

# **The Benefits and Purpose of Prayer**

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Prayer has been an intricate part of communication between God and mankind since the beginning of time. Adam and Eve had fellowship with God and He walked with them daily in the cool of the evening until they disobeyed his commandment and sin entered into the universe. They were driven out of the garden and they could no longer meet with their creator under the curse of sin. They had to sacrifice innocent animals in order to approach God. However, In Genesis 4:26, it says “then men began to call on the name of the Lord.” The righteous family lineage of Seth desired to have fellowship with God and they began to call on the name of God. Moving forward we know that Noah’s generation was wicked and Noah was the only one who found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He was a righteous man who was surrounded by wicked people. In Genesis 6:4, God looked down and saw the extent of the wickedness of mankind on the earth and that everyone with the exception of Noah, continually thought about evil things. The Bible says that the imaginations of the thoughts of the heart were evil continually. It was so corrupt that God regretted that he created man on the earth and his heart was grieved. God determined to destroy both man and beast, creeping things and the fowls of the air. He regretted making all of them. In Genesis 6:8, it reads, “But Noah found grace in the sight of the Lord.” God called Noah to build an ark with the plans that He provided for him. He gave specific instructions concerning the construction and what wood to build it from. He told him how to make it waterproof and he gave the instructions concerning every detail from start to finish. He commanded him to take his wife and sons and daughters-in-laws into the ark and to house a remnant of animals and fowls of the air. In Chapter 7 of Genesis, we read that Noah obeyed everything that the Lord had spoken to him to do. In spite of the fact that people mocked and scoffed and they made light of the prediction that rain was going to fall and destroy the earth, Noah kept on the course he had set to follow. When God shut the door, there was no more opportunity for anyone to enter the ark of safety. The Bible says that God declares that his spirit will not always strive with man. The Scriptures say (see 1 Corinthians 6:2) now is the accepted time, today is the day of salvation.

Look at Romans 10:8-13. But what saith it? The word is near thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if you shall confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in your heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead, you shall be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, “Whosoever believes on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.



In the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit fell upon 120 believers who were obedient to the commandment of the Lord to tarry in Jerusalem until they had been endued with power from on high. When the Jews from all different parts of the world heard people praising God in their native tongue, they were amazed and wondered how this could be. They heard people speaking about the wonderful works of God in all different languages that they had never learned. The onlookers were perplexed and some thought that these people must have been drinking new wine.

Peter stood up and being filled with the Holy Spirit began to bring to their attention the words of the prophet, Joel. God spoke through his prophet that in the last days, God would pour out his spirit on all flesh and their sons and daughters would prophesy and their young men would see visions and their old men would dream dreams. On God's servants and handmaidens he would pour out his spirit upon them and they would prophesy. Along with this God will show wonders in the heaven above and signs in the earth beneath; blood, fire, and vapor of smoke. The sun shall be turned to darkness and the moon into blood, before the great and terrible day of the Lord comes. And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Peter preached a sermon concerning the history of the Jews and how they have repeatedly rejected the messengers that God has sent to warn them of the fate for those who refuse to obey him. He spoke to them of the plan of salvation brought about by Jesus, the son of God, who came to this earth to provide redemption for the souls of men. He told them that he and the other apostles were witnesses to the fact that Jesus was God and he was put to death by wicked men but death couldn't hold him. He arose on the third day and has ascended into heaven. In Acts 2:36, Peter said, "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made that same Jesus, whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ." When the people heard this, fear gripped their hearts and they asked what they could do about their situation. Peter told them to "Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and they would receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

He went on to say that it was not only for them but for their children and their grandchildren and to as many as the Lord their God would call. He exhorted them to save themselves from this wicked (crooked) generation.

There was a great revival among those people and God added daily such as should be saved.

The Bible says that as in the days of Noah, so shall it be when the Son of God returns to this earth. Look at Luke 17:22-37. Jesus spoke about his second coming following the rejection and crucifixion inflicted on him from this generation. He says that the world is going to be in the same state of sinfulness when He returns. They went about their daily lives of eating, drinking, they married wives and women were given in marriage until the day Noah entered the ark. Jesus mention about Lot how that people bought, sold, they



spent time eating, drinking and planting their crops and building their houses oblivious to the judgment that was about to fall on them because of their wickedness.

We have an opportunity today to call upon the name of the Lord, to repent and turn from our sinful, rebellious ways and to seek the Lord's will for our lives. Prayer changes things! The people of Nineveh caused the Lord to repent of the judgment that He was going to pour out on the people because Jonah preached that the judgment of God was about to fall on them because of their wickedness. God had mercy on them because they believed and turned from their sins.

We must take God serious and set aside our idolatry and put the Lord back into his rightful place in our hearts, in our homes, in our communities and in our nation. The word of God commands us to pray without ceasing. The list is there for all to see. Pray for those who despitefully use us, pray for our leaders in government, pray for those who have lost their way, pray for the sick and God will raise them up and if they have committed sin, it will be forgiven them. The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray. There are people who have taken prayer out of our schools, out of our government, and they are fighting to end the Day of prayer that we just observed a few days ago.

They have tried to make it illegal for people to pray in public, for children to pray in school and churches have not made prayer a priority, but the Bible says, "The prayer of a righteous man availeth much." The prayers of God's people are precious to him.

In Revelation 8, you will find that the prayers of the saints from all ages are collected and one day they will be given to an angel to be poured out from a golden censer along with much incense and together they will be offered to God upon the golden altar and it will ascend up before God out of the angel's hand. Don't ever think that prayers are not answered. God hears them and He will answer them in due time. Be patient and don't be weary in well doing for you will reap if you don't get weary in well doing.