

The Key to Powerful and Effective Prayers

THE KEY TO POWERFUL AND EFFECTIVE PRAYERS

By George Lujack

This article will discuss how not to pray and will reveal the key to powerful and effective prayers, which is praying through belief, faith, living righteously, and trusting in God.

PROVERBS 15:8:

The prayer of the upright is His delight.

JAMES 5:16:

The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

The prayers of *the upright* and of *the righteous* are His delight and avail (produce) much. If this is the case, it stands to reason that the opposite of these verses should also be true. That is, the prayers of the crooked and unrighteous avail (produce) little. Indeed Scripture confirms that this is so.

PROVERBS 28:9:

One who turns his ear from hearing the Torah (law), even his prayer is an abomination.

The first and foremost thing a person must realize, if he or she wants God to answer his or her prayers, is that God will listen to the one who is practicing righteousness and He will not have regard for the prayer of the sinner, who actively sins while he or she prays.

People who are engaged in sin often pray to God and God will not regard such prayers. Such prayers are an abomination to Him. So, before praying to God, believers should make sure they are praying in righteousness, not in sin.

HOW TO IMPROPERLY PRAY TO GOD

IDOLATROUS PRAYERS

While actively engaging in idolatry, many people - often Catholics, use objects as a means to pray to God through. Bowing before an artistic or carved image of Yeshua (Jesus) and praying is praying while committing idolatry. God is a jealous God who will not share His glory with carved images (Isaiah 42:8), so how is He going to respect the prayer of a person committing idolatry as he or she prays? Using prayer beads, images, paintings, statues, or any object to pray to God through is an offense to Him. Idolatrous prayers show a lack of faith in Him being able to hear prayers and faith in the object's special ability and power to transmit messages to God, so that prayers will have a better chance of being heard by Him.

Remember the Roman centurion, how great his faith was, in that he knew the mere spoken word of Yeshua (Jesus) was sufficient to heal his servant; he knew Yeshua (Jesus) didn't need to physically touch his servant to heal him (Matthew 8:5-13; Luke 7:1-10).

MATTHEW 8:5-13; LUKE 7:1-10:

Now when Yeshua (Jesus) had entered Capernaum, a centurion came to Him, pleading with Him, saying, “Lord, my servant is lying at home paralyzed, dreadfully tormented (ready to die).”

And Yeshua (Jesus) said to him, **“I will come and heal him.”**

The centurion answered and said, “Lord, I am not worthy that You should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”

When Yeshua (Jesus) heard it, He marveled, and said to those who followed, **“Assuredly, I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! And I say to you that many will come from east and west, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven. But the sons of the kingdom will be cast out into outer darkness.**

There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” Then Yeshua (Jesus) said to the centurion, **“Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.”** And his servant was healed that same hour.

God likewise does not need an object for us to use so He can hear our prayers. The use of an object to pray through to God demonstrates a lack of faith that He cannot otherwise hear our prayers, or shows faith in the object itself, believing that God can hear our prayers *better* if we use it as a medium. The use of any and all objects to pray to God through is idolatry.

SEXUAL IMMORALITY PRAYERS

Sexual intercourse is a blessing to be shared between lawfully married heterosexual couples and *only* between lawfully married heterosexual couples. Many people disregard God’s laws against sexual immorality and are unmarried, yet live sexually active lives. Some who are married cheat on their spouses. Many get hurt after being sexually used in such relationships and pray to God for a good relationship, then reenter another unlawful affair, are dissatisfied, get hurt again, and keep repeating this cycle of sin.

JAMES 4:4:

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

One may find love through the world, but God will not listen to the prayers of the unlawful sexually active who pray for a good spouse (or relationship).

COVETOUSNESS PRAYERS

The Prosperity Gospel has deceived many to pray for material blessings, so that they can spend it on pleasures for themselves, to live their best life now.

JAMES 4:3:

You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

God is one who can materially bless those who serve Him, but He will not answer the prayers of those who have no desire to serve Him at all, and are merely praying to God so that they themselves can receive wealth to satisfy their covetousness and desires for material things.

PRAYERS OVER UNCLEAN CREATURES BEFORE EATING THEM

Scripture does address the prayers of those who believe that they can cleanse unclean creatures through prayer and then consume them.

ISAIAH 66:17:

“Those who sanctify and purify themselves [THROUGH PRAYER] ... eating swine’s flesh and the abomination [SEA CREATURES WITHOUT FINS AND SCALES] and the mouse, shall be consumed [BY DISEASE] together,” says YHWH (the Lord).

Mainstream Christians often cite Timothy in deceiving themselves into believing that they can miraculously transform unclean creatures into clean creatures through the power of prayer.

1 TIMOTHY 4:4-5:

For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

JOB 14:4:

Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? No one!

Creatures to be consumed cannot be sanctified by prayer alone; prayer *and* THE WORD OF GOD must sanctify them. Scripture, the word of God, distinguishes between which creatures are sanctified as clean that may be eaten and which creatures are prohibited as unclean that may not be eaten (Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14).

Prayers over unclean creatures, asking God to bless what He has already commanded man not to eat, are prayers of disobedience, futility, and/or ignorance. God will not answer prayers of disobedience, foolishness, and lawlessness. One might as well pray to God to bless his or her sexual promiscuity, so that he or she can commit sexual sin and be protected by God from receiving a sexually transmitted disease.

GRANDSTANDING PRAYERS

MATTHEW 6:5:

“And when you pray, you shall not be like the hypocrites. For they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Assuredly, I say to you, they have their reward.”

REPETITIVE PRAYERS

The Catholic Church has traditionally taught its flock to pray repetitive prayers of ‘Hail Mary,’ which are improper because Mary is not a goddess who can hear or answer prayers, Mary is dead in her grave awaiting her resurrection, and these prayers are vain and repetitive.

MATTHEW 6:7:

“And when you pray, do not use vain repetitions as the heathen do. For they think that they will be heard for their many words.”

HOW TO PROPERLY PRAY TO GOD

PRAY PRIVATELY TO GOD

MATTHEW 6:6:

But you, when you pray, go into your room, and when you have shut your door, pray to your Father who is in the secret place; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly.

To have a personal relationship with God, one needs to pray privately to Him about life's struggles and to be thankful for blessings received.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

MATTHEW 6:9-13; LUKE 11:2-4:

“In this manner therefore pray:

Our Father in heaven. Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the power and the glory forever.”

PRAY IN BELIEF AND FAITH

MATTHEW 17:20:

Yeshua (Jesus) said to them, “Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, ‘Move from here to there,’ and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you.”

MARK 11:22-24:

So Yeshua (Jesus) answered and said to them, “Have faith in God.

For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them, and you will have them.”

When Yeshua (Jesus) spoke of ‘moving mountains,’ He was speaking figuratively of moving mountains, not literally of moving Earth's mountains and casting them into the seas. He was speaking of mountainous obstacles that faithful believers have in their lives that prevent them from serving God, and other things that disrupt the lives of His faithful servants. Pray to remove mountainous obstacles, and believe, and He will remove them.

PRAY DILIGENTLY

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17:

Pray without ceasing.

PRAY TO BE RELIEVED OF SUFFERING

JAMES 5:13:

Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray.

PRAY IN HUMBLENESS

LUKE 18:9-14:

Also Yeshua (Jesus) spoke this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others:

“Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, ‘God, I thank You that I am not like other men—swindlers, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector. I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I possess.’ And the tax collector, standing afar off, would not so much as raise his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, ‘God, be merciful to me a sinner!’ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

LUKE 23:39-43:

Then one of the criminals who were hanged blasphemed Him, saying, “If You are the Messiah (Christ), save Yourself and us.”

But the other, answering, rebuked him, saying, “Do you not even fear God, seeing you are under the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we receive the due reward of our deeds; but this Man has done nothing wrong.” Then he said to Yeshua (Jesus), “Lord, remember me when You come into Your kingdom.” And Yeshua (Jesus) said to him, **“Assuredly, I say to you today, you will be with Me in Paradise.”**

God hears the prayers of the penitent man, and has no regard for the petitions or prayers of the proud or unrighteous.

PRAY FOR WISDOM AND SPIRITUAL UNDERSTANDING

2 CHRONICLES 1:8-12:

Solomon said to God: “You have shown great mercy to David my father, and have made me king in his place. Now, O YHWH (Lord) God, let Your promise to David my father be established, for You have made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. Now give me wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people; for who can judge this great people of Yours?”

Then God said to Solomon: “Because this was in your heart, and you have not asked riches or wealth or honor or the life of your enemies, nor have you asked long life—but have asked wisdom and knowledge for yourself, that you may judge My people over whom I have made you king—wisdom and knowledge are granted to you; and I will give you riches and wealth and honor, such as none of the kings have had who were before you, nor shall any after you have the like.”

COLOSSIANS 1:9:

For this reason we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding.

INTERCESSORY PRAYERS (PRAYERS ON BEHALF OF OTHERS)

1 THESSALONIANS 5:25:

Brethren, pray for us.

JAMES 5:14:

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

3 JOHN 1:2:

Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.

PRAY FOR YOUR ENEMIES AND THOSE WHO ABUSE YOU

LUKE 6:27-28:

“Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.”

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MATTHEW 6:33:

“Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

In all things we should pray to God.

The key to powerful and effective prayers is to be God’s righteous servant first, and in all things seek to glorify and serve Him, *then* as a righteous servant of His, pray to Him in righteousness (Proverbs 15:8; James 5:16).

A good employer listens to and rewards his or her good employees. How much more so will our righteous God listen to, protect, and reward His servants who pray to, serve, and worship Him in righteousness, spirit, and truth than that of a good earthly employer? (Deuteronomy 7:9; Daniel 9:4; Matthew 16:27; Luke 6:35, 18:6-7; John 4:24; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Ephesians 5:9; Colossians 3:23-24; James 2:5; Revelation 22:12).