of Yerushalayim	117
Daniyel's Prayer Mannerisms.....	117
The Vital Importance Of Praying To Yahweh	117
Servants Of Yahweh Are Required To Pray Regularly To Yahweh.....	118
Yahweh Is The Deliverer	118
Why Yahweh Delivered Daniyel.....	118
Servants Of Yahweh Are To Submit To All In Authority Over Them	119
Daniyel Was Tried For Yahweh's Glorification.....	119
Daniyel's Prayer For Yerushalayim's Restoration	119

Prayer

Study Yahweh's Words	120
Pray For The Fulfilment Of Yahweh's Prophecies	121
Serving Yahweh According To His Will	121
What The People Of Yahweh Should Now Do.....	121
When The Scattering Of The Children Of Yisrael Took Place.....	122
Pray Daniyel's Prayer.....	122
Daniyel Did Not Understand All Of Yahweh's Will	122
How Yahweh Answered Daniyel's Prayer	122
RETURNED CAPTIVES OF YAHUDAH	124
Yahweh Answered Daniyel's Request	124
Pray For The Lives Of Your Rulers.....	125
Ezra's And The People's Public Confession Of Sins And Prayer.....	125
Servants Of Yahweh Should Be An Example For The People	127
Nechemyah's Prayer For The Repentance And Restoration Of Yisrael	127
Pray To Yahweh For Favour Before Your Superior.....	128
Pray For Yahweh's Protection And Guidance	128
Yahweh's Servants Face Opposition As They Do Yahweh's Work	129
YAH'SHUAH'S WORDS.....	130
Pray For Those Who Spitefully Use You And Persecute You.....	130
How To Pray.....	130
Do Not Seek Human Glory	130
Yah'shuah's Words In Harmony With Daniyel's Conduct	131
We Are Required To Pray To Yahweh For The Supply Of Our Needs	131
The Form Our Prayers Should Take	131
Kingdom, Power And Glory Belong To Yahweh	131
Become Perfect As Even Your Father Is Perfect	132
Pray And Fast Privately	132
Pray For Whatever Is Needed.....	132
Yah'shuah Abided By The Teachings He Commanded His Disciples	132
Pray And Fast That The Father May Fulfil Special Needs	132
Acquire The Humility And Meekness Of Little Children	133
Pray With Faith.....	133
Pray To Yahweh For Relative Comfort	134
Yah'shuah's Prayer At Gat-Shemanim	134
Yah'shuah's Prayer Posture	134
Submit Wholly To Yahweh's Will, Even When Uncomfortable	135
Watch And Pray To Avoid Entering Into Temptation.....	135
When It Is Appropriate To Repeat Petitions To Yahweh	135
Yahweh Refused Yah'shuah's Petition.....	135
Requests Yahweh Answers In The Affirmative	135
It Is Not Sin To Ask Amiss	136
Yah'shuah's Example To Us.....	136
Watch, Keep Alert And Pray At All Times	136
Seek Out Time To Pray Privately To Yahweh.....	136
A Time For Fasting.....	137
Seek Yahweh's Guidance Prior To Making Major Decisions	137

Prayer

Pray That Yahweh's Prophecies May Be Fulfilled At Their Appointed Time.....	137
Ask Your Heavenly Father To Give You His Holy Spirit	138
Always Pray To Yahweh, Never Giving Up	139
Do Not Exalt Yourself	139
Pray For Your Brethren.....	139
Yah'shuah's Prayer Posture	140
Petition The Father In Yah'shuah's Name	140
Petition Yahweh According To His Appointed Times	141
How Your Joy May Be Made Full	141
Pray For Yah'shuah's Disciples	142
YAH'SHUAH'S DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES	144
The Early Disciples Set Us An Example Of Being Steadfast In Prayer And Supplication	144
The Early Disciples Followed Yah'shuah's Example	144
The Early Disciples Obeyed Yah'shuah's Command Of Being Steadfast In Prayer ...	145
Incorporate Yahweh's Inspired Words In Your Prayers To Him	145
Praying Steadfastly Is A Vital Duty Of Servants Of Yahweh	146
How To Receive The Holy Spirit	147
Yah'shuah's Words Fulfilled In Kefa's Ministry.....	147
Yahweh Pours Out The Holy Spirit On The Goyim.....	148
Pray For The Welfare Of The Brethren	150
Serve Yahweh And Yah'shuah With Prayer And Fasting.....	151
Appointments Within Yahweh's Household Should Be Accompanied With Prayer And Fasting	151
The Early Disciples Prayed Collectively	152
Shaul And Sila Prayed To Yahweh In The Hearing Of Others.....	152
In Bidding Farewell, The Disciples Prayed Collectively.....	152
Prayer Accompanies The Laying On Of Hands Upon The Sick.....	154
Pray For One Another Unceasingly.....	154
Draw On The Spirit To Intercede For You In Your Prayers To Yahweh.....	154
Pray For Yisrael's Salvation	154
Continue Steadfastly In Prayer	155
Pray For Yah'shuah's Servants	155
Shaul's Counsel On Conduct While Praying And Fasting	155
Those Speaking In Tongues Should Pray For The Gift Of Interpreting.....	155
Pray That The Brethren Be Perfected	155
Pray That Yahweh Blesses Yah'shuah's Disciples	156
Pray At All Times, In The Spirit	156
Pray For The Abounding Of The Love Of The Brethren	157
Pray For All Men	157
Pray For The Sanctification Of Food Yahweh Has Prepared For His Holy Ones	157
Widows Can Effectively Serve Yahweh In Prayers And Petitions	158
Learn From Yah'shuah	158
Pray And Sing Praises To Yahweh.....	158
Do Righteousness, That Yahweh May Hear Your Prayers.....	159
Be Sober In Prayer	159

Prayer

Pray In The Holy Spirit	160
SHOULD WOMEN PRAY WITH THEIR HEADS COVERED?	161
Imitate Shaul ONLY As He Imitates The Messiah	161
Become Aware Of The Messiah's Conduct.....	161
Simply Imitate The Messiah With No Human Intermediary	161
What Traditions Did Shaul Deliver To The Corinthian Brethren?	162
Shaul's Words On Authority Apparently In Harmony With The Messiah's	162
How Does A Man Dishonour His Head By Praying With His Head Covered?	162
How Does A Woman Dishonour Her Head By Praying With Her Head Uncovered?	162
Shaul's Words On This Matter Inconsistent!.....	162
What Attribute Of Women's Hair Is Inconsistent With Its Exposure During Prayer Or Prophecy?	163
What Is The Spiritual Purpose And Significance Of Hair?	163
Shaul's Words Imply That Hair Is A Mark Or Symbol Of Authority	163
Why Is The Relationship Between Man And Woman Shown To Be DIFFERENT From That Between The Messiah And Man?.....	164
Shaul Does Not Explain The Significance Of Angels In This Matter Of Praying With One's Head Covered	164
How Should Shaul's Audience Judge In This Matter?	164
Why Is Shaul Now Drawing Upon "Nature" As His Justification?	164
Why Isn't Shaul Drawing Upon The Messiah As His Justification?	165
Yahweh's Position On This Matter	165
Yahweh Makes No Distinction Between Men And Women	166
Yahweh's Command For Nazirs Ignored "Nature's" View	166
Shaul's Words Appear To Be Contradictory!.....	166
Nazir Women Are To Ignore Shaul's Words In 1 Corinthians 11	167
Shaul's Custom Was NOT Universally Accepted Within Yahweh's Assemblies	167
My View Is DIFFERENT From Shaul's!.....	167
Why I Hold A View Different From Shaul's Of 1 Corinthians 11	167
Yahweh Commanded A Man To Cover His Head And Pray!	167
Yahweh's Words Negate Shaul's Words In 1 Corinthians 11:1-16!	170
Is 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 Part Of Scripture?.....	170
Not All Of Shaul's Words Are Part Of Scripture!	170
Human Servants Of Yahweh Are Not Yet Perfect	170
Test Each Word Promulgated As Yahweh's Word.....	170

Prayer

AVRAHAM AND AVIMELEKH

Beresheet (Genesis) 20:7, 17, 1-18 reads,

^{20:1}Avraham journeyed from there toward the land of the South, and lived between Kadesh and Shur. He sojourned in Gerar. ^{20:2}Avraham said about Sarah his wife, "She is my sister." Avimelekh king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. ^{20:3}But the Mighty One came to Avimelekh in a dream of the night, and said to him, "Behold, you are a dead man, because of the woman whom you have taken. For she is a man's wife."

^{20:4}Now Avimelekh had not come near her. He said, "Sovereign, will you kill even a righteous nation?" ^{20:5}Didn't he tell me, 'She is my sister?' She, even she herself said, 'He is my brother.' In the integrity of my heart and the innocence of my hands have I done this."

^{20:6}The Mighty One said to him in the dream, "Yes, I know that in the integrity of your heart you have done this, and I also withheld you from sinning against me. Therefore I didn't allow you to touch her. ^{20:7}Now therefore, restore the man's wife. **For he is a prophet, and he will pray for you, and you will live.** If you don't restore her, know for sure that you will die, you, and all who are yours."

^{20:8}Avimelekh rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ear. The men were very scared. ^{20:9}Then Avimelekh called Avraham, and said to him, "What have you done to us? How have I sinned against you, that you have brought on me and on my kingdom a great sin? You have done deeds to me that ought not to be done!" ^{20:10}Avimelekh said to Avraham, "What did you see, that you have done this thing?"

^{20:11}Avraham said, "Because I thought, 'Surely the fear of the Mighty One is not in this place. They will kill me for my wife's sake.' ^{20:12}Moreover she is indeed my sister, the daughter of my father, but not the daughter of my mother; and she became my wife. ^{20:13}It happened, when the Mighty One caused me to wander from my father's house, that I said to her, 'This is your kindness which you shall show to me. Everywhere that we go, say of me, "He is my brother."'"

^{20:14}Avimelekh took sheep and oxen, men-servants and women-servants, and gave them to Avraham, and restored Sarah, his wife to him. ^{20:15}Avimelekh said, "Behold, my land is before you. Dwell where it pleases you." ^{20:16}To Sarah he said, "Behold, I have given your brother a thousand pieces of silver. Behold, it is for you a covering of the eyes to all that are with you. In front of all you are vindicated."

^{20:17}**Avraham prayed to the Mighty One. The Mighty One healed Avimelekh, and his wife, and his maid-servants, and they bore children.** ^{20:18}For Yahweh had closed up tight all the wombs of the house of Avimelekh, because of Sarah, Avraham's wife.

Yahweh Requires His Prophets To Pray For Repentant Sinners

20:7 and 20:17 appear to show that it was Yahweh's requirement that Avraham, a prophet, pray for Avimelekh and his household. It appears that it is Yahweh's requirement of his prophets that they pray for those who repent of their sins, that the repentant sinners may be forgiven their sins and healed of the consequences of their sins.

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The Sin Of Adultery Is Committed Against Both Yahweh And The Woman's Husband

20:6 shows that had Avimelekh had sexual intercourse with Sarah, he would have been sinning against Yahweh. Avraham, Sarah's husband, would not have been the only person that Avimelekh would have sinned against.

It therefore appears that when we sin we do so against Yahweh. And the sin of adultery is one committed not only against the woman's husband, but also against Yahweh.

Sin, Even Unwitting Sin, Must Be Atoned For

It is evident from the above passage that Avimelekh had sinned, even though unwittingly, in that he had taken someone else's wife to be his own wife. To atone for his unwitting sin he paid Avraham some compensatory property, including sheep, oxen, men-servants, women-servants, and a thousand pieces of silver. It therefore appears that when sin is committed, even unwittingly, it must be atoned for.

Repentance And Prayer Contribute To The Atoning For Sin

Seeing that Avimelekh had sinned against both Yahweh and Avraham, he had to atone for his sin, offering compensatory property to those sinned against. With Avraham, a human being, he indeed gave various items of property. But with Yahweh, seeing that Yahweh owns all property, there was really no property that he could have given Yahweh for compensation. What Yahweh required of Avimelekh was that he repents of his sin - his unwitting sin, and be prayed for. The prayer to Yahweh would take the place of a compensatory offering. And by the prayer having been offered to Yahweh, Yahweh would set aside Avimelekh's sin, and the resultant consequences arising out of his sin.

Why Did Yahweh Require His Prophet To Pray For A Repentant Sinner?

Why did Yahweh require Avraham, a prophet, to pray for Avimelekh? Why did not he require Avimelekh to pray for his own sin?

Is it the case that Yahweh hears the prayers of his prophets more than he does of those who are not prophets of his?

And if he does not hear the prayers of those who are not prophets of his to the degree that he hears his prophets' prayers, what is his reason for so hearing and not so hearing? Such that if the reason lies outside the position of prophet, then anyone meeting the appropriate qualification will indeed be heard by Yahweh when he or she prays to Yahweh. And if this is the case then it appears that in this instance Avraham met this qualification, while Avimelekh did not.

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YITZCHAK'S MARRIAGE TO RIVKA

Beresheet (Genesis) 24:1-67 reads,

^{24:1}Avraham was old, and well stricken in age. Yahweh had blessed Avraham in all things. ^{24:2}Avraham said to his servant, the elder of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "Please put your hand under my thigh. ^{24:3}I will make you swear by Yahweh, the Mighty One of heaven and the Mighty One of the eretz, that you shall not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Kana`anim, among whom I live. ^{24:4}But you shall go to my country, and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son Yitzchak."

^{24:5}The servant said to him, "What if the woman isn't willing to follow me to this land? Must I bring your son again to the land you came from?"

^{24:6}Avraham said to him, "Beware that you don't bring my son there again. ^{24:7}Yahweh, the Mighty One of heaven, who took me from my father's house, and from the land of my birth, who spoke to me, and who swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I will give this land,' he will send his angel before you. And you shall take a wife for my son from there. ^{24:8}If the woman isn't willing to follow you, then you shall be clear from this my oath. Only you shall not bring my son there again."

^{24:9}The servant put his hand under the thigh of Avraham his master, and swore to him concerning this matter. ^{24:10}The servant took ten camels, of his master's camels, and departed, having all goodly things of his master in his hand. He arose, and went to Aram-Naharayim, to the city of Nachor. ^{24:11}He made the camels kneel down outside the city by the well of water at the time of evening, the time that women go out to draw water. ^{24:12}He said, "Yahweh, the Mighty One of my master Avraham, please give me success this day, and show kindness to my master Avraham. ^{24:13}Behold, I am standing by the spring of water. The daughters of the men of the city are coming out to draw water. ^{24:14}Let it happen, that the young lady to whom I will say, 'Please let down your pitcher, that I may drink.' She will say, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink.' Let the same be she who you have appointed for your servant Yitzchak. Thereby will I know that you have showed kindness to my master."

^{24:15}It happened, before he had done speaking, that behold, Rivka came out, who was born to Betu'el the son of Milkah, the wife of Nachor, Avraham's brother, with her pitcher on her shoulder. ^{24:16}The young lady was very beautiful to look at, a virgin, neither had any man known her. She went down to the spring, filled her pitcher, and came up.

^{24:17}The servant ran to meet her, and said, "Please give me a drink, a little water from your pitcher."

^{24:18}She said, "Drink, my master." She hurried, and let down her pitcher on her hand, and gave him drink. ^{24:19}When she had done giving him drink, she said, "I will also draw for your camels, until they have done drinking." ^{24:20}She hurried, and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again to the well to draw, and drew for all his camels.

^{24:21}The man looked steadfastly at her, holding his shalom, to know whether Yahweh had made his journey prosperous or not. ^{24:22}It happened, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden ring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold, ^{24:23}and said, "Whose daughter are you? Please tell me. Is there room in your father's house for us to lodge in?"

Prayer

^{24:24}She said to him, "I am the daughter of Betu'el the son of Milkah, whom she bore to Nachor." ^{24:25}She said moreover to him, "We have both straw and provender enough, and room to lodge in."

^{24:26}**The man bowed his head, and worshiped Yahweh.** ^{24:27}He said, "Blessed be Yahweh, the Mighty One of my master Avraham, who has not forsaken his lovingkindness and his truth toward my master. As for me, Yahweh has led me in the way to the house of my master's relatives."

^{24:28}The young lady ran, and told her mother's house about these words. ^{24:29}Rivka had a brother, and his name was Lavan. Lavan ran out to the man, to the spring. ^{24:30}It happened, when he saw the ring, and the bracelets on his sister's hands, and when he heard the words of Rivka his sister, saying, "This is what the man said to me," that he came to the man. Behold, he was standing by the camels at the spring. ^{24:31}He said, "Come in, you blessed of Yahweh. Why do you stand outside? For I have prepared the house, and room for the camels."

^{24:32}The man came into the house, and he unloaded the camels. He gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet and the feet of the men who were with him. ^{24:33}Food was set before him to eat. But he said, "I will not eat until I have told my message."

He said, "Speak on."

^{24:34}He said, "I am Avraham's servant. ^{24:35}Yahweh has blessed my master greatly. He has become great. He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, men-servants and maid-servants, and camels and donkeys. ^{24:36}Sarah, my master's wife, bore a son to my master when she was old. He has given all that he has to him. ^{24:37}My master made me swear, saying, 'You shall not take a wife for my son of the daughters of the Kana'anims, in whose land I live, ^{24:38}but you shall go to my father's house, and to my relatives, and take a wife for my son.' ^{24:39}I said to my master, 'What if the woman will not follow me?' ^{24:40}He said to me, 'Yahweh, before whom I walk, will send his angel with you, and prosper your way. You shall take a wife for my son of my relatives, and of my father's house. ^{24:41}Then will you be clear from my oath, when you come to my relatives. If they don't give her to you, you shall be clear from my oath.' ^{24:42}I came this day to the spring, and said, 'Yahweh, the Mighty One of my master Avraham, if now you do prosper my way which I go. ^{24:43}Behold, I am standing by the spring of water. Let it happen, that the almah who comes forth to draw, to whom I will say, 'Give me, I pray you, a little water from your pitcher to drink,' ^{24:44}she will tell me, 'Drink, and I will also draw for your camels.' Let the same be the woman whom Yahweh has appointed for my master's son.' ^{24:45}Before I had done **speaking in my heart**, behold, Rivka came forth with her pitcher on her shoulder. She went down to the spring, and drew. I said to her, 'Please let me drink.' ^{24:46}She hurried and let down her pitcher from her shoulder, and said, 'Drink, and I will also give your camels a drink.' So I drank, and she made the camels drink also. ^{24:47}I asked her, and said, 'Whose daughter are you?' She said, 'The daughter of Betu'el, Nachor's son, whom Milkah bore to him.' I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her hands. ^{24:48}**I bowed my head, and worshiped Yahweh, and blessed Yahweh, the Mighty One of my master Avraham, who had led me in the right way to take my master's brother's daughter for his son.** ^{24:49}Now if you will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me. If not, tell me. That I may turn to the right hand, or to the left."

Prayer

^{24:50}Then Lavan and Betu'el answered, "The thing proceeds from Yahweh. We can't speak to you bad or good. ^{24:51}Behold, Rivka is before you, take her, and go, and let her be your master's son's wife, as Yahweh has spoken."

^{24:52}It happened that when Avraham's servant heard their words, **he bowed himself down to the eretz to Yahweh.** ^{24:53}The servant brought forth jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and clothing, and gave them to Rivka. He gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things. ^{24:54}They ate and drank, he and the men who were with him, and stayed all night. They rose up in the morning, and he said, "Send me away to my master."

^{24:55}Her brother and her mother said, "Let the young lady stay with us a few days, at least ten. After that she will go."

^{24:56}He said to them, "Don't hinder me, seeing Yahweh has prospered my way. Send me away that I may go to my master."

^{24:57}They said, "We will call the young lady, and ask her." ^{24:58}They called Rivka, and said to her, "Will you go with this man?"

She said, "I will go."

^{24:59}They sent away Rivka, their sister, with her nurse, Avraham's servant, and his men.

^{24:60}They blessed Rivka, and said to her, "Our sister, may you be the mother of thousands of ten thousands, and let your seed possess the gate of those who hate them."

^{24:61}Rivka arose with her ladies. They rode on the camels, and followed the man. The servant took Rivka, and went his way. ^{24:62}Yitzchak came from the way of Be'er-Lachai-Ro'i. For he lived in the land of the South. ^{24:63}Yitzchak went out to meditate in the field at the evening. He lifted up his eyes, and saw, and, behold, there were camels coming.

^{24:64}Rivka lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Yitzchak, she dismounted from the camel. ^{24:65}She said to the servant, "Who is the man who is walking in the field to meet us?"

The servant said, "It is my master."

She took her veil, and covered herself. ^{24:66}The servant told Yitzchak all the things that he had done. ^{24:67}Yitzchak brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and took Rivka, and she became his wife. He loved her. Yitzchak was comforted after his mother's death.

There is plenty to learn about prayer from Avraham's servant.

Avraham Was Confident That Yahweh Would Prosper His Servant's Way

24:6-8 shows that Avraham was confident that Yahweh would send his angel before Avraham's servant to bring to fruition the task that Avraham had set before his servant. That Avraham was so confident indicates that this instruction he was giving to his servant was in harmony with Yahweh's will. It can therefore be taken that it was indeed Yahweh's will that Yitzchak marry one of his relatives, and guided Avraham appropriately to send his servant to procure for Yitzchak such a qualifying wife.

A Woman Should Not Be Forced To Marry A Particular Man, Even One Yahweh Has Appointed Her For

24:8 also shows that even though Yahweh prepares for marriage a particular woman for a particular man, he does not force that woman or her family to agree to her marriage of that man that he has prepared her for. For Avraham understood that if the appointed woman was unwilling to accompany Avraham's servant in order to marry Yitzchak, she was not to be forced into the

Prayer

marriage. Thereby showing that a woman should not be forced into marrying a particular man, even if that man is the one that Yahweh has set for her to marry. A woman should be allowed freedom to determine whether or not she will abide by Yahweh's will for her life.

Avraham Had Faith That Yahweh Would Bring Success To His Servant's Mission

24:8 also shows that Avraham was indeed confident that his servant would succeed in meeting the woman appointed by Yahweh to be Yitzchak's wife. For he gave his servant instructions concerning what to do if the appointed woman refused to accompany him on his return journey. It is therefore evident that Avraham had faith in Yahweh in Yahweh succeeding in bringing Avraham's servant to the woman he had appointed to be Yitzchak's wife.

Success Lies In Yahweh's Hands

24:12-14 outlines Avraham's servant's prayer to Yahweh. Avraham's servant knew that success, whether in this mission or in other matters, lay in Yahweh's hands. It was therefore to Yahweh that he prayed, and not to some other deity.

Avraham Taught His Household To Worship Yahweh

It should also be noted that Avraham did not confine his worship of Yahweh to just himself, keeping it a private matter between only himself and Yahweh. For those in Avraham's household, including this servant of his, indeed understood Yahweh's ways, and prayed and worshipped Yahweh. It therefore appears that not only did Avraham's household understand Yahweh's ways, it also took action to abide by his ways.

Avraham's Servant Was Also A Servant Of Yahweh

Avraham's servant, understanding that success lay in Yahweh's hands, asked Yahweh to give him success in a manner that he clearly understood. It is therefore evident that Avraham's servant had faith in Yahweh responding to his prayers, indicating that he was indeed a worshipper of Yahweh.

Appropriate Respect Should Be Accorded To Yahweh In Praying To Him

24:26-27 shows that in praising Yahweh in prayer, appropriate respect needs to be accorded to Yahweh. This can be shown, as seen from Avraham's servant's example, by bowing one's head and worshipping Yahweh. And not only can this be done in private, but also in the presence of another human being.

Prayer

Consent For The Marriage Of A Woman Should Be Obtained From Both Her And Her Family

24:41 shows that the authority of a woman marrying a particular man does not rest solely with the woman, but also with the woman's family. For in 24:8 it was seen that the woman had authority to decline to accompany Avraham's servant on his return journey, accompanying him in order to become Yitzchak's wife. Here in 24:41 it is seen that the woman's family likewise had authority to decline the marriage proposal. It therefore appears that in the case of a woman becoming married to a particular man, consent should be obtained from both the woman and her family.

Yahweh Hears Both Audible And Silent Prayers

24:45 shows that when Avraham's servant had prayed to Yahweh that Yahweh give him success in his mission, he had so prayed in his heart. Indicating that this prayer was not audible to the people accompanying him. Yet Yahweh heard his prayer and answered it. It is therefore evident that Yahweh hears both audible and silent prayers, prayers prayed in the heart.

Authority For Giving A Woman Away In Marriage Rests With The Male Head Of Household

24:50-51 shows that it is the men in the household who had authority in determining whether or not the appointed woman would be given away in marriage to Yitzchak. In this case the men who so gave authority were the woman's father and her brother. The woman's father being head of the household, and the woman's brother being next in line in authority in the household with respect to this matter.

It Is Appropriate For One To Publicly Thank And Praise Yahweh

24:52 shows Avraham's servant, after receiving confirmation from Rivka's father and brother that they had indeed accepted the marriage proposal, bowing to the earth to Yahweh in worship. In other words, he acknowledged his appreciation to Yahweh, for prospering his mission, by bowing himself to the earth. And this he did in public, in the presence of Rivka's family. It therefore appears that it is quite appropriate to show forth thanksgiving and praise to Yahweh by bowing oneself to the earth to Yahweh, even in the presence of other people.

Rivka's Family Understood That Rivka Had Authority To Accept Or Decline The Marriage Proposal

24:58 shows that Rivka's family, after having accepted the marriage proposal, giving Rivka the opportunity to so accept or decline the marriage proposal. Rivka's family understanding of the marriage process was therefore in harmony with Avraham's understanding of it. That both the woman's family and the woman must be given due opportunity to accept a marriage proposal, seeing that both have authority in this matter.

Prayer

MOSHE'S DEALINGS WITH PAROH

Shemot (Exodus) 8:1-15 reads,

^{8:1}Yahweh spoke to Moshe, Go in to Par`oh, and tell him, "This is what Yahweh says, 'Let my people go, that they may serve me. ^{8:2}If you refuse to let them go, behold, I will plague all your borders with frogs: ^{8:3}and the river shall swarm with frogs, which shall go up and come into your house, and into your bedchamber, and on your bed, and into the house of your servants, and on your people, and into your ovens, and into your kneading-troughs: ^{8:4}and the frogs shall come up both on you, and on your people, and on all your servants.'" ^{8:5}Yahweh said to Moshe, "Tell Aharon, 'Stretch forth your hand with your rod over the rivers, over the streams, and over the pools, and cause frogs to come up on the land of Mitzrayim.'" ^{8:6}Aharon stretched out his hand over the waters of Mitzrayim; and the frogs came up, and covered the land of Mitzrayim. ^{8:7}The magicians did in like manner with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Mitzrayim.

^{8:8}Then Par`oh called for Moshe and Aharon, and said, "Entreat Yahweh, that he take away the frogs from me, and from my people; and I will let the people go, that they may sacrifice to Yahweh."

^{8:9}Moshe said to Par`oh, "I give you the honor of setting the time that I should pray for you, and for your servants, and for your people, that the frogs be destroyed from you and your houses, and remain in the river only."

^{8:10}He said, "Tomorrow."

He said, "Be it according to your word, that you may know that there is none like Yahweh our Mighty One. ^{8:11}The frogs shall depart from you, and from your houses, and from your servants, and from your people. They shall remain in the river only."

^{8:12}Moshe and Aharon went out from Par`oh, and Moshe cried to Yahweh concerning the frogs which he had brought on Par`oh. ^{8:13}Yahweh did according to the word of Moshe, and the frogs died out of the houses, out of the courts, and out of the fields. ^{8:14}They gathered them together in heaps, and the land stank. ^{8:15}But when Par`oh saw that there was a respite, he hardened his heart, and didn't listen to them, as Yahweh had spoken.

Yahweh's Prophets Should Pray For Repentant Sinners

8:8-11 shows that when Paroh indicated that he was repentant, and was ready to acquiesce to Yahweh's request delivered to him by Moshe, Moshe agreed to entreat Yahweh by praying for him, his servants and his people that the plague may be removed from them. Showing that Yahweh's prophets are indeed to pray for repentant sinners, even as Avraham prayed for Avimelekh when he undertook to return to him his wife Sarah, before he had sexually lain with her.

Prayer

Both Moshe And Paroh Were Confident That Yahweh Would Hear Moshe's Prayer

Moshe's reply to Paroh's request that he prays to Yahweh to remove the plague from the Mitzrim showed that he was indeed confident that Yahweh would hear his prayer. Even Paroh appeared confident that Yahweh would indeed hear Moshe's prayer.

Why were they so confident that Yahweh would indeed hear Moshe's prayer? Simply because Moshe was Yahweh's prophet?

Why Moshe Was Confident That Yahweh Would Hear His Prayer

8:10 gives Moshe's answer to this question. Yahweh was going to hear Moshe's prayer that he remove the plague from the Mitzrim in order that the Mitzrim may know that there is none like Yahweh, the Mighty One of the Yisraelites. In other words, Yahweh was going to hear Moshe's prayer, and do as Moshe requested, for the purpose of glorifying his name as the supreme and unique Mighty One! Indicating that when a situation arises whereby Yahweh can indeed be shown as supreme and unique, he indeed hears the prayers of his servants, his prophets, when they pray to him to act in a manner so glorifying his name.

Yahweh's Servants Are To Pray For Repentant Sinners

Shemot (Exodus) 8:20-32 reads,

^{8:20}Yahweh said to Moshe, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Par`oh; behold, he comes forth to the water; and tell him, 'This is what Yahweh says, "Let my people go, that they may serve me."^{8:21} Else, if you will not let my people go, behold, I will send swarms of flies on you, and on your servants, and on your people, and into your houses: and the houses of the Mitzrim shall be full of swarms of flies, and also the ground whereon they are."^{8:22} I will set apart in that day the land of Goshen, in which my people dwell, that no swarms of flies shall be there; to the end you may know that I am Yahweh in the midst of the earth."^{8:23} I will put a division between my people and your people: by tomorrow shall this sign be.'""^{8:24} Yahweh did so; and there came grievous swarms of flies into the house of Par`oh, and into his servants' houses: and in all the land of Mitzrayim the land was corrupted by reason of the swarms of flies.

^{8:25}Par`oh called for Moshe and for Aharon, and said, "Go, sacrifice to your mighty one in the land!"

^{8:26}Moshe said, "It isn't appropriate to do so; for we shall sacrifice the abomination of the Mitzrim to Yahweh our Mighty One. Behold, shall we sacrifice the abomination of the Mitzrim before their eyes, and won't they stone us?"^{8:27} We will go three days' journey into the wilderness, and sacrifice to Yahweh our Mighty One, as he shall command us."

^{8:28}Par`oh said, "I will let you go, that you may sacrifice to Yahweh your Mighty One in the wilderness, only you shall not go very far away. Pray for me."

^{8:29}**Moshe said, "Behold, I go out from you, and I will pray to Yahweh that the swarms of flies may depart from Par`oh, from his servants, and from his people, tomorrow; only don't let Par`oh deal deceitfully any more in not letting the people go to sacrifice to Yahweh."**^{8:30} Moshe went out from Par`oh, and prayed to Yahweh.^{8:31} Yahweh did according to the word of Moshe, and he removed the swarms of flies from Par`oh, from

Prayer

his servants, and from his people. There remained not one. ^{8:32}*Par`oh hardened his heart this time also, and he didn't let the people go.*

8:28-31 shows, again, that Yahweh's servants, his prophets, are to pray for repentant sinners. For when Paroh, again, indicated that he was repenting, Moshe agreed to pray for him again. And Yahweh again heard Moshe's voice, that he bring respite to the Mitzrim, that the plague upon them may be removed.

Yahweh Acts To Glorify His Name

Shemot (Exodus) 9:13-35 reads,

^{9:13}*Yahweh said to Moshe, "Rise up early in the morning, and stand before Par`oh, and tell him, 'This is what Yahweh, The Mighty One of the Hebrews, says: "Let my people go, that they may serve me.* ^{9:14}*For this time I will send all my plagues on your heart, and on your servants, and on your people; that you may know that there is none like me in all the earth.* ^{9:15}*For now I would have put forth my hand, and struck you and your people with pestilence, and you would have been cut off from the earth;* ^{9:16}*but indeed for this cause I have made you stand, to show you my power, and that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.* ^{9:17}*As you still exalt yourself against my people, that you won't let them go.* ^{9:18}*Behold, tomorrow about this time I will cause it to rain a very grievous hail, such as has not been in Mitzrayim since the day it was founded even until now.*

^{9:19}*Now therefore command that all of your cattle and all that you have in the field be brought into shelter. Every man and animal that is found in the field, and isn't brought home, the hail shall come down on them, and they shall die.*""

^{9:20}*Those who feared the word of Yahweh among the servants of Par`oh made their servants and their cattle flee into the houses.* ^{9:21}*Whoever didn't regard the word of Yahweh left his servants and his cattle in the field.*

^{9:22}*Yahweh said to Moshe, "Stretch forth your hand toward the sky, that there may be hail in all the land of Mitzrayim, on man, and on animal, and on every herb of the field, throughout the land of Mitzrayim."*

^{9:23}*Moshe stretched forth his rod toward the heavens, and Yahweh sent thunder, hail, and lightning flashed down to the earth. Yahweh rained hail on the land of Mitzrayim.* ^{9:24}*So there was very severe hail, and lightning mixed with the hail, such as had not been in all the land of Mitzrayim since it became a nation.* ^{9:25}*The hail struck throughout all the land of Mitzrayim all that was in the field, both man and animal; and the hail struck every herb of the field, and broke every tree of the field.* ^{9:26}*Only in the land of Goshen, where the children of Yisra'el were, there was no hail.*

^{9:27}*Par`oh sent, and called for Moshe and Aharon, and said to them, "I have sinned this time. Yahweh is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.* ^{9:28}*Pray to Yahweh; for there has been enough of mighty thunderings and hail. I will let you go, and you shall stay no longer."*

^{9:29}*Moshe said to him, "As soon as I have gone out of the city, I will spread abroad my hands to Yahweh. The thunders shall cease, neither shall there be any more hail; that you may know that the earth is Yahweh's.* ^{9:30}*But as for you and your servants, I know that you will not yet fear Yahweh The Mighty One."*

^{9:31}*The flax and the barley were struck, for the barley was in the ear, and the flax was in bloom.* ^{9:32}*But the wheat and the spelt were not struck, for they had not grown up.*

Prayer

^{9:33} Moshe went out of the city from Par`oh, and spread abroad his hands to Yahweh; and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain was not poured on the earth. ^{9:34} When Par`oh saw that the rain and the hail and the thunders were ceased, he sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants. ^{9:35} The heart of Par`oh was hardened, and he didn't let the children of Yisra'el go, as Yahweh had spoken through Moshe.

9:13-16 shows why Yahweh undertook the various actions that he did in the land of Mitzrayim. He did it to glorify his name. To show the people that there is none like him in all the earth, and to declare his name throughout all the earth.

9:27-30 shows that Yahweh, after Moshe's prayer, was going to bring respite to the plague with which he had just afflicted the Mitzrim. Nevertheless, he would bring this respite not because Paroh was a repentant sinner. No! Paroh had repeatedly shown that he had yet to truly repent, feigning repentance simply for the purpose of averting the plagues upon the Mitzrim. Nevertheless, Yahweh would still bring respite in order to show that all the earth belongs to Yahweh. In other words, he would bring respite to further declare and glorify his name throughout all the earth.

The Time Of Year When Yahweh's Plagues Afflicted The Mitzrim

9:31-32 shows the time of year that these events took place. The time when the flax and the barley have grown up, but the wheat and the spelt have not grown up. "For the barley was in the ear, and the flax in bloom." It was the time of the beginning of the year, Aviv - the time for green ears of barley.

Why Yahweh Performed His Signs In The Land Of Mitzrayim

Shemot (Exodus) 10:1-20 reads,

^{10:1} Yahweh said to Moshe, **"Go in to Par`oh, for I have hardened his heart, and the heart of his servants, that I may show these my signs in the midst of them, ^{10:2} and that you may tell in the hearing of your son, and of your son's son, what things I have done to Mitzrayim, and my signs which I have done among them; that you may know that I am Yahweh."**

^{10:3} Moshe and Aharon went in to Par`oh, and said to him, "This is what Yahweh, The Mighty One of the Hebrews, says: 'How long will you refuse to humble yourself before me? Let my people go, that they may serve me. ^{10:4} Or else, if you refuse to let my people go, behold, tomorrow I will bring locusts into your country, ^{10:5} and they shall cover the surface of the earth, so that one won't be able to see the earth. They shall eat the residue of that which has escaped, which remains to you from the hail, and shall eat every tree which grows for you out of the field. ^{10:6} Your houses shall be filled, and the houses of all your servants, and the houses of all the Mitzrim; as neither your fathers nor your fathers' fathers have seen, since the day that they were on the earth to this day.'" He turned, and went out from Par`oh.

^{10:7} Par`oh's servants said to him, "How long will this man be a snare to us? Let the men go, that they may serve Yahweh, their Mighty One. Don't you yet know that Mitzrayim is destroyed? ^{10:8} Moshe and Aharon were brought again to Par`oh, and he said to them, "Go, serve Yahweh your Mighty One; but who are those who will go?"

Prayer

^{10:9} Moshe said, "We will go with our young and with our old; with our sons and with our daughters, with our flocks and with our herds will we go; for we must hold a feast to Yahweh."

^{10:10} He said to them, "Yahweh be with you if I will let you go with your little ones! See, evil is clearly before your faces. ^{10:11} Not so! Go now you who are men, and serve Yahweh; for that is what you desire!" They were driven out from Par`oh's presence.

^{10:12} Yahweh said to Moshe, "Stretch out your hand over the land of Mitzrayim for the locusts, that they may come up on the land of Mitzrayim, and eat every herb of the land, even all that the hail has left." ^{10:13} Moshe stretched forth his rod over the land of Mitzrayim, and Yahweh brought an east wind on the land all that day, and all the night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. ^{10:14} The locusts went up over all the land of Mitzrayim, and rested in all the borders of Mitzrayim. They were very grievous. Before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. ^{10:15} For they covered the surface of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened, and they ate every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees that the hail had left. There remained nothing green, either tree or herb of the field, through all the land of Mitzrayim. ^{10:16} Then Par`oh called for Moshe and Aharon in haste, and he said, "I have sinned against Yahweh your Mighty One, and against you. ^{10:17} Now therefore please forgive my sin again, and pray to Yahweh your Mighty One, that he may also take away from me this death."

^{10:18} He went out from Par`oh, and prayed to Yahweh. ^{10:19} Yahweh turned an exceeding strong west wind, which took up the locusts, and drove them into the Sea of Suf. There remained not one locust in all the borders of Mitzrayim. ^{10:20} But Yahweh hardened Par`oh's heart, and he didn't let the children of Yisra'el go.

10:1-2 gives Yahweh's explanation why he did the various signs that he did in the land of Mitzrayim. That the Yisraelites may repeat, in the hearing of their progeny in subsequent generations, the signs that Yahweh did in the land of Mitzrayim, that they may know that Yahweh truly is Yahweh the Mighty One.

Prayer

MOSHE'S DEALINGS WITH THE PEOPLE OF YISRAEL

Bamidbar (Numbers) 11:1-3 reads,

^{11:1}The people were as murmurers, speaking evil in the ears of Yahweh: and when Yahweh heard it, his anger was kindled; and the fire of Yahweh burnt among them, and devoured in the uttermost part of the camp. ^{11:2}The people cried to Moshe; and Moshe prayed to Yahweh, and the fire abated. ^{11:3}The name of that place was called Tav`erah, because the fire of Yahweh burnt among them.

Yahweh Responds To The Prayers Of His Servants

When the people cried to Moshe, when the fire of Yahweh burned in the camp, he prayed to Yahweh, and the fire abated. Showing that Yahweh indeed responded to the prayer of his servant for the people.

Yahweh's servants, especially his prophets, should pray for the people whenever they sin and face the consequences of their sin. That Yahweh may both forgive them their sin, and also abate the consequences of their sin.

The sinning people should likewise repent of their sin, in order to assure their forgiveness and the abatement of the consequences of their sin.

Aharon And Miryam Speak Out Against Moshe

Bamidbar (Numbers) 12:1-16 reads,

^{12:1}Miryam and Aharon spoke against Moshe because of the Kushite woman whom he had married; for he had married a Kushite woman. ^{12:2}They said, "Has Yahweh indeed spoken only with Moshe? Hasn't he spoken also with us?" Yahweh heard it.

^{12:3}Now the man Moshe was very humble, above all the men who were on the surface of the earth. ^{12:4}Yahweh spoke suddenly to Moshe, and to Aharon, and to Miryam, "Come out you three to the tent of meeting."

They three came out.

^{12:5}Yahweh came down in a pillar of cloud, and stood at the door of the Tent, and called Aharon and Miryam; and they both came forth. ^{12:6}He said, "Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I, Yahweh, will make myself known to him in a vision, I will speak with him in a dream. ^{12:7}My servant Moshe is not so; he is faithful in all my house:

^{12:8}with him will I speak mouth to mouth, even manifestly, and not in dark speeches; and the form of Yahweh shall he see: why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant, against Moshe?" ^{12:9}The anger of Yahweh was kindled against them; and he departed.

^{12:10}The cloud removed from over the Tent; and, behold, Miryam was leprous, as white as snow: and Aharon looked at Miryam, and, behold, she was leprous. ^{12:11}Aharon said to Moshe, "Oh, my master, please don't lay sin on us, for that we have done foolishly, and for that we have sinned. ^{12:12}Let her not, I pray, be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he comes out of his mother's womb."

^{12:13}Moshe cried to Yahweh, saying, "Heal her, Mighty One, I beg you."

Prayer

^{12:14}Yahweh said to Moshe, "If her father had but spit in her face, shouldn't she be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut up outside of the camp seven days, and after that she shall be brought in again." ^{12:15}Miryam was shut up outside of the camp seven days: and the people didn't travel until Miryam was brought in again. ^{12:16}Afterward the people journeyed from Chatzerot, and encamped in the wilderness of Paran.

Moshe Prayed For Miryam's Healing

When Aharon and Miryam had sinned, and consequently Yahweh made Miryam leprous, Aharon cried to Moshe that they be forgiven their sin, and that Miryam be healed of her leprosy. For Aharon recognised that Yahweh indeed heard Moshe his servant, and was also repentant after both he and Miryam were reproved by Yahweh.

Moshe responded, as is typical of faithful servants and prophets of Yahweh, by crying to Yahweh to forgive their sin and remove the consequence of their sin.

Miryam Shamed In Retribution For Her Sin

Yahweh, typically, agreed to forgive their sin and also remove the consequence of their sin. For they were repentant. Nevertheless, Yahweh did not remove the consequence of their sin, Miryam's leprosy, immediately. Yahweh taught them that she needed to be shamed in retribution for her sin. And only after her shaming period was over would the consequence of her sin be removed.

Sometimes Yahweh Does Not Answer Our Prayers In The Manner That We Expect

In this Yahweh showed us that he sometimes does not answer our prayers at the time we expect answers to our prayers. He sometimes does not answer them in the manner we expect because he has good reason for not doing as we request. We should therefore try to ascertain why Yahweh acts in the manner that he does, seeking understanding from him in order to serve him faithfully and fearfully.

The Fiery Serpent On A Standard

Bamidbar (Numbers) 21:1-9 reads,

^{21:1}The Kana`ani, the king of `Arad, who lived in the South, heard tell that Yisra'el came by the way of Atarim; and he fought against Yisra'el, and took some of them captive.

^{21:2}Yisra'el vowed a vow to Yahweh, and said, "If you will indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities." ^{21:3}Yahweh listened to the voice of Yisra'el, and delivered up the Kana`anim; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and the name of the place was called Chormah.

^{21:4}They journeyed from mount Hor by the way to the Sea of Suf, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way. ^{21:5}The people spoke against the Mighty One, and against Moshe, "Why have you brought us up out of Mitzrayim to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread, and there is no water;

Prayer

and our soul loathes this light bread." ^{21:6}Yahweh sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Yisra'el died.

^{21:7}*The people came to Moshe, and said, "We have sinned, because we have spoken against Yahweh, and against you; pray to Yahweh, that he take away the serpents from us." Moshe prayed for the people.*

^{21:8}*Yahweh said to Moshe, "Make you a fiery serpent, and set it on a standard: and it shall happen, that everyone who is bitten, when he sees it, shall live." ^{21:9}Moshe made a serpent of brass, and set it on the standard: and it happened, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he looked to the serpent of brass, he lived.*

21:6-9 shows that when a sinner is repentant, Yahweh's servants should pray for that sinner, that he may be forgiven his sin, and the consequences of his sin removed. For so did Moshe, Yahweh's servant and prophet, pray for the repentant Yisraelites, and the plague of serpents was abated.

The People Of Yisrael Repeatedly Sinned Against Yahweh

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 9:1-10:22 reads,

^{9:1}*Hear, Yisra'el: you are to pass over the Yarden this day, to go in to dispossess nations greater and mightier than yourself, cities great and fortified up to the sky, ^{9:2}a people great and tall, the sons of the `Anakim, whom you know, and of whom you have heard say, "Who can stand before the sons of `Anak?" ^{9:3}Know therefore this day, that Yahweh your Mighty One is he who goes over before you as a devouring fire; he will destroy them, and he will bring them down before you: so shall you drive them out, and make them to perish quickly, as Yahweh has spoken to you.*

^{9:4}*Don't speak in your heart, after that Yahweh your Mighty One has thrust them out from before you, saying, "For my righteousness Yahweh has brought me in to possess this land." Whereas for the wickedness of these nations Yahweh does drive them out from before you. ^{9:5}Not for your righteousness, or for the uprightness of your heart, do you go in to possess their land; but for the wickedness of these nations Yahweh your Mighty One does drive them out from before you, and that he may establish the word which Yahweh swore to your fathers, to Avraham, to Yitzchak, and to Ya`akov. ^{9:6}Know therefore, that Yahweh your Mighty One doesn't give you this good land to possess it for your righteousness; for you are a stiff-necked people.*

^{9:7}*Remember, don't forget, how you provoked Yahweh your Mighty One to wrath in the wilderness: from the day that you went forth out of the land of Mitzrayim, until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against Yahweh. ^{9:8}Also in Chorev you provoked Yahweh to wrath, and Yahweh was angry with you to destroy you. ^{9:9}When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which Yahweh made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water. ^{9:10}Yahweh delivered to me the two tables of stone written with the finger of the Mighty One; and on them was written according to all the words, which Yahweh spoke with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. ^{9:11}It came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that Yahweh gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. ^{9:12}Yahweh said to me, "Arise, get you down quickly from hence; for your people whom you have brought forth*

Prayer

out of Mitzrayim have corrupted themselves; they have quickly turned aside out of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image."

^{9:13} Furthermore Yahweh spoke to me, saying, "I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiff-necked people: ^{9:14} let me alone, that I may destroy them, and blot out their name from under the sky; and I will make of you a nation mightier and greater than they."

^{9:15} So I turned and came down from the mount, and the mount was burning with fire: and the two tables of the covenant were in my two hands. ^{9:16} I looked, and, behold, you had sinned against Yahweh your Mighty One; you had made you a molten calf: you had turned aside quickly out of the way that Yahweh had commanded you. ^{9:17} I took hold of the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands, and broke them before your eyes. ^{9:18} **I fell down before Yahweh, as at the first, forty days and forty nights; I did neither eat bread nor drink water; because of all your sin which you sinned, in doing that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, to provoke him to anger. ^{9:19} For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith Yahweh was angry against you to destroy you. But Yahweh listened to me that time also.**

^{9:20} **Yahweh was very angry with Aharon to destroy him: and I prayed for Aharon also at the same time.**

^{9:21} I took your sin, the calf which you had made, and burnt it with fire, and stamped it, grinding it very small, until it was as fine as dust: and I cast the dust of it into the brook that descended out of the mount.

^{9:22} At Tav'erah, and at Massah, and at Kivrot-Hatta'avah, you provoked Yahweh to wrath. ^{9:23} When Yahweh sent you from Kadesh-Barnea, saying, "Go up and possess the land which I have given you"; then you rebelled against the commandment of Yahweh your Mighty One, and you didn't believe him, nor listen to his voice. ^{9:24} You have been rebellious against Yahweh from the day that I knew you.

^{9:25} **So I fell down before Yahweh the forty days and forty nights that I fell down, because Yahweh had said he would destroy you. ^{9:26} I prayed to Yahweh, and said, 'Sovereign Yahweh, don't destroy your people and your inheritance, that you have redeemed through your greatness, that you have brought forth out of Mitzrayim with a mighty hand. ^{9:27} Remember your servants, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Ya'akov; don't look to the stubbornness of this people, nor to their wickedness, nor to their sin, ^{9:28} lest the land whence you brought us out say, 'Because Yahweh was not able to bring them into the land which he promised to them, and because he hated them, he has brought them out to kill them in the wilderness.' ^{9:29} Yet they are your people and your inheritance, which you brought out by your great power and by your outstretched arm.'**

^{10:1} At that time Yahweh said to me, "Hew you two tables of stone like the first, and come up to me into the mount, and make you an ark of wood. ^{10:2} I will write on the tables the words that were on the first tables which you broke, and you shall put them in the ark."

^{10:3} So I made an ark of shittim wood, and hewed two tables of stone like the first, and went up into the mount, having the two tables in my hand. ^{10:4} He wrote on the tables, according to the first writing, the ten commandments, which Yahweh spoke to you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly: and Yahweh gave them to me. ^{10:5} I turned and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark that I had made; and there they are as Yahweh commanded me.

^{10:6} (The children of Yisra'el journeyed from Be'erot Bene-Ya'akan to Moserah. There Aharon died, and there he was buried; and El'azar his son ministered in the Kohen's

Prayer

office in his place. ^{10:7}From there they journeyed to Gudgodah; and from Gudgodah to Yotvatah, a land of brooks of water. ^{10:8}At that time Yahweh set apart the tribe of Levi, to bear the ark of the covenant of Yahweh, to stand before Yahweh to minister to him, and to bless in his name, to this day. ^{10:9}Therefore Levi has no portion nor inheritance with his brothers; Yahweh is his inheritance, according as Yahweh your Mighty One spoke to him.)

^{10:10}I stayed in the mount, as at the first time, forty days and forty nights: and Yahweh listened to me that time also; Yahweh would not destroy you. ^{10:11}Yahweh said to me, "Arise, take your journey before the people; and they shall go in and possess the land, which I swore to their fathers to give to them."

^{10:12}Now, Yisra'el, what does Yahweh your Mighty One require of you, but to fear Yahweh your Mighty One, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve Yahweh your Mighty One with all your heart and with all your soul, ^{10:13}to keep the commandments of Yahweh, and his statutes, which I command you this day for your good? ^{10:14}Behold, to Yahweh your Mighty One belongs Heaven and the Heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that is therein. ^{10:15}Only Yahweh had a delight in your fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all peoples, as at this day. ^{10:16}Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked. ^{10:17}For Yahweh your Mighty One, he is Mighty One of mighty ones, and Sovereign of sovereigns, the great Mighty One, the mighty, and the awesome, who doesn't regard persons, nor takes reward. ^{10:18}He does execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loves the sojourner, in giving him food and clothing. ^{10:19}Love you therefore the sojourner; for you were sojourners in the land of Mitzrayim. ^{10:20}You shall fear Yahweh your Mighty One; him shall you serve; and to him shall you cleave, and by his name shall you swear. ^{10:21}He is your praise, and he is your Mighty One, who has done for you these great and awesome things, which your eyes have seen. ^{10:22}Your fathers went down into Mitzrayim with seventy persons; and now Yahweh your Mighty One has made you as the stars of the sky for multitude.

How Yahweh's Servants Are To Entreat Yahweh When A Grievous Sin Has Been Committed

9:18 shows the manner Moshe entreated Yahweh to save the people of Yisrael from death after their sin of idolatry against Yahweh. Moshe fell before Yahweh, forty days and forty nights, eating neither bread nor drinking water! Showing that when the sin committed by people is grievous, the manner Yahweh's servant and prophet is to pray to Yahweh for their atonement and forgiveness is by falling before Yahweh and fasting!

Moshe's example shows that Yahweh servants, particularly his prophets, are to be alert to the conduct of the people Yahweh has given to them to serve. Such that if the people commit sin, Yahweh's servants and prophets are to quickly plead to Yahweh on their behalf, while at the same time urging the people to repent of their sin.

Moshe's Prayer For Aharon Facilitated Aharon's Preservation

9:20 shows that it was Moshe's prayer to Yahweh that resulted in the preservation of Aharon's life, after Aharon had participated with the people in their sin of idolatry.

Prayer

Moshe's Prayer To Yahweh For The People's Preservation

9:25-29 give the reasons Moshe gave to Yahweh in attempting to persuade Yahweh to spare the people and not destroy them. Moshe reminded Yahweh of his promises to the ancestors of the people, and how these promises were to be fulfilled in these people. Moshe also reminded Yahweh of his great name throughout all the earth, and how Yahweh's reputation stood to be damaged if he did not bring those people into the land of the Kanaanim.

Not that Yahweh was unaware of the things that Moshe was praying to him about, to persuade him from his intended action. No! Only that Moshe reasserted that what Yahweh was already doing, and what he was urging him to continue doing, was for the glorification of Yahweh's name, and for the showing of Yahweh's faithfulness, independent of the sinful conduct of the people inheriting these promises and blessings. In other words, Moshe prayed for the performance and perpetuation of Yahweh's will, despite the sinful conduct of the people.

Prayer

YISRAEL DURING THE DAYS OF JUDGES

Shofetim (Judges) 10:1-16 reads,

^{10:1}After Avimelekh there arose to save Yisra'el Tola the son of Pu'ah, the son of Dodo, a man of Yissakhar; and he lived in Shamir in the hill-country of Efrayim. ^{10:2}He judged Yisra'el twenty-three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir. ^{10:3}After him arose Ya'ir, the Gil'adite; and he judged Yisra'el twenty-two years. ^{10:4}He had thirty sons who rode on thirty donkey colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Chavvot-Ya'ir to this day, which are in the land of Gil'ad. ^{10:5}Ya'ir died, and was buried in Kamon.

^{10:6}The children of Yisra'el again did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, and served the Ba'alim, and the 'Ashtarot, and the mighty ones of Aram, and the mighty ones of Tzidon, and the mighty ones of Mo'av, and the mighty ones of the children of 'Ammon, and the mighty ones of the Pelishtim; and they forsook Yahweh, and didn't serve him.

^{10:7}The anger of Yahweh was kindled against Yisra'el, and he sold them into the hand of the Pelishtim, and into the hand of the children of 'Ammon. ^{10:8}They vexed and oppressed the children of Yisra'el that year: eighteen years oppressed they all the children of Yisra'el that were beyond the Yarden in the land of the Amori, which is in Gil'ad.

^{10:9}The children of 'Ammon passed over the Yarden to fight also against Yahudah, and against Binyamin, and against the house of Efrayim; so that Yisra'el was sore distressed.

^{10:10}The children of Yisra'el cried to Yahweh, saying, "We have sinned against you, even because we have forsaken our Mighty One, and have served the Ba'alim." ^{10:11}Yahweh said to the children of Yisra'el, "Didn't I save you from the Mitzrim, and from the Amori, from the children of 'Ammon, and from the Pelishtim?" ^{10:12}The Tzidonim also, and the 'Amaleki, and the Ma'on, did oppress you; and you cried to me, and I saved you out of their hand. ^{10:13}Yet you have forsaken me, and served other mighty ones: why - I will save you no more. ^{10:14}Go and cry to the mighty ones which you have chosen; let them save you in the time of your distress."

^{10:15}The children of Yisra'el said to Yahweh, "We have sinned: do you to us whatever seems good to you; only deliver us, we pray you, this day." ^{10:16}They put away the foreign mighty ones from among them, and served Yahweh; and his soul was grieved for the misery of Yisra'el.

Yahweh Generally Does Not Deliver Those Who Are Unfaithful To Him

10:11-14 shows that if one abandons Yahweh, and only comes to Yahweh for salvation in one's moment of distress, Yahweh will not act to save that one from that distress. Implying that if one desires to be in such standing before Yahweh such that Yahweh will save that one from distress, when distress comes upon one, one must indeed be and remain faithful to Yahweh.

How To Turn Yahweh's Heart In Our Favour

10:15-16 shows that when the sinning Yisraelites repented, Yahweh's heart was again turned to them. Therefore, to have Yahweh's heart turned to us in our favour, we must act faithfully towards Yahweh. Then, even if distress comes upon us, and we cry to Yahweh, he will indeed hear us, rather than leave us to our own devices.

Prayer

Prophecy And Instructions Concerning Shimshon's Birth

Shofetim (Judges) 13:1-25 reads,

^{13:1}The children of Yisra'el again did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh; and Yahweh delivered them into the hand of the Pelishtim forty years. ^{13:2}There was a certain man of Tzor'ah, of the family of the Dani, whose name was Manoach; and his wife was barren, and didn't bear. ^{13:3}The angel of Yahweh appeared to the woman, and said to her, "See now, you are barren, and don't bear; but you shall conceive, and bear a son. ^{13:4}Now therefore please beware and drink no wine nor strong drink, and don't eat any unclean thing: ^{13:5}for, behold, you shall conceive, and bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head; for the child shall be a Nazir to the Mighty One from the womb: and he shall begin to save Yisra'el out of the hand of the Pelishtim."

^{13:6}Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, "A man of the Mighty One came to me, and his face was like the face of the angel of the Mighty One, very awesome; and I didn't ask him whence he was, neither did he tell me his name: ^{13:7}but he said to me, 'Behold, you shall conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing; for the child shall be a Nazir to the Mighty One from the womb to the day of his death.'"

^{13:8}Then Manoach entreated Yahweh, and said, "**Oh, Sovereign, please let the man of the Mighty One whom you did send come again to us, and teach us what we shall do to the child who shall be born.**" ^{13:9}**The Mighty One listened to the voice of Manoach; and the angel of the Mighty One came again to the woman as she sat in the field:** but Manoach, her husband, wasn't with her. ^{13:10}The woman made haste, and ran, and told her husband, and said to him, "Behold, the man has appeared to me, who came to me the other day."

^{13:11}Manoach arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said to him, "Are you the man who spoke to the woman?" He said, "I am." ^{13:12}Manoach said, "Now let your words happen: what shall be the ordering of the child, and how shall we do to him?" ^{13:13}The angel of Yahweh said to Manoach, "Of all that I said to the woman let her beware. ^{13:14}She may not eat of anything that comes of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing; all that I commanded her let her observe."

^{13:15}Manoach said to the angel of Yahweh, "I pray you, let us detain you, that we may make ready a kid for you." ^{13:16}The angel of Yahweh said to Manoach, "Though you detain me, I won't eat of your bread; and if you will make ready a burnt offering, you must offer it to Yahweh." For Manoach didn't know that he was the angel of Yahweh.

^{13:17}Manoach said to the angel of Yahweh, "What is your name, that when your words happen, we may honor you?" ^{13:18}The angel of Yahweh said to him, "Why ask you after my name, seeing it is wonderful?" ^{13:19}So Manoach took the kid with the meal-offering, and offered it on the rock to Yahweh: and the angel did wondrously, and Manoach and his wife looked on. ^{13:20}For it happened, when the flame went up toward the sky from off the altar, that the angel of Yahweh ascended in the flame of the altar: and Manoach and his wife looked on; and they fell on their faces to the ground. ^{13:21}But the angel of Yahweh did no more appear to Manoach or to his wife. Then Manoach knew that he was the angel of Yahweh.

Prayer

^{13:22}Manoach said to his wife, "We shall surely die, because we have seen the Mighty One." ^{13:23}But his wife said to him, "If Yahweh were pleased to kill us, he wouldn't have received a burnt offering and a meal-offering at our hand, neither would he have showed us all these things, nor would at this time have told such things as these."

^{13:24}The woman bore a son, and named him Shimshon: and the child grew, and Yahweh blessed him. ^{13:25}The Spirit of Yahweh began to move him in Machane-Dan, between Tzor`ah and Eshta'ol.

Pray In A Manner Consistent With Yahweh's Will

13:8-9 shows that when Manoach prayed to Yahweh in a manner in harmony with Yahweh's will, in a manner to better perpetuate Yahweh's will, Yahweh listened to him. Implying that if Yahweh is to listen to our prayers to him, we ought to pray in a manner consistent with his will, in a manner to better perpetuate his will.

Prayer

SHEMUEL THE SEER

Shemuel's Birth

1 Shemuel (Samuel) 1:1-2:11, 18-21 reads,

^{1:1}Now there was a certain man of Ramatayim-Tzofim, of the hill-country of Ephraim, and his name was Elkana, the son of Yerocham, the son of Elihu, the son of Tochu, the son of Tzuf, an Ephraimite: ^{1:2}and he had two wives; the name of the one was Channah, and the name of the other Peninnah: and Peninnah had children, but Channah had no children. ^{1:3}This man went up out of his city from year to year to worship and to sacrifice to Yahweh-Tzva'ot in Shiloh. The two sons of `Eli, Chofni and Pinechas, Kohanim to Yahweh, were there.

^{1:4}When the day came that Elkana sacrificed, he gave to Peninnah his wife, and to all her sons and her daughters, portions: ^{1:5}but to Channah he gave a double portion; for he loved Channah, but Yahweh had shut up her womb. ^{1:6}Her rival provoked her sore, to make her fret, because Yahweh had shut up her womb. ^{1:7}as he did so year by year, when she went up to the house of Yahweh, so she provoked her; therefore she wept, and did not eat.

^{1:8}Elkana her husband said to her, "Channah, why weep you? And why don't you eat? And why is your heart grieved? Am I not better to you than ten sons?"

^{1:9}So Channah rose up after they had eaten in Shiloh, and after they had drunk. Now `Eli the Kohen was sitting on his seat by the door-post of the temple of Yahweh. ^{1:10}**She was in bitterness of soul, and prayed to Yahweh, and wept sore.** ^{1:11}She vowed a vow, and said, "Yahweh-Tzva'ot, if you will indeed look on the affliction of your handmaid, and remember me, and not forget your handmaid, but will give to your handmaid a man-child, then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come on his head."

^{1:12}It happened, as she continued praying before Yahweh, that `Eli marked her mouth.

^{1:13}**Now Channah, she spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard:** therefore `Eli thought she had been drunken. ^{1:14}`Eli said to her, "How long will you be drunken? Put away your wine from you." ^{1:15}Channah answered, "No, my master, I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit: I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but I poured out my soul before Yahweh. ^{1:16}Don't count your handmaid for a wicked woman; for out of the abundance of my complaint and my provocation have I spoken hitherto."

^{1:17}Then `Eli answered, "Go in shalom; and the Mighty One of Yisra'el grant your petition that you have asked of him." ^{1:18}She said, "Let your handmaid find favor in your sight." So the woman went her way, and ate; and her facial expression wasn't sad any more.

^{1:19}They rose up in the morning early, and worshipped before Yahweh, and returned, and came to their house to Ramah: and Elkana knew Channah his wife; and Yahweh remembered her. ^{1:20}It happened, when the time was come about, that Channah conceived, and bore a son; and she named him Shemu'el, saying, "Because I have asked him of Yahweh."

^{1:21}The man Elkana, and all his house, went up to offer to Yahweh the yearly sacrifice, and his vow. ^{1:22}But Channah didn't go up; for she said to her husband, "I will not go up

Prayer

until the child be weaned; and then I will bring him, that he may appear before Yahweh, and there abide forever." ^{1:23}Elkana her husband said to her, "Do what seems you good; wait until you have weaned him; only Yahweh establish his word." So the woman waited and nursed her son, until she weaned him. ^{1:24}When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, with three bulls, and one ephah of meal, and a bottle of wine, and brought him to the house of Yahweh in Shiloh: and the child was young. ^{1:25}They killed the bull, and brought the child to Eli.

^{1:26}She said, "Oh, my master, as your soul lives, my master, I am the woman who stood by you here, praying to Yahweh. ^{1:27}For this child I prayed; and Yahweh has given me my petition which I asked of him: ^{1:28}therefore also I have granted him to Yahweh; as long as he lives he is granted to Yahweh." He worshipped Yahweh there.

^{2:1}Channah prayed, and said:

"My heart exults in Yahweh;
My horn is exalted in Yahweh;
My mouth is enlarged over my enemies;
Because I rejoice in your salvation.

^{2:2}There is none holy as Yahweh;
For there is none besides you,
Neither is there any rock like our Mighty One.

^{2:3}Talk no more so exceeding proudly;
Don't let arrogance come out of your mouth;
For Yahweh is a Mighty One of knowledge,
By his actions are weighed.

^{2:4}The bows of the mighty men are broken;
Those who stumbled are girded with strength.

^{2:5}Those who were full have hired out themselves for bread;
Those who were hungry have ceased to hunger:
Yes, the barren has borne seven;
She who has many children languishes.

^{2:6}Yahweh kills, and makes alive:
He brings down to She'ol, and brings up.

^{2:7}Yahweh makes poor, and makes rich:
He brings low, he also lifts up.

^{2:8}He raises up the poor out of the dust,
He lifts up the needy from the dunghill,
To make them sit with princes,
Inherit the throne of glory:

For the pillars of the earth are Yahweh's,
He has set the world on them.

^{2:9}He will keep the feet of his holy ones;
But the wicked shall be put to silence in darkness;
For by strength shall no man prevail.

^{2:10}Those who strive with Yahweh shall be broken to pieces;
Against them will he thunder in the sky:
Yahweh will judge the ends of the earth;
He will give strength to his king,

Prayer

Exalt the horn of his anointed."

^{2:11} *Elkana went to Ramah to his house. The child did minister to Yahweh before `Eli the Kohen.*

^{2:18} *But Shemu'el ministered before Yahweh, being a child, girded with a linen efod.*

^{2:19} *Moreover his mother made him a little robe, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice. ^{2:20} `Eli blessed Elkana and his wife, and said, "Yahweh give you seed of this woman for the petition which was asked of Yahweh." They went to their own home. ^{2:21} Yahweh visited Channah, and she conceived, and bore three sons and two daughters. The child Shemu'el grew before Yahweh.*

How Channah Prayed For The Cessation Of Her Affliction

1:10-11 shows that Channah did not pray to keep the son that she prayed for. She offered to give him to Yahweh, to serve Yahweh all the days of his life. In other words, what Channah considered important to her was the cessation of her affliction, which came about on her because she was barren. And this affliction would cease by her bearing at least one child, whom she offered to give to Yahweh.

Channah Prayed In Her Heart - Silently

1:12-16 shows that Channah prayed in her heart - silently, and not audibly.

1:19-20 shows that Yahweh indeed heard Channah's silent prayer, and gave her a son.

Eli Publicly Worshipped Yahweh

1:28 shows that Eli acknowledged Channah's answered prayer, personified in Shemuel, by worshipping before Yahweh upon Shemuel's presentation before him. It therefore seems that it is quite appropriate to worship Yahweh publicly, in front of other people, when the occasion merits it.

Shemuel's Judging Of Yisrael

1 Shemuel (Samuel) 7:1-17 reads,

^{7:1} *The men of Kiryat-Ye`arim came, and fetched up the ark of Yahweh, and brought it into the house of Avinadav in the hill, and sanctified El`azar his son to keep the ark of Yahweh. ^{7:2} It happened, from the day that the ark abode in Kiryat-Ye`arim, that the time was long; for it was twenty years: and all the house of Yisra'el lamented after Yahweh.*

^{7:3} *Shemu'el spoke to all the house of Yisra'el, saying, "If you do return to Yahweh with all your heart, then put away the foreign mighty ones and the `Ashtarot from among you, and direct your hearts to Yahweh, and serve him only; and he will deliver you out of the hand of the Pelishtim." ^{7:4} Then the children of Yisra'el did put away the Ba`alim and the `Ashtarot, and served Yahweh only.*

^{7:5} *Shemu'el said, "Gather all Yisra'el to Mitzpah, and I will pray for you to Yahweh."*

^{7:6} *They gathered together to Mitzpah, and drew water, and poured it out before*

Prayer

Yahweh, and fasted on that day, and said there, "We have sinned against Yahweh."
Shemu'el judged the children of Yisra'el in Mitzpah.

^{7:7}When the Pelishtim heard that the children of Yisra'el were gathered together at Mitzpah, the masters of the Pelishtim went up against Yisra'el. When the children of Yisra'el heard it, they were afraid of the Pelishtim. ^{7:8}The children of Yisra'el said to Shemu'el, "Don't cease to cry to Yahweh our Mighty One for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Pelishtim." ^{7:9}**Shemu'el took a sucking lamb, and offered it for a whole burnt-offering to Yahweh; and Shemu'el cried to Yahweh for Yisra'el; and Yahweh answered him.**

^{7:10}As Shemu'el was offering up the burnt offering, the Pelishtim drew near to battle against Yisra'el; but Yahweh thundered with a great thunder on that day on the Pelishtim, and confused them; and they were struck down before Yisra'el. ^{7:11}The men of Yisra'el went out of Mitzpah, and pursued the Pelishtim, and struck them, until they came under Beit-Kar. ^{7:12}Then Shemu'el took a stone, and set it between Mitzpah and Shen, and called the name of it Even-Ha'ezer, saying, "Hitherto has Yahweh helped us." ^{7:13}So the Pelishtim were subdued, and they came no more within the border of Yisra'el: and the hand of Yahweh was against the Pelishtim all the days of Shemu'el. ^{7:14}The cities which the Pelishtim had taken from Yisra'el were restored to Yisra'el, from 'Ekron even to Gat; and the border of it did Yisra'el deliver out of the hand of the Pelishtim. There was shalom between Yisra'el and the Amori. ^{7:15}Shemu'el judged Yisra'el all the days of his life. ^{7:16}He went from year to year in circuit to Beit-El and Gilgal, and Mitzpah; and he judged Yisra'el in all those places. ^{7:17}His return was to Ramah, for there was his house; and there he judged Yisra'el: and he built there an altar to Yahweh.

Yahweh's Servants Should Teach The People How To Serve Yahweh

7:3-5 shows that Yahweh's servants and prophets ought to teach the people how they are to serve Yahweh - wholeheartedly, fearfully and faithfully! And when the people repent of their idolatry, serving other mighty ones, rather than serving Yahweh exclusively, Yahweh's servants ought to pray for the people that Yahweh may forgive them of their iniquities and also remove or abate the consequences of those iniquities.

In Yisrael's case the consequence of their faithlessness was their harassment and subjection under the hand of the Pelishtim. Therefore, by repenting of their sin and being forgiven of both their sin and this consequence of their sin, the Pelishtim would no longer harass or subject them under their hand.

How Yisrael Repented Before Yahweh

7:6 shows that as part of their repentance before Yahweh, Yisrael not only disposed off their idols, they also confessed their sins before Yahweh, and fasted before him.

It therefore appears that heartfelt repentance includes not only forsaking one's erroneous ways, but also confessing one's sins and fasting before Yahweh.

Prayer

Yahweh Hears His Servants' Prayers On Behalf Of Those Who Are Repentant

7:8-11 shows that not only did Yahweh hear Shemuel's prayer on behalf of Yisrael, he responded by removing the hand of the Pelishtim from being over Yisrael, subduing Yisrael. Yahweh indeed answers the prayers of his servants on behalf of those who are genuinely repentant.

7:9-10 - why did Shemuel offer up a sucking lamb for a whole burnt offering to Yahweh? What was the significance of Shemuel offering up the burnt offering to Yahweh and Yahweh hearing his prayer?

The People Of Yisrael Demand To Have A King

1 Shemuel (Samuel) 8:1-22 reads,

^{8:1}It happened, when Shemu'el was old, that he made his sons judges over Yisra'el. ^{8:2}Now the name of his firstborn was Yo'el; and the name of his second, Aviyah: they were judges in Be'er-Sheva. ^{8:3}His sons didn't walk in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted justice. ^{8:4}Then all the Zakenim of Yisra'el gathered themselves together, and came to Shemu'el to Ramah; ^{8:5}and they said to him, "Behold, you are old, and your sons don't walk in your ways: now make us a king to judge us like all the nations." ^{8:6}But the thing displeased Shemu'el, when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." **Shemu'el prayed to Yahweh.**

^{8:7}Yahweh said to Shemu'el, "Listen to the voice of the people in all that they tell you; for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me, that I should not be king over them.

^{8:8}According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Mitzrayim even to this day, in that they have forsaken me, and served other mighty ones, so do they also to you. ^{8:9}Now therefore listen to their voice: however you shall protest solemnly to them, and shall show them the manner of the king who shall reign over them."

^{8:10}Shemu'el told all the words of Yahweh to the people who asked of him a king. ^{8:11}He said, "This will be the manner of the king who shall reign over you: he will take your sons, and appoint them to him, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and they shall run before his chariots; ^{8:12}and he will appoint them to him for captains of thousands, and captains of fifties; and he will set some to plow his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and the instruments of his chariots. ^{8:13}He will take your daughters to be perfumers, and to be cooks, and to be bakers. ^{8:14}He will take your fields, and your vineyards, and your olive groves, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. ^{8:15}He will take the tenth of your seed, and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. ^{8:16}He will take your men-servants, and your maid-servants, and your best young men, and your donkeys, and put them to his work. ^{8:17}He will take the tenth of your flocks: and you shall be his servants. ^{8:18}**You shall cry out in that day because of your king whom you shall have chosen you; and Yahweh will not answer you in that day.**"

^{8:19}But the people refused to listen to the voice of Shemu'el; and they said, "No: but we will have a king over us, ^{8:20}that we also may be like all the nations, and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles."

^{8:21}Shemu'el heard all the words of the people, and he rehearsed them in the ears of Yahweh. ^{8:22}Yahweh said to Shemu'el, "Listen to their voice, and make them a king." Shemu'el said to the men of Yisra'el, "Go you every man to his city."

Prayer

Shemuel Sought Yahweh's Guidance When Faced With A Difficult Matter

8:1-6 shows that when Shemuel was faced with a difficult situation, a situation for which he did not have a ready answer, he prayed to Yahweh for guidance, that Yahweh may show him what to do in the situation. Following Shemuel's example, we should likewise seek Yahweh in prayer for guidance in our lives, especially when faced with key decisions.

The Nature Of Man's Rule Over Man

8:9-18 summarises the nature of man's rule over man. It should be noted that man's rule over man is quite different to Yahweh's rule over man, such as was the case with Yisrael right up to this time that they sought a human king for themselves to be over them. For human kings sequester that which is in the custody of the people, including making slaves of the people, and using these for their own purposes.

Shemuel Judged Yisrael In Righteousness

1 Shemuel (Samuel) 12:1-25 reads,

^{12:1} Shemu'el said to all Yisra'el, "Behold, I have listened to your voice in all that you said to me, and have made a king over you. ^{12:2} Now, behold, the king walks before you; and I am old and gray-headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my youth to this day. ^{12:3} Here I am: witness against me before Yahweh, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? Or whose donkey have I taken? Or whom have I defrauded? Whom have I oppressed? Or of whose hand have I taken a ransom to blind my eyes therewith? And I will restore it you." ^{12:4} They said, "You have not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither have you taken anything of any man's hand." ^{12:5} He said to them, "Yahweh is witness against you, and his anointed is witness this day, that you have not found anything in my hand." They said, "He is witness." ^{12:6} Shemu'el said to the people, "It is Yahweh who appointed Moshe and Aharon, and that brought your fathers up out of the land of Mitzrayim. ^{12:7} Now therefore stand still, that I may plead with you before Yahweh concerning all the righteous acts of Yahweh, which he did to you and to your fathers. ^{12:8} When Ya'akov was come into Mitzrayim, and your fathers cried to Yahweh, then Yahweh sent Moshe and Aharon, who brought forth your fathers out of Mitzrayim, and made them to dwell in this place. ^{12:9} But they forgot Yahweh their Mighty One; and he sold them into the hand of Sisera, captain of the host of Chatzor, and into the hand of the Pelishtim, and into the hand of the king of Mo'av; and they fought against them. ^{12:10} They cried to Yahweh, and said, 'We have sinned, because we have forsaken Yahweh, and have served the Ba'alim and the 'Ashtarot: but now deliver us out of the hand of our enemies, and we will serve you.' ^{12:11} Yahweh sent Yerubba'al, and Bedan, and Yiftach, and Shemu'el, and delivered you out of the hand of your enemies on every side; and you lived in safety. ^{12:12} When you saw that Nachash the king of the children of 'Ammon came against you, you said to me, 'No, but a king shall reign over us'; when Yahweh your Mighty One was your king. ^{12:13} Now therefore see the king whom you have chosen, and whom you have asked for: and, behold, Yahweh has set a king over you. ^{12:14} If you will fear Yahweh, and serve him, and listen to his voice, and

Prayer

not rebel against the commandment of Yahweh, and both you and also the king who reigns over you be followers of Yahweh your Mighty One, well: ^{12:15}but if you will not listen to the voice of Yahweh, but rebel against the commandment of Yahweh, then will the hand of Yahweh be against you, as it was against your fathers. ^{12:16}Now therefore stand still and see this great thing, which Yahweh will do before your eyes. ^{12:17}Isn't it wheat harvest today? I will call to Yahweh, that he may send thunder and rain; and you shall know and see that your wickedness is great, which you have done in the sight of Yahweh, in asking you a king." ^{12:18}So Shemu'el called to Yahweh; and Yahweh sent thunder and rain that day: and all the people greatly feared Yahweh and Shemu'el.

*^{12:19}All the people said to Shemu'el, "Pray for your servants to Yahweh your Mighty One, that we not die; for we have added to all our sins this evil, to ask us a king." ^{12:20}Shemu'el said to the people, "Don't be afraid; you have indeed done all this evil; yet don't turn aside from following Yahweh, but serve Yahweh with all your heart: ^{12:21}and don't turn aside; for then would you go after vain things which can't profit nor deliver, for they are vain. ^{12:22}For Yahweh will not forsake his people for his great name's sake, because it has pleased Yahweh to make you a people to himself. ^{12:23}**Moreover as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against Yahweh in ceasing to pray for you: but I will instruct you in the good and the right way.** ^{12:24}Only fear Yahweh, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he has done for you. ^{12:25}But if you shall still do wickedly, you shall be consumed, both you and your king."*

12:1-5 shows that Shemuel, judging or ruling over Yisrael under Yahweh's instructions, ruled well. He did not sequester property belonging to the people, nor make slaves of them for his own service, nor defraud them in other ways. Shemuel was a faithful servant of Yahweh. His rule, under Yahweh's guidance, was a contrast to the rule of human kings as portrayed by Yahweh in 1 Shemuel (Samuel) 8.

The Manner We Should Conduct Our Lives

12:14-15 summarises how we should conduct our lives. We should fear Yahweh, serve Yahweh, listen to Yahweh's voice, not rebel against the commandment of Yahweh, and be followers of Yahweh our Mighty One.

12:20-21 shows that Yahweh should be followed and served wholeheartedly.

A Duty Of Yahweh's Prophets

12:23 shows that it is the duty of a prophet of Yahweh to both pray for the people, and to instruct them in the good and the right way. Failure or ceasing to both pray for the people, and to instruct them in the good and the right way, constitutes sin for a prophet of Yahweh.

Prayer

YAHWEH'S PROMISE TO KING DAVID

2 Shemuel (Samuel) 7:1-29; 1 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 17:1-27 reads,

^{7:1}It happened, when the king lived in his house, and Yahweh had given him rest from all his enemies round about, ^{7:2}that the king said to Natan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of the Mighty One dwells within curtains." ^{7:3}Natan said to the king, "Go, do all that is in your heart; for Yahweh is with you."

^{7:4}It happened the same night that the word of Yahweh came to Natan, saying, ^{7:5}"Go and tell my servant David, 'Thus says Yahweh, Shall you build me a house for me to dwell in?"

^{7:6}For I have not lived in a house since the day that I brought up the children of Yisra'el out of Mitzrayim, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tent. ^{7:7}In all places in which I have walked with all the children of Yisra'el, spoke I a word with any of the tribes of Yisra'el, whom I commanded to be shepherd of my people Yisra'el, saying, "Why have you not built me a house of cedar?" ^{7:8}Now therefore thus shall you tell my servant David, Thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, I took you from the sheep pen, from following the sheep, that you should be prince over my people, over Yisra'el; ^{7:9}and I have been with you wherever you went, and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the name of the great ones who are in the earth. ^{7:10}I will appoint a place for my people Yisra'el, and will plant them, that they may dwell in their own place, and be moved no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as at the first, ^{7:11}and as from the day that I commanded judges to be over my people Yisra'el; and I will cause you to rest from all your enemies. Moreover Yahweh tells you that Yahweh will make you a house. ^{7:12}When your days are fulfilled, and you shall sleep with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who shall proceed out of your bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. ^{7:13}He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. ^{7:14}I will be his father, and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men; ^{7:15}but my lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it from Sha'ul, whom I put away before you. ^{7:16}Your house and your kingdom shall be made sure for ever before you: your throne shall be established forever." ^{7:17}According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Natan speak to David.

^{7:18}Then David the king went in, and sat before Yahweh; and he said, "Who am I, Sovereign Yahweh, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far? ^{7:19}This was yet a small thing in your eyes, Sovereign Yahweh; but you have spoken also of your servant's house for a great while to come; and this too after the manner of men, Sovereign Yahweh! ^{7:20}What can David say more to you? For you know your servant, Sovereign Yahweh. ^{7:21}For your word's sake, and according to your own heart, have you worked all this greatness, to make your servant know it. ^{7:22}Therefore you are great, Yahweh the Mighty One: for there is none like you, neither is there any mighty one besides you, according to all that we have heard with our ears. ^{7:23}What one nation in the earth is like your people, even like Yisra'el, whom the Mighty One went to redeem to himself for a people, and to make him a name, and to do great things for you, and awesome things for your land, before your people, whom you redeem to you out of Mitzrayim, from the nations and their mighty ones? ^{7:24}You did establish to yourself your

Prayer

people Yisra'el to be a people to you forever; and you, Yahweh, became their Mighty One. ^{7:25}Now, Yahweh the Mighty One, the word that you have spoken concerning your servant, and concerning his house, confirm you it forever, and do as you have spoken. ^{7:26}Let your name be magnified forever, saying, 'Yahweh-Tzva'ot is Mighty One over Yisra'el; and the house of your servant David shall be established before you.' ^{7:27}For you, Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, have revealed to your servant, saying, 'I will build you a house': therefore has your servant found in his heart to pray this prayer to you. ^{7:28}Now, O Sovereign Yahweh, you are the Mighty One, and your words are truth, and you have promised this good thing to your servant: ^{7:29}now therefore let it please you to bless the house of your servant, that it may continue forever before you; for you, Sovereign Yahweh, have spoken it: and with your blessing let the house of your servant be blessed forever."

Acknowledge Yahweh's Work And Praise Him

When Yahweh does a great work in our lives, or overwhelms us through a deed of his, we should both acknowledge Yahweh's work and praise Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisrael! Halleluyah!

The Dedication Of Yahweh's House

1 Melakhim (Kings) 8:1-9:9; 2 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 6:1-7:22 reads,

^{8:1}Then Shelomo assembled the Zakenim of Yisra'el, and all the heads of the tribes, the princes of the fathers' houses of the children of Yisra'el, to king Shelomo in Yerushalayim, to bring up the ark of the covenant of Yahweh out of the city of David, which is Tzion. ^{8:2}All the men of Yisra'el assembled themselves to king Shelomo at the feast, in the month Etanim, which is the seventh month. ^{8:3}All the Zakenim of Yisra'el came, and the Kohanim took up the ark. ^{8:4}They brought up the ark of Yahweh, and the tent of meeting, and all the holy vessels that were in the Tent; even these did the Kohanim and the Levites bring up. ^{8:5}King Shelomo and all the congregation of Yisra'el, who were assembled to him, were with him before the ark, sacrificing sheep and oxen, that could not be counted nor numbered for multitude. ^{8:6}The Kohanim brought in the ark of the covenant of Yahweh to its place, into the oracle of the house, to the most holy place, even under the wings of the Keruvim. ^{8:7}For the Keruvim spread forth their wings over the place of the ark, and the Keruvim covered the ark and the poles of it above. ^{8:8}The poles were so long that the ends of the poles were seen from the holy place before the oracle; but they were not seen outside: and there they are to this day. ^{8:9}There was nothing in the ark save the two tables of stone which Moshe put there at Chorev, when Yahweh made a covenant with the children of Yisra'el, when they came out of the land of Mitzrayim. ^{8:10}It came to pass, when the Kohanim were come out of the holy place, that the cloud filled the house of Yahweh, ^{8:11}so that the Kohanim could not stand to minister by reason of the cloud; for the glory of Yahweh filled the house of Yahweh. ^{8:12}Then spoke Shelomo, "Yahweh has said that he would dwell in the thick darkness. ^{8:13}I have surely built you a house of habitation, a place for you to dwell in forever." ^{8:14}The king turned his face about, and blessed all the assembly of Yisra'el: and all the assembly of Yisra'el stood. ^{8:15}He said, "Blessed be Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, who spoke with his mouth to David my father, and has with his hand fulfilled it, saying,

Prayer

^{8:16}'Since the day that I brought forth my people Yisra'el out of Mitzrayim, I chose no city out of all the tribes of Yisra'el to build a house, that my name might be there; but I chose David to be over my people Yisra'el.' ^{8:17}Now it was in the heart of David my father to build a house for the name of Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el. ^{8:18}But Yahweh said to David my father, 'Whereas it was in your heart to build a house for my name, you did well that it was in your heart: ^{8:19}nevertheless you shall not build the house; but your son who shall come forth out of your loins, he shall build the house for my name.' ^{8:20}Yahweh has established his word that he spoke; for I am risen up in the room of David my father, and sit on the throne of Yisra'el, as Yahweh promised, and have built the house for the name of Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el. ^{8:21}There have I set a place for the ark, in which is the covenant of Yahweh, which he made with our fathers, when he brought them out of the land of Mitzrayim."

^{8:22}Shelomo stood before the altar of Yahweh in the presence of all the assembly of Yisra'el, and spread forth his hands toward Heaven; ^{8:23}and he said, "Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, there is no mighty one like you, in Heaven above, or on earth beneath; who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with your servants, who walk before you with all their heart; ^{8:24}who have kept with your servant David my father that which you did promise him: yes, you spoke with your mouth, and have fulfilled it with your hand, as it is this day. ^{8:25}Now therefore, Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, keep with your servant David my father that which you have promised him, saying, 'There shall not fail you a man in my sight to sit on the throne of Yisra'el, if only your children take heed to their way, to walk before me as you have walked before me.' ^{8:26}Now therefore, Mighty One of Yisra'el, Please let your word be verified, which you spoke to your servant David my father.

^{8:27}"But will the Mighty One in very deed dwell on the earth? Behold, Heaven and the Heaven of heavens can't contain you; how much less this house that I have built! ^{8:28}Yet have you respect to the prayer of your servant, and to his supplication, Yahweh my Mighty One, to listen to the cry and to the prayer which your servant prays before you this day; ^{8:29}that your eyes may be open toward this house night and day, even toward the place whereof you have said, 'My name shall be there'; to listen to the prayer which your servant shall pray toward this place. ^{8:30}Listen you to the supplication of your servant, and of your people Yisra'el, when they shall pray toward this place: yes, hear in Heaven, your dwelling-place; and when you hear, forgive. ^{8:31}If a man sins against his neighbor, and an oath be laid on him to cause him to swear, and he comes and swears before your altar in this house; ^{8:32}then hear you in Heaven, and do, and judge your servants, condemning the wicked, to bring his way on his own head, and justifying the righteous, to give him according to his righteousness. ^{8:33}**When your people Yisra'el are struck down before the enemy, because they have sinned against you; if they turn again to you, and confess your name, and pray and make supplication to you in this house: ^{8:34}then hear you in Heaven, and forgive the sin of your people Yisra'el, and bring them again to the land which you gave to their fathers.** ^{8:35}When the sky is shut up, and there is no rain, because they have sinned against you; if they pray toward this place, and confess your name, and turn from their sin, when you do afflict them: ^{8:36}then hear in Heaven, and forgive the sin of your servants, and of your people Yisra'el, when you teach them the good way in which they should walk; and send rain on your land, which you have given to your people for an inheritance. ^{8:37}If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence,

Prayer

if there be blasting or mildew, locust or caterpillar; if their enemy besieges them in the land of their cities; whatever plague, whatever sickness there be; ^{8:38} whatever prayer and supplication be made by any man, or by all your people Yisra'el, who shall know every man the plague of his own heart, and spread forth his hands toward this house: ^{8:39} then hear in Heaven, your dwelling-place, and forgive, and do, and render to every man according to all his ways, whose heart you know; **(for you, even you only, know the hearts of all the children of men;)** ^{8:40} that they may fear you all the days that they live in the land which you gave to our fathers.

^{8:41} "Moreover concerning the foreigner, who is not of your people Yisra'el, when he shall come out of a far country for your name's sake ^{8:42} (for they shall hear of your great name, and of your mighty hand, and of your outstretched arm); when he shall come and pray toward this house; ^{8:43} hear in Heaven, your dwelling-place, and do according to all that the foreigner calls to you for; that all the peoples of the earth may know your name, to fear you, as do your people Yisra'el, and that they may know that this house which I have built is called by your name.

^{8:44} "If your people go out to battle against their enemy, by whatever way you shall send them, and they pray to Yahweh toward the city which you have chosen, and toward the house which I have built for your name; ^{8:45} then hear in Heaven their prayer and their supplication, and maintain their cause. ^{8:46} **If they sin against you (for there is no man who doesn't sin), and you be angry with them, and deliver them to the enemy, so that they carry them away captive to the land of the enemy, far off or near; ^{8:47} yet if they shall repent themselves in the land where they are carried captive, and turn again, and make supplication to you in the land of those who carried them captive, saying, 'We have sinned, and have done perversely, we have dealt wickedly'; ^{8:48} if they return to you with all their heart and with all their soul in the land of their enemies, who carried them captive, and pray to you toward their land, which you gave to their fathers, the city which you have chosen, and the house which I have built for your name: ^{8:49} then hear you their prayer and their supplication in Heaven, your dwelling-place, and maintain their cause; ^{8:50} and forgive your people who have sinned against you, and all their transgressions in which they have transgressed against you; and give them compassion before those who carried them captive, that they may have compassion on them ^{8:51} (for they are your people, and your inheritance, which you brought forth out of Mitzrayim, from the midst of the furnace of iron); ^{8:52} that your eyes may be open to the supplication of your servant, and to the supplication of your people Yisra'el, to listen to them whenever they cry to you. ^{8:53}** For you did separate them from among all the peoples of the earth, to be your inheritance, as you spoke by Moshe your servant, when you brought our fathers out of Mitzrayim, Sovereign Yahweh."

^{8:54} It was so, that when Shelomo had made an end of praying all this prayer and supplication to Yahweh, he arose from before the altar of Yahweh, **from kneeling on his knees with his hands spread forth toward Heaven.** ^{8:55} He stood, and blessed all the assembly of Yisra'el with a loud voice, saying, ^{8:56} "Blessed be Yahweh, who has given rest to his people Yisra'el, according to all that he promised: there has not failed one word of all his good promises, which he promised by Moshe his servant. ^{8:57} Yahweh our Mighty One be with us, as he was with our fathers: let him not leave us, nor forsake us; ^{8:58} that he may incline our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and his statutes, and his ordinances, which he commanded our fathers. ^{8:59} Let these my

Prayer

words, wherewith I have made supplication before Yahweh, be near to Yahweh our Mighty One day and night, that he maintains the cause of his servant, and the cause of his people Yisra'el, as every day shall require; ^{8:60}that all the peoples of the earth may know that Yahweh, he is the Mighty One; there is none else. ^{8:61}Let your heart therefore be perfect with Yahweh our Mighty One, to walk in his statutes, and to keep his commandments, as at this day."

^{8:62}The king, and all Yisra'el with him, offered sacrifice before Yahweh. ^{8:63}Shelomo offered for the sacrifice of peace-offerings, which he offered to Yahweh, two and twenty thousand oxen, and one hundred twenty thousand sheep. So the king and all the children of Yisra'el dedicated the house of Yahweh. ^{8:64}The same day did the king make the middle of the court holy that was before the house of Yahweh; for there he offered the burnt offering, and the meal-offering, and the fat of the peace-offerings, because the brazen altar that was before Yahweh was too little to receive the burnt offering, and the meal-offering, and the fat of the peace-offerings. ^{8:65}So Shelomo held the feast at that time, and all Yisra'el with him, a great assembly, from the entrance of Chama't to the brook of Mitzrayim, before Yahweh our Mighty One, seven days and seven days, even fourteen days. ^{8:66}On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went to their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that Yahweh had showed to David his servant, and to Yisra'el his people.

^{9:1}It happened, when Shelomo had finished the building of the house of Yahweh, and the king's house, and all Shelomo's desire which he was pleased to do, ^{9:2}that Yahweh appeared to Shelomo the second time, as he had appeared to him at Giv'on. ^{9:3}Yahweh said to him, "I have heard your prayer and your supplication, that you have made before me: I have made this house holy, which you have built, to put my name there forever; and my eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually. ^{9:4}As for you, if you will walk before me, as David your father walked, in integrity of heart, and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and will keep my statutes and my ordinances; ^{9:5}then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Yisra'el forever, according as I promised to David your father, saying, 'There shall not fail you a man on the throne of Yisra'el.'

^{9:6}**But if you shall turn away from following me, you or your children, and not keep my commandments and my statutes which I have set before you, but shall go and serve other mighty ones, and worship them; ^{9:7}then will I cut off Yisra'el out of the land which I have given them; and this house, which I have made holy for my name, will I cast out of my sight; and Yisra'el shall be a proverb and a byword among all peoples.**

^{9:8}Though this house is so high, yet shall everyone who passes by it be astonished, and shall hiss; and they shall say, 'Why has Yahweh done thus to this land, and to this house?'

^{9:9}And they shall answer, 'Because they forsook Yahweh their Mighty One, who brought forth their fathers out of the land of Mitzrayim, and laid hold on other mighty ones, and worshipped them, and served them: therefore has Yahweh brought all this evil on them.'"

Kneel And Spread Forth Your Hands Towards Heaven

8:22 shows that in public prayer it is quite appropriate to spread forth one's hands towards heaven when praying to Yahweh the Mighty One.

Prayer

8:54-55 shows that the posture Shelomo took while publicly praying to Yahweh was one of kneeling down with his hands spread forth toward heaven. It is therefore appropriate to use the same prayer posture that Shelomo used when praying in public.

Yahweh Heard Shelomo's Prayer

9:3 shows Yahweh's acknowledgement to Shelomo that he had heard his prayer and supplication that the latter had made before Yahweh. The contents of Shelomo's prayer and supplication are therefore important, and should be heeded appropriately.

Praise Yahweh

8:23-24 shows that Shelomo praised Yahweh, acknowledging his highest standing and his various attributes.

Pray Facing The Direction Of The Location Of Yahweh's House

8:30 shows that when the people of Yisrael pray for Yahweh's forgiveness, and pray toward the location of the house that Shelomo built for Yahweh, Yahweh will indeed forgive those repentant Yisraelites. Repentant Yisraelites should therefore pray for the forgiveness of their sins when facing the direction of the location of Yahweh's house that Shelomo built for him. In this manner they are assured forgiveness of their sins.

Non-Yisraelites Should Also Pray Facing The Location Of Yahweh's House

8:41-43 shows that non-Yisraelites should also pray to Yahweh with their various petitions, praying within the vicinity and toward the location of the house that Shelomo built for Yahweh. For when they do so Yahweh will indeed listen to their petitions, that all the people of the earth may know Yahweh's name, to fear Yahweh.

It should therefore be clear that all people, both Yisraelites and non-Yisraelites, should pray their prayers facing toward the location of the house that Shelomo built for Yahweh, that Yahweh may indeed hear their prayers and supplications, and respond to them appropriately.

Humble Yourself, Repent Of Sin And Wholeheartedly Seek Yahweh In Prayer

2 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 7:12-16 reads,

^{7:12}Yahweh appeared to Shelomo by night, and said to him, "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place to myself for a house of sacrifice. ^{7:13}If I shut up the sky so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among my people; ^{7:14}if my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from Heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. ^{7:15}Now my eyes shall be open, and my ears attentive, to the prayer that is made in this place. ^{7:16}For now have I chosen and made this house holy, that my name may be there forever; and my eyes and my heart shall be there perpetually.

Prayer

7:12-16 shows that Yahweh's people, those who are called by his name, should humble themselves, and pray, and seek his face, and turn from their wicked ways. For when they do so will Yahweh hear them from heaven, and forgive their sin, and heal their land. We should therefore humble ourselves, repent of our sins, and pray to Yahweh, seeking him wholeheartedly.

The Man Of The Mighty One From Yahudah

1 Melakhim (Kings) 13:1-6 reads,

^{13:1}Behold, there came a man of the Mighty One out of Yahudah by the word of Yahweh to Beit-El: and Yarov`am was standing by the altar to burn incense. ^{13:2}He cried against the altar by the word of Yahweh, and said, "Altar, altar, thus says Yahweh: 'Behold, a son shall be born to the house of David, Yoshiyahu by name; and on you shall he sacrifice the Kohanim of the high places who burn incense on you, and men's bones shall they burn on you.'" ^{13:3}He gave a sign the same day, saying, "This is the sign which Yahweh has spoken: Behold, the altar shall be torn, and the ashes that are on it shall be poured out." ^{13:4}It happened, when the king heard the saying of the man of the Mighty One, which he cried against the altar in Beit-El, that Yarov`am put forth his hand from the altar, saying, "Lay hold on him." His hand, which he put forth against him, dried up, so that he could not draw it back again to him. ^{13:5}The altar also was torn, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of the Mighty One had given by the word of Yahweh. ^{13:6}The king answered the man of the Mighty One, "Entreat now the favor of Yahweh your Mighty One, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored me again." **The man of the Mighty One entreated Yahweh, and the king's hand was restored him again, and became as it was before.**

13:5-6 shows that when men of the Mighty One are asked to pray for others, especially if these others are repentant, they should do so. As seen from Shemuel's words, it is the duty of Yahweh's prophets to both pray for the people and to instruct them to walk in the good and the right way.

Prayer

ELISHA THE PROPHET

The Shunammite Woman During Elisha's Time

2 Melakhim (Kings) 4:8-37 reads,

^{4:8}It fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. So it was, that as often as he passed by, he turned in there to eat bread. ^{4:9}She said to her husband, "See now, I perceive that this is a holy man of the Mighty One, that passes by us continually. ^{4:10}Let us make, Please, a little chamber on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a seat, and a lamp stand: and it shall be, when he comes to us, that he shall turn in there."

^{4:11}It fell on a day, that he came there, and he turned into the chamber and lay there.

^{4:12}He said to Gehazi his servant, "Call this Shunammite." When he had called her, she stood before him. ^{4:13}He said to him, "Say now to her, Behold, you have been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for you? Would you be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host?" She answered, "I dwell among my own people." ^{4:14}He said, "What then is to be done for her?" Gehazi answered, "Most assuredly she has no son, and her husband is old." ^{4:15}He said, "Call her." When he had called her, she stood in the door. ^{4:16}He said, "At this season, when the time comes round, you shall embrace a son." She said, "No, my master, you man of the Mighty One, do not lie to your handmaid."

^{4:17}The woman conceived, and bore a son at that season, when the time came round, as Elisha had said to her.

^{4:18}When the child was grown, it fell on a day that he went out to his father to the reapers.

^{4:19}He said to his father, "My head, my head." He said to his servant, "Carry him to his mother." ^{4:20}When he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees until noon, and then died. ^{4:21}She went up and laid him on the bed of the man of the Mighty One, and shut the door on him, and went out. ^{4:22}She called to her husband, and said, "Please send me one of the servants, and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of the Mighty One, and come again." ^{4:23}He said, "Why will you go to him today? It is neither new moon nor Shabbat." She said, "It shall be well." ^{4:24}Then she saddled a donkey, and said to her servant, "Drive, and go forward; don't slacken me the riding, except I bid you." ^{4:25}So she went, and came to the man of the Mighty One to mount Karmel.

It happened, when the man of the Mighty One saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, "Behold, yonder is the Shunammite: ^{4:26}please run now to meet her, and ask her, 'Is it well with you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?'" She answered, "It is well." ^{4:27}When she came to the man of the Mighty One to the hill, she caught hold of his feet. Gehazi came near to thrust her away; but the man of the Mighty One said, "Let her alone: for her soul is vexed within her; and Yahweh has hid it from me, and has not told me." ^{4:28}Then she said, "Did I desire a son of my master? Didn't I say, 'Do not deceive me?'"

^{4:29}Then he said to Gehazi, "Gird up your loins, and take my staff in your hand, and go your way: if you meet any man, Don't greet him; and if anyone greets you, don't answer him again: and lay my staff on the face of the child." ^{4:30}The mother of the child said, "As Yahweh lives, and as your soul lives, I will not leave you." He arose, and followed her.

Prayer

^{4:31} *Gechazi passed on before them, and laid the staff on the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Then he returned to meet him, and told him, saying, "The child has not awakened."*

^{4:32} *When Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid on his bed.*

^{4:33} *He went in therefore, and shut the door on them both, and prayed to Yahweh.* ^{4:34} *He went up, and lay on the child, and put his mouth on his mouth, and his eyes on his eyes, and his hands on his hands: and he stretched himself on him; and the flesh of the child grew warm.* ^{4:35} *Then he returned, and walked in the house once back and forth; and went up, and stretched himself on him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.* ^{4:36} *He called Gechazi, and said, "Call this Shunammite." So he called her. When she was come in to him, he said, "Take up your son."* ^{4:37} *Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground; and she took up her son, and went out.*

Pray To Yahweh In Private

4:33 shows that in praying to Yahweh that Yahweh restore life back to the son of the Shunammite woman, Elisha prayed to Yahweh in private. Implying that there are occasions meriting praying to Yahweh in private, rather than in public.

The Shunammite Woman Is A Parallel Of Sarah

The account of the Shunammite woman's family somewhat parallels that of Sarah's family. For just as Sarah was barren, so was the Shunammite woman. Just as Sarah's husband was old, so was the Shunammite woman. Just as Sarah was a great woman, so was the Shunammite woman. Just as Yahweh promised that Sarah would embrace a son "at this season, when the time comes round", so did Yahweh, through Elisha, promise the Shunammite woman that she would embrace a son "at this season, when the time comes round". And just Sarah's son would have died, and would have been resurrected from the dead, so did the Shunammite woman's son actually die and was actually resurrected from the dead! The parallels of Sarah's life and that of the Shunammite woman's life are striking!

The King Of Aram Seeks To Capture Elisha

2 Melakhim (Kings) 6:8-23 reads,

^{6:8} *Now the king of Aram was warring against Yisra'el; and he took counsel with his servants, saying, "In such and such a place shall be my camp."* ^{6:9} *The man of the Mighty One sent to the king of Yisra'el, saying, "Beware that you not pass such a place; for there the Aram are coming down."* ^{6:10} *The king of Yisra'el sent to the place which the man of the Mighty One told him and warned him of; and he saved himself there, not once nor twice.* ^{6:11} *The heart of the king of Aram was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said to them, "Won't you show me which of us is for the king of Yisra'el?"* ^{6:12} *One of his servants said, "No, my master, O king; but Elisha, the prophet who is in Yisra'el, tells the king of Yisra'el the words that you speak in your bedchamber."* ^{6:13} *He said, "Go and see where he is, that I may send and get him." It was told him, saying, "Behold, he is in Dotan."* ^{6:14} *Therefore sent he there horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and surrounded the city.*

Prayer

^{6:15}When the servant of the man of the Mighty One was risen early, and gone forth, behold, a host with horses and chariots was round about the city. His servant said to him, "Alas, my master! What shall we do?" ^{6:16}He answered, "Don't be afraid; for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." ^{6:17}Elisha prayed, and said, "Yahweh, Please open his eyes, that he may see." Yahweh opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

^{6:18}When they came down to him, "Elisha prayed to Yahweh, and said, 'Please smite this people with blindness.'" He struck them with blindness according to the word of Elisha.

^{6:19}Elisha said to them, "This is not the way, neither is this the city: follow me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek." He led them to Shomron. ^{6:20}It happened, when they were come into Shomron, that Elisha said, "Yahweh, open the eyes of these men, that they may see." Yahweh opened their eyes, and they saw; and, behold, they were in the midst of Shomron.

^{6:21}The king of Yisra'el said to Elisha, when he saw them, "My father, shall I strike them? Shall I strike them?" ^{6:22}He answered, "You shall not strike them: would you strike those whom you have taken captive with your sword and with your bow? Set bread and water before them, that they may eat and drink, and go to their master." ^{6:23}He prepared great provision for them; and when they had eaten and drunk, he sent them away, and they went to their master. The bands of Aram came no more into the land of Yisra'el.

Pray To Yahweh Only, Not To Anyone Else

6:17-20 show that it is to Yahweh that Elisha prayed. He did not pray to another mighty one, but only to Yahweh. Likewise, all servants of Yahweh should serve Yahweh wholeheartedly, and pray only to Yahweh, and not to another mighty one.

Have Great Faith In Yahweh

It is evident from Elisha's communication to Yahweh that he had great faith in Yahweh. For when he prayed to Yahweh that Yahweh undertake a particular action, Yahweh indeed undertook that action. Following Elisha's example, we should likewise have great faith in Yahweh, a faith paralleling that Elisha had.

How did Elisha come to acquire this great degree of faith?

Yahweh Protects His Servants

It is evident from this account that Yahweh indeed provided protection to his servant Elisha, protection against even human armies! Such that when the human army of Aram surrounded the city Elisha resided in, and thought to take him captive, Yahweh's angelic army had already surrounded Elisha and accorded him due protection! There was therefore no way the Arammian army was going to succeed in its mission of capturing Elisha, for Yahweh protected him!

Likewise, Yahweh accords due protection to his servants. And when they need due protection, Yahweh's servants should pray to him for that protection, even invisible but very real protection.

Prayer

CHIZKIYAHU KING OF YAHUDAH

The King Of Ashshur Attacks Yahudah In Chizkiyahu's Time

2 Melakhim (Kings) 18:1-19:37; Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 36:1-37:38; 2 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 32:1-23 reads,

^{18:1}Now it happened in the third year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Yisra'el, that Chizkiyahu the son of Achaz king of Yahudah began to reign. ^{18:2}He was twenty-five years old when he began to reign; and he reigned twenty-nine years in Yerushalayim: and his mother's name was Avi the daughter of Zekharyah. ^{18:3}He did that which was right in the eyes of Yahweh, according to all that David his father had done. ^{18:4}He removed the high places, and broke the pillars, and cut down the Asherah: and he broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moshe had made; for to those days the children of Yisra'el did burn incense to it; and he called it Nechushtan. ^{18:5}He trusted in Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Yahudah, nor among them that were before him. ^{18:6}For he joined with Yahweh; he didn't depart from following him, but kept his commandments, which Yahweh commanded Moshe. ^{18:7}Yahweh was with him; wherever he went forth he prospered: and he rebelled against the king of Ashshur, and didn't serve him. ^{18:8}He struck the Pelishtim to `Aza and the borders of it, from the tower of the watchmen to the fortified city.

^{18:9}It happened in the fourth year of king Chizkiyahu, which was the seventh year of Hoshea son of Elah king of Yisra'el, that Shalman'eser king of Ashshur came up against Shomron, and besieged it. ^{18:10}At the end of three years they took it: in the sixth year of Chizkiyahu, which was the ninth year of Hoshea king of Yisra'el, Shomron was taken.

^{18:11}**The king of Ashshur carried Yisra'el away to Ashshur, and put them in Chalach, and on the Chavor, the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Madai, ^{18:12}because they didn't obey the voice of Yahweh their Mighty One, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moshe the servant of Yahweh commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it.**

^{18:13}Now in the fourteenth year of king Chizkiyahu did Sancheriv king of Ashshur come up against all the fortified cities of Yahudah, and took them. ^{18:14}Chizkiyahu king of Yahudah sent to the king of Ashshur to Lakhish, saying, "I have offended; return from me: that which you put on me will I bear." The king of Ashshur appointed to Chizkiyahu king of Yahudah three hundred talents of silver and thirty talents of gold. ^{18:15}Chizkiyahu gave him all the silver that was found in the house of Yahweh, and in the treasures of the king's house. ^{18:16}At that time did Chizkiyahu cut off the gold from the doors of the temple of Yahweh, and from the pillars which Chizkiyahu king of Yahudah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Ashshur.

^{18:17}The king of Ashshur sent Tartan and Rav-Saris and Ravshakeh from Lakhish to king Chizkiyahu with a great army to Yerushalayim. They went up and came to Yerushalayim. When they were come up, they came and stood by the conduit of the upper pool, which is in the highway of the fuller's field. ^{18:18}When they had called to the king, there came out to them Elyakim the son of Chilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shebnah the Sofer, and Yo'ach the son of Asaf the recorder. ^{18:19}Ravshakeh said to them, "Say you now to Chizkiyahu, Thus says the great king, the king of Ashshur, 'What confidence is this in which you trust? ^{18:20}You say (but they are but vain words), There is counsel and strength

Prayer

for the war. Now on whom do you trust, that you have rebelled against me? ^{18:21}Now, behold, you trust on the staff of this bruised reed, even on Mitzrayim; whereon if a man lean, it will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Par`oh king of Mitzrayim to all who trust on him. ^{18:22}But if you tell me, "We trust in Yahweh our Mighty One"; isn't that he whose high places and whose altars Chizkiyahu has taken away, and has said to Yahudah and to Yerushalayim, "You shall worship before this altar in Yerushalayim?" ^{18:23}Now therefore, Please give pledges to my master the king of Ashshur, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you be able on your part to set riders on them.' ^{18:24}How then can you turn away the face of one captain of the least of my master's servants, and put your trust on Mitzrayim for chariots and for horsemen? ^{18:25}Am I now come up without Yahweh against this place to destroy it? Yahweh said to me, "Go up against this land, and destroy it." ""

^{18:26}Then said Elyakim the son of Chilkiyah, and Shebna, and Yo'ach, to Ravshakeh, "Please speak to your servants in the Arammian language; for we understand it: and don't speak with us in the Yahudim' language, in the ears of the people who are on the wall." ^{18:27}But Ravshakeh said to them, "Has my master sent me to your master, and to you, to speak these words? Hasn't he sent me to the men who sit on the wall, to eat their own dung, and to drink their own urine with you?"

^{18:28}Then Ravshakeh stood, and cried with a loud voice in the Yahudim' language, and spoke, saying, "Hear you the word of the great king, the king of Ashshur. ^{18:29}Thus says the king, 'Don't let Chizkiyahu deceive you; for he will not be able to deliver you out of my hand: ^{18:30}neither let Chizkiyahu make you trust in Yahweh, saying, "Yahweh will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be given into the hand of the king of Ashshur."'

^{18:31}Don't listen to Chizkiyahu: for thus says the king of Ashshur, 'Make your shalom with me, and come out to me; and eat you everyone of his vine, and everyone of his fig-tree, and everyone drink the waters of his own cistern; ^{18:32}Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of grain and new wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of olive-trees and of honey, that you may live, and not die: and don't listen to Chizkiyahu, when he persuades you, saying, "Yahweh will deliver us." ^{18:33}Has any of the mighty ones of the nations ever delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Ashshur?

^{18:34}Where are the mighty ones of Chamat, and of Arpad? Where are the mighty ones of Sefarvayim, of Hena, and `Ivvah? Have they delivered Shomron out of my hand? ^{18:35}Who are they among all the mighty ones of the countries, that have delivered their country out of my hand, that Yahweh should deliver Yerushalayim out of my hand?" ^{18:36}But the people held their shalom, and answered him not a word; for the king's commandment was, saying, "Don't answer him." ^{18:37}Then came Elyakim the son of Chilkiyah, who was over the household, and Shevna the Sofer, and Yo'ach the son of Asaf the recorder, to Chizkiyahu with their clothes torn, and told him the words of Ravshakeh.

^{19:1}It happened, when king Chizkiyahu heard it, that he tore his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of Yahweh. ^{19:2}He sent Elyakim, who was over the household, and Shevna the Sofer, and the Zakenim of the Kohanim, covered with sackcloth, to Yesha`yahu the prophet the son of Amotz. ^{19:3}They said to him, "Thus says Chizkiyahu, 'This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of rejection; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. ^{19:4}It may be Yahweh your Mighty One will hear all the words of Ravshakeh, whom the king of Ashshur his master has sent to defy the living Mighty One, and will rebuke the words which Yahweh your

Prayer

Mighty One has heard: why - lift up your prayer for the remnant that is left." ^{19:5} So the servants of king Chizkiyahu came to Yesha'yahu.

^{19:6} Yesha'yahu said to them, "Thus shall you tell your master, Thus says Yahweh, 'Don't be afraid of the words that you have heard, wherewith the servants of the king of Ashshur have blasphemed me. ^{19:7} Behold, I will put a spirit in him, and he shall hear news, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.'"

^{19:8} So Ravshakeh returned, and found the king of Ashshur warring against Livna; for he had heard that he was departed from Lakhish.

^{19:9} When he heard say of Tirhakah king of Kush, "Behold, he is come out to fight against you," he sent messengers again to Chizkiyahu, saying, ^{19:10} "Thus shall you speak to Chizkiyahu king of Yahudah, saying, 'Don't let your Mighty One in whom you trust deceive you, saying, "Yerushalayim shall not be given into the hand of the king of Ashshur." ^{19:11} Behold, you have heard what the kings of Ashshur have done to all lands, by destroying them utterly: and shall you be delivered? ^{19:12} Have the mighty ones of the nations delivered them, which my fathers have destroyed, Gozan, and Charan, and Retzef, and the children of 'Eden that were in Telassar? ^{19:13} Where is the king of Chamat, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sefarvayim, of Hena, and 'Ivvah?'"

^{19:14} Chizkiyahu received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it; and Chizkiyahu went up to the house of Yahweh, and spread it before Yahweh.

^{19:15} Chizkiyahu prayed before Yahweh, and said, "Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, who sits above the Keruvim, you are the Mighty One, even you alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth; you have made Heaven and earth. ^{19:16} Incline your ear, Yahweh, and hear; open your eyes, Yahweh, and see; and hear the words of Sancheriv, wherewith he has sent him to defy the living Mighty One. ^{19:17} Of a truth, Yahweh, the kings of Ashshur have laid waste the nations and their lands, ^{19:18} and have cast their mighty ones into the fire; for they were no mighty ones, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; therefore they have destroyed them. ^{19:19} Now therefore, Yahweh our Mighty One, save you us, I beg you, out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that you Yahweh are Mighty One alone."

^{19:20} Then Yesha'yahu the son of Amotz sent to Chizkiyahu, saying, "Thus says Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, 'Whereas you have prayed to me against Sancheriv king of Ashshur, I have heard you. ^{19:21} This is the word that Yahweh has spoken concerning him: "The virgin daughter of Tzion has despised you and laughed you to scorn; the daughter of Yerushalayim has shaken her head at you. ^{19:22} Whom have you defied and blasphemed? And against whom have you exalted your voice and lifted up your eyes on high? Even against the Holy One of Yisra'el. ^{19:23} By your messengers you have defied the Sovereign, and have said, 'With the multitude of my chariots am I come up to the height of the mountains, to the innermost parts of Levanon; and I will cut down the tall cedars of it, and the choice fir-trees of it; and I will enter into his farthest lodging-place, the forest of his fruitful field. ^{19:24} I have dug and drunk strange waters, and with the sole of my feet will I dry up all the rivers of Mitzrayim.' ^{19:25} **Haven't you heard how I have done it long ago, and formed it of ancient times? Now have I brought it to pass, that it should be yours to lay waste fortified cities into ruinous heaps. ^{19:26} Therefore their inhabitants were of small power, they were dismayed and confounded; they were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the grass on the housetops, and as grain blasted before it is grown up.** ^{19:27} But I know your sitting down, and your going out, and your coming in,

Prayer

and your raging against me. ^{19:28}Because of your raging against me, and because your arrogance is come up into my ears, therefore will I put my hook in your nose, and my bridle in your lips, and I will turn you back by the way by which you came." ^{19:29}This shall be the sign to you: You shall eat this year that which grows of itself, and in the second year that which springs of the same; and in the third year sow you, and reap, and plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of it. ^{19:30}The remnant that has escaped of the house of Yahudah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward. ^{19:31}For out of Yerushalayim shall go forth a remnant, and out of mount Tzion those who shall escape: the zeal of Yahweh shall perform this. ^{19:32}Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the king of Ashshur, "He shall not come to this city, nor shoot an arrow there, neither shall he come before it with shield, nor cast up a mound against it. ^{19:33}By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and he shall not come to this city, says Yahweh. ^{19:34}For I will defend this city to save it, for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake.""

^{19:35}It happened that night that the angel of Yahweh went forth, and struck in the camp of the Ashshur one hundred eighty-five thousand: and when men arose early in the morning, behold, these were all dead bodies. ^{19:36}So Sancheriv king of Ashshur departed, and went and returned, and lived at Nineveh. ^{19:37}It happened, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisrokh his mighty one, that Adrammelekh and Sar'etzer struck him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Ararat. Esar-Chaddon his son reigned in his place.

Yahweh Prospers The Ways Of His Faithful Servants

18:1-8 testifies, through Chizkiyahu's life, that when one serves Yahweh faithfully, Yahweh prospers the ways of that one.

Why Yisrael Was Sent Into Captivity

18:12 gives the reason for Yisrael's captivity. They didn't obey the voice of Yahweh their Mighty One, but transgressed his covenant, even all that Moshe the servant of Yahweh commanded, and would not hear it, nor do it.

To avoid living our lives devoid of Yahweh's protection, a life similar to that lived by these rebellious Yisraelites, we need to avoid the mistakes these rebellious Yisraelites made. We should wholly obey the voice of Yahweh our Mighty One. We should abide by all of Yahweh's righteous laws, and should be glad to hear and do these laws.

Seeing that Elisha had Yahweh's protection, as evidenced by Yahweh's invisible army protecting him when the Arammian army came to capture him, it should be clear that Elisha faithfully served Yahweh. Elisha obeyed Yahweh's voice, and abided by Yahweh's covenant, even all that Moshe the servant of Yahweh commanded.

We should follow Elisha's example, rather than that of rebellious Yisrael.

The King Of Ashshur Did Not Understand Yahweh And Yahweh's Ways

18:22 shows that the king of Ashshur, through his messengers, did not really understand who Yahweh was, or Yahweh's ways. For he equated the worship of Yahweh with the several high

Prayer

places and altars scattered throughout Yahudah that the people used in worship. The high places and altars that Chizkiyahu destroyed, as seen from 18:4.

Devarim (Deuteronomy) 12 clearly outlines Yahweh's command to his people Yisrael regarding the manner they were to worship him regarding high places and altars. He specifically prohibited them from worshipping him in the manner that the nations they were dispossessing worshipped their mighty ones - in any location that seemed right to them. Yahweh specifically commanded Yisrael to worship him at the place that he was to choose out of all the tribes of Yisrael, to place his name there. It was to this place that Yisrael was to offer sacrifice to him, and not at any geographical locality that seemed appropriate to them.

Therefore, in the king of Ashshur equating the worship of Yahweh with the scattered high places and altars all over the land of Yahudah, he manifested his ignorance with respect to the worship of Yahweh.

The King Of Ashshur Was An Enemy Of Yahweh

18:30 shows that the king of Ashshur, through his servant Ravshakeh, was an enemy of Yahweh! For he sought to remove the Yahudim's trust in Yahweh. Yet Yahweh the Mighty One, the Creator, desires that all of us fully trust in him.

The King Of Ashshur Ridiculed Yahweh

18:33-35 shows that the king of Ashshur equated Yahweh with the mighty ones of the various nations that he had conquered. He thought that Yahweh was as worthless a mighty one as the mighty ones of the nations that he had conquered.

The King Of Ashshur Arrogantly Elevated Himself To The Position Of A Mighty One

Also, 18:28-35 documents the proposal the king of Ashshur put before the people of Yahudah. If they were prepared to abandon trusting in Yahweh, and trust instead in the king of Ashshur, he would preserve their lives and reward them with property in another land. But if they continued to trust in Yahweh he would kill them. In other words, the king of Ashshur elevated himself to the category of a mighty one, and sought to displace Yahweh as the mighty one of the people of Yahudah!

Those among the people of Yahudah who knew Yahweh's words clearly knew the treachery that lay in the words of the king of Ashshur, treachery against Yahweh the Mighty One. They also knew that anyone who abandons Yahweh the Mighty One for another mighty one deserves to die, for such a one has broken faith with Yahweh!

The King Of Ashshur Defied The Living Mighty One

19:4 shows that Chizkiyahu clearly understood the import of the words of the king of Ashshur that Ravshakeh spoke on his behalf. The king of Ashshur was defying the living Mighty One, and not some dead idols taken to be mighty ones.

Prayer

It Was Yeshayahu's Duty, As Prophet, To Pray For The People

That Chizkiyahu sent his servants, and the Zakenim of the Kohanim, to Yeshayahu the prophet that the latter pray for the remnant of Yisrael shows that it was indeed the duty of Yahweh's prophet to pray for the people. The Zakenim of Yisrael understood that it is indeed a prophet's duty to pray for the people, as even Shemuel explained in his time, as already seen above. For it is sin for a prophet of Yahweh not to pray for the people.

Ridiculing Yahweh Is Blasphemy Against Yahweh

19:6 shows Yahweh describing the king of Ashshur's defiant words against Yahweh as blasphemy against Yahweh! In other words, when one belittles Yahweh, equating him with what are not mighty ones, belittling his power and authority, such a one blasphemes Yahweh!

Penalty For Blasphemy Against Yahweh

19:7 shows the penalty of those who blaspheme Yahweh - death!

The King Of Ashshur Accused Yahweh Of Deception

19:10 shows that on top of his blasphemy against Yahweh, the king of Ashshur further accused Yahweh of deception - deception regarding the fate of Yerushalayim with respect to the king of Ashshur's war campaign.

Do such foul-mouthed men expect to survive, especially in consideration that their foul mouths are directed at none other than HaElyon, Yahweh-Tzvaot, the Mighty One of mighty ones, the only Mighty One?

Death! Death! Death to such foul mouthed men!

The King Of Ashshur Repeated His Blasphemy And Defiance Against Yahweh

19:11-13 shows the king of Ashshur again repeating his blasphemy and defiance against Yahweh, belittling Yahweh and equating him with the worthless mighty ones of the nations that he had conquered.

Seek Yahweh's Guidance When Faced With Difficulty

19:14-15 show that when Chizkiyahu was faced with a difficult situation he went, in prayer, to Yahweh with that difficult situation, and recounted it to Yahweh. Likewise, when we encounter difficult situations in our lives, we should go to Yahweh, in prayer, and relate to him those difficult situations that he may show us what to do.

Yahweh Responds To Our Prayers In The Manner He Chooses

19:20 shows Yahweh's answer to Chizkiyahu through his prophet Yeshayahu. He did not respond directly to Chizkiyahu, but chose to do so through his servant Yeshayahu.

Prayer

We should therefore note that it is Yahweh's prerogative to respond to us in whatever manner he chooses to, or not to respond to us at all, if he so chooses. He is Yahweh, the Mighty One, and we are just his servants. He is the one telling us what to do, not we telling him what to do. We are simply to do as he tells us.

Be Alert To Yahweh's Communication In Whatever Manner He Chooses

In the context of receiving prayer responses from Yahweh, we should be alert to receiving Yahweh's response in whatever manner Yahweh chooses to send us his response. If Yahweh chooses to respond he may do so through a servant of his. Or he may do so through some other manner that he surely knows his message will reach its intended recipient. We should therefore be alert to receiving Yahweh's responses in whatever manner Yahweh chooses to send us his responses.

Chizkiyahu's Prayer To Yahweh

Seeing that Yahweh confirmed that he had heard Chizkiyahu's prayer against Sancheriv king of Ashshur, it is important to note the contents of Chizkiyahu's prayer against Sancheriv.

19:16 shows that Chizkiyahu acknowledged before Yahweh Sancheriv's defiant behaviour against Yahweh.

19:18 shows that idols are just the work of men's hands, and therefore are not mighty ones.

19:19 shows that Chizkiyahu begged Yahweh for salvation from the hand for Sancheriv, for the purpose of glorifying Yahweh's name - that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that Yahweh, alone, is the Mighty One.

Chizkiyahu's Sought Yahweh's Deliverance To Glorify Yahweh's Name

Because the reason Chizkiyahu gave Yahweh for his request for salvation from the hand of Sancheriv was for the glorification of Yahweh's name, rather than any comparative righteousness of the people of Yahudah versus the people of Ashshur, Yahweh responded. In other words, when an action for which Yahweh's action is sought is to glorify Yahweh's name, especially among a wide group of human beings, the likelihood of Yahweh responding in the manner requested is heightened.

Yahweh's Encapsulation Of Sancheriv's Sins

19:22 encapsulates, in Yahweh's words, Sancheriv's sins. Sancheriv defied and blasphemed Yahweh. Sancheriv exalted his voice and lifted up his eyes on high against Yahweh, the Holy One of Yisrael.

Why Sancheriv Gained Victory Over Many Nations

19:25-26 explains why Sancheriv attained his conquering victories over the nations that he subdued. It was all Yahweh's plan, planned from a long time prior to its occurrence, planned

Prayer

from ancient times. What was happening by the hand of Sancheriv was merely the realisation of what Yahweh had already planned from ancient times!

Why Major Geopolitical Events Occur In The Manner That They Do

In this there is a lesson for us. When we see particular nations rise up and become powerful, overawing all before them, it is not because those particular nations suddenly rose up of their own power. It was all planned a long time ago by Yahweh, from ancient times, for Yahweh's own purposes! In other words, the significant geopolitical events that we see being played out right before our eyes are all in Yahweh's control and overall plan.

The particular players in geopolitical events may not realise that they are just mere instruments bringing about the realisation of events Yahweh planned a long time ago, from ancient times, especially if these players are the arrogant type. Nevertheless, whether or not they realise this fact, this is indeed the case.

Therefore we, as servants of Yahweh, should indeed recognise and realise that all the major, including, minor, events that take place in the world are under Yahweh's control and authority. No single leader or power will arise without it having been planned a long time ago, from ancient times. The powers of today are simply instruments for bringing about Yahweh will in geopolitical events at a particular point in time.

Servants Of Yahweh Should Not Be Overawed By Any Human Power

Also, learning from Chizkiyahu and Yahudah's case, we should not fear any human power, no matter how powerful that power is. For it cannot stand against Yahweh the Mighty One. If a power defies and blasphemes Yahweh the Mighty One, even a power that Yahweh the Mighty One had intended to act as an instrument in bringing about plans he set in place a long time ago, in ancient times, that power will not stand. For Yahweh will indeed abase it, and another will take its place!

It is Yahweh the Mighty One that we all ought to rely on and place our complete and full trust and confidence in.

Pray According To Yahweh's Will

We should also note that for Yahweh to respond to our prayers we must indeed pray according to his will.

For example, if he had purposed from a long time ago, from ancient times, to give a particular domain over to a particular person or people, and we find that circumstances place us in a path opposed to this particular person or people, we ought to be careful in the manner we approach Yahweh in such a matter. For where it is his will to hand over that domain to this person, and yet we pray that Yahweh refrain from handing over that domain to this person, because he find ourselves opposed to this person, we will find ourselves praying against Yahweh's will! For Yahweh's will in that matter, purposed from ancient times, is to hand over that domain to that person.

Prayer

Seek Yahweh's Will And Act Within It

It is therefore prudent for us, whenever faced with a situation whereby we do not know the outcome, to seek Yahweh's will in the matter. In seeking Yahweh's will in the matter we should already set it to heart to do our part to realise Yahweh's will, and to avoid attempting to thwart Yahweh's will in any manner. Then when we pray that Yahweh's will be done, and Yahweh shows us that he requires us to act in a manner that we thought he could not possibly ask us to act, we simply forsake our will and do Yahweh's will! But if we persist in our will, and simply expect Yahweh to ratify our will, even when our will is contrary to his, we will not succeed in our undertaking!

An example of such a case happened historically after the time of Chizkiyahu. One of Chizkiyahu's successors as king of Yahudah was Yoshiyahu. Yoshiyahu was largely faithful to Yahweh. Nevertheless a time came when Yahweh had purposed to give the king of Mitzrayim victory over a people with whom Yoshiyahu was friendly. Yoshiyahu therefore sought to fight on the side of his friends, and against the king of Mitzrayim. Yahweh even warned Yoshiyahu to keep off that particular battle, warning him not by a prophet known to Yoshiyahu, but by the king of Mitzrayim himself. But Yoshiyahu placed his will before that of Yahweh in this matter, because he thought that fighting with his friend was in that case more important than the realisation of Yahweh's will, even when against the apparent interests of his friend. The outcome of the matter was that Yahweh's will did not change even by one iota. The king of Mitzrayim duly attained his victory over Yoshiyahu's friend. And more, Yoshiyahu lost his life in the battle, for he did not heed Yahweh's warning to him by the king of Mitzrayim!

2 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 35:20-27 reads,

^{35:20} *After all this, when Yoshiyahu had prepared the temple, Nekho king of Mitzrayim went up to fight against Karkemish by the Perat: and Yoshiyahu went out against him.*

^{35:21} *But he sent ambassadors to him, saying, "What have I to do with you, you king of Yahudah? I come not against you this day, but against the house wherewith I have war; and the Mighty One has commanded me to make haste: forbear you from meddling with the Mighty One, who is with me, that he not destroy you."* ^{35:22} *Nevertheless Yoshiyahu would not turn his face from him, but disguised himself, that he might fight with him, and didn't listen to the words of Nekho from the mouth of the Mighty One, and came to fight in the valley of Megiddo.*

^{35:23} *The archers shot at king Yoshiyahu; and the king said to his servants, "Have me away; for I am sore wounded."* ^{35:24} *So his servants took him out of the chariot, and put him in the second chariot that he had, and brought him to Yerushalayim; and he died, and was buried in the tombs of his fathers. All Yahudah and Yerushalayim mourned for Yoshiyahu.*

^{35:25} *Yirmeyahu lamented for Yoshiyahu: and all the singing men and singing women spoke of Yoshiyahu in their lamentations to this day; and they made them an ordinance in Yisra'el: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations.* ^{35:26} *Now the rest of the acts of Yoshiyahu, and his good deeds, according to that which is written in the law of Yahweh,* ^{35:27} *and his acts, first and last, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Yisra'el and Yahudah.*

Do Not Trust In Your Past Righteousness

It should therefore be clear to us that Yahweh's will is supreme! It should also be clear to us that we must all abide by Yahweh's will if we are to please Yahweh! We should not trust in our past

Prayer

righteousness, thinking that our past righteousness will stand us in good stead when we set about ignoring Yahweh's will in a particular matter! No!

Our past righteousness does not count for much with respect to our future conduct. Each situation that we face must be faced in application of Yahweh's word. If we reject Yahweh's word, relying on our past righteousness to stand us in good stead, then we are duly mistaken, as clearly shown in Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 33.

Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 33:12-20 reads,

^{33:12}You, son of man, tell the children of your people, "**The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him in the day of his disobedience; and as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby in the day that he turns from his wickedness; neither shall he who is righteous be able to live thereby in the day that he sins.**" ^{33:13}When I tell the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his righteousness, and commit iniquity, none of his righteous deeds shall be remembered; but in his iniquity that he has committed, therein shall he die. ^{33:14}Again, when I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die'; if he turns from his sin, and does that which is lawful and right; ^{33:15}if the wicked restores the pledge, gives again that which he had taken by robbery, walks in the statutes of life, committing no iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. ^{33:16}None of his sins that he has committed shall be remembered against him: he has done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live. ^{33:17}Yet the children of your people say, 'The way of the Sovereign is not equal': but as for them, their way is not equal. ^{33:18}When the righteous turns from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, he shall even die therein. ^{33:19}When the wicked turns from his wickedness, and does that which is lawful and right, he shall live thereby. ^{33:20}Yet you say, 'The way of the Sovereign is not equal.' House of Yisra'el, I will judge you everyone after his ways.

It should therefore be clear to us that Yahweh's will is supreme. Therefore, in prayer, it is Yahweh's will that we should seek, seeking it in order to abide by it. And whatever Yahweh shows us we ought to do, that is what we ought to do, whether or not it was initially our will. In other words, it is not our will that ought to be done, but Yahweh's will that ought to be done, and will indeed eventually be done!

Chizkiyahu's Sickness To Death

2 Melakhim (Kings) 20:1-11; Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 38:1-8 reads,

^{20:1}In those days was Chizkiyahu sick to death. Yesha`yahu the prophet the son of Amotz came to him, and said to him, "Thus says Yahweh, 'Set your house in order: for you shall die, and not live.'" ^{20:2}Then he turned his face to the wall, and prayed to Yahweh, saying, ^{20:3}"**Remember now, Yahweh, I beg you, how I have walked before you in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in your sight.**" Chizkiyahu wept sore. ^{20:4}It happened, before Yesha`yahu was gone out into the middle part of the city, that the word of Yahweh came to him, saying, ^{20:5}"Turn back, and tell Chizkiyahu the prince of my people, 'Thus says Yahweh, the Mighty One of David your father, I have heard your prayer, I have seen your tears: behold, I will heal you; on the third day you shall go up to the house of Yahweh. ^{20:6}I will add to your days fifteen years; and I will deliver you and this city out of the hand of the king of Ashshur; and I will defend this city for my own sake, and for my servant David's sake.'" ^{20:7}Yesha`yahu said, "Take a cake of figs." They took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered. ^{20:8}Chizkiyahu said to

Prayer

Yesha`yahu, "What shall be the sign that Yahweh will heal me, and that I shall go up to the house of Yahweh the third day?" ^{20:9} Yesha`yahu said, "This shall be the sign to you from Yahweh, that Yahweh will do the thing that he has spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten steps, or go back ten steps?" ^{20:10} Chizkiyahu answered, "It is a light thing for the shadow to decline ten steps: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten steps." ^{20:11} Yesha`yahu the prophet cried to Yahweh; and he brought the shadow ten steps backward, by which it had gone down on the dial of Achaz.

Acknowledge Yahweh's Power Over Life

20:1-3 shows that when Yahweh had informed Chizkiyahu that the latter would die of his sickness, Chizkiyahu begged Yahweh in prayer and weeping that he might continue to live. He acknowledged Yahweh's power over life, understanding that Yahweh can both cut short a person's life, and also lengthen it.

The Basis Of Chizkiyahu's Request To Yahweh

The basis of Chizkiyahu's request to Yahweh, that Yahweh listens to his plea, lay in his unwavering faithfulness to Yahweh.

This time Chizkiyahu was not pleading to Yahweh for action on a ground involved with the glorification of Yahweh's name, as was the case in the matter of Sancheriv. This time it was a simple plea of a faithful servant of Yahweh, asking for compassion and mercy.

Chizkiyahu's Prayer Moved Yahweh To Show Him Compassion

20:4-5 shows that Yahweh heard Chizkiyahu's prayer! Yahweh was moved to show compassion on Chizkiyahu by his pleading prayer and his sore tears. Yahweh therefore undertook to heal Chizkiyahu.

Yahweh's Eyes And Ears Are Open To The Prayers Of His Faithful Servants

It should therefore be noted that there are times when the actions of Yahweh's faithful servants can move Yahweh to act on their behalf, even when Yahweh had initially indicated that a contrary action would take place. In other words, Yahweh's ears are not shut, nor are his eyes closed, to the prayer of his faithful servants. Therefore, on occasion, when his faithful servants pray to him for action in a particular manner, even an action that Yahweh himself had not purposed to do, he sometimes hears the pleading prayers of his faithful servants, and graciously acts according to their petition.

Yahweh Is Merciful And Compassionate

We can therefore petition Yahweh to act according to our will, provided our will is not contrary to Yahweh's will. If we are faithful servants of his, it is not unlikely that he will hear our pleas and cries to him, and respond to them. Yahweh is a merciful and compassionate Mighty One!

Prayer

Yahweh Sometimes Extends The Lives Of His Faithful Servants

20:6 shows that not only did Yahweh undertake to heal Chizkiyahu of his sickness, he also undertook to add 15 years to Chizkiyahu's life! In other words, the days that Yahweh had initially allotted to Chizkiyahu had already reached their number, explaining Chizkiyahu's illness near unto death. But because Chizkiyahu's pleaded for mercy, on account of his faithfulness to Yahweh, Yahweh added 15 years to his life!

It should therefore be noted that when servants of Yahweh are sick near unto death on certain occasions, it may actually be the case that the years Yahweh allotted to them for life have reached their number. Nevertheless, this need not be the end of the matter. For if it is not contrary to Yahweh's will that these faithful servants of Yahweh continue living, Yahweh can indeed extend their lives. Therefore, in such cases, if the sick servants of Yahweh desire to continue living, they can plead in prayer to Yahweh for his mercy. And the compassionate Yahweh is likely to hear their pleadings in prayer, for his eyes see and his ears hear the plight of his faithful servants. Yahweh is likely to extend their lives by whatever years he decides.

Why Yahweh Sometimes Does Not Heal His Servants

It should also be noted that if Yahweh does not hear such prayers from his faithful servants, then it is indeed the case that it is his will that those faithful servants of his die at the allotted time for them to die. If they do not die at the allotted time it would be contrary to Yahweh's will.

A Time When Yahweh DID NOT HEAR Yah'shuah's Prayer

For example, in the case of Yah'shuah the Messiah, Yah'shuah prayed to Yahweh that if it was possible the death he was about to go through be lifted up from him, and Yahweh's purpose be accomplished in a different manner. Nevertheless, Yah'shuah was also careful to preface his prayer with the statement - "not my will, by yours be done." In other words, Yah'shuah, the most faithful servant of Yahweh, subjugated his will to Yahweh's. And in this case Yahweh did not hear Yah'shuah's prayer. For Yahweh did not lift up that excruciatingly painful death from Yah'shuah, but had Yah'shuah undergo that death. It was therefore the case that Yah'shuah had to die at that precise time for Yahweh's will to prevail. And Yahweh's will prevailed, and Yah'shuah died at the appointed time.

Mattityahu (Matthew) 26:36-46 reads,

^{26:36}Then Yah'shuah came with them to a place called Gat-Shemanim, and said to his disciples, *"Sit here, while I go there and pray."* ^{26:37}He took with him Kefa and the two sons of Zavdai, and began to be sorrowful and severely troubled. ^{26:38}Then he said to them, *"My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here, and watch with me."* ^{26:39}He went forward a little, fell on his face, and prayed, saying, *"My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not what I want, but what you want."* ^{26:40}He came to the disciples, and found them sleeping, and said to Kefa, *"What, couldn't you watch with me for one hour?"* ^{26:41}Watch and pray, that you not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." ^{26:42}Again, a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, *"My Father, if this cup can't pass away from me, unless I drink it, your will be done."* ^{26:43}He came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. ^{26:44}He left them again, went away, and prayed a third time, saying the same words. ^{26:45}Then he came to his disciples, and said to them, *"Sleep on now, and*

Prayer

take your rest. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners. ^{26:46}Arise, let us be going. Behold, he who betrays me is at hand."

Live And Die According To Yahweh's Will

Therefore, faithful servants of Yahweh must learn to live or die by Yahweh's will. When Yahweh wills that they die at a particular point in time, they should accept Yahweh's will and prepare themselves for death. But if it is not contrary to Yahweh's will that they die not at the time originally appointed for them to die, they can plead with Yahweh for an extension to their lives, if they so desire. And Yahweh is likely to hear their pleading prayers, and allot more years to their lives.

May Yahweh's will be done in our lives.

Yahweh Is Gracious And Merciful

2 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 30:1-27 reads,

^{30:1}Chizkiyahu sent to all Yisra'el and Yahudah, and wrote letters also to Efrayim and Menashshe, that they should come to the house of Yahweh at Yerushalayim, to keep the Pesach to Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el. ^{30:2}For the king had taken counsel, and his princes, and all the assembly in Yerushalayim, to keep the Pesach in the second month.

^{30:3}For they could not keep it at that time, because the Kohanim had not sanctified themselves in sufficient number, neither had the people gathered themselves together to Yerushalayim. ^{30:4}The thing was right in the eyes of the king and of all the assembly.

^{30:5}So they established a decree to make proclamation throughout all Yisra'el, from Be'er-Sheva even to Dan, that they should come to keep the Pesach to Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, at Yerushalayim: for they had not kept it in great numbers in such sort as it is written.

^{30:6}So the posts went with the letters from the king and his princes throughout all Yisra'el and Yahudah, and according to the commandment of the king, saying, "You children of Yisra'el, turn again to Yahweh, the Mighty One of Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yisra'el, that he may return to the remnant that have escaped of you out of the hand of the kings of Ashshur. ^{30:7}Don't be you like your fathers, and like your brothers, who trespassed against Yahweh, the Mighty One of their fathers, so that he gave them up to desolation, as you see. ^{30:8}Now don't you be stiff-necked, as your fathers were; but yield yourselves to Yahweh, and enter into his sanctuary, which he has sanctified forever, and serve Yahweh your Mighty One, that his fierce anger may turn away from you. ^{30:9}For if you turn again to Yahweh, your brothers and your children shall find compassion before those who led them captive, and shall come again into this land: for Yahweh your Mighty One is gracious and merciful, and will not turn away his face from you, if you return to him."

^{30:10}So the posts passed from city to city through the country of Efrayim and Menashshe, even to Zevulun: but they laughed them to scorn, and mocked them. ^{30:11}Nevertheless certain men of Asher and Menashshe and of Zevulun humbled themselves, and came to Yerushalayim. ^{30:12}Also on Yahudah came the hand of the Mighty One to give them one heart, to do the commandment of the king and of the princes by the word of Yahweh. ^{30:13}There assembled at Yerushalayim many people to keep the feast of matzah in the second month, a very great assembly.

Prayer

^{30:14}They arose and took away the altars that were in Yerushalayim, and all the altars for incense took they away, and cast them into the brook Kidron. ^{30:15}Then they killed the Pesach on the fourteenth day of the second month: and the Kohanim and the Levites were ashamed, and sanctified themselves, and brought burnt offerings into the house of Yahweh. ^{30:16}They stood in their place after their order, according to the law of Moshe the man of the Mighty One: the Kohanim sprinkled the blood that they received of the hand of the Levites. ^{30:17}For there were many in the assembly who had not sanctified themselves: therefore the Levites had the charge of killing the Pesachim for everyone who was not clean, to sanctify them to Yahweh. ^{30:18}For a multitude of the people, even many of Efrayim and Menashshe, Yissakhar and Zevulun, had not cleansed themselves, yet did they eat the Pesach otherwise than it is written. **For Chizkiyahu had prayed for them, saying, "The good Yahweh pardon everyone ^{30:19}who sets his heart to seek the Mighty One, Yahweh, the Mighty One of his fathers, though not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary."** ^{30:20}**Yahweh listened to Chizkiyahu, and healed the people.**

^{30:21}The children of Yisra'el who were present at Yerushalayim kept the feast of matzah seven days with great gladness; and the Levites and the Kohanim praised Yahweh day by day, singing with loud instruments to Yahweh. ^{30:22}Chizkiyahu spoke comfortably to all the Levites who had good understanding in the service of Yahweh. So they ate throughout the feast for the seven days, offering sacrifices of peace-offerings, and making confession to Yahweh, the Mighty One of their fathers. ^{30:23}The whole assembly took counsel to keep other seven days; and they kept other seven days with gladness. ^{30:24}For Chizkiyahu king of Yahudah did give to the assembly for offerings one thousand bulls and seven thousand sheep; and the princes gave to the assembly a thousand bulls and ten thousand sheep: and a great number of Kohanim sanctified themselves. ^{30:25}All the assembly of Yahudah, with the Kohanim and the Levites, and all the assembly who came out of Yisra'el, and the sojourners who came out of the land of Yisra'el, and who lived in Yahudah, rejoiced. ^{30:26}So there was great joy in Yerushalayim; for since the time of Shelomo the son of David king of Yisra'el there was not the like in Yerushalayim. ^{30:27}Then the Kohanim the Levites arose and blessed the people: and their voice was heard, and their prayer came up to his holy habitation, even to Heaven.

30:17-20 shows that there were many people, including many of Efrayim, Menashshe, Yissakhar and Zevulun, who had not cleansed themselves according to the commandment of Yahweh's Pesach. Nevertheless, they ate Yahweh's Pesach. For Chizkiyahu prayed for them, that they be forgiven their transgression. For they had set their hearts to seek Yahweh the Mighty One, the Mighty One of their fathers, though they were not cleansed according to the purification of the sanctuary.

Yahweh listened to Chizkiyahu's prayer, and healed the people who had not been appropriately cleansed.

That Yahweh listened to Chizkiyahu's prayer, forgiving the unwitting sin of the people, and allowing them to partake of his Pesach, shows that Yahweh is indeed merciful. For Yahweh looked on the hearts of these people, and saw that they did set their hearts to seek him.

By healing them Yahweh made them clean, for purposes of the purification of the sanctuary.

Prayer

Yahweh's Commands Have Priorities Of Importance

This action of Yahweh shows that his various commands have priorities of importance. It is more important to set one's heart to seek Yahweh, and sin unwittingly, than to comply with a command of Yahweh yet not truly setting one's heart to seek Yahweh. In other words, servants of Yahweh must truly seek him wholeheartedly, and do all of Yahweh's commands that they are aware of. As they continue to seek Yahweh they will in due course learn of the rest of Yahweh's commands, facilitating their doing these commands as they become aware of them.

Yahweh Is Merciful To The Humble

2 Divre Hayamim (Chronicles) 33:1-20 reads,

^{33:1}Menashshe was twelve years old when he began to reign; and he reigned fifty-five years in Yerushalayim. ^{33:2}He did that which was evil in the sight of Yahweh, after the abominations of the nations whom Yahweh cast out before the children of Yisra'el. ^{33:3}For he built again the high places which Chizkiyahu his father had broken down; and he reared up altars for the Ba'alim, and made Asherot, and worshipped all the host of the sky, and served them. ^{33:4}He built altars in the house of Yahweh, whereof Yahweh said, "In Yerushalayim shall my name be forever." ^{33:5}He built altars for all the host of the sky in the two courts of the house of Yahweh. ^{33:6}He also made his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom; and he practised sorcery, and used enchantments, and practised sorcery, and dealt with those who had familiar spirits, and with wizards: he worked much evil in the sight of Yahweh, to provoke him to anger. ^{33:7}He set the engraved image of the idol, which he had made, in the house of the Mighty One, of which the Mighty One said to David and to Shelomo his son, "**In this house, and in Yerushalayim, which I have chosen out of all the tribes of Yisra'el, will I put my name forever:**" ^{33:8}**neither will I any more remove the foot of Yisra'el from off the land which I have appointed for your fathers, if only they will observe to do all that I have commanded them, even all the law and the statutes and the ordinances given by Moshe.**" ^{33:9}Menashshe seduced Yahudah and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, so that they did evil more than did the nations whom Yahweh destroyed before the children of Yisra'el. ^{33:10}Yahweh spoke to Menashshe, and to his people; but they gave no heed. ^{33:11}Therefore Yahweh brought on them the captains of the host of the king of Ashshur, who took Menashshe in chains, and bound him with fetters, and carried him to Bavel. ^{33:12}**When he was in distress, he begged Yahweh his Mighty One, and humbled himself greatly before the Mighty One of his fathers.** ^{33:13}**He prayed to him; and he was entreated of him, and heard his supplication, and brought him again to Yerushalayim into his kingdom. Then Menashshe knew that Yahweh he was the Mighty One.** ^{33:14}Now after this he built an outer wall to the city of David, on the west side of Gichon, in the valley, even to the entrance at the fish gate; and he compassed 'Ofel about with it, and raised it up to a very great height: and he put valiant captains in all the fortified cities of Yahudah. ^{33:15}He took away the foreign mighty ones, and the idol out of the house of Yahweh, and all the altars that he had built in the mount of the house of Yahweh, and in Yerushalayim, and cast them out of the city. ^{33:16}He built up the altar of Yahweh, and offered thereon sacrifices of peace-offerings and of thanksgiving, and commanded

Prayer

Yahudah to serve Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el. ^{33:17}Nevertheless the people sacrificed still in the high places, but only to Yahweh their Mighty One.

^{33:18}Now the rest of the acts of Menashshe, and his prayer to his Mighty One, and the words of the seers who spoke to him in the name of Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, behold, they are written among the acts of the kings of Yisra'el. ^{33:19}His prayer also, and how the Mighty One was entreated of him, and all his sin and his trespass, and the places in which he built high places, and set up the Asherim and the engraved images, before he humbled himself: behold, they are written in the history of Hozai. ^{33:20}So Menashshe slept with his fathers, and they buried him in his own house: and Amon his son reigned in his place.

33:12-13 shows that Yahweh is indeed merciful, for he forgave Menashshe of all his sins and great abominations. For when Menashshe was in distress, and humbled himself, and sought Yahweh in prayer, Yahweh restored Menashshe back to his kingdom in Yerushalayim. Then did Menashshe acknowledge that Yahweh was indeed the Mighty One.

Servants of Yahweh should strive to always remain humble, abiding by Yahweh's commands. They should not allow their hearts to be lifted up in pride, causing them not to be fully submissive to Yahweh.

Prayer

YESHAYAHU THE PROPHET

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 1:1-20 reads,

^{1:1}The vision of Yesha`yahu the son of Amotz, which he saw concerning Yahudah and Yerushalayim, in the days of `Uzziyah, Yotam, Achaz, and Chizkiyahu, kings of Yahudah.

^{1:2}Hear, heavens,

And listen, eretz; for Yahweh has spoken:

I have nourished and brought up children,

And they have rebelled against me.

^{1:3}The ox knows his owner,

And the donkey his master's crib;

But Yisra'el doesn't know,

My people don't consider.

^{1:4}Ah sinful nation,

A people laden with iniquity,

A seed of evil-doers,

Children who deal corruptly!

They have forsaken Yahweh.

They have despised the Holy One of Yisra'el.

They are estranged and backward.

^{1:5}Why should you be beaten more,

That you revolt more and more?

The whole head is sick,

And the whole heart faint.

^{1:6}From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it:

Wounds, welts, and open sores.

They haven't been closed, neither bandaged, neither soothed with oil.

^{1:7}Your country is desolate.

Your cities are burned with fire.

Strangers devour your land in your presence,

And it is desolate,

As overthrown by strangers.

^{1:8}The daughter of Tziyon is left as a booth in a vineyard,

As a lodge in a garden of cucumbers,

As a besieged city.

^{1:9}Unless Yahweh Tzva'ot had left to us a very small remnant,

We would have been as Sedom;

We would have been like `Amorah.

*^{1:10}**Hear the word of Yahweh, you rulers of Sedom.***

Listen to the Torah of our Mighty One, you people of `Amorah.

^{1:11}What are the multitude of your sacrifices to me?, says Yahweh.

I have had enough of the burnt offerings of rams,

And the fat of fed animals.

I don't delight in the blood of bulls,

Prayer

Or of lambs,

Or of male goats.

^{1:12} *When you come to appear before me,*

Who has required this at your hand, to trample my courts?

^{1:13} *Bring no more **vain offerings**.*

Incense is an abomination to me;

New moons, Shabbatot, and convocations:

*I can't bear with **evil assemblies**.*

^{1:14} *My soul hates your New Moons and your appointed feasts; they are a trouble to me; I am weary of bearing them.* ^{1:15} ***When you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; yes, when you make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.*** ^{1:16} ***Wash yourselves, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from***

before my eyes; cease to do evil; ^{1:17}learn to do well; seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. ^{1:18} *Come now, and let us reason together, says Yahweh: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.* ^{1:19} *If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land: ^{1:20}but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be devoured with the sword; for the mouth of Yahweh has spoken it.*

Yahweh Does Not Hear The Prayers Of Unrepentant Sinners

1:15 shows that Yahweh would not hear the many prayers that the Yahudim would make. Why?

1:2 shows that the Yahudim, Yahweh's children, had rebelled against him.

1:3-4 shows that the Yahudim, Yisraelites, were sinful, laden with iniquity, evil doers, and dealt corruptly. They forsook and despised Yahweh, the Holy One of Yisrael, and became estranged and backward.

1:15 shows that the reason Yahweh would not hear their prayers was because their hands were full of blood - murder!

1:16-17 shows Yahweh urging the Yisraelites to wash themselves, to make themselves clean, by putting away the evil of their doings from before his eyes, by ceasing to do evil. And by learning to do well, seeking justice, relieving the oppressed, judging the fatherless and pleading for the widow.

In other words, to be heard by Yahweh in prayer, one must cease to do evil and do righteousness.

Yahweh Does Not Hear The Prayers Of The Proud

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 16:6-14 reads,

^{16:6} *We have heard of the pride of Mo'av, that he is very proud; even of his arrogance, and his pride, and his wrath; his boastings are nothing.* ^{16:7} *Therefore shall Mo'av wail for Mo'av, everyone shall wail: for the raisin-cakes of Kir-Hareset shall you mourn, utterly stricken.* ^{16:8} *For the fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sivmah; the sovereigns of the nations have broken down the choice branches of it, which reached even to Ya`zer, which wandered into the wilderness; its shoots were spread abroad, they passed over the sea.* ^{16:9} *Therefore I will weep with the weeping of Ya`zer for the vine of Sivmah; I will water you with my tears, Heshbon, and El`aleh: for on your summer fruits and on your*

Prayer

harvest the battle shout is fallen. ^{16:10} Gladness is taken away, and joy out of the fruitful field; and in the vineyards there shall be no singing, neither joyful noise: nobody shall tread out wine in the presses; I have made the vintage shout to cease. ^{16:11} Why my heart sounds like a lyre for Mo'av, and my inward parts for Kir-Heres. ^{16:12} It shall happen, when Mo'av presents himself, when he wearies himself on the high place, and shall come to his sanctuary to pray, that he shall not prevail. ^{16:13} This is the word that Yahweh spoke concerning Mo'av in time past. ^{16:14} But now Yahweh has spoken, saying, "Within three years, as the years of a hireling, the glory of Mo'av shall be brought into contempt, with all his great multitude; and the remnant shall be very small and of no account."

16:12 shows that even though Moav would go into his sanctuary and pray, he would not prevail, implying that his prayer would not to be heard by Yahweh.

Why?

16:6 shows that Moav was to be proud, very proud, arrogant and boastful.

In other words, Yahweh does not hear the prayers of those who are proud, arrogant or boastful. Implying that for Yahweh to hear our prayers, we must indeed avoid these traits, and put on humility.

Chizkiyahu's Prayer After His Recovery

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 38:9-20 reads,

^{38:9} *The writing of Chizkiyahu king of Yahudah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness.*

^{38:10} *I said, In the noontide of my days I shall go into the gates of She'ol:*

I am deprived of the residue of my years.

^{38:11} *I said, I shall not see Yah, Yah in the land of the living:*

I shall see man no more with the inhabitants of the world.

^{38:12} *My dwelling is removed, and is carried away from me as a shepherd's tent:*

I have rolled up, like a weaver, my life; he will cut me off from the loom:

From day even to night will you make an end of me.

^{38:13} *I quieted myself until morning; as a lion, so he breaks all my bones:*

From day even to night will you make an end of me.

^{38:14} *Like a swallow or a crane, so did I chatter;*

I did moan as a dove; my eyes fail with looking upward:

Sovereign, I am oppressed, be you my collateral.

^{38:15} *What shall I say? He has both spoken to me, and he has done it:*

I shall go softly all my years because of the bitterness of my soul.

^{38:16} *Sovereign, by these things men live;*

Wholly therein is the life of my spirit:

Why - recover you me, and make me to live.

^{38:17} *Behold, it was for my shalom that I had great bitterness:*

But you have in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption;

For you have cast all my sins behind your back.

^{38:18} **For She'ol can't praise you, death can't celebrate you:**

Those who go down into the pit can't hope for your truth.

^{38:19} **The living, the living, he shall praise you, as I do this day:**

The father to the children shall make known your truth.

Prayer

^{38:20}Yahweh is ready to save me:

Therefore we will sing my songs with stringed instruments

All the days of our life in the house of Yahweh.

Chizkiyahu's prayer after his recovery when he had been sick near unto death.

The Futility And Folly Of Praying To Idols

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 44:6-28 reads,

^{44:6}Thus says Yahweh, the King of Yisra'el, and his Redeemer, Yahweh Tzva'ot: "I am the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no Mighty One. ^{44:7}Who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me, since I established the ancient people? And the things that are coming, and that shall happen, let them declare. ^{44:8}Don't fear, neither be afraid: haven't I declared to you of old, and showed it? You are my witnesses. Is there a Mighty One besides me? Indeed, there is not. I don't know any Rock.

^{44:9}"Those who fashion an engraved image are all of them vanity; and the things that they delight in shall not profit; and their own witnesses don't see, nor know: that they may be put to shame. ^{44:10}Who has fashioned a mighty one, or molten an image that is profitable for nothing? ^{44:11}Behold, all his fellows shall be put to shame; and the workmen, they are of men: let them all be gathered together, let them stand up; they shall fear, they shall be put to shame together. ^{44:12}The smith makes an ax, and works in the coals, and fashions it with hammers, and works it with his strong arm: yes, he is hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water, and is faint. ^{44:13}The carpenter stretches out a line; he marks it out with a pencil; he shapes it with planes, and he marks it out with the compasses, and shapes it after the figure of a man, according to the beauty of a man, to dwell in a house.

^{44:14}He cuts down cedars for himself, and takes the cypress and the oak, and strengthens for himself one among the trees of the forest: he plants a fir-tree, and the rain nourishes it. ^{44:15}Then shall it be for a man to burn; and he takes of it, and warms himself; yes, he kindles it, and bakes bread: yes, he makes a mighty one, and worships it; he makes it an engraved image, and falls down to it. ^{44:16}He burns part of it in the fire; with part of it he eats flesh; he roasts roast, and is satisfied; yes, he warms himself, and says, 'Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire.' ^{44:17}The residue of it he makes a mighty one, even his engraved image; he falls down to it and worships, and prays to it, and says, 'Deliver me; for you are my mighty one.'

^{44:18}"They don't know, neither do they consider: for he has shut their eyes, that they can't see; and their hearts, that they can't understand. ^{44:19}None calls to mind, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, 'I have burned part of it in the fire; yes, also I have baked bread on the coals of it; I have roasted flesh and eaten it: and shall I make the residue of it an abomination? Shall I fall down to the stock of a tree?' ^{44:20}He feeds on ashes; a deceived heart has turned him aside; and he can't deliver his soul, nor say, 'Is there not a lie in my right hand?'

^{44:21}"Remember these things, Ya`akov, and Yisra'el; for you are my servant: I have formed you; you are my servant: Yisra'el, you shall not be forgotten by me. ^{44:22}I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, your transgressions, and, as a cloud, your sins: return to me; for I have redeemed you. ^{44:23}Sing, you heavens, for Yahweh has done it; shout, you lower parts of the eretz; break forth into singing, you mountains, O forest, and every tree therein: for Yahweh has redeemed Ya`akov, and will glorify himself in Yisra'el."

Prayer

^{44:24}Thus says Yahweh, your Redeemer, and he who formed you from the womb: "I am Yahweh, who makes all things; who stretches forth the heavens alone; who spreads abroad the eretz (who is with me?); ^{44:25}who frustrates the signs of the liars, and makes diviners mad; who turns wise men backward, and makes their knowledge foolish; ^{44:26}who confirms the word of his servant, and performs the counsel of his messengers; who says of Yerushalayim, 'She shall be inhabited'; and of the cities of Yahudah, 'They shall be built, and I will raise up the waste places of it'; ^{44:27}who says to the deep, 'Be dry, and I will dry up your rivers'; ^{44:28}Who says of Koresh, 'He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying of Yerushalayim, "She shall be built"; and of the temple, "Your foundation shall be laid."'"

Yahweh clearly shows the futility and folly of praying to idols, and of his unchallenged greatness. Praise Yahweh!

Yahweh - Alone - Is The Mighty One

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 45:14-25 reads,

^{45:14}Thus says Yahweh: "The labor of Mitzrayim, and the merchandise of Kush, and the Seva'im, men of stature, shall come over to you, and they shall be yours. They shall go after you. In chains they shall come over; and they shall fall down to you. They shall make supplication to you: 'Surely the Mighty One is in you; and there is none else, there is no other mighty one.' ^{45:15}Most assuredly you are a Mighty One who hid yourself, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, the Savior."

^{45:16}They shall be put to shame, yes, confounded, all of them; they shall go into confusion together who are makers of idols. ^{45:17}But Yisra'el shall be saved by Yahweh with an everlasting salvation: you shall not be put to shame nor confounded world without end. ^{45:18}For thus says Yahweh who created the heavens, the Mighty One who formed the eretz and made it, who established it and didn't create it a waste, who formed it to be inhabited: 'I am Yahweh; and there is no one else.' ^{45:19}I have not spoken in secret, in a place of the land of darkness; I didn't say to the seed of Ya'akov, Seek you me in vain: I, Yahweh, speak righteousness, I declare things that are right. ^{45:20}Assemble yourselves and come; draw near together, you who have escaped from the nations: they have no knowledge who carry the wood of their engraved image, and pray to a mighty one that can't save. ^{45:21}Declare you, and bring it forth; yes, let them take counsel together: who has showed this from ancient time? Who has declared it of old? Haven't I, Yahweh? And there is no Mighty One else besides me, a just Mighty One and a Savior; there is no one besides me. ^{45:22}Look to me, and be you saved, all the ends of the eretz; for I am the Mighty One, and there is none else. ^{45:23}**By myself have I sworn, the word is gone forth from my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that to me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.** ^{45:24}Only in Yahweh, it is said of me, is righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all those who were incensed against him shall be put to shame. ^{45:25}In Yahweh shall all the seed of Yisra'el be justified, and shall glory."

Yahweh, through his judgements, will indeed show that he Yahweh, alone, is the Mighty One, and that idols are not mighty ones. Only Yahweh should be prayed to, being the only Mighty One.

Prayer

Yahweh's House Of Prayer For All Peoples

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 56:1-8 reads,

^{56:1}Thus says Yahweh, "Keep you justice, and do righteousness; for my yeshu`ah is near to come, and my righteousness to be revealed. ^{56:2}Blessed is the man who does this, and the son of man who holds it fast; who keeps the Shabbat from profaning it, and keeps his hand from doing any evil. ^{56:3}Neither let the foreigner, who has joined himself to Yahweh, speak, saying, 'Yahweh will surely separate me from his people'; neither let the eunuch say, 'Behold, I am a dry tree.' ^{56:4}For thus says Yahweh of the eunuchs who keep my Shabbatot, and choose the things that please me, and hold fast my covenant: ^{56:5}To them will I give in my house and within my walls a memorial and a name better than of sons and of daughters; I will give them an everlasting name, that shall not be cut off. ^{56:6}Also the foreigners who join themselves to Yahweh, to minister to him, and to love the name of Yahweh, to be his servants, everyone who keeps the Shabbat from profaning it, and holds fast my covenant; ^{56:7}even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer: their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. ^{56:8}The Sovereign Yahweh, who gathers the outcasts of Yisra'el, says, 'Yet will I gather others to him, besides his own who are gathered.'"

56:7 shows that Yahweh's house is a house of prayer, a house of prayer for all peoples, both Yisraelites and non-Yisraelites.

To be brought into Yahweh's house one must keep justice and do righteousness, as 56:1 shows.

56:2 shows that keeping justice and doing righteousness includes keeping the Shabbat from profaning it, and keeping one's hands from doing any evil.

56:4 shows that it includes doing the things that please Yahweh, and holding fast Yahweh's covenant - the Ten Commandments.

56:6 shows that it includes joining oneself to Yahweh, to minister to him, to love the name of Yahweh, and to be Yahweh's servant.

By doing all these things will Yahweh indeed bring us to his house of prayer, a house of prayer for all peoples.

Prayer

YIRMEYAHU THE PROPHET

When Yahweh Does Not Hear The Prayers Of His Prophets For His People

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 7:16, 1-20 reads,

^{7:1}The word that came to Yirmeyahu from Yahweh, saying, ^{7:2}"Stand in the gate of Yahweh's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, 'Hear the word of Yahweh, all you of Yahudah, who enter in at these gates to worship Yahweh. ^{7:3}Thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place. ^{7:4}Don't you trust in lying words, saying, "The temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh, the temple of Yahweh, are these." ^{7:5}For if you thoroughly amend your ways and your doings; if you thoroughly execute justice between a man and his neighbor; ^{7:6}if you don't oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, and the widow, and don't shed innocent blood in this place, neither walk after other mighty ones to your own hurt: ^{7:7}then will I cause you to dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers, from of old even forevermore.

^{7:8}"Behold, you trust in lying words, that can't profit. ^{7:9}Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely, and burn incense to Ba'al, and walk after other mighty ones that you have not known, ^{7:10}and come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, "We are delivered"; that you may do all these abominations? ^{7:11}Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen it, says Yahweh. ^{7:12}But go you now to my place which was in Shiloh, where I caused my name to dwell at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Yisra'el.

^{7:13}Now, because you have done all these works, says Yahweh, and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you didn't hear; and I called you, but you didn't answer: ^{7:14}therefore will I do to the house which is called by my name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. ^{7:15}I will cast you out of my sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, even the whole seed of Efrayim.

^{7:16}**"Therefore don't you pray for this people, neither lift up a cry nor prayer for them, neither make intercession to me; for I will not hear you."** ^{7:17}Don't you see what they do in the cities of Yahudah and in the streets of Yerushalayim? ^{7:18}The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead the dough, to make cakes to the queen of the sky, and to pour out drink-offerings to other mighty ones, that they may provoke me to anger. ^{7:19}Do they provoke me to anger? says Yahweh; do they not provoke themselves, to the confusion of their own faces? ^{7:20}Therefore thus says the Sovereign Yahweh: Behold, my anger and my wrath shall be poured out on this place, on man, and on animal, and on the trees of the field, and on the fruit of the ground; and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched."

7:16 shows that there are circumstances when Yahweh does not hear the prayers of his prophets when these pray for his people.

The reason why Yahweh commanded Yirmeyahu not to pray for his people Yahudah was because Yahudah was committing evil and had not listened to his entreaties to repent of the evil committed. And Yahweh had thereby decided to punish Yahudah for the evil it was committing.

Prayer

In such circumstances, when the people have refused to repent, and Yahweh has decreed his punishment on the people for their refusal to repent, it is not for the prophet to continue praying for the people. For Yahweh will not listen to that prophet, seeing that he has already pronounced judgement on the people, after having given them opportunity to repent.

When Yahweh's Servants Are To Pray For The People

It therefore appears that the time for Yahweh's prophets to pray for his people is prior to Yahweh pronouncing his judgement on his people for their refusal to repent. In other words, if the people are living evil lives, and the period in which they are living in is one when Yahweh is still giving them time to repent, then Yahweh's prophets ought to continue praying for them. But once Yahweh has pronounced his judgement on the people for their works of evil, because they have refused to repent, despite having been given time to do so, then there is no longer any point for Yahweh's prophets to continue praying for such people. Such people have to bear their own sin.

When Yahweh's Servants Are Not To Pray For The People

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 11:1-14 reads,

^{11:1}The word that came to Yirmeyahu from Yahweh, saying, ^{11:2}"Hear you the words of this covenant, and speak to the men of Yahudah, and to the inhabitants of Yerushalayim; ^{11:3}and say you to them, 'Thus says Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el: Cursed be the man who doesn't hear the words of this covenant, ^{11:4}which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Mitzrayim, out of the iron furnace, saying, "Obey my voice, and do them, according to all which I command you: so shall you be my people, and I will be your Mighty One; ^{11:5}that I may establish the oath which I swore to your fathers, to give them a land flowing with milk and honey, as at this day.'" Then answered I, and said, "Amen, Yahweh."

^{11:6}Yahweh said to me, "Proclaim all these words in the cities of Yahudah, and in the streets of Yerushalayim, saying, 'Hear you the words of this covenant, and do them.

^{11:7}For I earnestly protested to your fathers in the day that I brought them up out of the land of Mitzrayim, even to this day, rising early and protesting, saying, "Obey my voice."

^{11:8}Yet they didn't obey, nor turn their ear, but walked everyone in the stubbornness of their evil heart: therefore I brought on them all the words of this covenant, which I commanded them to do, but they didn't do them."

^{11:9}Yahweh said to me, "A conspiracy is found among the men of Yahudah, and among the inhabitants of Yerushalayim. ^{11:10}They are turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words; and they are gone after other mighty ones to serve them: the house of Yisra'el and the house of Yahudah have broken my covenant which I made with their fathers. ^{11:11}Therefore thus says Yahweh, Behold, I will bring

evil on them, which they shall not be able to escape; and they shall cry to me, but I will not listen to them. ^{11:12}Then shall the cities of Yahudah and the inhabitants of

Yerushalayim go and cry to mighty ones to which they offer incense: but they will not save them at all in the time of their trouble. ^{11:13}For according to the number of your cities are your mighty ones, Yahudah; and according to the number of the streets of Yerushalayim have you set up altars to the shameful thing, even altars to burn incense to

Prayer

*Ba'al. ^{11:14}**Therefore don't you pray for this people, neither lift up cry nor prayer for them; for I will not hear them in the time that they cry to me because of their trouble.***"

Once Yahweh has pronounced his judgement upon those who refuse to hear his voice, despite having given them sufficient opportunity for them to repent of their evil ways and to hear his voice, Yahweh's prophets are not to pray for such people. For once Yahweh has passed his judgement after due time accorded for repentance, Yahweh's judgement stands. And human prayer does not change or alter Yahweh's judgement in such circumstances.

It therefore appears that the time Yahweh's prophets are to pray for errant people is prior to Yahweh's judgement being pronounced upon them after they have been accorded due time to repent of their evil ways.

Once Yahweh's Judgement Is Pronounced

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 14:1-16 reads,

^{14:1}*The word of Yahweh that came to Yirmeyahu concerning the drought. ^{14:2}Yahudah mourns, and the gates of it languish, they sit in black on the ground; and the cry of Yerushalayim is gone up. ^{14:3}Their nobles send their little ones to the waters: they come to the cisterns, and find no water; they return with their vessels empty; they are put to shame and confounded, and cover their heads. ^{14:4}Because of the ground which is cracked, because no rain has been in the land, the plowmen are put to shame, they cover their heads. ^{14:5}Yes, the hind also in the field calves, and forsakes her young, because there is no grass. ^{14:6}The wild donkeys stand on the bare heights, they pant for air like jackals; their eyes fail, because there is no herbage.*

^{14:7}*Though our iniquities testify against us, work you for your name's sake, Yahweh; for our backslidings are many; we have sinned against you. ^{14:8}You hope of Yisra'el, the Savior of it in the time of trouble, why should you be as a sojourner in the land, and as a wayfaring man who turns aside to stay for a night? ^{14:9}Why should you be like a scared man, as a mighty man who can't save? Yet you, Yahweh, are in the midst of us, and we are called by your name; don't leave us.*

^{14:10}*Thus says Yahweh to this people, "Even so have they loved to wander; they have not refrained their feet: therefore Yahweh does not accept them; now will he remember their iniquity, and visit their sins."*

^{14:11}*Yahweh said to me, "**Don't pray for this people for their good. ^{14:12}When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and meal-offering, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence.**" ^{14:13}Then said I, "Ah, Sovereign Yahweh! Behold, the prophets tell them, 'You shall not see the sword, neither shall you have famine; but I will give you assured shalom in this place.'"*

^{14:14}*Then Yahweh said to me, "The prophets prophesy lies in my name; I didn't send them, neither have I commanded them, neither spoke I to them: they prophesy to you a lying vision, and divination, and a thing of nothing, and the deceit of their own heart.*

^{14:15}*Therefore thus says Yahweh concerning the prophets who prophesy in my name, and I didn't send them, yet they say, 'Sword and famine shall not be in this land.' By sword and famine shall those prophets be consumed. ^{14:16}The people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Yerushalayim because of the famine and the sword; and*

Prayer

they shall have none to bury them - them, their wives, nor their sons, nor their daughters: for I will pour their wickedness on them."

It is again evident that once Yahweh has pronounced his judgement upon a people he has given due time to repent of their errant ways, that judgement of his stands. At that stage his prophets should not pray for such people, for Yahweh will not listen to such prayers. Also, even if the errant people then decide to pray and fast, after the determination of their fate, that prayer and fasting is worthless. Yahweh will not hear it, nor will he take action to revoke his judgement upon them.

When To Repent

It therefore appears that the time for taking due action to repent is prior to Yahweh pronouncing judgement on one. Prior to this time one's repentance, prayers and fasts count. But after the allotted time for repentance one's repentance, prayers, and fasts do not count. After such due time Yahweh's prophets should not pray for such people that he may show due mercy upon them. For he already gave the people an opportunity for being shown mercy, an opportunity they rejected!

Yirmeyahu's Letter To The Captives Of Yahudah At Bavel

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 29:1-14 reads,

^{29:1}Now these are the words of the letter that Yirmeyahu the prophet sent from Yerushalayim to the residue of the Zakenim of the captivity, and to the Kohanim, and to the prophets, and to all the people, whom Nevukhadnetztzar had carried away captive from Yerushalayim to Bavel, ^{29:2}(after that Yekhonyah the king, and the queen-mother, and the eunuchs, and the princes of Yahudah and Yerushalayim, and the craftsmen, and the smiths, were departed from Yerushalayim,) ^{29:3}by the hand of El'asah the son of Shafan, and Gemaryah the son of Chilkiyah, (whom Tzidkiyahu king of Yahudah sent to Bavel to Nevukhadnetztzar king of Bavel,) saying, ^{29:4}"Thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, to all the captivity, whom I have caused to be carried away captive from Yerushalayim to Bavel: ^{29:5}Build you houses, and dwell in them; and plant gardens, and eat the fruit of them. ^{29:6}Take you wives, and father sons and daughters; and take wives for your sons, and give your daughters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters; and multiply you there, and don't be diminished. ^{29:7}**Seek the shalom of the city where I have caused you to be carried away captive, and pray to Yahweh for it; for in the shalom of it shall you have shalom.** ^{29:8}For thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el: 'Don't let your prophets who are in the midst of you, and your diviners, deceive you; neither listen you to your dreams which you cause to be dreamed. ^{29:9}For they prophesy falsely to you in my name: I have not sent them, says Yahweh. ^{29:10}For thus says Yahweh, After seventy years are accomplished for Bavel, I will visit you, and perform my good word toward you, in causing you to return to this place. ^{29:11}For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says Yahweh, thoughts of shalom, and not of evil, to give you hope in your latter end. ^{29:12}**You shall call on me, and you shall go and pray to me, and I will listen to you.** ^{29:13}**You shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart.** ^{29:14}**I will be found of you, says Yahweh, and I will turn again your captivity, and I will gather you from all the nations,**

Prayer

and from all the places wither I have driven you, says Yahweh; and I will bring you again to the place whence I caused you to be carried away captive."

Long-Term Captives Should Pray For The Welfare Of The Land Of Their Captivity

29:7 shows that once Yahweh has executed his judgement on his people to send them to slavery amongst another nation or group of nations, and determined that they remain there for an extended period of time, his people should simply accept their fate in the land of their captivity, and pray for the welfare of the land of their captivity. For the welfare of his people is then tied to the welfare of the land of their captivity, as they will still be dwelling there for an extended period of time.

Yahweh's Command To Yisrael Applicable In The Present Time

29:11-14 is applicable for the period just prior to the return of Yah'shuah the Messiah, just prior to the remnant of Yisrael then living being restored to their own land, the period of time we are currently living in.

Yahweh is currently thinking of Yisrael thoughts of shalom, to give Yisrael hope.

What Yisraelites Should Now Do

It is now time for Yisraelites, wherever they are scattered amongst the nations of the world, to call on Yahweh. It is now time to pray to Yahweh. And Yahweh will indeed hear the prayer of Yisrael, the prayers of Yisraelites scattered throughout the world among the nations that Yahweh has scattered them in. And Yahweh has already promised that he will indeed hear this prayer of Yisrael, these prayers that these latter day Yisraelites scattered amongst the nations of the world pray to him.

It is now time for Yisraelites scattered throughout the entire world to seek Yahweh. It is time for them to find Yahweh. And they will indeed find Yahweh, when they seek him with all their heart - faithfully and wholeheartedly.

What Yahweh Is About To Do For Yisrael

And once found by them, Yahweh will indeed turn again their captivity, and will gather them from all the nations, from all the places where he has driven them. And Yahweh will bring them back to the place from which he had caused them to be carried captive - their own land of Yisrael, the land of Promise.

Yisraelites currently living, scattered amongst all the nations of the world, should now realise that their time of restoration is come. It is now time to return to Yahweh, seeking him wholeheartedly, in order to find him, and reap appropriate blessings from him!

Prophecy Shortly To Be Fulfilled

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 32:6-44 reads,

Prayer

^{32:6}Yirmeyahu said, "The word of Yahweh came to me, saying, ^{32:7}'Behold, Chanam'el the son of Shallum your uncle shall come to you, saying, "Buy you my field that is in `Anatot; for the right of redemption is yours to buy it."'" ^{32:8}So Chanam'el my uncle's son came to me in the court of the guard according to the word of Yahweh, and said to me, "Please buy my field that is in `Anatot, which is in the land of Binyamin; for the right of inheritance is yours, and the redemption is yours; buy it for yourself." Then I knew that this was the word of Yahweh. ^{32:9}I bought the field that was in `Anatot of Chanam'el my uncle's son, and weighed him the money, even seventeen shekels of silver. ^{32:10}I subscribed the deed, and sealed it, and called witnesses, and weighed him the money in the balances. ^{32:11}So I took the deed of the purchase, both that which was sealed, according to the law and custom, and that which was open: ^{32:12}and I delivered the deed of the purchase to Barukh the son of Neriya, the son of Mechaseyah, in the presence of Chanam'el my uncle's son, and in the presence of the witnesses who subscribed the deed of the purchase, before all the Yahudim who sat in the court of the guard. ^{32:13}I charged Barukh before them, saying, ^{32:14}"Thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el: 'Take these deeds, this deed of the purchase which is sealed, and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel; that they may continue many days.' ^{32:15}For thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el: Houses and fields and vineyards shall yet again be bought in this land."

^{32:16}Now after I had delivered the deed of the purchase to Barukh the son of Neriya, I prayed to Yahweh, saying, ^{32:17}"Ah Sovereign Yahweh! Behold, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and by your outstretched arm; there is nothing too hard for you, ^{32:18}who show lovingkindness to thousands, and recompense the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them; the great, the powerful Mighty One, Yahweh-Tzva'ot is his name; ^{32:19}great in counsel, and mighty in work; whose eyes are open on all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings: ^{32:20}who did set signs and wonders in the land of Mitzrayim, even to this day, both in Yisra'el and among other men; and made you a name, as at this day; ^{32:21}and did bring forth your people Yisra'el out of the land of Mitzrayim with signs, and with wonders, and with a strong hand, and with an outstretched arm, and with great terror; ^{32:22}and gave them this land, which you did swear to their fathers to give them, a land flowing with milk and honey; ^{32:23}and they came in, and possessed it, but they didn't obey your voice, neither walked in your law; they have done nothing of all that you commanded them to do: therefore you have caused all this evil to come on them. ^{32:24}Behold, the mounds, they are come to the city to take it; and the city is given into the hand of the Kasdim who fight against it, because of the sword, and of the famine, and of the pestilence; and what you have spoken is happened; and, behold, you see it. ^{32:25}You have said to me, Sovereign Yahweh, 'Buy you the field for money, and call witnesses; whereas the city is given into the hand of the Kasdim.'" ^{32:26}Then came the word of Yahweh to Yirmeyahu, saying, ^{32:27}"Behold, I am Yahweh, the Mighty One of all flesh: is there anything too hard for me? ^{32:28}Therefore thus says Yahweh: Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Kasdim, and into the hand of Nevukhadretzar king of Bavel, and he shall take it: ^{32:29}and the Kasdim, who fight against this city, shall come and set this city on fire, and burn it, with the houses, on whose roofs they have offered incense to Ba'al, and poured out drink-offerings to other mighty ones, to provoke me to anger. ^{32:30}For the children of Yisra'el and the children of

Prayer

Yahudah have done only that which was evil in my sight from their youth; for the children of Yisra'el have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands, says Yahweh.
^{32:31}*For this city has been to me a provocation of my anger and of my wrath from the day that they built it even to this day; that I should remove it from before my face,*
^{32:32}*because of all the evil of the children of Yisra'el and of the children of Yahudah, which they have done to provoke me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their Kohanim, and their prophets, and the men of Yahudah, and the inhabitants of Yerushalayim.*
^{32:33}*They have turned to me the back, and not the face: and though I taught them, rising up early and teaching them, yet they have not listened to receive instruction.*
^{32:34}*But they set their abominations in the house that is called by my name, to defile it.*
^{32:35}*They built the high places of Ba'al, which are in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters to pass through the fire to Molekh; which I didn't command them, neither did it come into my mind, that they should do this abomination, to cause Yahudah to sin.*
^{32:36}*Now therefore thus says Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, concerning this city, whereof you say, 'It is given into the hand of the king of Bavel by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence':*
^{32:37}*Behold, I will gather them out of all the countries, where I have driven them in my anger, and in my wrath, and in great indignation; and I will bring them again to this place, and I will cause them to dwell safely:*
^{32:38}*and they shall be my people, and I will be their Mighty One:*
^{32:39}*and I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and of their children after them:*
^{32:40}*and I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from following them, to do them good; and I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me.*
^{32:41}*Yes, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul.*
^{32:42}*For thus says Yahweh: Like as I have brought all this great evil on this people, so will I bring on them all the good that I have promised them.*
^{32:43}*Fields shall be bought in this land, whereof you say, 'It is desolate, without man or animal; it is given into the hand of the Kasdim.'*
^{32:44}*Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe the deeds, and seal them, and call witnesses, in the land of Binyamin, and in the places about Yerushalayim, and in the cities of Yahudah, and in the cities of the hill-country, and in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South: for I will cause their captivity to return, says Yahweh."*

Just as Yirmeyahu bought a field and took possession of it, so shall the returned remnant of Yisrael buy fields in their own land, after they return from their captivity in the various lands amongst the nations wherein they are scattered. The remnant of Yisrael should therefore realise that this prophecy is about to be fulfilled for them.

The People Sought Yahweh's Guidance Through Yirmeyahu The Prophet

Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah) 42:1-22 reads,

^{42:1}*Then all the captains of the forces, and Yochanan the son of Kareach, and Yezanyah the son of Hosha'yah, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, came near,*
^{42:2}*and said to Yirmeyahu the prophet, "Let, we pray you, our supplication be presented before you, and pray for us to Yahweh your Mighty One, even for all this remnant; for we are left but a few of many, as your eyes do see us:*
^{42:3}*that Yahweh your Mighty One may show us the way in which we should walk, and the thing that we should do."*
^{42:4}*Then*

Prayer

Yirmeyahu the prophet said to them, "I have heard you; behold, I will pray to Yahweh your Mighty One according to your words; and it shall happen that whatever thing Yahweh shall answer you, I will declare it to you; I will keep nothing back from you."

^{42:5}*Then they said to Yirmeyahu, "Yahweh be a true and faithful witness among us, if we don't do according to all the word wherewith Yahweh your Mighty One shall send you to us. ^{42:6}Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of Yahweh our Mighty One, to whom we send you; that it may be well with us, when we obey the voice of Yahweh our Mighty One."*

^{42:7}*It happened after ten days, that the word of Yahweh came to Yirmeyahu. ^{42:8}Then called he Yochanan the son of Kareach, and all the captains of the forces who were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, ^{42:9}and said to them, "Thus says Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, to whom you sent me to present your supplication before him: ^{42:10}If you will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I repent me of the evil that I have done to you. ^{42:11}Don't be afraid of the king of Bavel, of whom you are afraid; don't be afraid of him, says Yahweh: for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. ^{42:12}I will grant you mercy, that he may have mercy on you, and cause you to return to your own land. ^{42:13}But if you say, "We will not dwell in this land"; so that you don't obey the voice of Yahweh your Mighty One, ^{42:14}saying, "No; but we will go into the land of Mitzrayim, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the shofar, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell": ^{42:15}now therefore hear you the word of Yahweh, O remnant of Yahudah: Thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, If you indeed set your faces to enter into Mitzrayim, and go to sojourn there; ^{42:16}then it shall happen, that the sword, which you fear, shall overtake you there in the land of Mitzrayim; and the famine, whereof you are afraid, shall follow hard after you there in Mitzrayim; and there you shall die. ^{42:17}So shall it be with all the men who set their faces to go into Mitzrayim to sojourn there: they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence; and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring on them. ^{42:18}For thus says Yahweh-Tzva'ot, the Mighty One of Yisra'el: As my anger and my wrath has been poured forth on the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, so shall my wrath be poured forth on you, when you shall enter into Mitzrayim; and you shall be an object of horror, and an astonishment, and a curse, and a reproach; and you shall see this place no more.'*

^{42:19}*"Yahweh has spoken concerning you, remnant of Yahudah, 'Don't you go into Mitzrayim: know certainly that I have testified to you this day. ^{42:20}For you have dealt deceitfully against your own souls; for you sent me to Yahweh your Mighty One, saying, "Pray for us to Yahweh our Mighty One; and according to all that Yahweh our Mighty One shall say, so declare to us, and we will do it": ^{42:21}and I have this day declared it to you; but you have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh your Mighty One in anything for which he has sent me to you. ^{42:22}Now therefore know certainly that you shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence, in the place where you desire to go to sojourn there."*

42:1-3 shows that the people asked Yirmeyahu, Yahweh's prophet, to pray for them to Yahweh that Yahweh may guide them in their conduct. The people appeared willing to listen to whatever guidance Yahweh gave them.

Prayer

Why Yirmeyahu Agreed To The People's Request

42:4 shows that Yirmeyahu agreed to their request, seeing that they appeared willing to follow Yahweh's guidance.

It appears to me that Yirmeyahu made the right decision. For when a people appear willing to hear Yahweh's word, that they may do it, it is imperative that the prophet seek Yahweh in prayer for the guidance that is sought, for it is Yahweh's prophet's duty to so do.

42:5-6 shows that the people reaffirmed to heed Yahweh's words, whether it seemed favourable or unfavourable to them. In other words, despite all that had recently occurred to the people, they now appeared willing to be abandon their rebellion against Yahweh, and finally submit to him.

Yahweh Answers Our Prayers In His Own Time

42:7 shows that Yahweh did not answer the people immediately. He gave his answer after 10 days!

It should therefore be clear to us that when we seek Yahweh's guidance in a matter, we should not impose upon a Yahweh a time limit within which he is to respond to us. He is Yahweh, HaElyon, and we are just his creation. It is for us not to impose any stipulation upon Yahweh, but to accept whatever Yahweh gives us, including the manner he chooses to deal with us based on his own prerogative.

It should also be clear to us that even though we feel that we require an quick answer from Yahweh from a matter in which we are seeking his guidance, it is entirely up to him whether or not he will give us the guidance that we seek from him. And if he decides to give us the guidance that we request of him, it is entirely up to him to choose the timing of delivery of that guidance. We should never pressure Yahweh with any matter. He is Yahweh, HaElyon - the Most High, while we are just merely men!

The People Were Not Sincere In Their Request For Guidance From Yahweh

42:19-22 shows that it eventually emerged that the people were not sincere in their request for guidance from Yahweh. They had already made up their minds what option they sought for themselves. They just wanted Yahweh to ratify the option that they had already sought for themselves, rather than accept whatever guidance Yahweh gave them, even if contrary to the option they had already sought for themselves!

Yahweh Punishes Those Who Insincerely Seek His Guidance

Such requests for guidance at Yahweh's hand are not sincere requests. And because they are not sincere requests for guidance, Yahweh inevitably punishes those who engage in such requests for guidance!

In this case Yahweh had told the people, through Yirmeyahu, that they would surely face unpleasant consequences if they would choose not to heed his guidance. When it became clear that they were not going to heed Yahweh's words, but persisted in their past rebellion against Yahweh, Yirmeyahu reaffirmed to them that the evil consequences for rejecting Yahweh's word would surely be visited upon them.

Prayer

Those Whose Minds Are Set Should Not Seek Yahweh's Guidance

It should therefore be clear that we should seek Yahweh's guidance in any matter only when we are sufficiently meek and submissive to heed Yahweh's word in the matter. If we have already purposed a course of action in our minds, and are set on pursuing it, then it is pointless to seek Yahweh's guidance in it. For we have already sought to follow our own guidance. If the people approach a prophet of Yahweh to pray for them in such circumstances then the prophet should not pray, for the people have not come sincerely before Yahweh.

Sincerely Seek Yahweh's Guidance

It should also be noted that we should always seek Yahweh's guidance in any matter of significance, and do so in a meek and submissive manner. That Yahweh may guide our steps in all significant matters in our lives.

Prayer

YONAH THE PROPHET

Yonah's Mission

Yonah (Jonah) 1:1-4:11 reads,

^{1:1}Now the word of Yahweh came to Yonah the son of Ammittai, saying, ^{1:2}"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach against it, for their wickedness has come up before me."

^{1:3}But Yonah rose up to flee to Tarshish from the presence of Yahweh. He went down to Yafo, and found a ship going to Tarshish; so he paid its fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of Yahweh. ^{1:4}But Yahweh sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was a mighty tempest on the sea, so that the ship was likely brake up. ^{1:5}Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man to his mighty one. They threw the cargo that was in the ship into the sea, to lighten it. But Yonah had gone down into the innermost parts of the ship, and he was lying down, and was fast asleep. ^{1:6}So the shipmaster came to him, and said to him, "What do you mean, sleeper? Arise, call on your mighty ones! Maybe the mighty ones will notice us, so that we won't perish."

^{1:7}They all said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil is on us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell on Yonah. ^{1:8}Then they asked him, "Tell us, please, for whose cause this evil is on us. What is your occupation? Where do you come from? What is your country? Of what people are you?"

^{1:9}He said to them, "I am a Hebrew, and I fear Yahweh, the Mighty One of Heaven, who has made the sea and the dry land."

^{1:10}Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said to him, "What is this that you have done?" For the men knew that he was fleeing from the presence of Yahweh, because he had told them. ^{1:11}Then said they to him, "What shall we do to you, that the sea may be calm to us?" For the sea grew more and more tempestuous. ^{1:12}He said to them, "Take me up, and throw me into the sea. Then the sea will be calm for you; for I know that because of me this great tempest is on you."

^{1:13}Nevertheless the men rowed hard to get them back to the land; but they could not, for the sea grew more and more tempestuous against them. ^{1:14}Therefore they cried to Yahweh, and said, "We beg you, Yahweh, we beg you, let us not perish for this man's life, and don't lay on us innocent blood; for you, Yahweh, have done as it pleased you." ^{1:15}So they took up Yonah, and threw him into the sea; and the sea ceased its raging. ^{1:16}Then the men feared Yahweh exceedingly; and they offered a sacrifice to Yahweh, and made vows.

^{1:17}Yahweh prepared a great fish to swallow up Yonah, and Yonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

^{2:1}Then Yonah prayed to Yahweh, his Mighty One, out of the fish's belly. ^{2:2}He said, "I called because of my affliction to Yahweh. He answered me.

Out of the belly of She'ol I cried.

You heard my voice.

^{2:3}For you threw me into the depths,
In the heart of the seas.

Prayer

The flood was all around me.

All your waves and your billows passed over me.

^{2:4}*I said, 'I have been banished from your sight;*

Yet I will look again toward your holy temple.'

^{2:5}*The waters surrounded me,*

Even to the soul.

The deep was around me.

The weeds were wrapped around my head.

^{2:6}*I went down to the bottoms of the mountains.*

The earth barred me in forever:

Yet have you brought up my life from the pit, Yahweh my Mighty One.

^{2:7}*"When my soul fainted within me, I remembered Yahweh.*

My prayer came in to you, into your holy temple.

^{2:8}*Those who regard lying vanities forsake their own mercy.*

^{2:9}*But I will sacrifice to you with the voice of thanksgiving.*

I will pay that which I have vowed.

Salvation belongs to Yahweh."

^{2:10}*Yahweh spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Yonah on the dry land.*

^{3:1}*The word of Yahweh came to Yonah the second time, saying, ^{3:2}"Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I give you."*

^{3:3}*So Yonah arose, and went to Nineveh, according to the word of Yahweh. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey across. ^{3:4}Yonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried out, and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"*

^{3:5}*The people of Nineveh believed the Mighty One; and they proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them. ^{3:6}The news reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and took off his royal robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes. ^{3:7}He made a proclamation and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, "Let neither man nor animal, herd nor flock, taste anything; let them not feed, nor drink water; ^{3:8}but let them be covered with sackcloth, both man and animal, and let them cry mightily to the Mighty One. Yes, let them turn everyone from his evil way, and from the violence that is in his hands. ^{3:9}Who knows whether the Mighty One will not turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, so that we might not perish?"*

^{3:10}*The Mighty One saw their works, that they turned from their evil way. The Mighty One repented of the evil that he said he would do to them, and he didn't do it.*

^{4:1}*But it displeased Yonah exceedingly, and he was angry. ^{4:2}He prayed to Yahweh, and said, "Please, Yahweh, wasn't this what I said when I was still in my own country? Therefore I hurried to flee to Tarshish, for I knew that you are a gracious Mighty One, and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, and you repent of the evil.*

^{4:3}*Therefore now, Yahweh, take, I beg you, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live."*

^{4:4}*Yahweh said, "Is it right for you to be angry?"*

^{4:5}*Then Yonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made himself a booth, and sat under it in the shade, until he might see what would become of the city. ^{4:6}Yahweh the Mighty One prepared a vine, and made it to come up over Yonah,*

Prayer

that it might be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his discomfort. So Yonah was exceedingly glad because of the kikayone. ^{4:7}But the Mighty One prepared a worm at dawn the next day, and it chewed on the vine, so that it withered. ^{4:8}It happened, when the sun arose, that the Mighty One prepared a sultry east wind; and the sun beat on Yonah's head, so that he fainted, and requested for himself that he might die, and said, "It is better for me to die than to live."

^{4:9}*The Mighty One said to Yonah, "Is it right for you to be angry about the vine?"*

He said, "I am right to be angry, even to death."

^{4:10}*Yahweh said, "You have been concerned for the vine, for which you have not labored, neither made it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night. ^{4:11}Shouldn't I be concerned for Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred twenty thousand persons who can't discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?"*

Pray To Yahweh When In Affliction

2:1-10 shows that when Yonah was in great distress almost to death, he offered up to Yahweh a prayer for salvation and of thanksgiving. Yahweh heard Yonah's prayer, and restored him back to dry land.

Likewise, when we are in great affliction, it is to Yahweh that we should offer up our pleading prayers. Also, in the process of so doing, we should also thank Yahweh for his blessings upon us.

Yahweh's Pronounced Judgements Are Initially Provisional

4:1-3 shows that Yonah, in his prayer to Yahweh, did not then have a heart as Yahweh's, even though he knew what was in Yahweh's heart. For he knew that Yahweh is a gracious Mighty One, and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness. He also knew that Yahweh repents of his evil pronouncements upon a people when that people repent of their evil ways. In other words, Yahweh's pronounced judgements are provisional, their realisation subject to those the judgement has been delivered against repenting of their evil ways.

Yonah's Heart Was Different From Yahweh's

But Yonah did not desire grace and mercy upon Nineveh! He wanted the city destroyed, even as he had proclaimed in obedience to the word of Yahweh.

4:3 shows that not only did Yonah have a heart different from Yahweh's, he also could not bear to continue living, seeing that his words, the words that he spoke against Nineveh at Yahweh's command, had not been fulfilled. In other words, he felt it would be too much shame to face, continuing on with his life yet his words had not been fulfilled.

Lesson For Yahweh's Servants

There is a lesson here for Yahweh's servants.

Prayer

Yahweh does not desire the death of people - anyone. He desires to give all people - everyone - salvation. Also, being gracious and merciful, he forgives us our iniquities, when we repent of committing them. And when we repent, he removes whatever provisional judgement that he had pronounced upon us, showing us his grace and mercy.

Yahweh's servants should understand this nature of Yahweh. Such that when Yahweh commands them to preach a calamity about to befall a certain people because of that people's evil, that calamity will only strike that people if they persist in their evil. If they repent of their evil, seeking Yahweh wholeheartedly, and do righteousness, Yahweh will not execute the calamity that he had pronounced upon that people, for he is gracious and merciful, and does not desire the death of anyone.

Therefore, when Yahweh's servants preach that a calamity will befall a certain people, they should also preach to that people the manner they can avert that calamity befalling them. They should teach that people that they should repent of their evil ways, and do righteousness. For by so doing righteousness will Yahweh, who is gracious and merciful, show his abundant grace and mercy upon them, and forgive them their sin, thereby averting that calamity from befalling them.

Yahweh's servants should be like Yahweh, not desiring the death of anyone, but teaching them to repent of their evil ways, that they may be forgiven their iniquity and granted Yahweh's salvation.

Yahweh Takes No Pleasure In The Death Of Anyone

Yahweh reiterates this lesson to his servants in Yechezkel (Ezekiel) 18:1-32, which reads,

^{18:1}*The word of Yahweh came to me again, saying, ^{18:2}"What do you mean, that you use this proverb concerning Eretz-Yisra'el, saying, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge?' ^{18:3}As I live, says the Sovereign Yahweh, you shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Yisra'el.*

^{18:4}*"Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins, he shall die. ^{18:5}But if a man is just, and does that which is lawful and right, ^{18:6}and has not eaten on the mountains, neither has lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Yisra'el, neither has defiled his neighbor's wife, neither has come near to a woman in her impurity, ^{18:7}and has not wronged any, but has restored to the debtor his pledge, has taken nothing by robbery, has given his bread to the hungry, and has covered the naked with a garment; ^{18:8}he who has not given forth on interest, neither has taken any increase, who has withdrawn his hand from iniquity, has executed true justice between man and man, ^{18:9}has walked in my statutes, and has kept my ordinances, to deal truly; he is just, he shall surely live, says the Sovereign Yahweh. ^{18:10}If he fathers a son who is a robber, a shedder of blood, and who does any one of these things, ^{18:11}and who does not any of those duties, but even has eaten on the mountains, and defiled his neighbor's wife, ^{18:12}has wronged the poor and needy, has taken by robbery, has not restored the pledge, and has lifted up his eyes to the idols, has committed abomination, ^{18:13}has given forth on interest, and has taken increase; shall he then live? He shall not live: he has done all these abominations; he shall surely die; his blood shall be on him.*

^{18:14}*"Now, behold, if he fathers a son, who sees all his father's sins, which he has done, and fears, and does not such like; ^{18:15}who has not eaten on the mountains, neither has lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Yisra'el, has not defiled his neighbor's wife,*

Prayer

^{18:16}neither has wronged any, has not taken anything to pledge, neither has taken by robbery, but has given his bread to the hungry, and has covered the naked with a garment; ^{18:17}who has withdrawn his hand from the poor, who has not received interest nor increase, has executed my ordinances, has walked in my statutes; he shall not die for the iniquity of his father, he shall surely live. ^{18:18}As for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, robbed his brother, and did that which is not good among his people, behold, he shall die in his iniquity.

^{18:19}"Yet say you, 'Why does not the son bear the iniquity of the father?' When the son has done that which is lawful and right, and has kept all my statutes, and has done them, he shall surely live. ^{18:20}The soul who sins, he shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son; the righteousness of the righteous shall be on him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be on him. ^{18:21}But if the wicked turn from all his sins that he has committed, and keeps all my statutes, and does that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. ^{18:22}None of his transgressions that he has committed shall be remembered against him: in his righteousness that he has done he shall live.

^{18:23}**"Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? Says the Sovereign Yahweh; and not rather that he should return from his way, and live?"** ^{18:24}But when the righteous

turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? None of his righteous deeds that he has done shall be remembered: in his trespass that he has trespassed, and in his sin that he has sinned, in them shall he die. ^{18:25}Yet you say, 'The way of the Sovereign is not equal.'

^{18:26}Hear now, house of Yisra'el: Is my way not equal? Aren't your ways unequal? ^{18:26}When the righteous man turns away from his righteousness, and commits iniquity, and dies therein; in his iniquity that he has done shall he die. ^{18:27}Again, when the wicked man turns away from his wickedness that he has committed, and does that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. ^{18:28}**Because he considers, and turns away from all his transgressions that he has committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die.**

^{18:29}Yet says the house of Yisra'el, 'The way of the Sovereign is not equal.' House of Yisra'el, are not my ways equal? Are not your ways unequal? ^{18:30}Therefore I will judge you, house of Yisra'el, everyone according to his ways, says the Sovereign Yahweh. Return you, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. ^{18:31}Cast away from you all your transgressions, in which you have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will you die, house of Yisra'el? ^{18:32}**For I have no pleasure in the death of him who dies, says the Sovereign Yahweh: why turn yourselves, and live."**

Yahweh Refused To Listen To Yonah's Prayer

Yonah (Jonah) 4:4 shows that Yahweh did not respond positively to Yonah's prayer to him, that Yahweh takes away Yonah's life. In other words, Yahweh refused to listen to Yonah's prayer.

Why Yahweh Did Not Take Away Yonah's Life

It is therefore evident that Yonah had not prayed this prayer according to Yahweh's will. For it was not Yahweh's will to take away Yonah's life.

Prayer

Had it been Yahweh's will to take away Yonah's life, Yonah would have died when he was thrown overboard from the ship. But Yahweh rescued him from death in that instance, clearly showing Yonah that he wanted Yonah to continue living. In other words, the days for living that he had appointed for Yonah had not yet been exhausted.

Are Our Hearts Righteous?

Yahweh's answer in 4:4 also shows that not only did Yahweh desire that Yonah continue living, he also wanted him to consider the status of his heart, with respect to its righteousness. For Yahweh asked Yonah, "Is it RIGHT for you to be angry?"

In other words, Yahweh wanted Yonah to consider the righteousness of his heart, whether the attitude and anger he had adopted was one of righteousness or not.

We Should Consider Our Ways, Whether They Are Righteous Or Not

It should also be noted that Yahweh did not simply tell Yonah that the attitude and anger that Yonah had adopted was not right. He wanted Yonah to consider his ways, and correctly assess whether his ways were right or not.

In this we can learn that Yahweh indeed desires that we consider our ways, whether they are founded in righteousness or not. For we all are to be righteous, even as Yahweh is righteous. In other words, we all should be like Yahweh. Gracious as he is gracious. Merciful and he is merciful. Loving as he is loving. Righteous as he is righteous.

Yonah Did Not Desire To Face The Shame Of Seeing His Words Not Fulfilled

4:5 shows that Yonah was still hoping that Yahweh would overthrow the city of Nineveh, even after the people of Nineveh had repented of their evil. Yonah was hoping that Yahweh would give Yonah's word superiority over Yahweh's merciful and gracious nature. He was also hoping that by Yahweh so overthrowing Nineveh, he would not have to face the shame of seeing the failure of fulfilment of his words spoken against Nineveh, and spoken at Yahweh's command.

We Need To Surrender Our Wills To Yahweh's Will

It is therefore evident that Yonah clearly needed to suppress and rule over his own spirit. He needed to subjugate his own spirit to Yahweh's Spirit. For by subjugating his own spirit to Yahweh's Spirit he would allow Yahweh's will to reign in his life, rather than continuing to be self-willed, self-willed when contrary to Yahweh's will!

Servants of Yahweh should therefore note that they are to subjugate their own wills to Yahweh's will. It is Yahweh's will that is supreme, not ours. Also, if we are indeed Yahweh's servants, and not servants of our own desires contrary to Yahweh's, we will indeed subjugate our spirits to Yahweh's Spirit, and do those things that Yahweh desires. We will also assume Yahweh's heart, and see things in the manner that Yahweh sees them, and respond to situations in the manner that Yahweh responds.

Prayer

Yahweh Dealt With Yonah Patiently

4:6-10 shows Yahweh's patience in dealing with Yonah.

Yahweh Personally Taught Yonah What The Latter Needed To Learn

It should be noted that Yahweh desired that Yonah consider the righteousness of Yonah being angry that Yahweh had repented of overthrowing Nineveh, because the people of Nineveh had repented of their evil. And in the period of time that he gave Yonah for this consideration, Yonah continued in his self-will, without giving due consideration to Yahweh's challenge to him that he considers the righteousness of his heart. Yahweh therefore took it upon himself to teach Yonah the lesson that Yonah needed to learn in this matter. And he used the vine tree to get across his message to Yonah.

4:6-8 shows that when the vine had acted in Yonah's interests, acting as much needed shade for Yonah in the hot sun, Yonah was exceedingly glad, because of the positive role that the vine had played in his life. And when the vine was consumed by a worm, such that it withered and no longer could act in Yonah's interests, Yonah was exceedingly angry, angry that the vine had withered and could no longer play a positive role in Yonah's life.

4:9-10 shows Yahweh's lesson to Yonah. Yonah had been concerned about the welfare of a plant of vine, which had acted positively in his life. When it withered, such that it could no longer play the same role that it had played, he was very angry, and felt that his anger was justified, for it was out of concern for the vine. Likewise, Yahweh was concerned about the welfare of the people of Nineveh, who were of much greater value than the vine that Yonah had been concerned about. Therefore, if it was right for Yonah to be concerned for a thing of the value of vine, surely it was right for Yahweh to be concerned for things of substantially more value than vine - human beings and animals.

Yahweh Is Patient With Us - His Errant Servants

From Yonah's example we should learn that Yahweh is indeed patient with us - his errant servants. He is in the process of changing our spirits and hearts to become like his Spirit and heart. As this process requires time and experiences, he allows us the requisite time and experiences that facilitate our becoming like he is.

Be Patient With Other Human Beings

Seeing that Yahweh is patient with us, we should likewise be patient with other people, including not just those who are servants of Yahweh, but also those who are still committing evil.

Be Concerned About Yahweh's Creation

We should also be concerned about all of Yahweh's creation, especially other human beings. It is good to be concerned about plants. It is even better to be concerned about animals. But it is substantially greater to be concerned about fellow human beings, created in the image and likeness of Yahweh.

Prayer

The Prayers Yahweh Hears

It should also be noted that when we pray to Yahweh in a manner inconsistent with his will he does not hear us. For when Yonah prayed that he die, prior to learning the lessons that Yahweh desired that he learn, Yahweh did not listen to Yonah's prayer.

On the other hand, when Yonah prayed for salvation from death, while in the belly of the fish, Yahweh indeed heard his prayer for salvation and of thanksgiving. Yonah still needed to learn some lessons in life, including acquiring more of Yahweh's nature than he had acquired at the time that he was in the belly of the fish. His prayer was therefore in harmony with Yahweh's will, and Yahweh heard it.

Seek, Act And Pray According To Yahweh's Will

We should seek out Yahweh's will in whatever situation we happen to be in. We should then be careful to act within Yahweh's will and to likewise pray according to his will.

Learn About Yahweh's Nature And Acquire It

We should also learn about Yahweh's nature, and align our nature to be in harmony with Yahweh's nature. In other words, we should acquire Yahweh's nature, and act in situations manifesting his nature. Of great importance includes acquiring Yahweh's nature of graciousness, mercy, love and slowness to anger.

Yahweh's Human Servants Are Not Yet Perfect

We should also note that just because someone is a servant of Yahweh, even a prophet of Yahweh, does not necessarily mean that he or she is already perfect in his ways. Yonah was indeed Yahweh's servant and prophet. Yet he was evidently not perfect in his ways, even in the manner that he carried out the mission Yahweh gave him. Nevertheless, Yahweh continued to use Yonah to deliver his message to the people that he had sent him to. Also, at the same time, he continued to change Yonah to become more and more like he Yahweh is, enabling Yonah to put on more of Yahweh's nature.

We should therefore be patient with imperfect servants of Yahweh, for they have not yet attained to perfection. Just as Yahweh is patient with us, so should we be patient with other servants of Yahweh.

Knowing Yahweh's Nature Is Not Equivalent To Having Put On Yahweh's Nature

It should also be noted that knowledge of Yahweh's nature and ways is not equivalent to having put on the same nature and ways in our lives. For Yonah clearly knew and understood Yahweh's ways and nature. Nevertheless he did not, at the time he was given his commission to the people of Nineveh, accept Yahweh's righteousness for himself, to so have the same nature and ways.

It should therefore be evident that just because one knows of Yahweh's nature and ways does not necessarily mean that that one has also accepted for himself Yahweh's nature and ways.

Prayer

Clothe Yourself With Yahweh's Nature And Ways

It should also be noted that it is not enough for Yahweh's servants to just know of his nature and ways. They must also clothe themselves with the same nature and ways. We should therefore strive to put on Yahweh's nature and ways, becoming more and more like Yahweh with each passing period of time.

Prayer

THE PSALMS

Yahweh Hears The Prayers Of The Righteous

Psalm 4:1-3 reads,

^{4:1} *Answer me when I call, Mighty One of my righteousness.*

Give me relief from my distress.

Have mercy on me, and hear my prayer.

^{4:2} *You sons of men, how long shall my glory be turned into dishonor?*

Will you love vanity, and seek after falsehood?

Selah.

^{4:3} *But know that Yahweh has set apart for himself him who is righteous:*

Yahweh will hear when I call to him.

Yahweh hears the prayers of the righteous.

David Laid His Requests Before Yahweh In The Morning

Psalm 5:1-3 reads,

^{5:1} *Give ear to my words, Yahweh.*

Consider my meditation.

^{5:2} *Listen to the voice of my cry, my King, and my Mighty One;*

For to you do I pray.

^{5:3} *Yahweh, in the morning shall you hear my voice.*

In the morning I will lay my requests before you, and will watch expectantly.

5:3 shows that David prayed to Yahweh in the morning. In the morning he laid his requests before Yahweh.

Does this mean that Yahweh must be prayed to in the morning, following David's example?

It should be noted that in his morning prayers David was laying his requests before Yahweh, and then watching expectantly. In other words, when we have requests to lay before Yahweh, we should lay them before him in prayer.

It appears to me that the laying of requests before Yahweh is not limited only to morning prayers. Rather requests can be laid before Yahweh whenever there are requests to be laid before him, irrespective of the time of day that those requests are laid.

Yahweh Hears Righteous Pleas

Psalm 17:1-15 reads,

A Prayer by David.

^{17:1} *Hear, Yahweh, my righteous plea;*

Give ear to my prayer, that doesn't go out of deceitful lips.

^{17:2} *Let my sentence come forth from your presence;*

Let your eyes look on equity.

Prayer

*^{17:3} You have proved my heart; you have visited me in the night;
You have tried me, and found nothing;
I have resolved that my mouth shall not disobey.
^{17:4} As for the works of men, by the word of your lips
I have kept myself from the ways of the violent.
^{17:5} My steps have held fast to your paths,
My feet have not slipped.
^{17:6} I have called on you, for you will answer me, Mighty One:
Turn your ear to me. Hear my speech.
^{17:7} Show your marvelous lovingkindness,
You who save those who take refuge by your right hand from their enemies.
^{17:8} Keep me as the apple of your eye;
Hide me under the shadow of your wings,
^{17:9} From the wicked who oppress me,
My deadly enemies, who compass me about.
^{17:10} They close up their callous hearts.
With their mouth they speak proudly.
^{17:11} They have now surrounded us in our steps.
They set their eyes to cast us down to the earth.
^{17:12} He is like a lion that is greedy of his prey,
As it were a young lion lurking in secret places.
^{17:13} Arise, Yahweh,
Confront him, cast him down.
Deliver my soul from the wicked by your sword;
^{17:14} From men by your hand, Yahweh,
From men of the world, whose portion is in this life,
Whose belly you fill with your treasure:
They are satisfied with children,
Leave the rest of their substance to their babes.
^{17:15} As for me, I shall see your face in righteousness;
I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with seeing your form.*

17:1 shows the types of prayer that Yahweh hears: righteous pleas and prayers that do not go out of deceitful lips, but truthful ones.

Therefore, for Yahweh to hear our prayers, our pleas to him must indeed be righteous, and we ourselves must speak truth and not deceit.

To speak truth, and not deceit, we must indeed be aware of the true knowledge that comes from Yahweh, and speak that truth that emanates from Yahweh. We must also be truthful in our day to day affairs.

Obey Yahweh

17:3 shows that we must indeed be obedient to Yahweh for him to hear our prayers.

17:4-5 shows that we must keep ourselves from the ways of violent men, and that we must keep faithfully to Yahweh's ways.

Prayer

When Men Shall See Yahweh's Face

17:15 shows that the time for seeing Yahweh's face in righteousness, the time for seeing Yahweh's form, is when one has awakened. In other words, awaken from one's sleep in death. In other words, after one's resurrection!

Implying that prior to one's resurrection from the dead one indeed is not to see Yahweh's face or form.

Confess Your Sins To Yahweh

Psalm 32:1-7 reads,

^{32:1}*Blessed is he whose disobedience is forgiven,
Whose sin is covered.*

^{32:2}*Blessed is the man to whom Yahweh doesn't impute iniquity,
In whose spirit there is no deceit.*

^{32:3}*When I kept silence, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.*

^{32:4}*For day and night your hand was heavy on me.*

My strength was sapped in the heat of summer.

Selah.

^{32:5}*I acknowledged my sin to you.*

I didn't hide my iniquity.

I said, I will confess my transgressions to Yahweh,

And you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Selah.

^{32:6}*For this, let everyone that is righteous pray to you in a time when you may be found.
Surely when the great waters overflow, they shall not reach to him.*

^{32:7}*You are my hiding place. You will preserve me from trouble.*

You will surround me with songs of deliverance.

Selah.

32:3-5 shows that it is to Yahweh that we ought to confess our sins and transgressions, that he may forgive our disobedience, and cover our sin.

32:5 shows that when we do indeed confess our sins to Yahweh, he forgives us the iniquity of our sin. In other words, the gracious and merciful Yahweh desires to forgive us our sins. But we must first acknowledge to him those sins, before he will forgive us those sins.

It is therefore imperative that we acknowledge our sins before Yahweh by confessing them to him.

Pray To Yahweh While He Can Be Found

32:6 admonishes us to pray to Yahweh at such a time when he can be found. In other words, when we have committed sin, Yahweh gives us due time to repent of it, and confess it before him. This is the time that he may be found. And this is the time that we ought to repent of that sin and confess to him.

But if we do not repent of our sin and confess it before him in the time that he has allotted to us for so doing, we may find ourselves on the wrong side of his judgement for having committed that sin, and having subsequently remained unrepentant!

Prayer

It is therefore imperative that we acknowledge our sin to Yahweh by confessing it before him in prayer, and repenting of it, as soon as possible after having committed it. For Yahweh our Mighty One is indeed a merciful Mighty One.

Yahweh Delivers The Poor And Needy From Oppression

Psalm 35:1-28 reads,

^{35:1} *Contend, Yahweh, with those who contend with me.
Fight against those who fight against me.*
^{35:2} *Take hold of shield and buckler,
And stand up for my help.*
^{35:3} *Draw out also the spear, and stop the way against those who pursue me.
Tell my soul, "I am your salvation."*
^{35:4} *Let those who seek after my soul be put to shame and brought to dishonor.
Let those who plot my ruin be turned back and confounded.*
^{35:5} *Let them be as chaff before the wind,
The angel of Yahweh driving them on.*
^{35:6} *Let their way be dark and slippery,
The angel of Yahweh pursuing them.*
^{35:7} *For without cause have they hid their net in a pit for me.
Without cause have they dug a pit for my soul.*
^{35:8} *Let destruction come on him unawares.
Let his net that he has hidden catch himself.
Into that destruction let him fall.*
^{35:9} *My soul shall be joyful in Yahweh.
It shall rejoice in his salvation.*
^{35:10} *All my bones shall say, "Yahweh, who is like you,
Who delivers the poor from him who is too strong for him,
Yes, the poor and the needy from him who robs him?"*
^{35:11} *Unrighteous witnesses rise up.
They ask me about things that I don't know about.*
^{35:12} *They reward me evil for good,
To the bereaving of my soul.*
^{35:13} *But as for me, when they were sick, my clothing was sackcloth.
I afflicted my soul with fasting.
My prayer returned into my own bosom.*
^{35:14} *I behaved myself as though it had been my friend or my brother.
I bowed down mourning, as one who mourns his mother.*
^{35:15} *But in my adversity, they rejoiced, and gathered themselves together.
The attackers gathered themselves together against me, and I didn't know it.
They tore at me, and didn't cease.*
^{35:16} *Like the profane mockers in feasts,
They gnashed their teeth at me.*
^{35:17} *Sovereign, how long will you look on?
Rescue my soul from their destruction,
My precious life from the lions.*

Prayer

^{35:18} *I will give you thanks in the great assembly.*

I will praise you among many people.

^{35:19} *Don't let those who are my enemies wrongfully rejoice over me;*

Neither let them wink with the eye who hate me without a cause.

^{35:20} *For they don't speak shalom,*

But they devise deceitful words against those who are quiet in the land.

^{35:21} *Yes, they opened their mouth wide against me.*

They said, "Aha! Aha! Our eye has seen it!"

^{35:22} *You have seen it, Yahweh. Don't keep silent.*

Sovereign, don't be far from me.

^{35:23} *Wake up! Rise up to defend me, my Mighty One!*

My Sovereign, contend for me!

^{35:24} *Vindicate me, Yahweh my Mighty One, according to your righteousness;*

Don't let them gloat over me.

^{35:25} *Don't let them say in their heart, "Aha! That's the way we want it."*

Don't let them say, "We have swallowed him up!"

^{35:26} *Let them be put to shame and confounded together who rejoice at my calamity.*

Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor who magnify themselves against me.

^{35:27} *Let them shout for joy and be glad, who favor my righteous cause.*

Yes, let them say continually, "Yahweh be magnified,

Who has pleasure in the prosperity of his servant!"

^{35:28} *My tongue shall talk about your righteousness and about your praise all day long.*

35:10 shows that Yahweh is indeed the Deliverer, delivering the poor and needy from their oppressors, from those who are too strong for them.

Fast And Pray For Your Enemies

35:13-14 shows that we ought to fast and pray for the welfare of our enemies, for those who hate us. This is Yahweh's righteousness, for he shows his kindness not just to the good, but also to the evil.

Thank And Praise Yahweh

35:17-18 shows that we ought to thank Yahweh, our Deliverer, when we are in the great assembly of the faithful. We ought to praise Yahweh our Deliverer when we are among many people.

35:27-28 shows that servants of Yahweh should favour the righteous causes of their fellow servants. They should praise Yahweh and talk about his righteous deeds all day long.

Offer Your Supplications To Yahweh

Psalms 55:1-23 reads,

^{55:1} *Listen to my prayer, Mighty One.*

Don't hide yourself from my supplication.

^{55:2} *Attend to me, and answer me.*

I am restless in my complaint, and moan,

Prayer

^{55:3} *Because of the voice of the enemy,
Because of the oppression of the wicked.
For they bring suffering on me.
In anger they hold a grudge against me.*
^{55:4} *My heart is severely pained within me.
The terrors of death have fallen on me.*
^{55:5} *Fearfulness and trembling have come on me.
Horror has overwhelmed me.*
^{55:6} *I said, "Oh that I had wings like a dove!
Then I would fly away, and be at rest.*
^{55:7} *Behold, then I would wander far off.
I would lodge in the wilderness."*
Selah.
^{55:8} *"I would hurry to a shelter from the stormy wind and tempest."*
^{55:9} *Confuse them, Sovereign, and confound their language,
For I have seen violence and strife in the city.*
^{55:10} *Day and night they prowl around on its walls.
Malice and abuse are also within her.*
^{55:11} *Destructive forces are within her.
Threats and lies don't depart from her streets.*
^{55:12} *For it was not an enemy who insulted me,
Then I could have endured it.
Neither was it he who hated me who raised himself up against me,
Then I would have hid myself from him.*
^{55:13} *But it was you, a man like me,
My companion, and my familiar friend.*
^{55:14} *We took sweet fellowship together.
We walked in the Mighty One's house with the throng.*
^{55:15} *Let death come suddenly on them.
Let them go down alive into She'ol.
For wickedness is in their dwelling, in the midst of them.*
^{55:16} *As for me, I will call on the Mighty One.
Yahweh will save me.*
^{55:17} **Evening, morning, and at noon, I will cry out in distress.
He will hear my voice.**
^{55:18} *He has redeemed my soul in shalom from the battle that was against me,
Although there are many who oppose me.*
^{55:19} *The Mighty One, who is enthroned forever,
Will hear, and answer them.*
Selah.
*They never change,
Who don't fear the Mighty One.*
^{55:20} *He raises his hands against his friends.
He has violated his covenant.*
^{55:21} *His mouth was smooth as butter,
But his heart was war.*

Prayer

His words were softer than oil,

Yet they were drawn swords.

^{55:22} **Cast your burden on Yahweh, and he will sustain you.**

He will never allow the righteous to be moved.

^{55:23} *But you, Mighty One, will bring them down into the pit of destruction.*

Bloodthirsty and deceitful men shall not live out half their days,

But I will trust in you.

David repeatedly, as is the case in 55:1, prayed prayers of supplication to Yahweh.

Why?

55:2-3 show that he was quite often on the run away from his oppressive and wicked enemies. He therefore repeatedly prayed to Yahweh for deliverance and salvation from the hands of his enemies.

Likewise, if and when we find ourselves being pursued by our enemies, and we are in the right, we should pray to Yahweh that he may deliver and save us from our errant enemies, even praying such prayers repeatedly, as David did.

Enemies Arise Among Those We Fellowship With

55:12-14 shows that it is not always the case that our enemies are those who have for long been known to be so. Sometimes our enemies arise from those we previously considered our brethren and fellow servants of Yahweh! The very ones we fellowshiped and walked with in the house of Yahweh the Mighty One!

The implication being that not all who associate themselves with the servants of Yahweh are truly Yahweh's servants! Some only appear to be so. But in the fullness of time their true traits emerge. And it then becomes evident where they truly stand - against the true servants of Yahweh.

True servants of Yahweh must therefore be aware that there are also false servants among those calling themselves of the household of Yahweh. By their fruits you will know them.

Yahweh Both Saves And Redeems

55:16-19 shows that Yahweh is indeed the Saviour, redeeming one from the depths of heavy opposition.

David Prayed To Yahweh Three Times A Day

55:17 shows that David cried out to Yahweh evening, morning and at noon.

Does this mean that Yahweh's servants ought to pray to him at evening, morning and at noon?

It should be noted that the context in which David made these cries to Yahweh were circumstances of despair! In his desperation, seeing the heavy and sustained opposition against him from his many enemies, he frequently cried out to Yahweh, doing so at evening, morning and at noon. It therefore appears that when there is cause, one should cry out to Yahweh as often as one feels is necessary. One can cry out three times a day, as David did. Or one can cry out even more frequently, if the circumstances merit such frequent pleas for Yahweh's help.

Prayer

Fear Yahweh's Name

Psalm 61:1-8 reads,

^{61:1}*Hear my cry, Mighty One.*

Listen to my prayer.

^{61:2}*From the end of the earth, I will call to you, when my heart is overwhelmed.*

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I.

^{61:3}*For you have been a refuge for me,*

A strong tower from the enemy.

^{61:4}*I will dwell in your tent forever.*

I will take refuge in the shelter of your wings.

Selah.

^{61:5}*For you, Mighty One, have heard my vows.*

You have given me the heritage of those who fear your name.

^{61:6}*You will prolong the king's life;*

His years shall be for generations.

^{61:7}*He shall be enthroned in the Mighty One's presence forever.*

Appoint your lovingkindness and truth, that they may preserve him.

^{61:8}*So I will sing praise to your name forever,*

That I may fulfill my vows daily.

61:5 shows that a key facilitating Yahweh hearing our prayers is our fearing his name. We should therefore fear Yahweh's name, that our prayers may not be hindered.

Do Not Cherish Sin In Your Heart

Psalm 66:16-20 reads,

^{66:16}*Come, and hear, all you who fear the Mighty One.*

I will declare what he has done for my soul.

^{66:17}*I cried to him with my mouth.*

He was extolled with my tongue.

^{66:18}***If I cherished sin in my heart,***

The Sovereign wouldn't have listened.

^{66:19}*But most assuredly, the Mighty One has listened.*

He has heard the voice of my prayer.

^{66:20}*Blessed be the Mighty One, who has not turned away my prayer,*

Nor his lovingkindness from me.

66:18 shows that if we cherish sin in our hearts, Yahweh the Sovereign does not listen to our prayers. Therefore, to ensure that Yahweh listens to our prayers, our hearts must abhor sin, and love righteousness.

66:20 implies that the grounds that Yahweh the Mighty One refuses to listen to prayers are also the same grounds that he refrains from imparting his lovingkindness, his Spirit, to someone. Therefore, to ensure that Yahweh's lovingkindness, Yahweh Spirit, dwells in us, we need to abhor sin and love righteousness.

Ask Yahweh To Answer Speedily When In Distress

Psalm 69:1-36 reads,

Prayer

^{69:1} Save me, Mighty One,
For the waters have come up to my neck!
^{69:2} I sink in deep mire, where there is no foothold.
I have come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me.
^{69:3} I am weary with my crying.
My throat is dry.
My eyes fail, looking for my Mighty One.
^{69:4} Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head.
Those who want to cut me off, being my enemies wrongfully, are mighty.
I have to restore what I didn't take away.
^{69:5} Mighty One, you know my foolishness.
My sins aren't hidden from you.
^{69:6} Don't let those who wait for you be put to shame through me, Sovereign Yahweh-Tzva'ot.
Don't let those who seek you be brought to dishonor through me, Mighty One of Yisra'el.
^{69:7} Because for your sake, I have borne reproach.
Shame has covered my face.
^{69:8} I have become a stranger to my brothers,
An alien to my mother's children.
^{69:9} For the zeal of your house consumes me.
The reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me.
^{69:10} When I wept and I fasted,
That was to my reproach.
^{69:11} When I made sackcloth my clothing,
I became a byword to them.
^{69:12} Those who sit in the gate talk about me.
I am the song of the drunkards.
^{69:13} But as for me, my prayer is to you, Yahweh, in an acceptable time.
Mighty One, in the abundance of your lovingkindness, answer me in the truth of your salvation.
^{69:14} Deliver me out of the mire, and don't let me sink.
Let me be delivered from those who hate me, and out of the deep waters.
^{69:15} Don't let the flood waters overwhelm me,
Neither let the deep swallow me up.
Don't let the pit shut its mouth on me.
^{69:16} Answer me, Yahweh, for your lovingkindness is good.
According to the multitude of your tender mercies, turn to me.
^{69:17} **Don't hide your face from your servant,**
For I am in distress. Answer me speedily!
^{69:18} Draw near to my soul, and redeem it.
Ransom me because of my enemies.
^{69:19} You know my reproach, my shame, and my dishonor.
My adversaries are all before you.
^{69:20} Reproach has broken my heart, and I am full of heaviness.
I looked for some to take pity, but there was none;
For comforters, but I found none.

Prayer

^{69:21} *They also gave me gall for my food.
In my thirst, they gave me vinegar to drink.*
^{69:22} *Let their table before them become a snare.
May it become a retribution and a trap.*
^{69:23} *Let their eyes be darkened, so that they can't see.
Make their loins continually to shake.*
^{69:24} *Pour out your indignation on them.
Let the fierceness of your anger overtake them.*
^{69:25} *Let their habitation be desolate.
Let no one dwell in their tents.*
^{69:26} *For they persecute him whom you have wounded.
They tell of the sorrow of those whom you have hurt.*
^{69:27} *Charge them with crime upon crime.
Don't let them come into your righteousness.*
^{69:28} *Let them be blotted out of the book of life,
And not be written with the righteous.*
^{69:29} *But I am in pain and distress.
Let your salvation, Mighty One, protect me.*
^{69:30} **I will praise the name of the Mighty One with a song,
And will magnify him with thanksgiving.**
^{69:31} **It will please Yahweh better than an ox,
Or a bull that has horns and hoofs.**
^{69:32} *The humble have seen it, and are glad.
You who seek after the Mighty One, let your heart live.*
^{69:33} **For Yahweh hears the needy,
And doesn't despise his captive people.**
^{69:34} *Let Heaven and earth praise him;
The seas, and everything that moves therein!*
^{69:35} *For the Mighty One will save Tzion, and build the cities of Yahudah.
They shall settle there, and own it.*
^{69:36} *The children also of his servants shall inherit it.
Those who love his name shall dwell therein.*

69:17 shows that it is not inappropriate to sometimes ask Yahweh to act speedily in a particular matter, especially when we are in distress, as can be seen from this example of David's.

Nevertheless, we should always remember that Yahweh knows best, and even the timing of his deliverance is best left to him.

Praise And Thanksgiving Pleases Yahweh More Than Animal Sacrifices

69:30-31 shows that praise to Yahweh with song, and thanksgiving prayers, are more pleasing to him than animal sacrifices to him. Not that animal sacrifices to him are not at all pleasing. No! Only that prayers of praise and thanksgiving give Yahweh greater pleasure than animal sacrifices.

We should therefore regularly offer to Yahweh prayers of praise and thanksgiving.

Prayer

Seek Yahweh Wholeheartedly

69:32-33 shows that Yahweh hears the prayers of the humble, those who seek him. Yahweh does not despise these needy ones, these who are held captive.

We should therefore seek Yahweh wholeheartedly, that he may indeed hear our prayers.

Trust In Yahweh And Walk Blamelessly

Psalms 84:9-12 reads,

^{84:9} *Behold, Mighty One our shield,*

Look at the face of your anointed.

^{84:10} *For a day in your courts is better than a thousand.*

I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my Mighty One,

Than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.

^{84:11} *For Yahweh the Mighty One is a sun and a shield.*

Yahweh will give grace and glory.

He withholds no good thing from those who walk blamelessly.

^{84:12} *Yahweh-Tzva'ot,*

Blessed is the man who trusts in you.

84:11 shows that Yahweh withholds no good thing from those who walk blamelessly.

We should therefore strive to walk blamelessly before Yahweh, that our various good requests to him in prayer may be answered in the affirmative.

Some Reasons Why Yahweh Answers Prayers

Psalms 86:1-17 reads,

A Prayer by David.

^{86:1} ***Hear, Yahweh, and answer me.***

For I am poor and needy.

^{86:2} ***Preserve my soul, for I am righteous.***

You, my Mighty One, save your servant who trusts in you.

^{86:3} ***Be merciful to me, Sovereign,***

For I call to you all day long.

^{86:4} ***Bring joy to the soul of your servant,***

For to you, Sovereign, do I lift up my soul.

^{86:5} ***For you, Sovereign, are good, and ready to forgive;***

Abundant in lovingkindness to all those who call on you.

^{86:6} *Hear, Yahweh, my prayer.*

Listen to the voice of my petitions.

^{86:7} *In the day of my trouble I will call on you,*

For you will answer me.

^{86:8} *There is no one like you among the mighty ones, Sovereign,*

Nor any deeds like your deeds.

^{86:9} *All nations you have made will come and worship before you, Sovereign.*

They shall glorify your name.

^{86:10} *For you are great, and do wondrous things.*

You are Mighty One alone.

Prayer

^{86:11} **Teach me your way, Yahweh.**

I will walk in your truth.

Make my heart undivided to fear your name.

^{86:12} I will praise you, Sovereign my Mighty One, with my whole heart.

I will glorify your name forevermore.

^{86:13} For your lovingkindness is great toward me.

You have delivered my soul from the lowest She'ol.

^{86:14} Mighty One, the proud have risen up against me.

A company of violent men have sought after my soul,

And they don't hold regard for you before them.

^{86:15} But you, Sovereign, are a merciful and gracious Mighty One,

Slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness and truth.

^{86:16} Turn to me, and have mercy on me!

Give your strength to your servant.

Save the son of your handmaid.

^{86:17} Show me a sign of your goodness,

That those who hate me may see it, and be put to shame,

Because you, Yahweh, have helped me, and comforted me.

Be Humble

86:1 shows that the reason David expected Yahweh to both hear him and answer him was that he was poor and needy. Implying that it is those who are poor and needy in spirit whose prayers are heard by Yahweh.

We should likewise be poor and needy in spirit.

Be Righteous And Trust Wholly In Yahweh

86:2 shows that the reason David expected both preservation and salvation was because he was both righteous and trusted in Yahweh. Implying that it is those who are righteous and trust in Yahweh who Yahweh hears their supplications.

We should likewise be righteous and trust wholly in Yahweh.

Call To Yahweh All Day Long

86:3 shows that the reason David expected to receive mercy from Yahweh was because he called to Yahweh all day long. In other words, he did not just call to Yahweh once, twice or three times a day, but called to Yahweh all day long.

We should likewise be calling to Yahweh all day long, that he may show us his great mercy.

Lift Up Your Soul To Yahweh

86:4 shows that the reason David expected to receive joy from Yahweh was because he lifted up his soul to Yahweh.

Prayer

We should likewise lift up our souls to Yahweh, telling him all our innermost thoughts, that he may give us his gift of joy.

Ask Yahweh To Teach You His Way

86:11 shows us that we ought to ask Yahweh to teach us his way, that we may walk in his truth. We ought to ask Yahweh to make our heart undivided to fear his name.

Praying When In Distress

Psalm 102:1-28 reads,

A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed and pours out his complaint before Yahweh.

^{102:1}Hear my prayer, Yahweh!

Let my cry come to you.

^{102:2}Don't hide your face from me in the day of my distress.

Turn your ear to me.

Answer me quickly in the day when I call.

^{102:3}For my days consume away like smoke.

My bones are burned as a firebrand.

^{102:4}My heart is blighted like grass, and withered,

For I forget to eat my bread.

^{102:5}By reason of the voice of my groaning,

My bones stick to my skin.

^{102:6}I am like a pelican of the wilderness.

I have become as an owl of the waste places.

^{102:7}I watch, and have become like a sparrow that is alone on the housetop.

^{102:8}My enemies reproach me all day.

Those who are mad at me use my name as a curse.

^{102:9}For I have eaten ashes like bread,

And mingled my drink with tears,

^{102:10}Because of your indignation and your wrath,

For you have taken me up, and thrown me away.

^{102:11}My days are like a long shadow.

I have withered like grass.

^{102:12}But you, Yahweh, will abide forever;

Your renown endures to all generations.

^{102:13}You will arise and have mercy on Tzion;

For it is time to have pity on her.

Yes, the set time has come.

^{102:14}For your servants take pleasure in her stones,

And have pity on her dust.

^{102:15}So the nations will fear the name of Yahweh;

All the kings of the earth your glory.

^{102:16}For Yahweh has built up Tzion.

He has appeared in his glory.

Prayer

^{102:17} *He has responded to the prayer of the destitute,
And has not despised their prayer.*
^{102:18} *This will be written for the generation to come.
A people who will be created will praise Yah.*
^{102:19} *For he has looked down from the height of his sanctuary.
From Heaven, Yahweh saw the earth;*
^{102:20} *To hear the groans of the prisoner;
To free those who are condemned to death;*
^{102:21} *That men may declare the name of Yahweh in Tzion,
And his praise in Yerushalayim;*
^{102:22} *When the peoples are gathered together,
The kingdoms, to serve Yahweh.*
^{102:23} **He weakened my strength along the course.
He shortened my days.**
^{102:24} *I said, "My Mighty One, don't take me away in the midst of my days.
Your years are throughout all generations.*
^{102:25} *Of old, you laid the foundation of the earth.
The heavens are the work of your hands.*
^{102:26} *They will perish, but you will endure.
Yes, all of them will wear out like a garment.
You will change them like a cloak, and they will be changed.*
^{102:27} *But you are the same.
Your years will have no end.*
^{102:28} *The children of your servants will continue.
Their seed will be established before you."*

102:2 shows, as already seen earlier on, that when we are in distress and cry to Yahweh to deliver us, it is appropriate to ask him to act speedily.

Yahweh Has Appointed Times For Particular Actions

102:13 shows that Yahweh has set or appointed times for acting in particular manners with respect to particular situations.

We should therefore ascertain from Yahweh when his set time for acting in a given circumstance is, that when that time arrives, we may pray to him to take the appropriate action that he had set upon himself to undertake. For 102:17 shows that Yahweh responds to the prayer of the destitute in such circumstances, and does not despise their prayer.

Prepare Yourself To Pray For Tzion

Seeing that this has been spoken about in the context of the restoration of Tzion, and seeing that the time for this restoration is almost upon us, servants of Yahweh should prepare themselves to pray to Yahweh to restore the fortunes of Tzion. That Yahweh may act in its favour, and do it what he has prophesied for it.

Prayer

Yahweh Shortens And Prolongs The Days Of Human Beings

102:23-24 shows that Yahweh does sometimes shorten the days of certain people, with these people not living out the fullness of days that Yahweh originally allotted to them.

Earlier on, in the case of Chizkiyahu the king, it was seen that Yahweh prolonged his days. Therefore, just as Yahweh does, on occasion, prolong the days of certain people, so also, on occasion, he shortens the days of other people.

Worship Yahweh In Fasting

Psalms 109:1-31 reads,

109:1 **Mighty One of my praise, don't remain silent,**
109:2 **For they have opened the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of deceit against me.**
They have spoken to me with a lying tongue.
109:3 **They have also surrounded me with words of hatred,**
And fought against me without a cause.
109:4 **In return for my love, they are my adversaries;**
But I am in prayer.
109:5 **They have rewarded me evil for good,**
And hatred for my love.
109:6 **Set a wicked man over him.**
Let an adversary stand at his right hand.
109:7 **When he is judged, let him come forth guilty.**
Let his prayer be turned into sin.
109:8 **Let his days be few.**
Let another take his office.
109:9 **Let his children be fatherless,**
And his wife a widow.
109:10 **Let his children be wandering beggars.**
Let them be sought from their ruins.
109:11 **Let the creditor seize all that he has.**
Let strangers plunder the fruit of his labor.
109:12 **Let there be none to extend kindness to him,**
Neither let there be any to have pity on his fatherless children.
109:13 **Let his posterity be cut off.**
In the generation following let their name be blotted out.
109:14 **Let the iniquity of his fathers be remembered by Yahweh.**
Don't let the sin of his mother be blotted out.
109:15 **Let them be before Yahweh continually,**
That he may cut off the memory of them from the earth;
109:16 **Because he didn't remember to show kindness,**
But persecuted the poor and needy man,
The broken in heart, to kill them.
109:17 **Yes, he loved cursing, and it came to him.**
He didn't delight in blessing, and it was far from him.

Prayer

109:18 He clothed himself also with cursing as with his garment.

It came into his inward parts like water,

Like oil into his bones.

109:19 Let it be to him as the clothing with which he covers himself,

For the belt that is always around him.

109:20 This is the reward of my adversaries from Yahweh,

Of those who speak evil against my soul.

109:21 But deal with me, Yahweh the Sovereign, for your name's sake,

Because your lovingkindness is good, deliver me;

109:22 For I am poor and needy.

My heart is wounded within me.

109:23 I fade away like an evening shadow.

I am shaken off as the locust.

*109:24 **My knees are weak through fasting.***

My body is thin and lacks fat.

109:25 I have also become a reproach to them.

When they see me, they shake their head.

109:26 Help me, Yahweh, my Mighty One.

Save me according to your lovingkindness;

109:27 That they may know that this is your hand;

That you, Yahweh, have done it.

109:28 They may curse, but you bless.

When they arise, they will be put to shame,

But your servant shall rejoice.

109:29 Let my adversaries be clothed with dishonor.

Let them cover themselves with their own shame as with a robe.

109:30 I will give great thanks to Yahweh with my mouth.

Yes, I will praise him among the multitude.

109:31 For he will stand at the right hand of the needy,

To save him from those who judge his soul.

109:24 shows that fasting was fundamental to David in his worship of Yahweh.

We should likewise worship Yahweh not just in prayers, but also in fasting.

Pray For The Peace Of Yerushalayim

Psalm 122:1-9 reads,

122:1 I was glad when they said to me,

"Let's go to Yahweh's house!"

122:2 Our feet are standing

Within your gates, Yerushalayim;

122:3 Yerushalayim, that is built

As a city that is compact together;

122:4 Where the tribes go up, even Yah's tribes,

According to an ordinance for Yisra'el,

To give thanks to the name of Yahweh.

Prayer

^{122:5} *For there are set thrones for judgment,
The thrones of David's house.*

^{122:6} **Pray for the shalom of Yerushalayim.**

They will prosper who love you.

^{122:7} *Shalom be within your walls,
And prosperity within your palaces.*

^{122:8} *For my brothers' and companions' sakes,
I will now say, "Shalom be within you."*

^{122:9} *For the sake of the house of Yahweh our Mighty One,
I will seek your good.*

122:6 shows that we should pray for the shalom or peace of Yerushalayim. It is the location of the house of Yahweh our Mighty One. We should also love Yerushalayim, for those who do so will prosper.

Prayers Are Similar To Incense And Sacrifices

Psalm 141:1-5 reads,

^{141:1} *Yahweh, I have called on you.*

Come to me quickly!

Listen to my voice when I call to you.

^{141:2} **Let my prayer be set before you like incense;**

The lifting up of my hands like the evening sacrifice.

^{141:3} *Set a watch, Yahweh, before my mouth.*

Keep the door of my lips.

^{141:4} *Don't incline my heart to any evil thing,*

To practice deeds of wickedness with men who work iniquity.

Don't let me eat of their delicacies.

^{141:5} **Let the righteous strike me, it is kindness;**

Let him reprove me, it is like oil on the head;

Don't let my head refuse it;

Yet my prayer is always against evil deeds.

141:2 likens prayers to Yahweh to incense, and the lifting up of hands in prayer to the evening sacrifice.

Earlier on it was seen that Yahweh takes greater pleasure in prayers to him than in animal sacrifices to him, showing that though they are different, they have similarities, both being offerings to Yahweh.

141:5 shows that like David, we should always pray against evil deeds.

Seek Relief From Yahweh For His Own Name's Sake

Psalm 143:1-12 reads,

^{143:1} *Hear my prayer, Yahweh.*

Listen to my petitions.

In your faithfulness and righteousness, relieve me.

^{143:2} **Don't enter into judgment with your servant,**

For in your sight no man living is righteous.

Prayer

^{143:3} *For the enemy pursues my soul.
He has struck my life down to the ground.
He has made me live in dark places, as those who have been long dead.*
^{143:4} *Therefore my spirit is overwhelmed within me.
My heart within me is desolate.*
^{143:5} *I remember the days of old.
I meditate on all your doings.
I contemplate the work of your hands.*
^{143:6} *I spread forth my hands to you.
My soul thirsts for you, like a parched land.
Selah.*
^{143:7} **Hurry to answer me, Yahweh.**
My spirit fails.
*Don't hide your face from me,
So that I don't become like those who go down into the pit.*
^{143:8} **Cause me to hear your lovingkindness in the morning.**
For I trust in you.
Cause me to know the way in which I should walk.
For I lift up my soul to you.
^{143:9} *Deliver me, Yahweh, from my enemies.
I flee to you to hide me.*
^{143:10} *Teach me to do your will,
For you are my Mighty One.
Your Spirit is good.
Lead me in the land of uprightness.*
^{143:11} *Revive me, Yahweh, for your name's sake.
In your righteousness, bring my soul out of trouble.*
^{143:12} *In your lovingkindness, cut off my enemies,
And destroy all those who afflict my soul,
For I am your servant.*

143:1-2 shows that when David prayed to Yahweh for relief, he did not base his prayer on his own righteousness. For he recognised that in Yahweh's sight no living man is righteous. In other words, living men have yet to attain to Yahweh's righteousness. David therefore sought relief based on Yahweh's faithfulness and righteousness. Implying that Yahweh had made a promise to David, and David was therefore asking for relief from the circumstances he then found himself in, that Yahweh's promises may be fulfilled, thus showing Yahweh's faithfulness.

Therefore, when we are faced with a difficult situation, a situation that our conduct does not justify our being relieved from, we can still obtain relief from that situation by appealing to Yahweh for his great name's sake. In other words, if our being relieved from that difficult situation would facilitate the glorification of Yahweh's name, we should appeal for Yahweh to take action on our behalf and thus glorify his name by so doing.

For example, Yahweh had promised David that he would indeed be king over Yisrael. Yet when king Shaul and all Yisrael were pursuing him as a fugitive, it seemed highly unlikely that David would succeed to the throne of Yisrael. David therefore prayed for salvation at Yahweh's hand that the promise that Yahweh had made to David may indeed be fulfilled. In other words, David was not praying for salvation based on his own good conduct. No! But based

Prayer

on Yahweh's faithfulness and righteousness. For Yahweh is faithful and righteous, and will always bring to fruition his promises. David therefore based his petition for relief on Yahweh's good and great name!

When In Danger Ask Yahweh For A Quick Answer

143:7-9 shows that when we are in dire straits, such as when our lives are in danger, it is indeed very appropriate to cry to Yahweh to hurry his response to our petition.

Seek Yahweh's Guidance

143:8-10 shows that it is to Yahweh that we should seek guidance for spiritual matters. We should pray to him to give us knowledge of spiritual matters. We should pray to him to teach us to do his will.

And seeing that we saw earlier on that Yahweh does not deny his upright servants their good requests, we can indeed be confident that Yahweh will indeed impart to us his spiritual knowledge, and teach us how to do his will, after having shown us what his will is.

143:11 reiterates the basis of David's petition for relief from a distressing situation. It was founded on Yahweh's name's sake, and not on David's righteousness. We should learn from David, and do likewise.

Prayer

PROVERBS

Put Away Wickedness

Mishle (Proverbs) 15:8 reads,

^{15:8}*The sacrifice made by the wicked is an abomination to Yahweh,
But the prayer of the upright is his delight.*

Prayer is again likened to sacrifice.

Seeing that the prayers of the wicked are an abomination before Yahweh, and seeing also that we ought to pray regularly to Yahweh, it is implied that we ought to put away wickedness far from us. Such that we do not bring to Yahweh unholy offering - our prayers profaned with our wickedness. It is therefore imperative that we live upright and righteous lives.

Mishle (Proverbs) 15:29 reads,

^{15:29}*Yahweh is far from the wicked,
But he hears the prayer of the righteous.*

Be Attentive To Yahweh's Law

Mishle (Proverbs) 28:9 reads,

^{28:9}*He who turns away his ear from hearing the law,
Even his prayer is an abomination.*

The prayers of those who turn their ears away from hearing the law are an abomination. Also, the prayers of the wicked are an abomination. It is therefore wickedness to turn one's ears away from hearing Yahweh's law.

Yahweh's servants should therefore be duly attentive to his law, and do it.

Prayer

IYOV'S SUFFERINGS

Avoid Wickedness And Pray Pure Prayers

Iyov (Job) 16:1-22 reads,

^{16:1}Then Iyov answered,

^{16:2}"I have heard many such things.

Miserable comforters are you all!

^{16:3}Shall vain words have an end?

Or what provokes you that you answer?

^{16:4}I also could speak as you do.

If your soul were in my soul's place,

I could join words together against you,

And shake my head at you.

^{16:5}But I would strengthen you with my mouth.

The solace of my lips would relieve you.

^{16:6}"Though I speak, my grief is not subsided.

Though I forbear, what am I eased?

^{16:7}But now, Mighty One, you have surely worn me out.

You have made desolate all my company.

^{16:8}You have shriveled me up. This is a witness against me.

My leanness rises up against me,

It testifies to my face.

^{16:9}He has torn me in his wrath, and persecuted me;

He has gnashed on me with his teeth:

My adversary sharpens his eyes on me.

^{16:10}They have gaped on me with their mouth;

They have struck me on the cheek reproachfully.

They gather themselves together against me.

^{16:11}The Mighty One delivers me to the unrighteous,

And casts me into the hands of the wicked.

^{16:12}I was at ease, and he broke me apart.

Yes, he has taken me by the neck, and dashed me to pieces.

He has also set me up for his target.

^{16:13}His archers surround me.

He splits my kidneys apart, and does not spare.

He pours out my gall on the ground.

^{16:14}He breaks me with breach on breach.

He runs on me like a Rafa.

^{16:15}I have sewed sackcloth on my skin,

And have thrust my horn in the dust.

^{16:16}My face is red with weeping.

Deep darkness is on my eyelids.

^{16:17}Although there is no violence in my hands,

And my prayer is pure.

Prayer

*16:18 "Earth, don't cover my blood,
Let my cry have no place to rest.
16:19 Even now, behold, my witness is in Heaven.
He who vouches for me is on high.
16:20 My friends scoff at me.
My eyes pour out tears to the Mighty One,
16:21 That he would maintain the right of a man with the Mighty One,
Of a son of man with his neighbor!
16:22 For when a few years are come,
I shall go the way from whence I shall not return.*

16:17 shows that Iyov avoided the way of wickedness, and prayed pure prayers to Yahweh the Mighty One. We should do likewise.

[16:16 appears to suggest that Iyov was of the Caucasian (white) race, seeing that his face was "red with weeping", and "deep darkness" was on his eyelids. These are physical traits typical of those of the Caucasian race in similar circumstances.]

Avoid The Traits Of Wickedness

Iyov (Job) 21:1-34 reads,

*21:1 Then Iyov answered,
21:2 "Listen diligently to my speech.
Let this be your consolation.
21:3 Allow me, and I also will speak;
After I have spoken, mock on.
21:4 As for me, is my complaint to man?
Why shouldn't I be impatient?
21:5 Look at me, and be astonished.
Lay your hand on your mouth.
21:6 When I remember, I am troubled.
Horror takes hold of my flesh.
21:7 "Why do the wicked live,
Become old, yes, and grow mighty in power?
21:8 Their child is established with them in their sight,
Their offspring before their eyes.
21:9 Their houses are safe from fear,
Neither is the rod of the Mighty One upon them.
21:10 Their bulls breed without fail.
Their cows calve, and don't miscarry.
21:11 They send forth their little ones like a flock.
Their children dance.
21:12 They sing to the tambourine and harp,
And rejoice at the sound of the pipe.
21:13 They spend their days in prosperity.
In an instant they go down to She'ol.
21:14 **They tell the Mighty One, 'Depart from us,
For we don't want to know about your ways.***

Prayer

21:15 What is Shaddai, that we should serve him?

What profit should we have, if we pray to him?'

21:16 Behold, their prosperity is not in their hand:

The counsel of the wicked is far from me.

21:17 "How often is it that the lamp of the wicked is put out?

That their calamity comes on them?

That the Mighty One distributes sorrows in his anger?

21:18 That they are as stubble before the wind,

As chaff that the storm carries away?

21:19 You say, 'The Mighty One lays up his iniquity for his children.'

Let him recompense it to himself, that he may know it.

21:20 Let his own eyes see his destruction.

Let him drink of the wrath of Shaddai.

21:21 For what does he care for his house after him,

When the number of his months is cut off?

21:22 "Shall any teach the Mighty One knowledge,

Seeing he judges those who are high?

21:23 One dies in his full strength,

Being wholly at ease and quiet.

21:24 His pails are full of milk.

The marrow of his bones is moistened.

21:25 Another dies in bitterness of soul,

And never tastes of good.

21:26 They lie down alike in the dust,

The worm covers them.

21:27 "Behold, I know your thoughts,

The devices with which you would wrong me.

21:28 For you say, 'Where is the house of the prince?

Where is the tent in which the wicked lived?'

21:29 Haven't you asked wayfaring men?

Don't you know their evidences,

21:30 That the evil man is reserved to the day of calamity?

That they are led forth to the day of wrath?

21:31 Who shall declare his way to his face?

Who shall repay him what he has done?

21:32 Yet shall he be borne to the grave,

Men shall keep watch over the tomb.

21:33 The clods of the valley shall be sweet to him.

All men shall draw after him,

As there were innumerable before him.

21:34 So how can you comfort me with nonsense,

Seeing that in your answers there remains only falsehood?"

21:14-15 shows that the wicked have no regard for the Mighty One, or for his ways. They see no profit in serving Yahweh, or in praying to him.

Servants of Yahweh should avoid these traits of the wicked.

Prayer

Yahweh Hears The Prayers Of Repentant Sinners

Iyov (Job) 22:1-30 reads,

^{22:1}Then Elifaz the Temanite answered,
^{22:2}"Can a man be profitable to the Mighty One?
Surely he who is wise is profitable to himself.
^{22:3}Is it any pleasure to Shaddai, that you are righteous?
Or does it benefit him, that you make your ways perfect?
^{22:4}Is it for your piety that he reproves you,
That he enters with you into judgment?
^{22:5}**Isn't your wickedness great?**
Neither is there any end to your iniquities.
^{22:6}**For you have taken pledges from your brother for nothing,**
And stripped the naked of their clothing.
^{22:7}**You haven't given water to the weary to drink,**
And you have withheld bread from the hungry.
^{22:8}But as for the mighty man, he had the earth.
The honorable man, he lived in it.
^{22:9}**You have sent widows away empty,**
And the arms of the fatherless have been broken.
^{22:10}Therefore snares are round about you.
Sudden fear troubles you,
^{22:11}Or darkness, so that you can not see,
And floods of waters cover you.
^{22:12}"Isn't the Mighty One in the heights of Heaven?
See the height of the stars, how high they are!
^{22:13}You say, 'What does the Mighty One know?
Can he judge through the thick darkness?
^{22:14}Thick clouds are a covering to him, so that he doesn't see.
He walks on the vault of the sky.'
^{22:15}Will you keep the old way
Which wicked men have trodden,
^{22:16}Who were snatched away before their time,
Whose foundation was poured out as a stream,
^{22:17}Who said to the Mighty One, 'Depart from us;'
And, 'What can Shaddai do for us?'
^{22:18}Yet he filled their houses with good things,
But the counsel of the wicked is far from me.
^{22:19}The righteous see it, and are glad;
The innocent laugh them to scorn,
^{22:20}Saying, 'Surely those who rose up against us are cut off,
The fire has consumed the remnant of them.'
^{22:21}"Acquaint yourself with him, now, and be at shalom.
Thereby good shall come to you.
^{22:22}Please receive the law from his mouth,
And lay up his words in your heart.

Prayer

^{22:23} *If you return to Shaddai, you shall be built up,
If you put away unrighteousness far from your tents.*
^{22:24} *Lay your treasure in the dust,
The gold of Ofir among the stones of the brooks.*
^{22:25} *The Almighty will be your treasure,
Precious silver to you.*
^{22:26} *For then shall you delight yourself in Shaddai,
And shall lift up your face to the Mighty One.*
^{22:27} *You shall make your prayer to him, and he will hear you.
You shall pay your vows.*
^{22:28} *You shall also decree a thing, and it shall be established to you.
Light shall shine on your ways.*
^{22:29} *When they cast down, you shall say, 'be lifted up.'*
He will save the humble person.
^{22:30} *He will even deliver him who is not innocent;
Yes, he shall be delivered through the cleanness of your hands."*

The words of Elifaz the Temanite in 22:21-30 are true, as applied to repentant sinners. Nevertheless, his accusation against Iyov was false, for Iyov was not guilty of having committed the sins he accused Iyov of having committed. Elifaz's words were therefore not applicable to Iyov, but to wicked men.

But the message in them is correct, that Shaddai, Yahweh the Mighty Man, indeed hears the prayers of repentant sinners. Therefore, if we have sinned, we should repent of our sins, and subsequently pray to Yahweh. He will then hear us, but not while we are still committing iniquity.

Confess Your Sins To Both Yahweh And Men

Iyov (Job) 33:23-28 reads,

^{33:23} *"If there is beside him an angel,
An interpreter, one among a thousand,
To show to man what is right for him;*
^{33:24} *Then the Mighty One is gracious to him, and says,
'Deliver him from going down to the pit,
I have found a ransom.'*
^{33:25} *His flesh shall be fresher than a child's;
He returns to the days of his youth.*
^{33:26} *He prays to the Mighty One, and he is favorable to him,
So that he sees his face with joy:
He restores to man his righteousness.*
^{33:27} *He sings before men, and says,
'I have sinned, and perverted that which was right,
And it didn't profit me.*
^{33:28} *He has redeemed my soul from going into the pit,
My life shall see the light.'*

33:26-27 shows that the people the Mighty One restores to righteousness are those who confess their sins, not just to the Mighty One, but also to other human beings.

Prayer

Servants of Yahweh should therefore not be shy about confessing their sins to one another, but should do so. They should, even more importantly, confess their sins to Yahweh the Mighty One. Confession of sins is therefore to be made to both Yahweh the Mighty One and to other human beings.

Yahweh's Servants Must Pray For Sinners

Iyov (Job) 42:7-17 reads,

^{42:7}It was so, that after Yahweh had spoken these words to Iyov, Yahweh said to Elifaz the Temanite, **"My wrath is kindled against you, and against your two friends; for you have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Iyov has."** ^{42:8}**Now therefore, take to yourselves seven bulls and seven rams, and go to my servant Iyov, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and my servant Iyov shall pray for you, for I will accept him, that I not deal with you according to your folly. For you have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Iyov has."**

^{42:9}So Elifaz the Temanite and Bildad the Shuchi and Tzofar the Naamathite went, and did what Yahweh commanded them, and **Yahweh accepted Iyov.**

^{42:10}**Yahweh turned the captivity of Iyov, when he prayed for his friends. Yahweh gave Iyov twice as much as he had before.** ^{42:11}Then came there to him all his brothers, and all his sisters, and all those who had been of his acquaintance before, and ate bread with him in his house. They comforted him, and consoled him concerning all the evil that Yahweh had brought on him. Everyone also gave him a piece of money, and everyone a ring of gold.

^{42:12}So Yahweh blessed the latter end of Iyov more than his beginning. He had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand female donkeys. ^{42:13}He had also seven sons and three daughters. ^{42:14}He called the name of the first, Jemimah; and the name of the second, Keziah; and the name of the third, Keren-happuch. ^{42:15}In all the land were no women found so beautiful as the daughters of Iyov. Their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. ^{42:16}After this Iyov lived one hundred forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons' sons, to four generations. ^{42:17}So Iyov died, being old and full of days.

42:8 shows that Yahweh requires his servants to pray for sinners. To pray for sinners that they may repent of their sins, and that Yahweh may accept them into his fold.

It is therefore a duty of a servant of Yahweh to pray for others, that they may repent of their sins, and that Yahweh may forgive them of their sins, and accept them into his household.

42:10 shows that Yahweh blessed Iyov only after he had prayed for his friends. In other words, for Yahweh to shower his blessings upon his servants, they must first perform the duty that Yahweh had given them to perform, including praying for repentant sinners that these may be forgiven.

We should therefore pray for sinners, that they may both repent of their sins, and that Yahweh may forgive them of their sins. After so doing, Yahweh can then allow the blessings that he desires for us to come upon us.

Prayer

DANIEL THE PROPHET

Daniyel Cast Into The Lions' Den

Daniyel (Daniel) 6:1-28 reads,

^{6:1}It pleased Daryavesh to set over the kingdom one hundred twenty satraps, who should be throughout the whole kingdom; ^{6:2}and over them three presidents, of whom Daniyel was one; that these satraps might give account to them, and that the king should have no damage. ^{6:3}Then this Daniyel was distinguished above the presidents and the satraps, because an excellent spirit was in him; and the king thought to set him over the whole realm.

^{6:4}Then the presidents and the satraps sought to find occasion against Daniyel as touching the kingdom; but they could find no occasion nor fault, because he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him. ^{6:5}Then said these men, "We shall not find any occasion against this Daniyel, except we find it against him concerning the law of his Mighty One."

^{6:6}Then these presidents and satraps assembled together to the king, and said thus to him, "King Daryavesh, live forever. ^{6:7}All the presidents of the kingdom, the deputies and the satraps, the counselors and the governors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a strong interdict, that whoever shall ask a petition of any mighty one or man for thirty days, save of you, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. ^{6:8}Now, O king, establish the interdict, and sign the writing, that it not be changed, according to the law of the Madai and Paras, which doesn't alter." ^{6:9}Therefore king Daryavesh signed the writing and the interdict.

^{6:10}**When Daniyel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house (now his windows were open in his chamber toward Yerushalayim) and he kneeled on his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his Mighty One, as he did before.** ^{6:11}Then these men assembled together, and found Daniyel making petition and supplication before his Mighty One.

^{6:12}Then they came near, and spoke before the king concerning the king's interdict: "Haven't you signed an interdict, that every man who shall make petition to any mighty one or man within thirty days, save to you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions?" The king answered, "The thing is true, according to the law of the Madai and Paras, which doesn't alter." ^{6:13}Then answered they and said before the king, "That Daniyel, who is of the children of the captivity of Yahudah, doesn't regard you, O king, nor the interdict that you have signed, but makes his petition three times a day."

^{6:14}Then the king, when he heard these words, was sore displeased, and set his heart on Daniyel to deliver him; and he labored until the going down of the sun to rescue him.

^{6:15}Then these men assembled together to the king, and said to the king, "Know, O king, that it is a law of the Madai and Paras, that no interdict nor statute which the king establishes may be changed." ^{6:16}Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniyel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spoke and said to Daniyel, "Your Mighty One whom you serve continually, he will deliver you." ^{6:17}A stone was brought, and laid on the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his masters; that nothing might be changed concerning Daniyel.

Prayer

^{6:18}Then the king went to his palace, and passed the night fasting; neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep fled from him. ^{6:19}Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste to the den of lions. ^{6:20}When he came near to the den to Daniyel, he cried with a lamentable voice; the king spoke and said to Daniyel, "Daniyel, servant of the living Mighty One, is your Mighty One, whom you serve continually, able to deliver you from the lions?" ^{6:21}Then said Daniyel to the king, "O king, live forever. ^{6:22}My Mighty One has sent his angel, and has shut the lions' mouths, and they have not hurt me; because as before him innocence was found in me; and also before you, O king, have I done no hurt." ^{6:23}Then was the king exceeding glad, and commanded that they should take Daniyel up out of the den. So Daniyel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found on him, because he had trusted in his Mighty One.

^{6:24}The king commanded, and they brought those men who had accused Daniyel, and they cast them into the den of lions, them, their children, and their wives; and the lions had the mastery of them, and broke all their bones in pieces, before they came to the bottom of the den.

^{6:25}Then king Daryavesh wrote to all the peoples, nations, and languages, who dwell in all the earth: "Shalom be multiplied to you. ^{6:26}I make a decree, that in all the dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the Mighty One of Daniyel; for he is the living Mighty One, and steadfast forever, His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed; and his dominion shall be even to the end. ^{6:27}He delivers and rescues, and he works signs and wonders in Heaven and in earth, who has delivered Daniyel from the power of the lions." ^{6:28}So this Daniyel prospered in the reign of Daryavesh, and in the reign of Koresh the Parsian.

Pray Your Prayers Facing In The Direction Of Yerushalayim

6:10 shows that Daniyel prayed his prayers facing in the direction of Yerushalayim. This clearly shows that Daniyel understood the validity of Shelomo's prayer at the time of the dedication of the temple, and Yahweh's acceptance of Shelomo's prayer.

Therefore, following Daniyel's example, all servants of Yahweh should pray their prayers facing in the direction of Yerushalayim.

Daniyel's Prayer Mannerisms

6:10 also shows the posture that Daniyel adopted for his prayers - kneeling on his knees. It also shows the frequency of his prayers - three times a day. It also shows what he prayed about - giving thanks to the Mighty One. Servants of Yahweh should indeed follow Daniyel's commendable example.

The Vital Importance Of Praying To Yahweh

6:10 also shows that Daniyel ignored the royal statute and interdict, and continued on as before with his regular prayer routine, giving thanks to Yahweh the Mighty One. In other words, Daniyel clearly perceived that praying to the Mighty One was more important than submitting to the royal statute and interdict, a statute and interdict forbidding regular prayer to the Mighty One

Prayer

for 30 days. It did not matter that violating this royal statute and interdict had a penalty that potentially meant death to its violator. In other words, Daniyel was quite prepared to die, seeing that the penalty for so praying to Yahweh the Mighty One during this forbidden period was death!

In this Daniyel teaches us that it is vitally important that we pray to Yahweh on a regular basis, thanking him for the various blessings he accords us and for all his wonderful works. He also teaches us that regularly praying to the Mighty One, regularly giving thanks to the Mighty One, is more important than even the preservation of our physical lives! He also teaches us that where we are faced with a dilemma between regularly praying to Yahweh, or otherwise obeying Yahweh, and obeying a command that forbids us from so praying to Yahweh, we should submit to Yahweh, and continue to regularly pray to him, rather than submit to the forbidding command. In other words, we should clearly understand that Yahweh is indeed HaElyon - the Most High. It is his words that are supreme, and not those of other entities, especially if the words of these other entities are contrary to Yahweh's words.

Servants Of Yahweh Are Required To Pray Regularly To Yahweh

It should also be clear that it is indeed a requirement of servants of Yahweh that they pray regularly to Yahweh. As earlier seen, Shemuel indeed said that it was sin for him not to pray for the welfare of the people. It was also seen that Yahweh required Iyov to pray for his errant friends, that they may be forgiven their iniquity, before Yahweh restored Iyov to his former fortunes. It should therefore be clear that it is indeed Yahweh's requirement that his servants pray regularly to him, both in thanksgiving and in making other petitions, including asking for mercy for repentant sinners.

6:11 shows that Daniyel was making prayer and supplication before the Mighty One.

Yahweh Is The Deliverer

6:16 shows that king Daryavesh, the king of Madai and Paras, believed that Daniyel's Mighty One could indeed deliver Daniyel out of the mouth of the lions in the den. Yahweh the Mighty One is indeed the deliverer.

6:19-22 shows that Yahweh indeed delivered Daniyel from harm that the lions would have done to him.

Why Yahweh Delivered Daniyel

6:22 gives the reason why Yahweh delivered Daniyel. Because he was a faithful servant who served innocently, so serving both Yahweh the Mighty One and the king of Madai and Paras. It should therefore be clear that servants of Yahweh should not only be faithful in their service to Yahweh, but also to all others whom Yahweh places in authority above them.

Prayer

Servants Of Yahweh Are To Submit To All In Authority Over Them

In other words, from Daniyel's experience, it is indeed evident that it is also a requirement of Yahweh that his servants be faithful and submissive to all he places in authority over them, such as various governments.

Daniyel Was Tried For Yahweh's Glorification

6:25-26 shows that Yahweh used Daniyel's difficult experience of faith for his own glorification. For Daniyel's faithful service to Yahweh, even unto death, resulted in Yahweh being glorified in the entire kingdom under the domain of king Daryavesh.

We should therefore learn from Daniyel's experience that Yahweh indeed allows us to undergo difficult situations, even situations that are potentially fatal, for the glorification of his own name. Provided we remain faithful to him, even under great pressure, his purpose will indeed be done, and we will eventually be commended before him.

Daniyel's Prayer For Yerushalayim's Restoration

Daniyel (Daniel) 9:1-27 reads,

^{9:1}*In the first year of Daryavesh the son of Achashverosh, of the seed of the Madai, who was made king over the realm of the Kasdim, ^{9:2}in the first year of his reign I, Daniyel, understood by the books the number of the years whereof the word of Yahweh came to Yirmeyahu the prophet, for the accomplishing of the desolations of Yerushalayim, even seventy years. ^{9:3}**I set my face to the Sovereign Mighty One, to seek by prayer and petitions, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes.***

^{9:4}*I prayed to Yahweh my Mighty One, and made confession, and said, "Oh, Sovereign, the great and dreadful Mighty One, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love him and keep his commandments. ^{9:5}We have sinned, and have dealt perversely, and have done wickedly, and have rebelled, even turning aside from your precepts and from your ordinances; ^{9:6}neither have we listened to your servants the prophets, who spoke in your name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land. ^{9:7}Sovereign, righteousness belongs to you, but to us confusion of face, as at this day; to the men of Yahudah, and to the inhabitants of Yerushalayim, and to all Yisra'el, who are near, and who are far off, through all the countries where you have driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against you. ^{9:8}Sovereign, to us belongs confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against you. ^{9:9}To the Sovereign our Mighty One belong mercies and forgiveness; for we have rebelled against him; ^{9:10}neither have we obeyed the voice of Yahweh our Mighty One, to walk in his laws, which he set before us by his servants the prophets. ^{9:11}Yes, all Yisra'el have transgressed your law, even turning aside, that they should not obey your voice: therefore has the curse been poured out on us, and the oath that is written in the law of Moshe the servant of the Mighty One; for we have sinned against him. ^{9:12}He has confirmed his words, which he spoke against us, and against our judges who judged us, by bringing on us a great evil; for under the whole sky has not been done as has been done on Yerushalayim. ^{9:13}As it is written in the law of Moshe, all this evil is come on us: yet have we not entreated the favor of Yahweh our Mighty One, that we should turn from our iniquities, and have discernment in your truth. ^{9:14}Therefore*

Prayer

has Yahweh watched over the evil, and brought it on us; for Yahweh our Mighty One is righteous in all his works which he does, and we have not obeyed his voice. ^{9:15}Now, Sovereign our Mighty One, who has brought your people forth out of the land of Mizrayim with a mighty hand, and have gotten you renown, as at this day; we have sinned, we have done wickedly. ^{9:16}Sovereign, according to all your righteousness, let your anger and please let your wrath be turned away from your city Yerushalayim, your holy mountain; because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Yerushalayim and your people are become a reproach to all who are round about us. ^{9:17}Now therefore, our Mighty One, listen to the prayer of your servant, and to his petitions, and cause your face to shine on your sanctuary that is desolate, for the Sovereign's sake. ^{9:18}My Mighty One, turn your ear, and hear; open your eyes, and see our desolations, and the city which is called by your name: for we do not present our petitions before you for our righteousness, but for your great mercies' sake. ^{9:19}Sovereign, hear; Sovereign, forgive; Sovereign, listen and do; don't defer, for your own sake, my Mighty One, because your city and your people are called by your name."

^{9:20}*While I was speaking, and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Yisra'el, and presenting my supplication before Yahweh my Mighty One for the holy mountain of my Mighty One; ^{9:21}yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gavri'el, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening offering. ^{9:22}He instructed me, and talked with me, and said, "Daniyel, I am now come forth to give you wisdom and understanding. ^{9:23}At the beginning of your petitions the commandment went forth, and I am come to tell you; for you are greatly beloved: therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision. ^{9:24}Seventy weeks are decreed on your people and on your holy city, to finish disobedience, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy. ^{9:25}Know therefore and discern, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Yerushalayim to the Messiah the prince, shall be seven weeks, and sixty-two weeks: it shall be built again, with street and moat, even in troubled times. ^{9:26}After the sixty-two weeks the Messiah shall be cut off, and shall have nothing: and the people of the prince who shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end of it shall be with a flood, and even to the end shall be war; desolations are determined. ^{9:27}He shall make a firm covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the offering to cease; and on the wing of abominations shall come one who makes desolate; and even to the full end, and that determined, shall wrath be poured out on the desolate."*

Study Yahweh's Words

9:2 shows that Daniyel was a student of Yahweh's words contained in the books - the Scriptures. Yahweh's servants should likewise be regular and serious students of his words contained in the books - the Scriptures.

It was from studying the Scriptures that Daniyel obtained understanding of the plight of his people - why they were exiled away from their own land, and scattered among the various countries of all the earth. It was also from studying the Scriptures that he learnt about the timing

Prayer

of the end of that exile that they were then experiencing, and the time for the restoration of Yerushalayim.

It is therefore evident that servants of Yahweh can learn much from studying his words contained in the Scriptures.

Pray For The Fulfilment Of Yahweh's Prophecies

9:3-19 shows that Daniyel prayed for the restoration of Yerushalayim, the very restoration that he had learnt from the Scriptures would take place at about the time that he was praying.

In this there is a lesson for us. Yahweh had already purposed to restore Yerushalayim after the stipulated 70 years. And seeing that Yahweh's purposes stand, he was indeed going to restore it as he stipulated, irrespective of man's conduct pertaining to Yerushalayim. Yet we see Daniyel petitioning Yahweh, with fasting and sackcloth and ashes, to do according to what he had already said that he would do!

In other words, servants of Yahweh are not to rest on their laurels just because they have learned that Yahweh has stipulated his performance of a certain action at a certain point in time. They should be involved in Yahweh's prophesied action. And that involvement commences by their seeking Yahweh in prayer and petitions, including fasting, that Yahweh indeed fulfils that which he has already prophesied that he will fulfil. It should therefore be evident that a reason why Yahweh reveals to his servants particular prophecies involving his conduct is for these servants of his to be involved in the fulfilment of these prophecies.

Serving Yahweh According To His Will

In other words, it is Yahweh's will that his servants serve him in the manner that he has allotted to them. Some are to serve in one manner, while others are to serve in another. Once Yahweh has revealed to a particular servant of his the meaning of his will in a particular area of life, that servant should do what Yahweh has allotted to him to do. This includes praying for the fulfilment of Yahweh's will in that matter. It may also include undertaking additional specific duties that Yahweh shows that servant that he or she should do.

Therefore, when Yahweh gives us understanding of his prophecies showing that matters prophesied long ago are about to be fulfilled, it is indeed our duty to pray for the realisation of these prophesied matters. It is indeed our duty to pray to Yahweh that he may show us the details of the service he desires from each one of us. And it is indeed our duty to do that which he shows us.

What The People Of Yahweh Should Now Do

Earlier on, in Shelomo's prayer, it was seen that the people of Yahweh, the children of Yisrael, would indeed repent of their iniquities in the last days, while they are in the lands of their captors, scattered throughout all the nations of the whole world. They would seek Yahweh wholeheartedly, and Yahweh would be found by them.

Seeing that we are already in the last days, it is indeed incumbent upon servants of Yahweh to pray for the repentance of the people of Yahweh, the children of Yisrael. It is incumbent upon servants of Yahweh to follow the example set for them by Daniyel, and petition Yahweh with fasting, even in sackcloth and ashes, that Yahweh may indeed be wholeheartedly

Prayer

sought by the children of Yisrael, and be found by them. That Yahweh may forgive them their sins and iniquities, and that he may restore them back to their own land after the soon-coming return of the Messiah.

It is indeed now time for Yahweh's servants to undertake the various works the Father has given them with respect to facilitating the children of Yisrael repenting of their sins. It is indeed now time for Yahweh's servants to ascertain from Yahweh what their detailed service ought to be, and then to faithfully undertake that service.

When The Scattering Of The Children Of Yisrael Took Place

9:7 shows that by the time that Daniyel was praying this prayer to Yahweh, the children of Yisrael had already been scattered throughout the entire world, to the various countries where Yahweh had driven them. The scattering of the children of Yisrael throughout all the various countries in the world therefore took place a very long time ago.

Pray Daniyel's Prayer

Daniyel's intense prayer in 9:3-19 is just as valid today, as it was when Daniyel prayed it. For the issues that Daniyel prayed about are likewise valid today. Servants of Yahweh should therefore pray Daniyel's prayer to Yahweh, that Yahweh may restore both Yisrael and Yerushalayim!

9:21 shows that Daniyel was praying this prayer at about the time of the evening offering. It appears that Daniyel timed his prayers to coincide with the times of the daily offerings to Yahweh.

Daniyel Did Not Understand All Of Yahweh's Will

9:22-23 shows that when Daniyel commenced to pray his prayer and supplication, he understood only a small portion of Yahweh's will, that which he had understood from studying Yahweh's word contained in the Scriptures. But there was more to understanding Yahweh's will that had not even been written in the Scriptures that Daniyel was studying. Yahweh therefore sent his angel Gavriel to impart more understanding to Daniyel concerning Yahweh's will.

How Yahweh Answered Daniyel's Prayer

Yahweh's conduct in this matter should also be noted. Daniyel was praying for the restoration of Yerushalayim. He was, presumably, therefore expecting an answer concerned with the prayer that he was praying. Yet Yahweh chose not to respond to him as he might presumably have been expecting - beginning to see the restoration of Yerushalayim. Instead Yahweh chose to show him how he Daniyel would serve Yahweh at the time that he was praying this prayer. In other words, the prayer had the effect of Daniyel receiving more knowledge and understanding of Yahweh's will, including his own role in the dissemination of Yahweh's knowledge and understanding to other servants of Yahweh.

It should therefore be noted that the response Yahweh gives to the various prayers his servants pray to him are not necessarily what those servants were expecting at the time they were offering their supplications to Yahweh. Yahweh sometimes responds in a manner whereby he

Prayer

gives us additional revelation of his will, both applicable to us individually and collectively, or applicable to some other person or persons.

It should also be noted that when a time has come to pray to Yahweh over a particular matter, it invariably also is the time for Yahweh to show us his will for us individually, showing us those things that he desires we do in our serving him. Servants of Yahweh should therefore be fully prepared to serve Yahweh in any manner Yahweh stipulates. For unless Yahweh has shown them beforehand, they do not really know the specific manner that Yahweh desires that they serve him. And when shown how we are to serve Yahweh, we should so commence to serve Yahweh as he shows us.

9:23-27 contains the knowledge and understanding that the angel Gavriel was sent to impart to Daniyel, something that Daniyel had no clue would be given to him when he was praying for the restoration of Yerushalayim.

Yahweh the Mighty One, how great and unsearchable are his ways! Praise Yahweh! Halleluyah!

Prayer

RETURNED CAPTIVES OF YAHUDAH

Yahweh Answered Daniel's Request

Ezra 6:1-22 reads,

^{6:1}Then Daryavesh the king made a decree, and search was made in the house of the archives, where the treasures were laid up in Bavel. ^{6:2}There was found at Achmeta, in the palace that is in the province of Madai, a scroll, and therein was thus written for a record: ^{6:3}"In the first year of Koresh the king, Koresh the king made a decree: 'Concerning the house of the Mighty One at Yerushalayim, let the house be built, the place where they offer sacrifices, and let the foundations of it be strongly laid; the height of it sixty cubits, and the breadth of it sixty cubits; ^{6:4}with three courses of great stones, and a course of new timber: and let the expenses be given out of the king's house. ^{6:5}Also let the gold and silver vessels of the house of the Mighty One, which Nevukhadnetztzar took forth out of the temple which is at Yerushalayim, and brought to Bavel, be restored, and brought again to the temple which is at Yerushalayim, everyone to its place; and you shall put them in the house of the Mighty One.'"

^{6:6}"Now therefore, Tattenai, governor beyond the River, Shetar-Bozenai, and your companions the Afarsekhi, who are beyond the River, be you far from there: ^{6:7}let the work of this house of the Mighty One alone; let the governor of the Yahudim and the Zakenim of the Yahudim build this house of the Mighty One in its place. ^{6:8}Moreover I make a decree what you shall do to these Zakenim of the Yahudim for the building of this house of the Mighty One: that of the king's goods, even of the tribute beyond the River, expenses be given with all diligence to these men, that they be not hindered. ^{6:9}That which they have need of, both young bulls, and rams, and lambs, for burnt offerings to the Mighty One of Heaven; also wheat, salt, wine, and oil, according to the word of the Kohanim who are at Yerushalayim, let it be given them day by day without fail; ^{6:10}that they may offer sacrifices of sweet savor to the Mighty One of Heaven, and pray for the life of the king, and of his sons. ^{6:11}Also I have made a decree, that whoever shall alter this word, let a beam be pulled out from his house, and let him be lifted up and fastened thereon; and let his house be made a dunghill for this: ^{6:12}and the Mighty One who has caused his name to dwell there overthrow all kings and peoples who shall put forth their hand to alter the same, to destroy this house of the Mighty One which is at Yerushalayim. I Daryavesh have made a decree; let it be done with all diligence."

^{6:13}Then Tattenai, the governor beyond the River, Shetar-Bozenai, and their companions, because that Daryavesh the king had sent, did accordingly with all diligence. ^{6:14}The Zakenim of the Yahudim built and prospered, through the prophesying of Chaggai the prophet and Zekharyah the son of 'Iddo. They built and finished it, according to the commandment of the Mighty One of Yisra'el, and according to the decree of Koresh, and Daryavesh, and Artachshasta king of Paras. ^{6:15}This house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Daryavesh the king.

^{6:16}The children of Yisra'el, the Kohanim, and the Levites, and the rest of the children of the captivity, kept the dedication of this house of the Mighty One with joy. ^{6:17}They offered at the dedication of this house of the Mighty-One one hundred bulls, two hundred rams, four hundred lambs; and for a sin-offering for all Yisra'el, twelve male goats,

Prayer

according to the number of the tribes of Yisra'el. ^{6:18}They set the Kohanim in their divisions, and the Levites in their courses, for the service of the Mighty One, which is at Yerushalayim; as it is written in the book of Moshe.

^{6:19}The children of the captivity kept the Pesach on the fourteenth day of the first month.

^{6:20}For the Kohanim and the Levites had purified themselves together; all of them were pure: and they killed the Pesach for all the children of the captivity, and for their brothers the Kohanim, and for themselves. ^{6:21}The children of Yisra'el who had come

again out of the captivity, and all such as had separated themselves to them from the filthiness of the nations of the land, to seek Yahweh, the Mighty One of Yisra'el, ate,

^{6:22}and kept the feast of matzah seven days with joy: for Yahweh had made them joyful, and had turned the heart of the king of Ashshur to them, to strengthen their hands in the work of the house of the Mighty One, the Mighty One of Yisra'el.

6:1-22 shows that the prayer Daniyel prayed to Yahweh in Daniyel (Daniel) 9 was indeed heard. For the house of the Mighty One was rebuilt, and Yerushalayim was restored!

Pray For The Lives Of Your Rulers

6:10 shows that Yahweh's servants are to pray for the lives of their rulers.

Ezra's And The People's Public Confession Of Sins And Prayer

Ezra 10:1-44 reads,

^{10:1}Now while Ezra prayed and made confession, weeping and casting himself down before the house of the Mighty One, there was gathered together to him out of Yisra'el a very great assembly of men and women and children; for the people wept very sore.

^{10:2}Shekhanyahu the son of Yechi'el, one of the sons of `Elam, answered Ezra, "**We have trespassed against our Mighty One, and have married foreign women of the peoples of the land: yet now there is hope for Yisra'el concerning this thing.**" ^{10:3}**Now therefore let us make a covenant with our Mighty One to put away all the wives, and such as are born of them, according to the counsel of my master, and of those who tremble at the commandment of our Mighty One; and let it be done according to the law.** ^{10:4}**Arise; for the matter belongs to you, and we are with you: be of good courage, and do it.**"

^{10:5}Then arose Ezra, and made the chiefs of the Kohanim, the Levites, and all Yisra'el, to swear that they would do according to this word. So they swore.

^{10:6}Then Ezra rose up from before the house of the Mighty One, and went into the chamber of Yehochanan the son of Elyashiv: and when he came there, he ate no bread, nor drank water; for he mourned because of the trespass of them of the captivity. ^{10:7}They made proclamation throughout Yahudah and Yerushalayim to all the children of the captivity, that they should gather themselves together to Yerushalayim; ^{10:8}and that whoever didn't come within three days, according to the counsel of the princes and the Zakenim, all his substance should be forfeited, and himself separated from the assembly of the captivity. ^{10:9}Then all the men of Yahudah and Binyamin gathered themselves together to Yerushalayim within the three days; it was the ninth month, on the twentieth day of the month: and all the people sat in the broad place before the house of the Mighty One, trembling because of this matter, and for the great rain.

Prayer

^{10:10} Ezra the Kohen stood up, and said to them, "You have trespassed, and have married foreign women, to increase the guilt of Yisra'el. ^{10:11} Now therefore make confession to Yahweh, the Mighty One of your fathers, and do his pleasure; and separate yourselves from the peoples of the land, and from the foreign women."

^{10:12} Then all the assembly answered with a loud voice, "As you have said concerning us, so must we do. ^{10:13} But the people are many, and it is a time of much rain, and we are not able to stand outside: neither is this a work of one day or two; for we have greatly transgressed in this matter. ^{10:14} Let now our princes be appointed for all the assembly, and let all those who are in our cities who have married foreign women come at appointed times, and with them the Zakenim of every city, and the judges of it, until the fierce wrath of our Mighty One be turned from us, until this matter be dispatched."

^{10:15} Only Yonatan the son of `Asa'el and Yachzeyah the son of Tikvah stood up against this matter: and Meshullam and Shabbetai the Levite helped them.

^{10:16} The children of the captivity did so. Ezra the Kohen, with certain heads of fathers' houses, after their fathers' houses, and all of them by their names, were set apart; and they sat down in the first day of the tenth month to examine the matter. ^{10:17} They made an end with all the men who had married foreign women by the first day of the first month.

^{10:18} Among the sons of the Kohanim there were found who had married foreign women: namely, of the sons of Yeshua, the son of Yotzadak, and his brothers, Ma`aseyah, and Eli`ezer, and Yariv, and Gedalyahu. ^{10:19} They gave their hand that they would put away their wives; and being guilty, they offered a ram of the flock for their guilt. ^{10:20} Of the sons of Immer: Chanani and Zevadyah. ^{10:21} Of the sons of Charim: Ma`aseyah, and Elijah, and Shemayahu, and Yechi`el, and `Uzziyah. ^{10:22} Of the sons of Pashchur: Elya`enai, Ma`aseyah, Yishma`el, Netan`el, Yozavad, and El`asah. ^{10:23} Of the Levites: Yozavad, and Shim`i, and Kelayah (the same is Kelita), Petachyah, Yahudah, and Eli`ezer. ^{10:24} Of the singers: Elyashiv. Of the porters: Shallum, and Telem, and Uri.

^{10:25} Of Yisra'el: Of the sons of Par`osh: Ramyah, and Yizziyah, and Malkiyah, and Miyamin, and El`azar, and Malkiyah, and Benayah. ^{10:26} Of the sons of `Elam: Mattanyah, Zekharyah, and Yechi`el, and `Avdi, and Yeremot, and Elijah. ^{10:27} Of the sons of Zattu: Elya`enai, Elyashiv, Mattanyah, and Yeremot, and Zavad, and Aziza. ^{10:28} Of the sons of Bevai: Yehochanan, Chananyah, Zakkai, `Atlai. ^{10:29} Of the sons of Bani: Meshullam, Mallukh, and `Ada'ya, Yashuv, and She'al, Yeremot. ^{10:30} Of the sons of Pachat-Mo'av: `Adna, and Kelal, Benayah, Ma`aseyah, Mattanyah, Betzal`el, and Binnui, and Menashshe. ^{10:31} Of the sons of Charim: Eli`ezer, Yishshiyah, Malkiyah, Shemayahu, Shim`on, ^{10:32} Binyamin, Mallukh, Shemaryahu. ^{10:33} Of the sons of Chashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zavad, Elifelet, Yeremai, Menashshe, Shim`i. ^{10:34} Of the sons of Bani: Ma`adai, `Amram, and U`el, ^{10:35} Benayah, Bedeyah, Keluhu, ^{10:36} Vanyah, Meremot, Elyashiv, ^{10:37} Mattanyah, Mattenai, and Ya`asai, ^{10:38} and Bani, and Binnui, Shim`i, ^{10:39} and Shelemyahu, and Natan, and `Ada'ya, ^{10:40} Makhnadvai, Shashai, Sharai, ^{10:41} `Azar`el, and Shelemyahu, Shemaryahu, ^{10:42} Shallum, Amaryah, Yosef. ^{10:43} Of the sons of Nevo: Ye`i`el, Mattityah, Zavad, Zevina, Yaddai, and Yo`el, Benayah. ^{10:44} All these had taken foreign wives; and some of them had wives by whom they had children.

10:1 shows that Ezra took the lead among the people in praying and making confession for the sin of the people, and weeping in the process of so doing.

Prayer

Ezra's public prayer for the people, that they repent and be forgiven their iniquity, acted as an example for the sinners among the people. They were cut to their hearts by Ezra's actions, and sought to repent of their iniquity.

Servants Of Yahweh Should Be An Example For The People

Servants of Yahweh should learn from Ezra's example. Sometimes servants of Yahweh have to take due action publicly, that the people may realise the gravity of their sins, to bring them to the point whereby they repent of their sins. Those with repentant hearts will take note of the actions of Yahweh's servants, and will indeed repent of their sins.

Nechemyah's Prayer For The Repentance And Restoration Of Yisrael

Nechemyah (Nehemiah) 1:1-11 reads,

^{1:1}*The words of Nechemyah the son of Chakhalyah. Now it happened in the month Kislev, in the twentieth year, as I was in Shushan the palace, ^{1:2}that Chanani, one of my brothers, came, he and certain men out of Yahudah; and I asked them concerning the Yahudim who had escaped, who were left of the captivity, and concerning Yerushalayim. ^{1:3}They said to me, "The remnant who are left of the captivity there in the province are in great affliction and reproach: the wall of Yerushalayim also is broken down, and the gates of it are burned with fire."*

^{1:4}*It happened, when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days; **and I fasted and prayed before the Mighty One of Heaven,** ^{1:5}and said, "I beg you, Yahweh, the Mighty One of Heaven, the great and awesome Mighty One, who keeps covenant and lovingkindness with those who love him and keep his commandments: ^{1:6}Let your ear now be attentive, and your eyes open, that you may listen to the prayer of your servant, **which I pray before you at this time, day and night,** for the children of Yisra'el your servants while I confess the sins of the children of Yisra'el, which we have sinned against you. Yes, my father's house and I have sinned: ^{1:7}we have dealt very corruptly against you, and have not kept the commandments, nor the statutes, nor the ordinances, which you commanded your servant Moshe. ^{1:8}Remember, I beg you, the word that you commanded your servant Moshe, saying, 'If you trespass, I will scatter you abroad among the peoples: ^{1:9}but if you return to me, and keep my commandments and do them, though your outcasts were in the uttermost part of the heavens, yet will I gather them from there, and will bring them to the place that I have chosen, to cause my name to dwell there.' ^{1:10}Now these are your servants and your people, whom you have redeemed by your great power, and by your strong hand. ^{1:11}Sovereign, I beg you, let now your ear be attentive to the prayer of your servant, and to the prayer of your servants, **who delight to fear your name;** and please prosper your servant this day, and grant him mercy in the sight of this man." Now I was cup bearer to the king.*

1:4-11 shows that the prayer and petition Nechemyah prayed to Yahweh was very similar to that Daniyel prayed in Daniyel (Daniel) 9.

It should be noted that both these servants of Yahweh accompanied their intense prayers with fasting. It should therefore be evident that prayers for the repentance and restoration of Yisrael should be accompanied with fasting.

Prayer

1:11 shows a trait of Yahweh's servants - they delight to fear his name. Yahweh's servants should take delight in fearing Yahweh's name.

Pray To Yahweh For Favour Before Your Superior

Nechemyah (Nehemiah) 2:1-8 reads,

^{2:1}*It happened in the month Nisan, in the twentieth year of Artachshasta the king, when wine was before him, that I took up the wine, and gave it to the king. Now I had not been before sad in his presence. ^{2:2}The king said to me, "Why is your face sad, seeing you are not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart." Then I was very sore afraid. ^{2:3}I said to the king, "Let the king live forever: why should not my face be sad, when the city, the place of my fathers' tombs, lies waste, and the gates of it are consumed with fire?" ^{2:4}Then the king said to me, "For what do you make request?" So I prayed to the Mighty One of Heaven. ^{2:5}I said to the king, "If it please the king, and if your servant have found favor in your sight, that you would send me to Yahudah, to the city of my fathers' tombs, that I may build it." ^{2:6}The king said to me (the queen also sitting by him,) "For how long shall your journey be? And when will you return?" So it pleased the king to send me; and I set him a time. ^{2:7}Moreover I said to the king, "If it please the king, let letters be given me to the governors beyond the River, that they may let me pass through until I come to Yahudah; ^{2:8}and a letter to Asaf the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give me timber to make beams for the gates of the castle which appertains to the house, and for the wall of the city, and for the house that I shall enter into." The king granted me, according to the good hand of my Mighty One on me.*

2:4 shows that when Nechemyah sought the king's favour, to facilitate his going to Yerushalayim to work on restoring the fortunes of Yahweh's house and Yahweh's city, Yerushalayim, he prayed to Yahweh. Therefore, when we need a superior's authority to facilitate our fulfilling Yahweh's will in a given matter, we should pray that Yahweh may grant us favour in the sight of that superior, that Yahweh's will may be done.

Pray For Yahweh's Protection And Guidance

Nechemyah (Nehemiah) 4:1-23 reads,

^{4:1}*But it happened that when Sanvallat heard that we were building the wall, he was angry, and took great indignation, and mocked the Yahudim. ^{4:2}He spoke before his brothers and the army of Shomron, and said, "What are these feeble Yahudim doing? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of rubbish, seeing they are burned?" ^{4:3}Now Toviya the `Ammonite was by him, and he said, "Even that which they are building, if a fox go up, he shall break down their stone wall."*

^{4:4}*"Hear, our Mighty One; for we are despised: and turn back their reproach on their own head, and give them up for a spoil in a land of captivity; ^{4:5}and don't cover their iniquity, and don't let their sin be blotted out from before you; for they have provoked you to anger before the builders." ^{4:6}So we built the wall; and all the wall was joined together to half the height of it: for the people had a mind to work.*

^{4:7}*But it happened that when Sanvallat, Toviya, the `Aravi'im, the `Ammonim, and the Ashdodi heard that the repairing of the walls of Yerushalayim went forward, and that the*

Prayer

breaches began to be stopped, then they were very angry; ^{4:8} and they conspired all of them together to come and fight against Yerushalayim, and to cause confusion therein.

^{4:9} **But we made our prayer to our Mighty One, and set a watch against them day and night, because of them.** ^{4:10}Yahudah said, "The strength of the bearers of burdens is

decayed, and there is much rubbish; so that we are not able to build the wall." ^{4:11}Our adversaries said, "They shall not know, neither see, until we come into the midst of them, and kill them, and cause the work to cease." ^{4:12}It happened that when the Yahudim who lived by them came, they said to us ten times from all places, "You must return to us."

^{4:13}Therefore set I in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, in the open places, I set there the people after their families with their swords, their spears, and their bows.

^{4:14}I looked, and rose up, and said to the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, "Don't be you afraid of them: remember the Sovereign, who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses." ^{4:15}It happened, when our enemies heard that it was known to us, and the Mighty One had brought their counsel to nothing, that we returned all of us to the wall, everyone to his work.

^{4:16}It happened from that time forth, that half of my servants worked in the work, and half of them held the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the coats of mail; and the rulers were behind all the house of Yahudah. ^{4:17}They all built the wall and those who bore burdens loaded themselves; everyone with one of his hands worked in the work, and with the other held his weapon; ^{4:18}and the builders, everyone had his sword girded by his side, and so built. He who sounded the shofar was by me. ^{4:19}I said to the nobles, and to the rulers and to the rest of the people, "The work is great and large, and we are separated on the wall, one far from another: ^{4:20}in whatever place you hear the sound of the shofar, resort you there to us; our Mighty One will fight for us." ^{4:21}So we worked in the work: and half of them held the spears from the rising of the morning until the stars appeared.

^{4:22}Likewise at the same time said I to the people, "Let everyone with his servant lodge within Yerushalayim, that in the night they may be a guard to us, and may labor in the day." ^{4:23}So neither I, nor my brothers, nor my servants, nor the men of the guard who followed me, none of us put off our clothes, everyone went with his weapon to the water.

4:9 shows that the people prayed to Yahweh for protection, to facilitate their accomplishing Yahweh's will pertaining to Yerushalayim. Yahweh duly responded by giving them due protection, such that the attack plan of their enemies was thwarted.

Yahweh's Servants Face Opposition As They Do Yahweh's Work

It should be noted that Yahweh's servants face opposition as they carry out Yahweh's work. When such opposition comes, as it inevitably does, Yahweh's servants ought to pray to Yahweh for his protection and guidance in the matter. And provided Yahweh's servants remain faithful in executing the work Yahweh has given them to do, Yahweh will indeed see to it that his purpose will indeed prevail, despite the opposition from those attempting to thwart his purpose.

Prayer

YAH'SHUAH'S WORDS

Pray For Those Who Spitefully Use You And Persecute You

Mattityahu (Matthew) 5:43-48; Luke 6:27 reads,

^{5:43}*"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor, and hate your enemy.'*
^{5:44}*But I tell you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,* ^{5:45}*that you may be sons of your Father who is in Heaven. For he makes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the just and the unjust.* ^{5:46}*For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?* ^{5:47}*If you only greet your friends, what more do you do than others? Don't even the tax collectors do the same?* ^{5:48}***Therefore you shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.***

In striving for perfection, even as the Father is perfect, we must pray for our enemies, those who spitefully use us and persecute us. In other words, we must become like our Father, putting on within us the traits possessed by our Father.

How To Pray

Mattityahu (Matthew) 6:5-18; Luke 11:1-4 reads,

^{6:5}*"When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Most assuredly, I tell you, they have received their reward.* ^{6:6}*But you, when you pray, enter into your inner chamber, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret, and your Father who sees in secret will reward you.* ^{6:7}*In praying, don't use vain repetitions, as the Goyim do; for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking.* ^{6:8}*Therefore don't be like them, for your Father knows what things you need, before you ask him.* ^{6:9}*Pray like this. 'Our Father, who is in Heaven, may your name be kept holy.* ^{6:10}*May your kingdom come. May your will be done, as in Heaven, so on earth.* ^{6:11}*Give us this day our daily bread.* ^{6:12}*Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.* ^{6:13}*Bring us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.'* ^{6:14}*For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.* ^{6:15}*But if you don't forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* ^{6:16}*"Moreover when you fast, don't be, as the hypocrites, with sad faces. For they disfigure their faces, that they may be seen by men to be fasting. Most assuredly I tell you, they have received their reward.* ^{6:17}*But you, when you fast, anoint your head, and wash your face;* ^{6:18}*that you are not seen by men to be fasting, but by your Father who is in secret, and your Father, who sees in secret, will reward you.*

Do Not Seek Human Glory

6:5-6 shows that our private prayers to the Father should remain so - private, a matter between our Father and ourselves. But if we pray publicly, that others may see that we are people of

Prayer

prayer, then it is for the receipt of human glory that we are so praying, rather than for the purpose suggested by the words we utter to our Father.

It is therefore implied that we should not seek human glory. For when we seek human glory we do not obtain whatever it is that we seek from the Father, seeing that it is human glory that we are really seeking. What we ought to do is seek the Father's glory, and do those things that glorify our Father's name, rather than those things that glorify ourselves.

Yah'shuah's Words In Harmony With Daniyel's Conduct

6:6 shows that Yah'shuah's instruction to pray in private is in agreement with Daniyel's conduct. For it was Daniyel's custom to pray to Yahweh three times a day, doing so in his own chamber, and facing towards Yerushalayim.

We Are Required To Pray To Yahweh For The Supply Of Our Needs

6:7-8 implies that prayers are petitions to our Father that he may do as we petition him. And since the Father knows our needs, we need not waste time by useless repetitions, but should succinctly state to him what our requests are.

It should also be noted that it is indeed a requirement of the Father that we request from him that which we need. He already knows our needs, even when we are not aware what those needs are. And he desires to give us our needs, as he is perfect and is love. Nevertheless he still requires us to pray to him for the supply of those needs. It therefore appears that prayer humbles us. For it reminds us that without our Father we really cannot exist. We therefore exist because he sustains us.

In this regard we should also be continually thankful for the sustenance that he gives us. For without his sustenance that he provides us we would not live. We should therefore pray prayers of thanksgiving to our Father on a regular basis.

The Form Our Prayers Should Take

6:9-13 shows us the manner we ought to pray.

Kingdom, Power And Glory Belong To Yahweh

6:13 reiterates that the kingdom, the power and the glory belong to Yahweh the Father, forever. We should therefore not seek what belongs to Yahweh for ourselves. We should rather use whatever Yahweh places in our custody in the manner that Yahweh shows us we ought to use it. Therefore if and when Yahweh gives us a kingdom, power and glory, seeing that these belong to him, we ought to use whatever belongs to him in the manner that he, as the owner, commands. Implying that even when he gives us a kingdom, power and glory, we should always remember that our status is really only that of a custodian. We should therefore act as faithful custodians or servants.

Prayer

Become Perfect As Even Your Father Is Perfect

6:14-15 reminds us that our forgiveness from our Father is conditional upon our forgiving our fellow brethren. It also reminds us that we must become like our Father. For just as the Father is merciful, so also must we become merciful. And just as the Father has other perfect traits, so also must we acquire these other perfect traits. We must become perfect, even as our Father is perfect.

Pray And Fast Privately

6:16-18 again reiterates, using the example of our fasting, that we should not seek the glory of men. Rather, our worship to the Father should be done privately. Glory belongs to Yahweh, and not to us human beings. Whatever glory our Father allows to come our way is for our glorifying his name, for his name's sake.

Pray For Whatever Is Needed

Mattityahu (Matthew) 9:35-38; Luke 10:1-16 reads,

^{9:35}Yah'shuah went about all the cities and the villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and every sickness among the people. ^{9:36}But when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, as sheep without a shepherd. ^{9:37}Then he said to his disciples, *"The harvest indeed is plentiful, but the laborers are few. ^{9:38}Pray therefore that the Master of the harvest will send forth laborers into his harvest."*

In ministering to the people, Yah'shuah perceived a need. He then commanded his disciples to pray to Yahweh, the Master of the harvest, to fulfil that need in the manner that it ought to have been fulfilled.

In this Yah'shuah teaches us that whenever we perceive the existence of a need, we should pray to our Father to fulfil the need in the manner that it ought to be done. Where the need is for more labourers into the Father's harvest, we ought to pray for those additional labourers. Where the need is for something else, we ought to pray for the other thing. We ought to pray for whatever is needed, praying to our Father to fulfil the need in the manner that it ought to be fulfilled.

Yah'shuah Abided By The Teachings He Commanded His Disciples

Mattityahu (Matthew) 14:22-23; Luke 9:18 reads,

^{14:22}Immediately he made the disciples get into the boat, and to go ahead of him to the other side, while he sent the multitudes away. ^{14:23}After he had sent the multitudes away, he went up into the mountain apart to pray. When evening had come, he was there alone.

Yah'shuah indeed abided by the teachings he gave his disciples. For just as he commanded them to pray in private, not to seek glory from human beings, glory that belongs to the Father, so did he do. He prayed to the Father privately.

Pray And Fast That The Father May Fulfil Special Needs

Mattityahu (Matthew) 17:14-21; Mark 9:17-28 reads,

Prayer

^{17:14}When they came to the multitude, there came to him a man, kneeling to him, saying,
^{17:15}"Master, have mercy on my son, for he is epileptic, and suffers grievously; for he often falls into the fire, and often into the water. ^{17:16}So I brought him to your disciples, and they could not cure him."

^{17:17}Yah'shuah answered, "*Faithless and perverse generation! How long will I be with you? How long will I bear with you? Bring him here to me.*" ^{17:18}Yah'shuah rebuked him, the demon went out of him, and the boy was cured from that hour.

^{17:19}Then the disciples came to Yah'shuah privately, and said, "Why couldn't we cast it out?"

^{17:20}He said to them, "*Because of your unbelief, for most assuredly I tell you, if you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will tell this mountain, 'Move from here to yonder place,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you.* ^{17:21}*But this kind doesn't go out except by prayer and fasting.*"

17:21 shows that there are some needs that are only fulfilled by our Father after we have petitioned him both by prayer and fasting. In other words, fasting is a vital tool in bringing petitions to Yahweh, that Yahweh may indeed hear them.

Another such need, that is fulfilled only by prayer and fasting, is the restoration of Yisrael from the lands of their captors, and the restoration of Yerushalayim, and Yahweh's house at Yerushalayim. For so did both Daniyel and Nechemyah pray and fast to Yahweh for these.

Acquire The Humility And Meekness Of Little Children

Mattityahu (Matthew) 19:13-15 reads,

^{19:13}Then little children were brought to him, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray; and the disciples rebuked them. ^{19:14}But Yah'shuah said, "*Allow the little children, and don't forbid them to come to me; for to such belongs the Kingdom of Heaven.*"

^{19:15}He laid his hands on them, and departed there.

Yah'shuah showed that it is appropriate to pray, even in public, for little children. For to those of such nature belongs the Kingdom of Heaven.

We should therefore strive to acquire the humility and meekness of little children.

Pray With Faith

Mattityahu (Matthew) 21:17-22; Mark 11:12-14, 19-26 reads,

^{21:17}He left them, and went forth out of the city to Beit-Anyah, and lodged there. ^{21:18}Now in the morning, as he returned to the city, he was hungry. ^{21:19}Seeing a fig tree by the road, he came to it, and found nothing on it but leaves. He said to it, "*Let there be no fruit from you forever!*" Immediately the fig tree withered away. ^{21:20}When the disciples saw it, they marveled, saying, "How did the fig tree immediately wither away?" ^{21:21}Yah'shuah answered them, "*Most assuredly I tell you, if you have faith, and don't doubt, you will not only do what is done to the fig tree, but even if you will tell this mountain, 'Be taken up and cast into the sea,' it will be done.* ^{21:22}*All things, whatever you will ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.*"

Yah'shuah showed that our prayers, especially when we are petitioning our Father Yahweh to do something, should be accompanied with faith - belief. In other words, if we believe that the Father will accord us the need that we ask him to accord us, he will indeed do so.

Prayer

Pray To Yahweh For Relative Comfort

Mattityahu (Matthew) 24:15-22; Mark 13:14-20 reads,

^{24:15}*When, therefore, you see the abomination of desolation, which was spoken of through Daniyel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),* ^{24:16}*then let those who are in Yahudah flee to the mountains.* ^{24:17}*Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take out things that are in his house.* ^{24:18}*Let him who is in the field not return back to take his cloak.* ^{24:19}*But woe to those who are with child and to nursing mothers in those days!* ^{24:20}*Pray that your flight will not be in the winter, nor on a Shabbat,* ^{24:21}*for then will be great oppression, such as has not been from the beginning of the world until now, no, nor ever will be.* ^{24:22}*Except those days had been shortened, no flesh would have been saved. But for the elect's sake, those days will be shortened.*

Yah'shuah had told his disciples that times were coming when his disciples in the area of Yahudah would need to flee urgently from Yahudah. In 24:20 he commanded them to pray that their flight not take place on either winter or on a Shabbat, but at a time more convenient for fleeing. In other words, if it was essential to flee on either winter or on a Shabbat, so be it. But it would be less difficult to flee at other times.

In this Yah'shuah has taught us that it is appropriate to pray to Yahweh that circumstances may be more comfortable for us than they otherwise could be. In other words, if something is to happen, we ought to pray to Yahweh that it happens in the most comfortable manner, or least painful manner. It is not inappropriate to so pray.

Yah'shuah's Prayer At Gat-Shemanim

Mattityahu (Matthew) 26:36-46; Mark 14:32-42 reads,

^{26:36}*Then Yah'shuah came with them to a place called Gat-Shemanim, and said to his disciples, "Sit here, while I go there and pray."* ^{26:37}*He took with him Kefa and the two sons of Zavdai, and began to be sorrowful and severely troubled.* ^{26:38}*Then he said to them, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even to death. Stay here, and watch with me."* ^{26:39}*He went forward a little, fell on his face, and prayed, saying, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass away from me; nevertheless, not what I want, but what you want."* ^{26:40}*He came to the disciples, and found them sleeping, and said to Kefa, "What, couldn't you watch with me for one hour?"* ^{26:41}*Watch and pray, that you not enter into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* ^{26:42}*Again, a second time he went away, and prayed, saying, "My Father, if this cup can't pass away from me, unless I drink it, your will be done."* ^{26:43}*He came again and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.* ^{26:44}*He left them again, went away, and prayed a third time, saying the same words.* ^{26:45}*Then he came to his disciples, and said to them, "Sleep on now, and take your rest. Behold, the hour is at hand, and the Son of Man is betrayed into the hands of sinners."* ^{26:46}*Arise, let us be going. Behold, he who betrays me is at hand."*

Yah'shuah's Prayer Posture

26:39 shows that Yah'shuah fell on his face and prayed, thereby showing us that this is indeed an appropriate prayer posture - face down.

Prayer

Submit Wholly To Yahweh's Will, Even When Uncomfortable

26:39 also shows that Yah'shuah prayed that the ordeal - "this cup" - that he was about to undergo pass away from him, if it was possible for Yahweh's will to be done in some other manner. But he also submitted himself to Yahweh's will, being fully willing to go through with the ordeal if that was the only manner that the Father's will would be done.

In this Yah'shuah taught us to fully submit to the Father's will, even when it is not comfortable and is indeed painful.

He also taught us that it is not inappropriate to pray that pain we may be undergoing be alleviated from us. In other words, it is quite in order to pray to Yahweh that he removes from us pain we may be undergoing. But in this we ought to submit to Yahweh's will, for it might indeed be his will that we undergo the pain for some duration of time.

Watch And Pray To Avoid Entering Into Temptation

26:41 shows us that to avoid entering into temptation, it is important that we pray about this, and also be watchful.

When It Is Appropriate To Repeat Petitions To Yahweh

It should be noted from 26:42 and 26:44 that Yah'shuah repeated the words that he had previously prayed to Yahweh. It is also submitted that these were not vain or useless repetitions, for Yah'shuah was praying earnestly for Yahweh's guidance and answer in this most momentous period of his entire life. It therefore appears not to be out of order to repeat prayers for guidance and alleviation of pain, if, after initially praying, we have yet to receive an answer from Yahweh.

Yahweh Refused Yah'shuah's Petition

It should also be noted that Yahweh's answer to Yah'shuah in this matter was NO! In other words, though Yah'shuah prayed that the ordeal he was about to undergo pass away from him, Yahweh did not acquiesce to Yah'shuah's prayer. For it was not Yahweh's will to allow the ordeal to pass away from Yah'shuah.

Requests Yahweh Answers In The Affirmative

It should therefore be clear to us that the only requests that Yahweh will answer in the affirmative are those that are in harmony with his will. Yah'shuah knew this. He knew he was asking a difficult thing, a thing that might not have been in Yahweh's will, for the purpose of alleviating or averting the pain he was about to undergo. But he was also fully submissive to Yahweh, ready to do Yahweh's will even unto death. And so he did, thereby setting us an example that we all should follow - being fully submissive to Yahweh, even unto death.

Prayer

It Is Not Sin To Ask Amiss

It should also be noted that it is not sin to make a request of Yahweh on a matter that may not be his will. It is sin when we act contrary to his will. But it is not sin to ascertain his will, or to make request of something that may not be his will. In such cases we should also ask Yahweh to show us what his will is, that we may fully submit to it and abide by it. For it is Father Yahweh who is our Master, and we are just his servants.

Yah'shuah's Example To Us

Mark 1:35-37; 6:45-46 reads,

^{1:35}Early in the night, he rose up and went out, and departed into a desert place, and there prayed. ^{1:36}Shim'on and those who were with him followed after him; ^{1:37}and they found him, and told him, "All are seeking you."

Yah'shuah prayed to the Father privately, setting us an example we ought to follow.

Watch, Keep Alert And Pray At All Times

Mark 13:28-37 reads,

^{13:28}*"Now from the fig tree, learn this parable. When the branch has now become tender, and puts forth its leaves, you know that the summer is near; ^{13:29}even so you also, when you see these things coming to pass, know that it is near, at the doors. ^{13:30}Most assuredly I say to you, this race will not pass away until all these things are accomplished. ^{13:31}Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. ^{13:32}But of that day or that hour no one knows, not even the angels in Heaven, neither the Son, but only the Father. ^{13:33}**Watch, keep alert, and pray; for you don't know when the time is.** ^{13:34}"It is like a man, traveling to another country, having left his house, and given authority to his servants, and to each one his work, and also commands the doorkeeper to keep watch. ^{13:35}Watch therefore, for you don't know when the master of the house is coming, whether at evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or in the morning; ^{13:36}lest coming suddenly he might find you sleeping. ^{13:37}What I tell you, I tell all: Watch."*

We should be praying regularly that we may be vigilant and alert and ready for the fulfilment of prophesied events, especially the return of Yah'shuah the Messiah.

Seek Out Time To Pray Privately To Yahweh

Luke 5:15-16 reads,

^{5:15}*But the report concerning him spread much more, and great multitudes came together to hear, and to be healed by him of their infirmities. ^{5:16}But he withdrew himself into the desert, and prayed.*

Yah'shuah showed us, even when his schedule was busy, and he would surrounded by people, he sought time to be alone by himself, and pray to Yahweh. We should likewise seek out time, even out of very busy schedules, and pray to Yahweh in private.

Prayer

A Time For Fasting

Luke 5:33-35 reads,

^{5:33}They said to him, "Why do Yahchanan's disciples often fast and pray, likewise also the disciples of the Perushim, but yours eat and drink?"

^{5:34}He said to them, "*Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast, while the bridegroom is with them?* ^{5:35}*But the days will come when the bridegroom will be taken away from them. Then will they fast in those days.*"

Yah'shuah showed that after his departure and return to heaven, it would be a time for his disciples, his friends, to fast. The time we currently are living in is therefore one for fasting. Yah'shuah's servants should therefore fast often.

Seek Yahweh's Guidance Prior To Making Major Decisions

Luke 6:12-19 reads,

^{6:12}It happened in these days that he went out into the mountain to pray and he continued all night in prayer to the Mighty One. ^{6:13}When it was day, he called his disciples, and from them he chose twelve, whom he also named apostles: ^{6:14}Shim'on, whom he also named Kefa; And'drai, his brother; Ya`akov; Yahchanan; Pilipos; Bar-Talmi; ^{6:15}Mattityahu; T'oma; Ya`akov, the son of Chalfai; Shim'on, who was called the Zealot; ^{6:16}Yahudah the son of Ya`akov; and Yahudah from K'riot, who also became a traitor. ^{6:17}He came down with them, and stood on a level place, with a crowd of his disciples, and a great number of the people from all Yahudah and Yerushalayim, and the sea coast of Tzor and Tzidon, who came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases; ^{6:18}also those who were troubled with unclean spirits, and they were being healed. ^{6:19}All the multitude sought to touch him, for power came forth from him, and healed them all.

6:12 shows us that on the night before Yah'shuah chose his disciples, he prayed privately to Yahweh, and continued all night in prayer. It is plausible that his prayer included seeking guidance in the selection of his disciples, that he may select those whom Yahweh gave him.

We should likewise follow Yah'shuah's example. When faced with momentous decisions, we should seek Yahweh's guidance prior to the making of those decisions, to facilitate our acting according to Yahweh's will.

Pray That Yahweh's Prophecies May Be Fulfilled At Their Appointed Time

Luke 9:18-36 reads,

^{9:18}It happened, as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him, and he asked them, "*Who do the multitudes say that I am?*"

^{9:19}They answered, "'Yahchanan the Baptizer,' but others say, 'Elijah,' and others, that one of the old prophets is risen again."

^{9:20}He said to them, "*But who do you say that I am?*"

Kefa answered, "The Messiah of the Mighty One."

^{9:21}But he warned them, and commanded them to tell this to no one, ^{9:22}saying, "*The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the Zakenim, chief Kohanim, and Sofrim, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.*"

^{9:23}He said to all, "*If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.* ^{9:24}*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever will*

Prayer

lose his life for my sake, the same will save it. ^{9:25}For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits his own self? ^{9:26}For whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed, when he comes in the glory of himself, of the Father, and of the holy angels. ^{9:27}But I tell you the truth: There are some of those who stand here, who will in no way taste of death, until they see the kingdom of the Mighty One."

^{9:28}*It happened about eight days after these sayings, that he took with him Kefa, Yahchanan, and Ya`akov, and went up onto the mountain to pray. ^{9:29}As he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became white and dazzling. ^{9:30}Behold, two men talked with him, who were Moshe and Eliyah, ^{9:31}who appeared in glory, and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Yerushalayim.*

^{9:32}*Now Kefa and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they were fully awake, they saw his glory, and the two men who stood with him. ^{9:33}It happened, as they were parting from him, that Kefa said to Yah'shuah, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let's make three tents: one for you, and one for Moshe, and one for Eliyah," not knowing what he said. ^{9:34}While he said these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered into the cloud. ^{9:35}A voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!" ^{9:36}When the voice came, Yah'shuah was found alone. They were silent, and told no one in those days any of the things that they had seen.*

9:27 shows that Yah'shuah said that there were some standing who would not taste death before they saw the kingdom of the Mighty One. In other words, Yah'shuah had prophesied about a certain event affecting some of his disciples.

9:28-31 shows that it was as Yah'shuah was praying that the prophecy he spoke of in 9:27 was fulfilled. For both Moshe and Eliyah appeared before him, in glorious appearance, and spoke. Yah'shuah himself also had his face altered, and his clothing became white and dazzling.

It therefore appears that Yah'shuah needed to pray to Yahweh to fulfil the prophecy that Yah'shuah had spoken concerning some of his disciples.

It therefore appears that when servants of Yahweh have come to learn about the imminent fulfilment of one or some of Yahweh's prophecies, they should indeed pray to Yahweh to so act and fulfil those prophecies at their appointed time. For their prayer will indeed be according to Yahweh's will, and by Yahweh having given them knowledge of these prophecies, he has also given them the responsibility of praying to him about the matter of their fulfilment. Servants of Yahweh should therefore fully play their part in the fulfilment of Yahweh's prophecies. These include praying that these prophecies may be fulfilled, and also doing such additional duties that Yahweh shows them they ought to do.

Ask Your Heavenly Father To Give You His Holy Spirit

Luke 11:5-13 reads,

^{11:5}*He said to them, "Which of you, if you go to a friend at midnight, and tell him, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread, ^{11:6}for a friend of mine has come to me from a journey, and I have nothing to set before him,' ^{11:7}and he from within will answer and say, 'Don't bother me. The door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give it to you?' ^{11:8}I tell you, although he will not rise and give it to him because he is his*

Prayer

friend, yet because of his persistence, he will get up and give him as many as he needs. ^{11:9}I tell you, keep asking, and it will be given you. Keep seeking, and you will find. Keep knocking, and it will be opened to you. ^{11:10}For everyone who asks receives. He who seeks finds. To him who knocks it will be opened. ^{11:11}Which of you fathers, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he won't give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? ^{11:12}Or if he asks for an egg, he won't give him a scorpion, will he? ^{11:13}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?"

Yah'shuah shows us that we should ask the Father in heaven to give us his Holy Spirit. We should therefore pray that Father Yahweh gives us his Holy Spirit, and he certainly will.

Always Pray To Yahweh, Never Giving Up

Luke 18:1-8 reads,

^{18:1}He also spoke a parable to them that they must always pray, and not give up, ^{18:2}saying, "A certain judge was in a city, who didn't fear the Mighty One, and didn't respect man. ^{18:3}A widow was in that city, and she came often to him, saying, 'Defend me from my adversary!'" ^{18:4}He wouldn't for a while, but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I don't fear the Mighty One, nor respect man, ^{18:5}yet because this widow bothers me, I will defend her, or else she will wear me out by her continual coming.'" ^{18:6}The Master said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge says. ^{18:7}Won't the Mighty One avenge his elect, who are crying out to him day and night, and yet he exercises patience with them? ^{18:8}I tell you that he will avenge them quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

We should always pray to the Mighty One, crying out to him day and night, never giving up.

Do Not Exalt Yourself

Luke 18:9-14 reads,

^{18:9}He spoke also this parable to certain people who were convinced of their own righteousness, and who despised all others. ^{18:10}"Two men went up into the temple to pray; one was a Parush, and the other was a tax collector. ^{18:11}The Parush stood and prayed to himself like this: 'Mighty One, I thank you, that I am not like the rest of men, extortioners, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ^{18:12}I fast twice in the week. I give tithes of all that I get.' ^{18:13}But the tax collector, standing far away, wouldn't even lift up as his eyes to Heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'Mighty One, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ^{18:14}I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other, for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."

We should not exalt ourselves, but should humble ourselves, especially before the Mighty One in our prayers to him.

Pray For Your Brethren

Luke 22:31-32 reads,

Prayer

^{22:31}The Master said, "Shim'on, Shim'on, behold, Hasatan asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat, ^{22:32}but I prayed for you, that your faith wouldn't fail. You, when once you have turned again, establish your brothers."

Yah'shuah prayed for his disciples. We should likewise pray for our brethren, that they may be fully submissive to Yahweh and faithfully serve Yahweh in the various works that Yahweh has given them.

Yah'shuah's Prayer Posture

Luke 22:39-46 reads,

^{22:39}He came out, and went, as his custom was, to the Mount of Olives. His disciples also followed him. ^{22:40}When he was at the place, he said to them, "**Pray that you don't enter into temptation.**"

^{22:41}He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and he knelt down and prayed, ^{22:42}saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done." ^{22:43}An angel from Heaven appeared to him, strengthening him.

^{22:44}**Being in agony he prayed more earnestly. His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down on the ground.** ^{22:45}When he rose up from his prayer, he came to the disciples, and found them sleeping because of grief, ^{22:46}and said to them, "Why do you sleep? **Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation.**"

22:41 shows that Yah'shuah knelt down and prayed. The accounts in Mattityahu (Matthew) and Mark show that his face fell to the ground and he prayed. The prayer posture that Yah'shuah therefore adopted was one whereby he both knelt down and had his face to the ground. This was the same prayer posture that Avraham's servant adopted when he went on his mission to bring Rivka as Yitzchak's wife.

Servants of Yahweh ought to follow Yah'shuah's prayer posture in their private prayers to Yahweh. They can even do so publicly, as other servants of Yahweh did, as seen in various portions of Scripture.

Petition The Father In Yah'shuah's Name

Yahchanan (John) 14:8-21 reads,

^{14:8}Pilipos said to him, "Master, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us."

^{14:9}Yah'shuah said to him, "Have I been with you such a long time, and do you not know me, Pilipos? He who has seen me has seen the Father. How do you say, 'Show us the Father?' ^{14:10}Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I tell you, I speak not from myself; but the Father living in me does his works.

^{14:11}Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake. ^{14:12}**Most assuredly I tell you, he who believes in me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these will he do; because I am going to my Father.** ^{14:13}**Whatever you will ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.** ^{14:14}**If you will ask anything in my name, that will I do.** ^{14:15}If you love me, keep my commandments. ^{14:16}I will pray to the Father, and he will give you another Counselor, that he may be with you forever, ^{14:17}-- the Spirit of truth, whom the world can't receive; for it doesn't see him, neither knows him. You know him, for he lives with you, and will be in you. ^{14:18}I will not leave you orphans. I will come to you. ^{14:19}Yet

Prayer

a little while, and the world will see me no more; but you will see me. Because I live, you will live also. ^{14:20}In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ^{14:21}Someone who has my commandments, and keeps them, that person is one who loves me. One who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him, and will reveal myself to him."

14:13-14 shows that we ought to ask the various things that we ask Father Yahweh in the name of Yah'shuah. For by so invoking Yah'shuah's name, will Yah'shuah give us the thing that we ask, provided it is in harmony with Yahweh's will.

Petition Yahweh According To His Appointed Times

14:16-18 notes that Yah'shuah said that he would - future tense - pray to the Father that the Father gives them his Holy Spirit.

That Yah'shuah had not yet prayed that the Father give his disciples the Holy Spirit indicates that it was not yet time for them to have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. He therefore just dwelt with them, but not in them. Therefore, when it was time for the Holy Spirit to dwell in them, the time that the Father had ordained for the Holy Spirit to dwell in Yah'shuah's disciples, Yah'shuah would indeed pray that the Holy Spirit dwell in his disciples at that time.

It should therefore be noted that even when we pray according to Yahweh's will with respect to the occurrence of a particular thing, that thing will not occur until Yahweh's time for the occurrence of that thing has come. If Yahweh has revealed to us the appropriate timing for the occurrence of that thing, we should wait until that time before praying for it to occur. And when that time definitely comes, we should definitely pray for its occurrence. For in Yahweh showing or revealing to us the right time for a thing to occur, he is also giving us the responsibility and duty of praying for its occurrence at its appointed time. Therefore, when such time arrives, we should do our duty and duly pray to Yahweh to bring to pass what he had ordained to bring to pass at his appointed time.

How Your Joy May Be Made Full

Yahchanan (John) 16:19-28 reads,

^{16:19}*Therefore Yah'shuah perceived that they wanted to ask him, and he said to them, "Do you inquire among yourselves concerning this, that I said, 'A little while, and you won't see me, and again a little while, and you will see me?' ^{16:20}Most assuredly I tell you, that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy. ^{16:21}A woman, when she is in travail, has sorrow, because her time has come. But when she has delivered the child, she doesn't remember the anguish any more, for the joy that a child is born into the world. ^{16:22}You therefore now have sorrow, but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your joy away from you. ^{16:23}In that day you will ask me no question. Most assuredly I tell you, whatever you may ask of the Father, he will give it to you in my name. ^{16:24}Until now, you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be made full. ^{16:25}I have spoken these things to you in figures of speech. But the time comes when I will no more speak to you in figures of speech, but will tell you plainly about the Father. ^{16:26}In that day you will ask in my name; and I don't say to you, that I will pray to the Father for you, ^{16:27}for the Father himself loves you, because you have*

Prayer

loved me, and have believed that I came forth from the Mighty One. ^{16:28} *I came out from the Father, and have come into the world. Again, I leave the world, and go to the Father."*

16:23-27 again reiterates that Yah'shuah's disciples ought to make request of Yahweh in Yah'shuah's name. For the Father will indeed give them that which they ask, that their joy may be made full.

Indicating that our joy is made full by our receiving from the Father what we have asked in Yah'shuah's name. There is therefore much joy in receiving from the Father.

16:26-27 shows that those whom the Father loves are those who believe Yah'shuah, those who believe the words that he gave Yah'shuah to speak. Therefore, by believing both Father Yahweh and Yah'shuah, and thereby being loved by both of them, one can indeed pray to Father Yahweh and be heard by him, praying in the name of Yah'shuah. We should heed Yah'shuah's words.

Pray For Yah'shuah's Disciples

Yahchanan (John) 17:1-26 reads,

^{17:1} *Yah'shuah said these things, and lifting up his eyes to Heaven, he said, "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may also glorify you; ^{17:2} even as you gave him authority over all flesh, that to all whom you have given him, he will give eternal life. ^{17:3} This is eternal life, that they should know you, the only true Mighty One, and him whom you sent, Yah'shuah the Messiah. ^{17:4} I glorified you on the earth. I have accomplished the work that you have given me to do. ^{17:5} Now, Father, glorify me with your own self with the glory which I had with you before the world existed. ^{17:6} I revealed your name to the people whom you have given me out of the world. They were yours, and you have given them to me. They have kept your word. ^{17:7} Now they know that all things whatever you have given me are from you, ^{17:8} for the words which you have given me I have given to them, and they received them, and knew for sure that I came forth from you, and they believed that you sent me. ^{17:9} I pray for them. I don't pray for the world, but for those whom you have given me, for they are yours. ^{17:10} All things that are mine are yours, and yours are mine, and I am glorified in them. ^{17:11} I am no more in the world, and these are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, keep them through your name which you have given me, that they may be one, even as we are. ^{17:12} While I was with them in the world, I kept them in your name. Those whom you have given me I have kept. None of them is lost, except the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled. ^{17:13} But now I come to you, and I say these things in the world, that they may have my joy made full in themselves. ^{17:14} I have given them your word. The world hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ^{17:15} I pray not that you would take them from the world, but that you would keep them from the evil one. ^{17:16} They are not of the world even as I am not of the world. ^{17:17} Sanctify them in your truth. Your word is truth. ^{17:18} As you sent me into the world, even so I sent them into the world. ^{17:19} For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth. ^{17:20} Neither for these only do I pray, but for those also who believe in me through their word, ^{17:21} that they may all be one; even as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that you sent me. ^{17:22} The glory which you have given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, even as we*

Prayer

are one; ^{17:23}I in them, and you in me, that they may be perfected into one; that the world may know that you sent me, and loved them, even as you loved me. ^{17:24}Father, I desire that they also whom you have given me be with me where I am, that they may see my glory, which you have given me, for you loved me before the foundation of the world. ^{17:25}Righteous Father, the world didn't know you, but I knew you; and these knew that you sent me. ^{17:26}I made known to them your name, and will make it known; that the love with which you loved me may be in them, and I in them."

Yah'shuah prayed for his disciples. So should we pray for Yah'shuah's disciples, our brethren.

Prayer

YAH'SHUAH'S DISCIPLES AND APOSTLES

The Early Disciples Set Us An Example Of Being Steadfast In Prayer And Supplication

Acts 1:9-14 reads,

^{1:9}When he had said these things, as they were looking, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. ^{1:10}While they were looking steadfastly into the sky as he went, behold, two men stood by them in white clothing, ^{1:11}who also said, "You men of the Galil, why do you stand looking into the sky? This Yah'shuah, who was received up from you into the sky will come back in the same way as you saw him going into the sky." ^{1:12}Then they returned to Yerushalayim from the mount called Olivet, which is near Yerushalayim, a Shabbat day's journey away. ^{1:13}When they had come in, they went up into the upper chamber, where they were staying; that is Kefa, Yahchanan, Ya`akov, And'drai, Pilipos, T'oma, Bar-Talmai, Mattityahu, Ya`akov the son of Chalfai, Shim'on the Zealot, and Yahudah the son of Ya`akov. ^{1:14}All these with one accord continued steadfastly in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Miryam, the mother of Yah'shuah, and with his brothers.

That 1:14 says that the disciples "continued" steadfastly, in one accord, in prayer and supplication, indicates that they were already involved in prayer and supplication prior to the rising into the sky of Yah'shuah. In this these early disciples set us an example that we who are disciples of Yah'shuah ought to follow.

The Early Disciples Followed Yah'shuah's Example

Acts 1:15-26 reads,

^{1:15}In these days, Kefa stood up in the midst of the disciples (and there was a multitude of persons gathered together, about one hundred twenty), and said, ^{1:16}"Brothers, it was necessary that this Scripture should be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke before by the mouth of David concerning Yahudah, who was guide to those who took Yah'shuah. ^{1:17}For he was numbered with us, and received his portion in this ministry. ^{1:18}Now this man obtained a field with the reward for his wickedness, and falling headlong, his body burst open, and all his intestines gushed out. ^{1:19}It became known to everyone who lived in Yerushalayim that in their language that field was called 'Chakal-Dama,' that is, 'The field of blood.' ^{1:20}For it is written in the book of Tehillim,
'Let his habitation be made desolate,
Let no one dwell therein,'
and,
'Let another take his office.'
^{1:21}Of the men therefore who have accompanied us all the time that the Master Yah'shuah went in and went out among us, ^{1:22}beginning from the baptism of Yahchanan, to the day that he was received up from us, of these must one become a witness with us of his resurrection."

Prayer

^{1:23}They put forward two, Yosef called Bar-Sabba, who was surnamed Justus, and Mattiyah. ^{1:24}**They prayed, and said, "You, Master, who knows the hearts of all men, show which one of these two you have chosen ^{1:25}to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Yahudah fell away, that he might go to his own place."** ^{1:26}They drew lots for them, and the lot fell on Mattiyah, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Just as Yah'shuah had prayed prior to his selection of his disciples, so also does 1:24 show that the disciples prayed prior to the selection of the one amongst them who would take over Yahudah of Kriot's place in the ministry of apostleship and of witnessing to the resurrection of Yah'shuah.

1:24-25 shows that in selecting those who serve Yahweh, it is important to seek Yahweh's guidance, as it is he - alone - who knows the hearts of all men. And in service to Yahweh it is to the heart that we ought to look, not to men's outward appearances, as even Yahweh showed us through his prophet Shemuel.

The Early Disciples Obeyed Yah'shuah's Command Of Being Steadfast In Prayer

Acts 2:41-47 reads,

^{2:41}Then those who gladly received his word were baptized. There were added that day about three thousand souls. ^{2:42}**They continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and prayer.** ^{2:43}Fear came on every soul, and many wonders and signs were done through the apostles. ^{2:44}All who believed were together, and had all things common. ^{2:45}They sold their possessions and goods, and distributed them to all, according as anyone had need. ^{2:46}**Day by day, continuing steadfastly with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread at home, they took their food with gladness and singleness of heart, ^{2:47}praising the Mighty One, and having favor with all the people.** Yahweh added to the assembly day by day those who were being saved.

2:42 shows that the disciples continued steadfastly in prayer. They heeded Yah'shuah's words, praying continually to Yahweh, without giving up. We should follow their example.

Incorporate Yahweh's Inspired Words In Your Prayers To Him

Acts 4:23-37 reads,

^{4:23}Being let go, they came to their own company, and reported all that the chief Kohanim and the Zakenim had said to them. ^{4:24}They, when they heard it, lifted up their voice to the Mighty One with one accord, and said, "O Master, you are the Mighty One, who made the Heaven, the earth, the sea, and all that is in them; ^{4:25}who by the mouth of your servant, David, said,
'Why do the nations rage,
And the peoples plot a vain thing?
^{4:26}The kings of the earth take a stand,
And the rulers take council together,
Against Yahweh, and against his Messiah.'
^{4:27}For truly, in this city against your holy servant, Yah'shuah, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Goyim and the people of Yisra'el, were gathered

Prayer

together ^{4:28}to do whatever your hand and your council foreordained to happen. ^{4:29}Now, Master, look at their threats, and grant to your servants to speak your word with all boldness, ^{4:30}while you stretch forth your hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done through the name of your holy Servant Yah'shuah."

^{4:31}**When they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were gathered together. They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of the Mighty One with boldness.** ^{4:32}The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul. Not one of them claimed that anything of the things that he possessed was his own, but they had all things common. ^{4:33}With great power, the apostles gave their testimony of the resurrection of the Master Yah'shuah. Great grace was on them all. ^{4:34}For neither was there among them any who lacked, for as many as were owners of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, ^{4:35}and laid them at the apostles' feet, and distribution was made to each, according as anyone had need. ^{4:36}Yosi, who by the apostles was surnamed Bar-Nabba (which is, being interpreted, Son of Exhortation), a Levite, a man of Cyprus by race, ^{4:37}having a field, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet.

4:29-30 shows that the requests the disciples made to Yahweh in their collective prayer of one accord was that Yahweh's servants speak his word with boldness, and that signs and wonders be done forth through the name of Yahweh's holy Servant Yah'shuah.

4:31 shows that Yahweh responded to them just as they had prayed. He answered them by shaking the place where they were gathered together. He filled them all with the Holy Spirit. And they spoke the word of the Mighty One with boldness!

It should also be noted that the prayer they prayed to Yahweh incorporated Yahweh's inspired words contained in his Holy Scriptures. We should likewise incorporate Yahweh inspired words in our prayers to him.

Praying Steadfastly Is A Vital Duty Of Servants Of Yahweh

Acts 6:1-6 reads,

^{6:1}Now in those days, when the number of the disciples was multiplying, there arose a grumbling of the Grecian Yahudim against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily service. ^{6:2}The twelve called the multitude of the disciples to them and said, "It is not appropriate for us to forsake the word of the Mighty One and serve tables. ^{6:3}Therefore select from among you, brothers, seven men of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. ^{6:4}**But we will continue steadfastly in prayer and in the ministry of the word.**" ^{6:5}These words pleased the whole multitude. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, Pilipos, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch; ^{6:6}whom they set before the apostles. **When they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.**

6:4 shows that it is indeed the duty of apostles to both pray and to preach the word of Yah'shuah. Prayer is a vital part in the duty of servants of Yahweh.

6:6 shows that the induction of the seven for the work before them was accompanied by both prayer and the laying on of hands. Prayer is vital in service to Yahweh.

Prayer

How To Receive The Holy Spirit

Acts 8:9-25 reads,

^{8:9}But there was a certain man, Shim'on by name, who had used sorcery in the city before, and amazed the people of Shomron, making himself out to be some great one, ^{8:10}to whom they all listened, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is that great power of the Mighty One." ^{8:11}They listened to him, because for a long time he had amazed them with his sorceries. ^{8:12}But when they believed Pilipos preaching good news concerning the kingdom of the Mighty One and the name of Yah'shuah the Messiah, they were baptized, both men and women. ^{8:13}Shim'on himself also believed. Being baptized, he continued with Pilipos. Seeing signs and great miracles done, he was amazed.

^{8:14}Now when the apostles who were at Yerushalayim heard that Shomron had received the word of the Mighty One, they sent Kefa and Yahchanan to them, ^{8:15}who, when they had come down, **prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Spirit;** ^{8:16}for as yet he had fallen on none of them. They had only been baptized into the name of the Master Yah'shuah. ^{8:17}Then they laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

^{8:18}Now when Shim'on saw that the Holy Spirit was given through the laying on of the apostles' hands, he offered them money, ^{8:19}saying, "Give me also this power, that whoever I lay my hands on may receive the Holy Spirit."

^{8:20}But Kefa said to him, "May your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain the gift of the Mighty One with money! ^{8:21}You have neither part nor lot in this matter, for your heart isn't right before the Mighty One. ^{8:22}Repent therefore of this, your wickedness, and ask the Mighty One if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you. ^{8:23}For I see that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity."

^{8:24}Shim'on answered, "Pray for me to Yahweh, that none of the things that you have spoken come on me."

^{8:25}They therefore, when they had testified and spoken the word of the Master, returned to Yerushalayim, and preached the good news to many villages of the Shomroni.

8:14-17 shows that receipt of the Holy Spirit is accompanied by prayer and the laying on of hands. Prayer is vital in service to Yahweh.

It should also be remembered that it is indeed the Father's will that his children have the Holy Spirit dwelling in them. He also desires to give us his Spirit more than we desire to give good gifts to our own children. Nevertheless, to receive the Holy Spirit, we must still pray to the Father for it. Showing that we acknowledge that the Spirit indeed comes forth from him, and that without him giving the Spirit to us, the Spirit cannot indeed dwell in us. We should therefore pray that Yah'shuah's disciples receive the Holy Spirit.

Yah'shuah's Words Fulfilled In Kefa's Ministry

Acts 9:36-43 reads,

^{9:36}Now there was at Yafo a certain disciple named Tavita, which when translated, means Dorcas. This woman was full of good works and acts of mercy that she did. ^{9:37}It happened in those days that she fell sick, and died. When they had washed her, they laid her in an upper chamber. ^{9:38}As Lud was near Yafo, the disciples, hearing that Kefa was there, sent two men to him, imploring him not to delay in coming to them. ^{9:39}Kefa got up and went with them. When he had come, they brought him into the upper chamber. All the widows stood by him weeping, and showing the coats and garments that Dorcas made

Prayer

while she was with them. ^{9:40}**Kefa put them all out, and kneeled down and prayed.** Turning to the body, he said, "Tavita, get up!" She opened her eyes, and when she saw Kefa, she sat up. ^{9:41}He gave her his hand, and raised her up. Calling the holy ones and widows, he presented her alive. ^{9:42}It became known throughout all Yafo, and many believed in the Master. ^{9:43}It happened, that he stayed many days in Yafo with one Shim'on, a tanner.

9:40 shows that it was after prayer in private that Kefa called out to Tavita's dead body and commanded it to get up. And life was restored to it, and she lived again.

Yah'shuah's words to his disciples were therefore being fulfilled, how they would do works as great and greater than those he Yah'shuah did, for Yah'shuah would do those works on their behalf.

Yahweh Pours Out The Holy Spirit On The Goyim

Acts 10:1-11:18 reads,

^{10:1}Now there was a certain man in Caesarea, Cornelius by name, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, ^{10:2}**a devout man, and one who feared the Mighty One with all his house, who gave alms generously to the people, and always prayed to the Mighty One.** ^{10:3}At about the ninth hour of the day, he clearly saw in a vision an angel of Yahweh coming to him, and saying to him, "Cornelius!"

^{10:4}He, fastening his eyes on him, and being frightened, said, "What is it, Master?"

He said to him, "**Your prayers and your alms have gone up for a memorial before the Mighty One.**" ^{10:5}Now send men to Yafo, and get one Shim'on, who is surnamed Kefa.

^{10:6}He lodges with one Shim'on a tanner, whose house is by the seaside."

^{10:7}When the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants, and a devout soldier of those who waited on him continually. ^{10:8}Having explained everything to them, he sent them to Yafo. ^{10:9}Now on the next day, as they were on their journey, and got close to the city, **Kefa went up on the housetop to pray, at about noon.**

^{10:10}He became hungry, and desired to eat, but while they were preparing, he fell into a trance. ^{10:11}He saw Heaven opened, and a certain container descending to him, like a great sheet, let down by four corners on the earth, ^{10:12}in which were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, reptiles, and birds of the sky. ^{10:13}A voice came to him, "**Rise, Kefa, kill and eat!**"

^{10:14}But Kefa said, "Not so, Master; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean."

^{10:15}A voice came to him again the second time, "**What the Mighty One has cleansed, you must not make unholy.**" ^{10:16}This was done three times, and immediately the vessel was received up into Heaven.

^{10:17}Now while Kefa was very perplexed in himself what the vision which he had seen might mean, behold, the men who were sent by Cornelius, having made inquiry for Shim'on's house, stood before the gate, ^{10:18}and called and asked whether Shim'on, who was surnamed Kefa, was lodging there. ^{10:19}While Kefa thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men seek you. ^{10:20}But arise, get down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

^{10:21}Kefa went down to the men, and said, "Behold, I am he whom you seek. Why have you come?"

^{10:22}They said, "Cornelius a centurion, a righteous man and one who fears the Mighty One, and well spoken of by all the nation of the Yahudim, was directed by a holy angel to

Prayer

invite you to his house, and to listen to what you say. ^{10:23} So he called them in and lodged them. On the next day Kefa arose and went out with them, and some of the brothers from Yafo accompanied him. ^{10:24} On the next day they entered into Caesarea. Cornelius was waiting for them, having called together his relatives and his near friends. ^{10:25} When it happened that Kefa entered, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. ^{10:26} But Kefa raised him up, saying, "Stand up! I myself am also a man." ^{10:27} As he talked with him, he went in, and found many come together. ^{10:28} He said to them, "You yourselves know how it is an unlawful thing for a man who is a Yahudi to join himself or come to one of another nation, but the Mighty One has shown me that I shouldn't call any man unholy or unclean. ^{10:29} Therefore also I came without complaint when I was sent for. I ask therefore, why did you send for me?"

^{10:30} Cornelius said, "**Four days ago, I was fasting until this hour, and at the ninth hour, I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, ^{10:31} and said, 'Cornelius, your prayer is heard, and your alms are remembered in the sight of the Mighty One. ^{10:32} Send therefore to Yafo, and call to you Shim'on, who is surnamed Kefa. He lodges in the house of Shim'on a tanner, by the seaside. When he comes, he will speak to you.' ^{10:33} Therefore I sent to you at once, and it was good of you to come. Now therefore we are all here present in the sight of the Mighty One to hear all things that have been commanded you by the Mighty One.**"

^{10:34} Kefa opened his mouth and said, "Truly I perceive that the Mighty One doesn't show favoritism, ^{10:35} but in every nation he who fears him, and works righteousness, is acceptable to him. ^{10:36} The word which he sent to the children of Yisra'el, preaching good news of shalom by Yah'shuah the Messiah (he is Master of all): ^{10:37} that spoken word you yourselves know, which was proclaimed throughout all Yahudah, beginning from the Galil, after the baptism which Yahchanan preached; ^{10:38} even Yah'shuah of Natzeret, how the Mighty One anointed him with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good, and healing all who were oppressed by the devil; for the Mighty One was with him. ^{10:39} We are witnesses of all things that he did both in the country of the Yahudim, and in Yerushalayim; whom they also killed, hanging him on a tree. ^{10:40} The Mighty One raised him up the third day, and gave him to be revealed, ^{10:41} not to all the people, but to witnesses who were chosen before by the Mighty One, to us, who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. ^{10:42} He charged us to preach to the people, and to testify that this is he who is appointed by the Mighty One as the Judge of the living and the dead. ^{10:43} All the prophets testify about him, that through his name everyone who believes in him will receive remission of sins."

^{10:44} While Kefa was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those who heard the word. ^{10:45} They of the circumcision who believed were amazed, as many as came with Kefa, because the gift of the Holy Spirit was also poured out on the Goyim. ^{10:46} **For they heard them speak with other languages, and magnify the Mighty One.**

Then Kefa answered, ^{10:47} "Can any man forbid the water, that these who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we should not be baptized?" ^{10:48} He commanded them to be baptized in the name of Yah'shuah the Messiah. Then they asked him to stay some days.

^{11:1} Now the apostles and the brothers who were in Yahudah heard that the Goyim had also received the word of the Mighty One. ^{11:2} When Kefa had come up to Yerushalayim, those who were of the circumcision contended with him, ^{11:3} saying, "You went in to uncircumcised men, and ate with them!"

Prayer

^{11:4} But Kefa began, and explained to them in order, saying, ^{11:5} "I was in the city of Yafu praying, and in a trance I saw a vision: a certain container descending, like it was a great sheet let down from Heaven by four corners. It came as far as me, ^{11:6} on which, when I had looked intently, I considered, and saw the four-footed animals of the earth, wild animals, creeping things, and birds of the sky. ^{11:7} I also heard a voice saying to me, *'Rise, Kefa, kill and eat!'* ^{11:8} But I said, 'Not so, Master, for nothing unholy or unclean has ever entered into my mouth.' ^{11:9} But a voice answered me the second time out of Heaven, *'What the Mighty One has cleansed, don't you make unholy.'* ^{11:10} This was done three times, and all were drawn up again into Heaven. ^{11:11} Behold, immediately three men stood before the house where I was, having been sent from Caesarea to me. ^{11:12} The Spirit told me to go with them, without discriminating. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered into the man's house. ^{11:13} He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house, and saying to him, 'Send to Yafu, and get Shim'on, whose surname is Kefa, ^{11:14} who will speak to you words whereby you will be saved, you and all your house.' ^{11:15} As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them, even as on us at the beginning. ^{11:16} I remembered the word of the Master, how he said, *'Yahchanan indeed baptized with water, but you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit.'* ^{11:17} If then the Mighty One gave to them the same gift as us, when we believed in the Master Yah'shuah the Messiah, who was I, that I could withstand the Mighty One?" ^{11:18} When they heard these things, they held their shalom, and glorified the Mighty One, saying, "Then the Mighty One has also granted to the Goyim repentance to life!"

10:2 shows that Cornelius was a man who prayed to Yahweh regularly.

10:9 shows that Kefa was a man of prayer, who sought out a private place for himself to pray.

We should emulate the examples of these servants of Yahweh.

Pray For The Welfare Of The Brethren

Acts 12:1-17 reads,

^{12:1} Now about that time, Herod the king put forth his hands to oppress some of the assembly. ^{12:2} He killed Ya'akov, the brother of Yahchanan, with the sword. ^{12:3} When he saw that it pleased the Yahudim, he proceeded to seize Kefa also. This was during the days of matzah. ^{12:4} When he had captured him, he put him in prison, and delivered him to four squads of four soldiers each to guard him, intending to bring him out to the people after the Pesach. ^{12:5} **Kefa therefore was kept in the prison, but constant prayer was made by the assembly to the Mighty One for him.** ^{12:6} The same night when Herod was about to bring him out, Kefa was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains. Guards in front of the door kept the prison. ^{12:7} Behold, an angel of Yahweh stood by him, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Kefa on the side, and woke him up, saying, "Stand up quickly!" His chains fell off from his hands. ^{12:8} The angel said to him, "Put on your clothes, and tie on your sandals." He did so. He said to him, "Wrap your cloak around you, and follow me." ^{12:9} He went out, and followed him. He didn't know that what was done by the angel was real, but thought he saw a vision. ^{12:10} When they were past the first and the second guard, they came to the iron gate that leads into the city, which opened to them by itself. They went out, and passed on through one street, and immediately the angel departed from him.

Prayer

^{12:11}When Kefa had come to himself, he said, "Now I truly know that Yahweh has sent forth his angel and delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from everything the Jewish people were expecting." ^{12:12}Thinking about that, he came to the house of Miryam, the mother of Yahchanan whose surname was Mark, **where many were gathered together and were praying.** ^{12:13}When Kefa knocked at the door of the gate, a maid named Rhoda came to answer. ^{12:14}When she recognized Kefa's voice, she didn't open the gate for joy, but ran in, and reported that Kefa stood before the gate. ^{12:15}They said to her, "You are crazy!" But she insisted that it was so. They said, "It is his angel." ^{12:16}But Kefa continued knocking. When they had opened, they saw him, and were amazed. ^{12:17}But he, beckoning to them with his hand to be silent, declared to them how Yahweh had brought him forth out of the prison. He said, "Tell these things to Ya`akov, and to the brothers." He departed, and went to another place.

12:5 shows that the brethren prayed for the welfare of one another, especially when they were faced with severe opposition from their enemies.

12:6-10 shows that Yahweh indeed heard the prayers of the assembly, and released Kefa from prison.

12:12 shows that many of the assembly were gathered together and were praying for Kefa's welfare. It is therefore quite in order for assembly members to come together and pray collectively about a matter. Just as there were occasions when the people of Yisrael assembled themselves together and prayed collectively, so also it is the case that those of Yah'shuah's assembly have occasions when they come together and pray collectively.

Serve Yahweh And Yah'shuah With Prayer And Fasting

Acts 13:1-4 reads,

^{13:1}Now in the assembly that was at Antioch there were some prophets and teachers: Bar-Nabba, Shim'on who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Menachem the foster-brother of Herod the tetrarch, and Sha'ul. ^{13:2}**As they served the Master and fasted,** the Holy Spirit said, "Separate Bar-Nabba and Sha'ul for me, for the work to which I have called them." ^{13:3}**Then, when they had fasted and prayed and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.** ^{13:4}So, being sent forth by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia. From there they sailed to Cyprus.

The prophets and teachers of the assembly at Antioch served the Master Yah'shuah with fasting and prayer. We ought to follow in their example.

13:3 shows that even after the Holy Spirit had given command that Bar-Nabba and Shaul be set apart for the work to which he had called them, the prophets and teachers continued to pray, and laid their hands on these two, and sent them on their way. In other words, even when Yahweh has made clear to us his will concerning our service to him, we must still continue to pray for his guidance and help in the manner we so serve him as he has directed.

We continually need Yahweh and the help he avails to us. We cannot do without Yahweh.

Appointments Within Yahweh's Household Should Be Accompanied With Prayer And Fasting

Acts 14:20-23 reads,

Prayer

^{14:20}But as the disciples stood around him, he rose up, and entered into the city. On the next day he went out with Bar-Nabba to Derbe. ^{14:21}When they had preached the good news to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, ^{14:22}confirming the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many afflictions we must enter into the kingdom of the Mighty One. ^{14:23}**When they had appointed Zakenim for them in every assembly, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Master, on whom they had believed.**

14:23 shows that Shaul and Bar-Nabba accompanied their appointment of Zakenim for the disciples with prayer and fasting, and then a commendation to the Master Yah'shuah. It should therefore be noted that appointments to key positions in the household of Yahweh should be accompanied with prayer and fasting. This is to seek Yahweh's guidance in the matter, that those whose hearts he approves of be the ones to be appointed to positions of oversight in his household.

The Early Disciples Prayed Collectively

Acts 16:16 reads,

^{16:16}It happened, **as we were going to prayer,** that a certain girl having a spirit of divination met us, who brought her masters much gain by fortune telling.

It was the custom of the disciples to pray collectively.

It therefore appears that the disciples made time to both pray together, and also privately.

It would seem to me that in their collective prayers they did not parade themselves before outsiders to be seen by them that they were praying. In other words, their collective prayers were private to the disciples, and were not conducted in public. In this manner they continued to remain faithful to Yah'shuah their Master, praying in a manner whereby they did not seek glory from men.

Shaul And Sila Prayed To Yahweh In The Hearing Of Others

Acts 16:25 reads,

^{16:25}But about midnight Sha'ul and Sila were praying and singing hymns to the Mighty One, and the prisoners were listening to them.

Shaul and Sila prayed and sang hymns to the Mighty One, all in the hearing of their fellow prisoners. This shows that when we are in a situation whereby we are denied privacy, we are still supposed to continue praying to Yahweh the Mighty One. In such a case we are not praying in the hearing of outsiders in order to seek their glory. But we have been put in a situation whereby we do not have privacy to so pray to Yahweh.

It therefore appears that praying to Yahweh is more important than looking for a private place to pray to him. Therefore, if no private place is available to facilitate private prayer to Yahweh, we are still required to pray to Yahweh, even in the observation and hearing of outsiders. But we should be careful not to seek their glory in so praying.

In Bidding Farewell, The Disciples Prayed Collectively

Acts 20:17-21:6 reads,

Prayer

^{20:17}From Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called to himself the Zakenim of the assembly.
^{20:18}When they had come to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you all the time, ^{20:19}serving the Master with all humility, with many tears, and with trials which happened to me by the plots of the Yahudim; ^{20:20}how I didn't shrink from declaring to you anything that was profitable, teaching you publicly and from house to house, ^{20:21}testifying both to Yahudim and to Yevanim repentance toward the Mighty One, and faith toward our Master Yah'shuah the Messiah. ^{20:22}Now, behold, I go bound by the Spirit to Yerushalayim, not knowing what will happen to me there; ^{20:23}except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions wait for me. ^{20:24}But these things don't count; nor do I hold my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Master Yah'shuah, to fully testify to the good news of the grace of the Mighty One. ^{20:25}Now, behold, I know that you all, among whom I went about preaching the kingdom of the Mighty One, will see my face no more. ^{20:26}Therefore I testify to you this day that I am clean from the blood of all men, ^{20:27}for I didn't shrink from declaring to you the whole counsel of the Mighty One. ^{20:28}Take heed, therefore, to yourselves, and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the assembly of the Master and the Mighty One which he purchased with his own blood. ^{20:29}For I know that after my departure, vicious wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. ^{20:30}Men will arise from among your own selves, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ^{20:31}Therefore watch, remembering that for a period of three years I didn't cease to admonish everyone night and day with tears. ^{20:32}Now, brothers, I entrust you to the Mighty One, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build up, and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified. ^{20:33}I coveted no one's silver, or gold, or clothing. ^{20:34}You yourselves know that these hands ministered to my necessities, and to those who were with me. ^{20:35}In all things I gave you an example, that so laboring you ought to help the weak, and to remember the words of the Master Yah'shuah, that he himself said, ***'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'***"
^{20:36}**When he had spoken these things, he kneeled down and prayed with them all.**
^{20:37}They all wept a lot, and fell on Sha'ul's neck and kissed him, ^{20:38}sorrowing most of all because of the word which he had spoken, that they should see his face no more. They brought him on his way to the ship.
^{21:1}When it happened that we had parted from them and had set sail, we came with a straight course to Cos, and the next day to Rhodes, and from there to Patara. ^{21:2}Having found a ship crossing over to Phoenicia, we went aboard, and set sail. ^{21:3}When we had come in sight of Cyprus, leaving it on the left hand, we sailed to Aram, and landed at Tzor, for there the ship was to unload her cargo. ^{21:4}Having found disciples, we stayed there seven days. These said to Sha'ul through the Spirit, that he should not go up to Yerushalayim. ^{21:5}When it happened that we had accomplished the days, we departed and went on our journey. They all, with wives and children, brought us on our way until we were out of the city. **Kneeling down on the beach, we prayed.** ^{21:6}After saying goodbye to each other, we went on board the ship, and they returned home again.

20:36 and 21:5 show that it is indeed appropriate for disciples to pray collectively when at least one amongst their number is departing away from them and going to a different part of the world.

Prayer

Prayer Accompanies The Laying On Of Hands Upon The Sick

Acts 28:7-10 reads,

^{28:7}Now in the neighborhood of that place were lands belonging to the chief man of the island, named Publius, who received us, and courteously entertained us three days. ^{28:8}It was so, that the father of Publius lay sick of fever and dysentery. **Sha'ul entered in to him, prayed, and laying his hands on him, healed him.** ^{28:9}Then when this was done, the rest also that had diseases in the island came, and were cured. ^{28:10}They also honored us with many honors, and when we sailed, they put on board the things that we needed.

28:8 shows that prayer accompanies the laying on of hands upon those who are sick, that they may be healed of their sicknesses.

Pray For One Another Unceasingly

Romans 1:8-12 reads,

^{1:8}First, I thank my Mighty One through Yah'shuah the Messiah for all of you, that your faith is proclaimed throughout the whole world. ^{1:9}For the Mighty One is my witness, whom I serve in my spirit in the good news of his Son, **how unceasingly I make mention of you always in my prayers,** ^{1:10}requesting, if by any means now at length I may be prospered by the will of the Mighty One to come to you. ^{1:11}For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, to the end you may be established; ^{1:12}that is, that I with you may be comforted in you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.

1:9 shows that Shaul unceasingly and always made mention of the disciples in his prayers. He prayed that Yahweh facilitate their meeting together, that each may comfort the other by their faith in the Yah'shuah the Messiah.

Disciples of Yah'shuah should therefore pray for one another unceasingly, praying that they may comfort one another by their faith in the Master.

Draw On The Spirit To Intercede For You In Your Prayers To Yahweh

Romans 8:26-27 reads,

^{8:26}In the same way, the Spirit also helps our weaknesses, for we don't know how to pray as we ought. But the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings that can't be uttered. ^{8:27}He who searches the hearts knows what is on the Spirit's mind, because he makes intercession for the holy ones according to the Mighty One.

Seeing that we do not know how to pray as we ought, we should draw on the Spirit to intercede for us before Yahweh the Mighty One, and make up for our deficiencies.

Pray For Yisrael's Salvation

Romans 10:1 reads,

^{10:1}Brothers, my heart's desire and my prayer to the Mighty One is for Yisra'el, that they may be saved.

Shaul prayed that Yisrael be saved. So should we do.

Prayer

Continue Steadfastly In Prayer

Romans 12:12 reads,

^{12:12}*rejoicing in hope; enduring in oppression; continuing steadfastly in prayer;*
Shaul encouraged the brethren to continue steadfastly in prayer.

Pray For Yah'shuah's Servants

Romans 15:30-32 reads,

^{15:30}*Now I beg you, brothers, by our Master Yah'shuah the Messiah, and by the love of the Spirit, that **you strive together with me in your prayers to the Mighty One for me,***
^{15:31}*that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Yahudah, and that my service which I have for Yerushalayim may be acceptable to the holy ones; ^{15:32}that I may come to you in joy through the will of the Mighty One, and together with you, find rest.*

Shaul begged the brethren that they join him in praying to the Mighty One that he be delivered from his enemies, and that his service for the brethren might be found acceptable before the holy ones, and that he may come to them in joy. These are matters we ought to pray for as they affect each one of us.

Shaul's Counsel On Conduct While Praying And Fasting

1 Corinthians 7:5 reads,

^{7:5}*Don't defraud one another, unless it is by consent for a season, that you may give yourselves to fasting and prayer, and may be together again, that Hasatan doesn't tempt you because of your lack of self-control.*

Shaul advised that it was not inappropriate for a husband and wife to refrain from sexual relations when they were serving the Master in prayer and fasting. But he also warned them not to make it a prolonged refrain, to avoid temptation to commit sexual immorality, occasioned by lack of self-control on the part of one or both of them.

Those Speaking In Tongues Should Pray For The Gift Of Interpreting

1 Corinthians 14:13-14 reads,

^{14:13}*Therefore let him who speaks in another language pray that he may interpret. ^{14:14}For if I pray in another language, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful.*

Those speaking in tongues - other languages - should pray for the gift of interpreting what they speak in another language, that they may impart words of understanding to their audience.

Pray That The Brethren Be Perfected

2 Corinthians 13:7-9 reads,

^{13:7}*Now I pray to the Mighty One that you do no evil; not that we may appear approved, but that you may do that which is honorable, though we are as reprobate. ^{13:8}For we can do nothing against the truth, but for the truth. ^{13:9}For we rejoice when we are weak and you are strong. This we also pray for, even your perfecting.*

We should pray that we do no evil, but should instead be perfected.

Prayer

Pray That Yahweh Blesses Yah'shuah's Disciples

Ephesians 1:15-23 reads,

^{1:15}For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Master Yah'shuah which is among you, and the love which you have toward all the holy ones, ^{1:16}**don't cease to give thanks for you, making mention in my prayers.** ^{1:17}that the Mighty One of our Master Yah'shuah the Messiah, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; ^{1:18}having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the holy ones, ^{1:19}and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might ^{1:20}which he worked in Messiah, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, ^{1:21}far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. ^{1:22}He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the assembly, ^{1:23}which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

We should not cease to give thanks to Yahweh for the good that he is doing in the lives of other disciples of Yah'shuah.

Pray At All Times, In The Spirit

Ephesians 6:10-22 reads,

^{6:10}Finally, be strong in the Master, and in the strength of his might. ^{6:11}Put on the whole armor of the Mighty One, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ^{6:12}For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world's rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. ^{6:13}Therefore, put on the whole armor of the Mighty One, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand. ^{6:14}Stand therefore, having the utility belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ^{6:15}and having fitted your feet with the preparation of the good news of shalom; ^{6:16}above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. ^{6:17}Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of the Mighty One; ^{6:18}**with all prayer and requests, praying at all times in the Spirit, and being watchful to this end in all perseverance and requests for all the holy ones:** ^{6:19}On my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the good news, ^{6:20}for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. ^{6:21}But that you also may know my affairs, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Master, will make known to you all things; ^{6:22}whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.

6:18 shows that we ought to pray at all times, in the Spirit, to be adequately equipped to battle against Hasatan.

6:19 shows that we should pray for Yahweh's servants that they may preach Yahweh's word with boldness.

Prayer

Pray For The Abounding Of The Love Of The Brethren

Philippians 1:9-11 reads,

^{1:9}***This I pray***, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and all discernment; ^{1:10}so that you may approve the things that are excellent; that you may be sincere and void of offense to the day of Messiah; ^{1:11}being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are through Yah'shuah the Messiah, to the glory and praise of the Mighty One.

We should pray that the love of the brethren may abound in knowledge and discernment, to facilitate their growth in Yahweh's perfection.

Pray For All Men

1 Timothy 2:1-8 reads,

^{2:1}***I exhort therefore, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercessions, and givings of thanks, be made for all men: ^{2:2}for kings and all who are in high places; that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all righteousness and reverence.*** ^{2:3}For this is good and acceptable in the sight of Yahweh, our Savior; ^{2:4}who desires to have all men to be saved, and come to full knowledge of the truth. ^{2:5}For there is one Mighty One, and one mediator between the Mighty One and men, the man Messiah Yah'shuah, ^{2:6}who gave himself as a ransom for all; the testimony in its own times; ^{2:7}to which I was appointed a preacher and an apostle (I am telling the truth in Messiah, not lying), a teacher of the Goyim in faith and truth. ^{2:8}I desire therefore that the men in every place pray, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting.

We should pray for all men, including those in authority, that the brethren may lead quiet and tranquil lives in all righteousness and reverence.

Pray For The Sanctification Of Food Yahweh Has Prepared For His Holy Ones

1 Timothy 4:1-5 reads,

^{4:1}But the Spirit says expressly that in later times some will fall away from the faith, paying attention to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons, ^{4:2}through the hypocrisy of men who speak lies, branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron; ^{4:3}forbidding marriage and commanding to abstinence from foods which the Mighty One created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. ^{4:4}For every creature of the Mighty One is good, and nothing is to be rejected, if it is received with thanksgiving. ^{4:5}For it is sanctified through the word of the Mighty One and prayer.

4:3-5 shows that foods the Mighty One created to be received with thanksgiving are sanctified through the word of the Mighty One and prayer. We therefore ought to pray for the sanctification of food the Mighty One created to be received with thanksgiving, thanking Yahweh also for giving us that food for our nourishment.

Prayer

Widows Can Effectively Serve Yahweh In Prayers And Petitions

1 Timothy 5:1-15 reads,

^{5:1}Don't rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father; the younger men as brothers; ^{5:2}the elder women as mothers; the younger as sisters, in all purity. ^{5:3}Honor widows who are widows indeed. ^{5:4}But if any widow has children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to repay their parents, for this is acceptable in the sight of the Mighty One. ^{5:5}**Now she who is a widow indeed, and desolate, has her hope set on the Mighty One, and continues in petitions and prayers night and day.** ^{5:6}But she who gives herself to pleasure is dead while she lives. ^{5:7}Also command these things, that they may be without reproach. ^{5:8}But if anyone doesn't provide for his own, and specially his own household, he has denied the faith, and is worse than an unbeliever. ^{5:9}Let none be enrolled as a widow under sixty years old, having been the wife of one man, ^{5:10}well reported of for good works; if she has brought up children, if she has used hospitality to strangers, if she has washed the holy ones' feet, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work. ^{5:11}But refuse younger widows, for when they have grown wanton against Messiah, they desire to marry; ^{5:12}having condemnation, because they have rejected their first pledge. ^{5:13}Besides, they also learn to be idle, going about from house to house. Not only idle, but also gossips and busybodies, saying things which they ought not. ^{5:14}I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household, and give no occasion to the adversary for reviling. ^{5:15}For already some have turned aside after Hasatan.

5:5 shows that widows can effectively serve Yahweh in petitions and prayers night and day. Widows and others ought to so pray and petition Yahweh.

Learn From Yah'shuah

Hebrews 5:7 reads,

^{5:7}Who in the days of his flesh, having offered up prayers and petitions with strong crying and tears to him who was able to save him from death, and having been heard for his righteous fear,

Yah'shuah offered up to Yahweh prayers and petitions, with strong crying and tears. We should learn from Yah'shuah and likewise pray intensely to Yahweh.

Pray And Sing Praises To Yahweh

Yaakov (James) 5:13-18 reads,

^{5:13}Is any among you suffering? Let him pray. Is any cheerful? Let him sing praises. ^{5:14}Is any among you sick? Let him call for the Zakenim of the assembly, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of Yahweh, ^{5:15}and the prayer of faith will heal him who is sick, and the Master will raise him up. If he has committed sins, it will be forgiven him. ^{5:16}Confess your offenses one to another, and pray one for another, that you may be healed. The effective, earnest prayer of a righteous man is powerfully effective. ^{5:17}Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it didn't rain on the earth for three years and six months. ^{5:18}He prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth brought forth its fruit.

Those who are undergoing suffering should pray and be prayed for that their suffering may end.

Prayer

We should also learn from the lives of faithful servants of Yahweh, whose prayers have been very effective in their results.

Do Righteousness, That Yahweh May Hear Your Prayers

1 Kefa (Peter) 3:1-12 reads,

^{3:1}*In like manner, wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; so that, even if any don't obey the Word, they may be gained by the behavior of their wives without a word; ^{3:2}seeing your pure behavior in fear. ^{3:3}Let your beauty be not just the outward adorning of braiding the hair, and of wearing jewels of gold, or of putting on fine clothing; ^{3:4}but in the hidden person of the heart, in the incorruptible adornment of a humble and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of the Mighty One of great value. ^{3:5}For this is how the holy women before, who hoped in the Mighty One, also adorned themselves, being in subjection to their own husbands: ^{3:6}as Sarah obeyed Avraham, calling him master, whose children you now are, if you do well, and are not put in fear by any terror. ^{3:7}**You husbands, in like manner, live with your wives according to knowledge, giving honor to the woman, as to the weaker vessel, as being also joint heirs of the grace of life; not cutting off your prayers.** ^{3:8}Finally, be all like-minded, compassionate, loving as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous, ^{3:9}not rendering evil for evil, or reviling for reviling; but instead blessing; for to this were you called, that you should inherit a blessing. ^{3:10}For,*

"He who would love life,

And see good days,

Let him keep his tongue from evil,

And his lips from speaking deceit.

^{3:11}*Let him turn away from evil, and do good.*

Let him seek shalom, and pursue it.

^{3:12}**For the eyes of Yahweh are on the righteous,**

And his ears open to their prayer;

But the face of Yahweh is against those who do evil."

3:7 shows that husbands should live with their wives in a manner that is compliant with Yahweh's word, that Yahweh may hear their prayers. For when we disregard Yahweh's word our prayers are hindered, whether we are men or women. All of us should therefore abide by Yahweh's word that he may indeed hear our prayers.

3:12 reiterates that Yahweh hears the prayers of the righteous, but sets his face against those who do evil.

Be Sober In Prayer

1 Kefa (Peter) 4:7 reads,

^{4:7}*But the end of all things is near. Therefore be of sound mind, self-controlled, and sober in prayer.*

We should be sober in our prayers, especially seeing that the end of the age is near.

Prayer

Pray In The Holy Spirit

Yahudah (Jude) 1:20 reads,

^{1:20} *But you, beloved, keep building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit.*

We should be praying in the Holy Spirit.

Prayer

SHOULD WOMEN PRAY WITH THEIR HEADS COVERED?

1 Corinthians 11:1-16 reads,

^{11:1}Be imitators of me, even as I also am of Messiah. ^{11:2}Now I praise you, brothers, that you remember me in all things, and hold firm the traditions, even as I delivered them to you. ^{11:3}But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Messiah, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Messiah is the Mighty One. ^{11:4}**Every man praying or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonors his head.** ^{11:5}**But every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonors her head. For it is one and the same thing as if she were shaved.** ^{11:6}For if a woman is not covered, let her also be shorn. But if it is shameful for a woman to be shorn or shaved, let her be covered. ^{11:7}For a man indeed ought not to have his head covered, because he is the image and glory of the Mighty One, but the woman is the glory of the man. ^{11:8}For man is not from woman, but woman from man; ^{11:9}for neither was man created for the woman, but woman for the man. ^{11:10}For this cause the woman ought to have authority on her head, because of the angels. ^{11:11}Nevertheless, neither is the woman independent of the man, nor the man independent of the woman, in the Master. ^{11:12}For as the woman is from the man, so is the man also by the woman; but all things are from the Mighty One. ^{11:13}**Judge for yourselves. Is it appropriate that a woman pray to the Mighty One unveiled?** ^{11:14}Doesn't even nature itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him? ^{11:15}But if a woman has long hair, it is a glory to her, for her hair is given to her for a covering. ^{11:16}But if any man seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither do the Mighty One's assemblies.

Imitate Shaul ONLY As He Imitates The Messiah

In 11:1, Shaul urges his audience to imitate him as he imitates the Messiah. In other words, he was not urging them to imitate him in a manner whereby he did not imitate the Messiah. Therefore, if Shaul was engaging in a practice that did not imitate the Messiah, he was not urging his audience to imitate him in such a practice.

Become Aware Of The Messiah's Conduct

It was therefore incumbent upon his audience to determine whether his conduct was like that of the Messiah. And to do this his audience had to be aware of the Messiah's conduct. Therefore, if his audience was already aware of the Messiah's conduct, and was already aware that they needed to imitate the Messiah, they did not need Shaul between them and the Messiah. For they would just do as the Messiah did, being already aware of the Messiah's conduct.

Simply Imitate The Messiah With No Human Intermediary

It should therefore be noted that the important point here is that believers should imitate the Messiah's conduct. They need no man or other entity between them and the Messiah. They should simply become aware of the Messiah's conduct, and imitate him. If they decide to imitate

Prayer

someone else, they should be careful not to imitate that other person in a manner contrary to the Messiah's conduct. In other words, the Messiah's conduct determines for them the boundaries of acceptable conduct.

What Traditions Did Shaul Deliver To The Corinthian Brethren?

11:2 shows that Shaul praised the Corinthian brethren for holding firm the traditions that he had delivered to them. What traditions were these? Were these traditions within the bounds determined by the Messiah's conduct? Or were some of them outside those bounds?

Shaul's Words On Authority Apparently In Harmony With The Messiah's

Shaul's message in 11:3 appears to be in harmony with the Messiah's words. Yahweh the Mighty One is in authority over the Messiah, who is in authority over all men, who are individually in authority over their wives and unmarried daughters.

How Does A Man Dishonour His Head By Praying With His Head Covered?

In 11:4 Shaul states that every man praying or prophesying having his head covered dishonours his head. How does such a man dishonour his head? Which head does he dishonour - the Messiah? And is this concept one that Shaul received from the Messiah? For if he did, all men should abide by it. Also, is it a concept within the bounds determined by the Messiah's conduct? For only those concepts within the bounds of the Messiah's conduct should be abided by. What did the Messiah say concerning this matter?

How Does A Woman Dishonour Her Head By Praying With Her Head Uncovered?

In 11:5 Shaul states that every woman praying or prophesying with her head unveiled dishonours her head, equating an unveiled head in prayer or prophesying to a shaven head. How does such a woman dishonour her head? Which head does she dishonour - her husband, or father, or the Messiah? And is this tradition that Shaul is espousing here one derived from the Messiah? If so, where did the Messiah espouse such a concept?

Shaul's Words On This Matter Inconsistent!

It should also be noted that consistency appears to be lacking in this matter, with respect to the conduct of men and of women. For Shaul says that if a man prays or prophesies with his head covered he dishonours his head. But if a woman does the same she does not dishonour her head. Why should it be the case that a man dishonours his head by praying or prophesying with his head covered, and it not be the case for a woman to do likewise? Is it the case that the law for a man is here different from that of a woman? And if so, why?

It should also be noted that in 11:3 Shaul laid down the authority structure with respect to Yahweh the Mighty One, Yah'shuah the Messiah, men and women. In laying out the authority structure as pertaining to these entities, Shaul showed a consistency. Yahweh head over

Prayer

Yah'shuah. Yah'shuah head over men. Men head over women. But in the matter of praying with covered heads Shaul does not retain the same consistency! For what is applicable to man is not to woman, and vice versa!

Why this inconsistency?

And what is Shaul's view with respect to the Messiah praying or prophesying with his head covered? Does he, having been a man, dishonour his head - Yahweh - by praying with his head covered? Do we have scriptural citations showing him praying or prophesying after his resurrection, and also showing whether or not his head was covered?

What Attribute Of Women's Hair Is Inconsistent With Its Exposure During Prayer Or Prophesying?

In 11:6 Shaul states that if a woman is not covered, she should be shorn of her hair, and thereby pray or prophesy with a shaven head. This suggests that there is some attribute attached to women's hair on their head, an attribute inconsistent with praying or prophesying. It also suggests that this inconsistent attribute is overlooked or covered by the veiling of a woman's hair. If so, what is this inconsistent attribute?

What Is The Spiritual Purpose And Significance Of Hair?

And why is it the case that men's hair do not have the same attribute? In fact, it appears that men's hair have the opposite attribute, for if they pray or prophesy veiling or covering their hair, they are deemed by Shaul to dishonour their head! Therefore I ask again, why the inconsistency? And what is the purpose and spiritual meaning of hair, both for men and for women?

In 11:6 Shaul accepts that it might be deemed shameful, by some, if women are shorn of their hair. To avoid putting them in shame, their heads should be covered, the veiling of their hair having the same effect as the removal or shearing of their hair. But if it is not deemed shameful for a woman to have her hair shorn, Shaul's word is that she should be shorn!

Again I ask, what is this key attribute about hair, especially the distinction between a man's hair and a woman's hair?

Shaul's Words Imply That Hair Is A Mark Or Symbol Of Authority

In 11:7 Shaul states that the reason a man ought not to have his head covered is because he is the image and glory of the Mighty One. But a woman, not being the image and glory of the Mighty One, but that of man, must have her head covered.

In other words, to reflect man's greater status over woman, he is not to have his head covered. To reflect woman's lesser status in relation to man, she is to have her head covered.

This implies that hair is a mark of authority.

It also implies that a woman who has an unshorn or uncovered head is effectively not submitting herself to man's authority.

But if it is the case that a woman with an unshorn or uncovered head is effectively not submitting herself to man's authority, why is it not the case that a man with an unshorn or uncovered head is likewise effectively not submitting himself to the Messiah's authority? Why should it be the reverse for men? What is the explanation for this inconsistency?

Prayer

Why Is The Relationship Between Man And Woman Shown To Be DIFFERENT From That Between The Messiah And Man?

In 11:10 Shaul says that because woman came from man, and was created for man, she ought to have authority on her head. This authority on her head symbolised by her having her head shorn or covered - without visible hair! Why doesn't the same apply to the man, seeing the similarity of his relationship to the Mighty One that the woman has to man?

Shaul Does Not Explain The Significance Of Angels In This Matter Of Praying With One's Head Covered

In 11:10 Shaul says that the second reason for a woman having her head covered or shorn is because of angels. But he does not show how angels come into this picture of man's authority relationship with woman, and the Mighty One's authority relationship with man. Or does he mean the Mighty One's authority relationship with angels? And if so, what is the connection? And how is it all explained?

Shaul's comments in 11:11-12 do not answer the question raised here above. They also appear to discount any notion of women being required to have shorn or covered heads with a like relationship between Yahweh and the angels, and that between man and woman. For Yahweh does not come from angels and is independent of angels. Yet angels were created by Yahweh and are dependent on Yahweh. Shaul's comments here about angels therefore do not appear to shed light on his comments about women being required to have shorn or covered heads.

How Should Shaul's Audience Judge In This Matter?

In 11:13 Shaul asks his audience to judge for themselves, whether it is appropriate for women to pray to the Mighty One unveiled.

How should his audience judge for themselves? On what basis?

If they are to judge using the traditions Shaul delivered to them, a tradition that Shaul has not clearly explained here, then they will simply be going by Shaul's authority. But they should go by Shaul's authority only to the extent that it is within the Messiah's. If Shaul's authority exceeds the bounds set by the Messiah then they should disregard it, and stick only to the Messiah's authority.

One should judge this matter using the Messiah's authority.

Therefore, what did the Messiah say concerning this matter? This is what should rule in this matter.

Why Is Shaul Now Drawing Upon "Nature" As His Justification?

In 11:14 Shaul says that nature teaches that if a man has long hair it is a dishonour to him. It should be noted that Shaul here is drawing upon "nature" as his justification in this tradition that he is upholding, that men should have short hair, and pray with uncovered heads.

Prayer

Why Isn't Shaul Drawing Upon The Messiah As His Justification?

Earlier on, in 11:1, he urged his audience to follow him as he followed the Messiah. In 11:1 he was drawing upon the Messiah's authority, and correctly showing that this forms the basis of traditions within the assemblies of Yahweh. Yet here in 11:14 he is drawing upon "nature" as his authority! Why does not he draw upon the Messiah's words in this matter to determine it once and for all? Is it the case that the Messiah gave no command that men have short hair, and should avoid having long hair?

Yahweh's Position On This Matter

It should also be noted that Yahweh gave commandments pertaining to Nazirs. These are found in Bamidbar (Numbers) 6.

^{6:1}Yahweh spoke to Moshe, saying, ^{6:2}"Speak to the children of Yisra'el, and tell them, **When either man or woman shall make a special vow, the vow of a Nazir, to separate himself to Yahweh,** ^{6:3}he shall separate himself from wine and strong drink; he shall drink no vinegar of wine, or vinegar of strong drink, neither shall he drink any juice of grapes, nor eat fresh grapes or dried. ^{6:4}All the days of his separation shall he eat nothing that is made of the grape-vine, from the kernels even to the husk. ^{6:5}**All the days of his vow of separation there shall no razor come on his head: until the days are fulfilled, in which he separates himself to Yahweh, he shall be holy; he shall let the locks of the hair of his head grow long.** ^{6:6}All the days that he separates himself to Yahweh he shall not come near to a dead body. ^{6:7}He shall not make himself unclean for his father, or for his mother, for his brother, or for his sister, when they die; because his separation to the Mighty One is on his head. ^{6:8}All the days of his separation he is holy to Yahweh. ^{6:9}If any man dies very suddenly beside him, and he defiles the head of his separation; then he shall shave his head in the day of his cleansing, on the seventh day shall he shave it. ^{6:10}On the eighth day he shall bring two turtle-doves, or two young pigeons, to the Kohen, to the door of the tent of meeting: ^{6:11}and the Kohen shall offer one for a sin-offering, and the other for a burnt offering, and make atonement for him, for that he sinned by reason of the dead, and shall make his head holy that same day. ^{6:12}He shall separate to Yahweh the days of his separation, and shall bring a he-lamb a year old for a trespass-offering; but the former days shall be void, because his separation was defiled. ^{6:13}This is the law of the Nazir, when the days of his separation are fulfilled: he shall be brought to the door of the tent of meeting: ^{6:14}and he shall offer his offering to Yahweh, one he-lamb a year old without blemish for a burnt offering, and one ewe-lamb a year old without blemish for a sin-offering, and one ram without blemish for peace-offerings, ^{6:15}and a basket of matzah, cakes of fine flour mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and their meal-offering, and their drink-offerings. ^{6:16}The Kohen shall present them before Yahweh, and shall offer his sin-offering, and his burnt offering: ^{6:17}and he shall offer the ram for a sacrifice of peace-offerings to Yahweh, with the basket of matzah: the Kohen shall offer also the meal-offering of it, and the drink-offering of it. ^{6:18}The Nazir shall shave the head of his separation at the door of the tent of meeting, and shall take the hair of the head of his separation, and put it on the fire that is under the sacrifice of peace-offerings. ^{6:19}The Kohen shall take the boiled shoulder of the ram, and one unleavened cake out of the basket, and one unleavened wafer, and shall put them on the hands of the Nazir, after he has shaved the head of his separation; ^{6:20}and the Kohen

Prayer

shall wave them for a wave-offering before Yahweh; this is holy for the Kohen, together with the wave-breast and heave-thigh: and after that the Nazir may drink wine. ^{6:21} This is the law of the Nazir who vows, and of his offering to Yahweh for his separation, besides that which he is able to get: according to his vow which he vows, so he must do after the law of his separation."

Yahweh Makes No Distinction Between Men And Women

Bamidbar (Numbers) 6:2 shows that the vow of a Nazir applies to both men and women, where one vows to separate oneself to Yahweh. The vow of a Nazir does not make a distinction between men and women. It is therefore clear that Yahweh's word makes no distinction in this matter between men and women, quite in contrast to the distinction made by Shaul's words in 1 Corinthians 11!

Bamidbar (Numbers) 6:5 shows that during the days of the separation of a Nazir, no razor is to come upon his or her head. The Nazir is to let the hair of his or her head grow long!

Bamidbar (Numbers) 6:13-18 shows that when the days of separation to Yahweh for the Nazir have been fulfilled, he or she is to shave the head, and burn the hair on the fire under the sacrifice of peace offerings.

Yahweh's Command For Nazirs Ignored "Nature's" View

It should therefore be noted that Yahweh's law specifically provided a situation whereby men had to grow their hair long. Yahweh's law of the Nazir had to be abided by Nazir men irrespective of whether "nature" considered it dishonourable for a man to have long hair! And Scripture mentions the following servants of Yahweh who were Nazirs - Shimshon the judge, Shemuel the seer and Yahchanan the Baptizer.

Shaul's Words Appear To Be Contradictory!

In 1 Corinthians 11:15 Shaul says that it is a glory to a woman for her to have long hair, for her hair is given to her for a covering!

This statement appears to contradict the tradition that Shaul is trying to uphold over here. For he says that a woman's hair is her covering. Yet he also says that she should not pray or prophesy with an uncovered head. This might suggest that she should pray or prophesy with her head covered with hair.

Yet earlier on he clearly said that her head should either be veiled or shorn when she is praying or prophesying. Implying that she prays or prophesies either without hair or her head covered with a veil, a veil covering her hair.

It therefore appears that Shaul's statements are not fully consistent, and are in fact contradictory!

Also, why should a woman be given her long hair for a covering and a glory, and then required to shave it or cover it with a veil when praying or prophesying to Yahweh? Is it the case that one dishonours her head by praying to Yahweh with an uncovered head with long hair when Yahweh gave her long hair for a glory? This does not appear to make sense. For if Yahweh has given her long hair for a glory and a covering, why should it be dishonourable when she prays to Yahweh with her long hair still on her head?

Prayer

Nazir Women Are To Ignore Shaul's Words In 1 Corinthians 11

Also, noting from Bamidbar (Numbers) 6, some women were also Nazirs, and therefore required to have long unshorn hair over the duration of their Nazir vow. As this was a special vow to separate oneself to Yahweh, it is indeed evident that these Nazir women had to pray to Yahweh during this period with long hair. They were not to shear their hair over the duration of their Nazir vow. Therefore, a woman having taken a Nazir vow would indeed disregard Shaul's words that she shave her head in order to pray or prophesy. For she would indeed be obeying Yahweh's Nazir law.

And, surely, Yahweh's words are superior to Shaul's traditions!

Shaul's Custom Was NOT Universally Accepted Within Yahweh's Assemblies

That Shaul in 11:16 talks about contentious men, contentious in the context of this custom of women being required to pray or prophesy with either shorn or covered heads, suggests that this was a custom that was NOT universally accepted within the assemblies of Yahweh!

Also, the strength of Shaul's phraseology in 11:16, whereby he says that neither they nor the Mighty One's assemblies had such a custom, suggests that if one did not accept Shaul's espoused tradition, one's view would have been disregarded, and Shaul's espoused tradition would have prevailed!

My View Is DIFFERENT From Shaul's!

Well, I surely have a view that is DIFFERENT from Shaul's! And, surely, if I was living around the time that Shaul was espousing this view, my contrary view would have been disregarded! Nevertheless, I maintain a contrary view!

Why I Hold A View Different From Shaul's Of 1 Corinthians 11

First of all, Shaul's justification for this tradition that he espouses is NOT consistent!

Secondly, he does not explain the inconsistencies in his justification!

Thirdly, going by his own preface to his comments, he should be followed only as he follows the Messiah. Seeing that the Messiah has spoken differently in this matter of length of hair and praying to Yahweh, speaking this in Bamidbar (Numbers) 6, Shaul's tradition should be disregarded! It is not consistent with the Messiah's words! It should therefore be disregarded!

And seeing that the Messiah is superior to Shaul, as even Shaul acknowledges by implication in 11:1, Shaul's tradition not founded on the Messiah's word should be disregarded!

Yahweh Commanded A Man To Cover His Head And Pray!

It should also be noted that Shemot (Exodus) 29 clearly shows the Kohen Gadol, Aharon at that time, being required to wear a turban on his head, thereby covering his head.

^{29:1}"This is the thing that you shall do to them to make them holy, to minister to me in the Kohen's office: take one young bull and two rams without blemish, ^{29:2}matzah,

Prayer

unleavened cakes mixed with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil: you shall make them of fine wheat flour. ^{29:3}You shall put them into one basket, and bring them in the basket, with the bull and the two rams. ^{29:4}You shall bring Aharon and his sons to the door of the tent of meeting, and shall wash them with water. ^{29:5}You shall take the garments, and put on Aharon the coat, the robe of the efod, the efod, and the breastplate, and dress him with the skillfully woven band of the efod; ^{29:6}**and you shall set the turban on his head, and put the holy crown on the turban.** ^{29:7}Then you shall take the anointing oil, and pour it on his head, and anoint him. ^{29:8}You shall bring his sons, and put coats on them. ^{29:9}You shall dress them with belts, Aharon and his sons, and bind headbands on them: and they shall have the priesthood by a perpetual statute: and you shall consecrate Aharon and his sons."

And did not Yahweh require the Kohanim to pray for the people? Did not the Kohen Gadol pray for the people with a covered head? Did the Kohen Gadol dishonour his head by so praying, yet he was doing so at the command of his head?

Vayikra (Leviticus) 16 contains Yahweh's command to the Kohen Gadol in this context.

^{16:1}Yahweh spoke to Moshe, after the death of the two sons of Aharon, when they drew near before Yahweh, and died; ^{16:2}and Yahweh said to Moshe, "Speak to Aharon your brother, that he doesn't come at all times into the holy place within the veil, before the mercy seat which is on the ark; that he not die: for I will appear in the cloud on the mercy seat. ^{16:3}**Herewith shall Aharon come into the holy place:** with a young bull for a sin-offering, and a ram for a burnt offering. ^{16:4}He shall put on the holy linen coat, and he shall have the linen breeches on his flesh, and shall be girded with the linen sash, **and with the linen mitre shall he be attired:** they are the holy garments; and he shall bathe his flesh in water, **and put them on.**

^{16:5}"He shall take of the congregation of the children of Yisra'el two male goats for a sin-offering, and one ram for a burnt offering. ^{16:6}Aharon shall present the bull of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself, and for his house. ^{16:7}He shall take the two goats, and set them before Yahweh at the door of the tent of meeting. ^{16:8}Aharon shall cast lots on the two goats; one lot for Yahweh, and the other lot for `Azazel. ^{16:9}Aharon shall present the goat on which the lot fell for Yahweh, and offer him for a sin-offering. ^{16:10}But the goat, on which the lot fell for `Azazel, shall be set alive before Yahweh, to make atonement for him, to send him away for `Azazel into the wilderness. ^{16:11}Aharon shall present the bull of the sin-offering, which is for himself, and shall make atonement for himself, and for his house, and shall kill the bull of the sin-offering which is for himself: ^{16:12}and he shall take a censer full of coals of fire from off the altar before Yahweh, and his hands full of sweet incense beaten small, and bring it within the veil: ^{16:13}and he shall put the incense on the fire before Yahweh, that the cloud of the incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the testimony, that he not die: ^{16:14}and he shall take of the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east; and before the mercy seat shall he sprinkle of the blood with his finger seven times. ^{16:15}Then shall he kill the goat of the sin-offering, that is for the people, and bring his blood within the veil, and do with his blood as he did with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat, and before the mercy seat: ^{16:16}and he shall make atonement for the holy place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Yisra'el, and because of their transgressions, even all their sins: and so shall he do for the tent of meeting, that dwells with them in the midst of their uncleanness.

Prayer

^{16:17}"There shall be no man in the tent of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the holy place, until he comes out, and has made atonement for himself, and for his household, and for all the assembly of Yisra'el. ^{16:18}He shall go out to the altar that is before Yahweh, and make atonement for it, and shall take of the blood of the bull, and of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar round about. ^{16:19}He shall sprinkle of the blood on it with his finger seven times, and cleanse it, and make it holy from the uncleanness of the children of Yisra'el.

^{16:20}"When he has made an end of atoning for the holy place, and the tent of meeting, and the altar, he shall present the live goat: ^{16:21}and Aharon shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, **and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Yisra'el, and all their transgressions, even all their sins;** and he shall put them on the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a man who is in readiness into the wilderness: ^{16:22}and the goat shall bear on him all their iniquities to a solitary land: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness.

^{16:23}**Aharon shall come into the tent of meeting, and shall put off the linen garments, which he put on when he went into the holy place, and shall leave them there:** ^{16:24}and he shall bathe his flesh in water in a holy place, and put on his garments, and come forth, and offer his burnt offering and the burnt offering of the people, and make atonement for himself and for the people. ^{16:25}The fat of the sin-offering shall he burn on the altar. ^{16:26}He who lets go the goat for 'Azazel shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp. ^{16:27}The bull of the sin-offering, and the goat of the sin-offering, whose blood was brought in to make atonement in the holy place, shall be carried forth outside of the camp; and they shall burn in the fire their skins, and their flesh, and their dung. ^{16:28}He who burns them shall wash his clothes, and bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp.

^{16:29}**It shall be a statute forever to you: in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, you shall afflict your souls, and shall do no manner of work, the home-born, or the stranger who sojourns among you:** ^{16:30}for on this day shall atonement be made for you, to cleanse you; from all your sins shall you be clean before Yahweh. ^{16:31}It is a Shabbat of solemn rest to you, and you shall afflict your souls; **it is a statute forever.** ^{16:32}**The Kohen, who shall be anointed and who shall be consecrated to be Kohen in his father's place, shall make the atonement, and shall put on the linen garments, even the holy garments:** ^{16:33}**and he shall make atonement for the holy sanctuary; and he shall make atonement for the tent of meeting and for the altar; and he shall make atonement for the Kohanim and for all the people of the assembly.** ^{16:34}**This shall be an everlasting statute to you, to make atonement for the children of Yisra'el because of all their sins once in the year.**" He did as Yahweh commanded Moshe.

Vayikra 16:4 clearly shows that Aharon was required to wear the holy garments in going into the holy place, holy garments that included the linen mitre or turban, that covered the hair of his head.

Vayikra 16:21 clearly shows that Aharon was required to pray or make confession while still wearing the holy garments, including the linen mitre.

Vayikra 16:23 shows that it was after Aharon's confession or prayer, and the sending away into the wilderness of the goat for Azazel, that Aharon returned into the tent of meeting and removed the holy garments. Aharon therefore prayed with his head covered, doing this at Yahweh's command, as confirmed in 16:34.

Prayer

Vayikra 16:29-34 also show that this command was an everlasting statute binding the Kohen Gadol's family and the people of Yisrael, and was therefore applicable even during the time of Shaul's comments in 1 Corinthians 11!

Yahweh's Words Negate Shaul's Words In 1 Corinthians 11:1-16!

It is therefore evident that Scripture clearly negates the tradition that Shaul was espousing in 11:1-16. I therefore do not subscribe to this FAULTY tradition! Neither do I recommend that anyone else should!

Is 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 Part Of Scripture?

Someone might then ask - is 1 Corinthians 11:1-16 part of Scripture?

My answer is that it is NOT part of Scripture! For does not Yahchanan (John) 10:35 indeed state that Scripture CANNOT be broken?

^{10:35} *If he called them the Mighty Ones, to whom the word of the Mighty One came (and the scripture can't be broken),*

Yet we have here clearly seen Shaul's words in 11:1-16 having been broken by Scripture, for Yahweh's clear words have negated this tradition espoused by Shaul!

Not All Of Shaul's Words Are Part Of Scripture!

This also shows that NOT ALL of Shaul's words are part of Scripture. The words that he spoke under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and have been recorded are clearly part of Scripture. But elsewhere, when he was giving his own opinion, his opinion was simply that of a human being, but not necessarily part of Scripture.

Human Servants Of Yahweh Are Not Yet Perfect

It should also be noted that just as other servants of Yahweh before Shaul had made their own mistakes or errors in their time, so also did Shaul make his in his own time. Human servants of Yahweh are not yet perfect, and inevitably make their own mistakes or errors.

Test Each Word Promulgated As Yahweh's Word

Servants and disciples of Yahweh and Yah'shuah should therefore realise that not all of Shaul's written words are part of Scripture. They must test each word of Shaul, as they must also of other servants of Yahweh, and other professed servants of Yahweh who are not really servants of Yahweh. They must test each word to ascertain whether it is in harmony with Yahweh's and Yah'shuah's words.

Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 8:20 admonishes us to go to the Torah and the Testimony - Scripture.

^{8:20} *To the Torah and to the testimony! If they don't speak according to this word, surely there is no morning for them.*

If one does not speak according to the Torah and the Testimony - Scripture, it is because there is no light - Holy Spirit - in those words that one speaks. Scripture determines for us words that are

Prayer

inspired by the Holy Spirit, words that have light in them. Therefore if one does not speak according to Scripture, even if that one is the universally revered Shaul, those words so spoken have NO AUTHORITY over our lives and should not be accepted!