

What is Prayer?




The Problem of Man's Fragility

And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of David my father, although I am but a little child. I do not know how to go out or come in. (1 Kgs. 3:7)

The LORD will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore. (Ps .121:8)

We Are Hard-Wired to Pray



O You who hears prayer,
to You shall all flesh
come.

(Psalms 65:2)

Prayer Requires a Living God

For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God,
(1 Thess 1:9)

"Truly, O LORD, the kings of Assyria have devastated all the countries and their lands, and have cast their gods into the fire, for they were not gods but the work of men's hands, wood and stone. So they have destroyed them. Now, O LORD our God, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, LORD, are God."

(Isa 37:18-20)

Prayer Requires a Compassionate God

Or what man is there among you who, when his son asks for a loaf, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, he will not give him a snake, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give what is good to those who ask Him! (Matt 7:9-11)

For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.
(Heb 4:15)

Prayer Requires a Wise God

Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit." Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are just a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that." But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil.

(Jas 4:13-16)

For who knows what is good for a man during his lifetime, during the few years of his futile life? He will spend them like a shadow. (Eccl 6:12)

Prayer Requires an Accessible God

It came about at noon, that Elijah mocked them and said, "Call out with a loud voice, for he is a god; either he is occupied or gone aside, or is on a journey, or perhaps he is asleep and needs to be awakened."
(1 Kgs 18:27)

that they would seek God, if perhaps they might grope for Him and find Him, though He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and exist, as even some of your own poets have said, 'For we also are His children.'
(Acts 17:27-28)

Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months.¹⁸
Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit. (Jas 5:17-18)

An Analysis of Prayer

1. We need help on our pilgrimage through this life
2. We can't stop ourselves from praying
3. Jehovah is alive and powerful
4. Jehovah is compassionate and empathetic
5. Jehovah is wise and discerning
6. Jehovah is infinitely accessible